Freemasonry in Greater London : a case study

Paper delivered to the Manchester Association for Masonic Research and the Sheffield Masonic Study Circle, May 2002

Last March, Professor Roy Porter, one of the most prolific British historians, spent an afternoon working on his allotment in Sussex. Cycling home, carrying daffodils he had gathered at the allotment, he collapsed and died. He was 55 years old. Porter wrote more than 100 books, a number of which are useful in understanding the intellectual and social context of the history of freemasonry. For example, one of his last books, *The English Enlightenment*, vividly portrays the cultural and ideological forces which shaped English freemasonry in the eighteenth century. Porter was, like me, a South Londoner, and one of his most personal publications was his 1994 study, *London: A Social History*. In describing how London became the first great world city, Porter stresses how a 'basic fault-line' running through the city's history has been a failure to provide adequate local government. In Porter's words, 'Not since the Romans has London possessed a unified government, a government relevant to all its needs. Administration has been fragmented, often deliberately'.

The anomalies of London's government are particularly apparent during the period of its greatest expansion in the nineteenth century. Because of concern about the cost of introducing authorities sufficiently large to cover the whole metropolis, the city corporation was the only great municipal corporation to remain unreformed in the 1830s. The huge new suburbs which sprang up around London during Victoria's reign were governed in the same way as the smallest country village, by the parish vestry. Individual vestries were obliged to obtain local acts of parliament to enable them to deal with the problems of urbanisation, while a host of special commissions, separate from the vestries, were established to deal with such matters as paving, police and sewers. In 1855, it was calculated that local government in Greater London was carried out by more than 300 different bodies deriving their authority from over 150 local acts.

The Metropolitan Board of Works, established in 1855, was the first municipal agency to be given powers covering the whole of London's built-up area, and its creation enabled large-scale infrastructure projects such as the Thames Embankment and the main drainage system to be carried out. However, the bulk of local government continued to be the responsibility of the vestries, although some of the quirks in the constitution of these bodies had been removed by the legislation which created the Metropolitan Board. In 1888, the Metropolitan Board of Works was replaced by an elected body, the London County Council. At first the powers of the L.C.C. were not much greater than those of its

predecessor, but gradually it also acquired responsibility for such matters as education, transport and social security. In many ways, the achievements of the L.C.C. were impressive, but in 1900 the civic powers of the vestries had been transferred to metropolitan borough councils, and the relationship between the L.C.C. and the boroughs was complex and fractious. Moreover, the continuing growth of the capital meant that the boundaries of the administrative county of London became obsolete almost as soon as they were established. The rise and fall of the Greater London Council and the establishment of a second mayor of London are just the latest instalments in a story as old as London itself.

The administrative anomalies created by London's growth are not restricted to civic government. Cricket followers will be familiar with the way in which county cricket still uses the pre-1888 boundaries, with Middlesex covering north London and Surrey the south. The church struggled to come to terms with the growth of south London.[154] Much of the area which became south London was under the jurisdiction of the vast and distant diocese of Winchester. In 1877, this area was transferred to the diocese of Rochester. The bishop of Rochester, Anthony Thorold, realising, in the words of Florence Higham, 'that this transfer was no answer to the problem of South London, an area of unrelieved poverty and ignorance',[155] was determined that this area should have its own religious identity. A suffragan Bishop of Southwark was appointed in 1891 and an ancient parish church in Southwark was restored to become a pro-cathedral in 1897. Finally, in 1905 the diocese of Southwark was created. Despite this long gestation, the structure and shape of the new diocese was far from logical, and it was at the time of its birth little more than an unwieldy conglomeration of parishes stretching from the industrial riverside to the prosperous Surrey countryside.

The organisation of freemasonry in the London area reflects similar difficulties. The pivotal event in modern freemasonry was, of course, the creation of a Grand Lodge by four London lodges in 1717, and London remains at the heart of English freemasonry. There are today approximately 50,000 London masons, about a fifth of the total membership of English freemasonry.[156] Nevertheless, the organisation of London freemasonry has for many years been seen as a problem. In 1992, Lord Eglinton, the Assistant Grand Master, echoing comments made by the then Grand Secretary two years previously, declared that 'London is not a province and,

[154] Florence Higham, *Sixty Years On: The Story of Southwark Cathedral and Diocese 1905-1965* (London: Diocese of Southwark, 1965), pp. 5-8.

[155] *Ibid*., p. 5.

[156] London Grand Rank Association Bulletin No. 109 (August 1990), address by Commander Higham as Grand Secretary on London freemasonry.

masonically speaking, a geographical accident: many meet there because it is equally inconvenient for all'.[157] The arguments presented at that time against major changes in London freemasonry echo those which have frequently prevailed in discussions of London's local government: the existing system is cheap and economical in manpower; to treat London in the same way as the provinces would be too expensive and cumbersome.[158]

The most commonly used working definition of built-up London in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the Bills of Mortality. This was a short-hand term for those 109 parishes for which weekly digests of the number of deaths were prepared. The Bills of Mortality were an early warning system for outbreaks of plague, so to be effective they had to include suburban areas outside the city proper, such as the Surrey parishes of Lambeth, Bermondsey and Rotherhithe. Increasingly, the term Bills of Mortality was used in legislation to define the metropolitan area. In 1724, when the Premier Grand Lodge declared that brothers could only belong to one lodge in the Bills of Mortality, it was simply using the most common means of easily defining the built-up area of London. The Bills of Mortality were again used in Premier Grand Lodge as a definition of metropolitan London in 1767-8 when a proposal was put forward for the appointment of General Inspectors or Provincial Grand Masters for the London lodges, but this proposal was defeated through the opposition of the London lodges.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Bills of Mortality had become outmoded, and they were superceded in 1836 when the Registrar-General's Department was established. However, in 1815, two years after the Union, freemasonry had already introduced its own definition of greater London. London lodges were defined as those lying within a ten-mile radius of Freemasons' Hall.[159] This was an extraordinarily wide-ranging definition of London, embracing places like Richmond, Barnet and Eltham at a time when they were still very rural. The adoption of the ten-mile radius appears very forward-thinking, in that it seems to assume urban expansion and make allowance for it. However, it seems likely that the ten-mile rule was adopted for more pragmatic reasons. London lodges paid higher fees to Grand Lodge than those in the provinces, and Grand Lodge was doubtless anxious to maximise its revenue. Grand Lodge may also have sought to avoid conflicts of precedence by ensuring that provincial

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[157] 'London Freemasonry: Today and Tomorrow', London Grand Rank Association Bulletin No. 115 (February 1992)

[158] *Ibid*. Lord Eglinton summarises the reasons against 'provincialising' London by stating that London freemasonry was economic on manpower and not expensive. He suggested that 40 Assistant Provincial Grand Masters would be required to achieve parity of representation between London lodges and the provinces.

[159] *Constitutions of the Antient Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, Part the Second* (London: W. P. Norris, 1815), pp. 70-1.

officers did not have authority too close to London. The common practices of organising lodge outings and of moving metropolitan lodges to country villages outside the city during the summer may also have been factors in determining the ten-mile definition.[160]

Prescient though the ten-mile radius might appear, it offered little assistance apart from geographical flexibility in helping freemasonry cope with the growth of London. There was no provincial or district grand master for the London lodges, and the disciplinary powers of a provincial grand master were exercised within the ten-mile boundary by the Board of General Purposes.[161] The administration was run from the Grand Secretary's office. Consequently, as London grew and the number of London lodges increased, the demands on the administrative machine at Great Queen Street threatened to overwhelm both the board of General Purposes and Grand Lodge itself. The ten mile radius also created difficulties for the organisation of freemasonry in the counties surrounding London. In 1850, the Provincial Grand Master for Surrey pointed out that St George's Lodge in Chertsey suffered in the award of provincial honours, because so many members lived outside the province. He suggested that this should be remedied by annexing southern Middlesex to his

[160] For example, between 1737 and 1798 the Premier Grand Lodge held annual summer feasts in such places as Hampstead, Putney, Turnham Green, Hackney, Deptford, Vauxhall, Islington and Canonbury, with a special lodge, the Country Stewards Lodge No. 540, being established to organise this event: W. Wonnacott, 'The Country Stewards' Lodge and the Green Apron', *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* 36 (1923), pp. 150-178; J. M. Hamill, 'The Country Feasts and their Stewards - A Further Note', *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* 89 (1976), pp. 222-226. Despite the demise of the Country Stewards' Lodge and its feasts, summer outings remained a feature of the calendar of many London lodges. For example, from 1863 to 1901, the Lodge of Antiquity No. 2 held every June a Recreation banquet which, until 1893, took place in hotels either in Richmond or Greenwich: W. H. Rylands and C. W. Firebrace, *Records of the Lodge Original, No. 1. Now the Lodge of Antiquity No. 2...* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1926), 2, pp. 180-181. The *Freemasons' Quarterly Review* for September 1842, 9 (1842), p. 303, notes that 'Lodges of Recreation and Water Frolics have been the order of the day. For the last three months London Masonics have patronised Richmond, Blackwall, Greenwich, Canonbury, and other classic spots'. The ten mile radius enabled London lodges to hold such events without intruding on any provincial authority. The spread of London and the establlishment of the Province of Middlesex in 1870 led to a growth in 'summer lodges', lodges established specifically to provide a country venue for freemasonry in the summer, and to lodges from the Greater London area seeking permission to meet during the summer in venues in rural Surrey and Middlesex: Allan Beaver, *Middlesex Matters: A History of 125 Years of Middlesex Freemasonry 1870-1995* (Addlestone: Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex, 1995), pp. 22, 29-30, 260-1, 274, 277, 278, 288. In May 1914, the Bolingbroke Lodge No. 2417, which then met in Battersea, requested a dispensation to hold a meeting at the Sun Hotel, Kingston-upon-Thames, which was in the Province of Surrey, 'to avoid the hot atmosphere of a town meeting place': Returns, Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

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province.[162] The ten-mile radius undoubtedly contributed to the fact that a province of Middlesex was not established until 1870.[163] Even then, the new Provincial Grand Master had great difficulty in finding potential provincial officers who were resident in the county.[164] At a provincial meeting in 1908, it was lamented that the province was impossible to organise: 'Dispersed as it is, with the London district of freemasonry in the centre, there is no room for expansion at all…'[165]

Between 1851 and 1911, the population within the ten mile radius increased from more than two and a half million to over seven million. The consequent increase in the number of London lodges and freemasons created great problems.[166] Freemasons' Hall was unable to accommodate all those entitled to attend Grand Lodge, and provincial brethren frequently travelled to London for quarterly communications, only to be turned away because the hall was already full of members from London. There were complaints that London masons used Grand Lodge to pursue local disputes. Moreover, the pressure of London business meant that the Board of General Purposes was being overwhelmed. London masons themselves were disgruntled because they felt that the lack of an honours system for London lodges made it difficult for them to achieve Grand rank.[167] In the winter of 1904-5, an attempt was made gently to refer in Grand Lodge to the need for an administrative structure for London freemasonry similar to that enjoyed by the provinces and districts. This was unsuccessful in generating discussion of the issue, and Alfred Robbins, a young Past Master of the Gallery Lodge No. 1928, decided to raise openly in Grand Lodge the question of creating a subordinate Grand Lodge for London. Attempts by him to put a motion on this issue at Grand Lodge were ruled out of order. In the meantime, a

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[162] Letter from Alexander Dobie, 24 September 1850, on the subject file for the Provincial Grand Lodge of Surrey at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

[163] But cf. Beaver, *op. cit.*, p. 22, who suggests that the largely rural character of Middlesex was also a major factor.

[164] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

[165] Ibid., p. 21.

[166] The *Freemasons' Calendar* for 1851 lists 126 London lodges; by 1913 there were 731 London lodges: *The Freemason* 31 January 1914, pp. 506-7. The increase could perhaps have been larger; an inspection of the file of refused petitions at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry shows that Lord Zetland as Grand Master regularly declined applications for new London lodges on the grounds that there were enough already. For example, the file of rejected petitions includes petitions for various lodges to meet in Battersea which were rejected on these grounds, including an 1862 petition for the 'Royal Albert Lodge', which was met in the Swan Tavern, and an 1863 petition for the 'Royal Alexandra Lodge', which was to meet in the Swan Hotel, Bridge Road.

[167] These issues were summarised in the 1913 report on the organisation of Grand Lodge. They had also previously been ventilated from time to time in the correspondence columns of *The Freemason,* e.g. 50 (1910-11), pp. 28 January 1911, p. 486; 4 February 1911, p. 502; 11 February 1911, pp. 519-521, which includes a useful list of London lodges arranged according to the ten division scheme eventually proposed in February 1913.

distinguished group of London masons formed a provisional committee to investigate the best form of administration for London freemasonry. This committee took a poll of London lodges, held a public meeting of London masons, and organised a petition calling for a London Grand Lodge. To head off this discontent, the Duke of Connaught as Grand Master announced at the Quarterly Communication in December 1907 the creation of London Rank, the first time that London was recognised masonically as an entity.[168] While this was effective in temporarily heading off the discontent of London masons, London rank at first proved controversial. Some provinces refused precedence to holders of London rank, and it was said of the honour that 'Some prize it; others deride it'.[169]

Most of the opposition in 1907 to the creation of a subordinate Grand Lodge for London seems to have come from the Pro Grand Master, Lord Amherst, who resigned shortly afterwards (his retirement being perhaps hastened by the controversy about London). Amherst was succeeded by Lord Ampthill, who was still at the time of his appointment under forty years of age.

[168] On the introduction of London Rank, see further W. Read, 'Sir Alfred Robbins, 'Prime Minister of Freemasonry', *AQC* 86 (1973), pp. 101-3 and F. W. Golby, *London Rank* (1930), bound in volume 21 of the series of masonic pamphlets at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

[169] *The Freemason* 3 January 1914, p. 425. The term 'London Grand Rank' did not come into use until 7 June 1939.

Ampthill felt that the organisation of Grand Lodge needed a thorough overhaul in order that it would deal with business more expeditiously. In 1910 Amherst circulated Provincial and District Grand Masters with proposals for reform of Grand Lodge, and a special committee of the Board of General Purposes was established to consider the matter. Robbins was a member of this committee, and Robbins's appointment as President of the Board of General Purposes in 1913 seems to reflect the high regard in which he was held by Lord Ampthill. Ampthill and Robbins made a formidable partnership, and they were determined to place the organisation of Grand Lodge on a new footing.[170]

In December 1913, the report of the committee of the Board of General Purposes on the future government of the Craft was presented to Grand Lodge. Robbins played the chief part in drafting the report and presenting it to Grand Lodge.[171] The report recommended the

[170] Read, *op. cit*., pp. 103-6.

[171] Read, op. cit., pp. 103-8. The report was summarised in *The Freemason* 6 December 1913, pp. 360-3. The following is based on the discussion of this report in Read and in *The Freemason*, 13 December 1913, p. 385, 390; 3 January 1914, pp. 425-429; 10 January 1914, pp. 444-449; 17 January 1914, pp. 461-466; 24 January 1914, pp. 481-486; 31 January 1914, pp. 497-501, 506-507 (a useful map of the masonic area of London) ; 7 February 1914, pp. 517-521; 14 February 1914, pp. 537-539; 21 February 1914, pp. 553-554; 28 February 1914, p. 574,; 7 March 1914, pp. 585-588; 21 March 1914, p. 623; 30 May 1914, p. 779; 20 June 1914, pp. 829-832.

establishment of a Grand Council, consisting of a mixture of Grand officers, elected members and members nominated by the Grand Master, to 'exercise all the administrative, legislative and judicial duties at present exercised by Grand Lodge'. The main logistical problem in establishing the Grand Council was of course London. Since London did not have a provincial structure, it was difficult to organise elections there. The possibility of using electoral colleges was considered, but it seemed that such a device would increase factionalism, instead of reducing it. Organising the London lodges geographically was impossible, since two thirds of the London lodges met at or within a mile of Freemasons' Hall. The report therefore proposed the creation of ten Metropolitan Grand Lodges. Each Metropolitan Grand Lodge would be designated by a roman numeral, and lodges would be assigned to that Metropolitan Grand Lodge whose number corresponded to the last digit of the lodge number. The initial proposal envisaged that the Metropolitan Grand Lodges would cover the whole ten mile area, but in ensuing discussion the provinces surrounding London suggested that the metropolitan district should correspond to the administrative county of London.

Robbins' presentation of the report to Grand Lodge was masterly. He did not deliver a diatribe in favour of reform, but simply left the report to speak for itself, drawing the attention of Grand Lodge to the most salient facts. He emphasised that all Lodges would have an opportunity to put forward their views on the changes. Grand Lodge approved the report in principle, but stipulated that Lodges should be allowed three months in which to put forward their views. The report triggered an enormous debate within Freemasonry. Robbins himself was at one point accused of misleading lodges by suggesting that Grand Lodge had already approved the proposals, whereas it had in fact only approved the principle. When the consultation was complete, it was found that of 3160 papers sent out, 2696 were returned (an 85% poll), and that the voting by lodges and by individuals was respectively 57% and 60% in favour of the changes.[172] However, London had again complicated matters. While the Provinces and Districts had supported the proposals, the London lodges had mainly voted against them.[173] This made the proposed reform unviable, since the creation of the General Council depended on the establishment of the Metropolitan Grand Lodges.

Robbins hoped that the scheme could somehow be rescued, and a committee of Grand Lodge was appointed to take the matter forward by arranging a series of conferences with London lodges in their proposed divisions. However, as Robbins himself afterwards wrote, 'By this time, it was June 1914; and, before a

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[172] Read, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

[173] The Middlesex Masters Lodge voted against the reform of Grand Lodge but nevertheless asked that the ten-mile radius should be abolished and the Metropolitan Grand Lodges established: Beaver, *op. cit.*, p. 21

single conference could be arranged, the Great War had broken out. In accordance with the general feeling that that was not a time in which to engage in a large plan of constitutional change, ... the task was set aside by common consent.'[174] No attempt was made to return to the reform of Grand Lodge after the war, although Robbins, still apparently smarting from his experiences in 1913, bravely declared in 1930 that 'all who closely watch the work of Grand Lodge know that the subject, though dormant, is far from dead'.[175] The immediate problem of accommodation for Grand Lodge was resolved by the rebuilding of Freemasons' Hall between 1927 and 1933. Some provincial freemasons had in 1913 fiercely criticised the fact that Quarterly Communications were always held in London, and in 1922 it was agreed that the September Quarterly Communication could be held outside London, and meetings were held at Liverpool in 1923 and Birmingham in 1928.[176] Although the organisation of London freemasonry has been discussed many times since the end of the First World War, changes have so far only been piecemeal. In 1979, the ten mile radius was reduced to five miles, and lodges in the 'border area' were allowed to choose between joining the relevant province or remaining a London lodge.[177] Although a small office in Freemasons' Hall had responsibility for London lodges, it is only recently that a London management group has been established for the London lodges.[178] This month sees the conclusion of consultations on a working party report recommending the creation of a Metropolitan Grand Lodge, more than two hundred years after such a measure was first proposed.

The administrative vicissitudes of London freemasonry have created anomalies in lodge histories which can be confusing to both the mason and the outsider. This can be illustrated by looking at two lodges in south London. Putney, the starting point of the boat race, was until the nineteenth century a small Surrey riverside village. In 1899, some members of the Putney Constitutional Club who were not masons thought it would be a good idea to have a masonic lodge attached to the club, and put a notice on the club notice board to this effect. Masonic members of the club pointed out that this was an improper procedure, but nevertheless Putney Lodge No. 2766 was eventually consecrated. The founders of the lodge were local tradesmen and professional men, including the clerk of the vestry from the neighbouring parish of Fulham, the local vicar, and the editor of the local paper. The strong local connections of the lodge

[174] Sir Alfred Robbins, *English-Speaking Freemasonry* (London: Ernest Benn, 1930), p. 154.
[175] *Ibid.*, p. 154.
[176] *Ibid.*, p. 181.
[177] Quarterly Communication?
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were reflected in its badge, showing the tower of Putney church, and in some of its lodge furniture, made of wood from the old Putney bridge. At first, the lodge met in the Putney vestry offices. Afterwards, it met for many years on the premises of the Constitutional Club. New owners objected to the lodge meeting on these premises, and it was forced in 1976 to move across the river to Fulham. This proved too expensive, and the lodge then moved to a masonic centre at Twickenham. As a result, however, it also became a Middlesex lodge, so that anyone seeking information about this lodge associated with a place which was in Surrey needs to check Middlesex sources.[179]

Clapham is another part of south London which was in Surrey. The Clapham Park Lodge No. 5446 was formed in 1934 by members of the Clapham Rotary Club, and met originally in the centre of Clapham, but over the years moved from one venue to another, ending up eventually in the London Masonic Centre in Clerkenwell in central London. As a result, by 1992, the south London connections of the lodge had largely vanished. Nine members also belonged to lodges which were in the Province of Middlesex and five others lived in the province. It seemed logical for this south London lodge to become a Middlesex lodge, so it moved to Twickenham and joined the Province of Middlesex.[180]

[179] Beaver, *op. cit*., pp. 292-3 ; *Putney Lodge Jubilee*
[180] Beaver, *op. cit.,* p. 320.

Other lodges from south-west London, as we shall see, have moved in other directions. Many have gravitated towards the central London facilities of Freemasons' Hall, Mark Masons Hall and, most recently, the London Masonic Centre in Clerkenwell,[181] again losing much of their local identity in the process. Stories such as these may reinforce perceptions of greater London, and particularly south London, as an anonymous and rootless area. At the end of the nineteenth century, Sir Walter Besant famously described south London as 'a city without a municipality, without a centre, without a civic history'.[182] He declared that the residents of south London 'have no local patriotism or enthusiasm – one cannot imagine a man proud of New Cross'. In 1961, Professor Jim Dyos published a groundbreaking study of the development of Camberwell in south-east London which offered important corrections to Besant's bleak view.[183] For Besant, the development of south London was a sudden process; he wrote that 'The houses sprang up as if in a single night; streets in a month, churches and chapels in a quarter'.[184] Dyos showed that the process of development was more piecemeal, the character and shape of the different developments reflecting the

[181] The London Masonic Centre was opened in the former Middlesex Sessions House in June 1980: Wells, *op.cit.,* pp. 142-3.
[182] Walter Besant, *South London* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1899), p. 320.
[183] H. J. Dyos, *Victorian Suburb: A Study in the Growth of Camberwell* (Leicester, 1961).
[184] Besant, op. cit., p. 318.

underlying pattern of rural landholding. This development was not simply the result of the appearance of the railways; changes in road transport and improvements in coaches, buses and trams were also important factors. Moreover, Dyos emphasised that the new inhabitants of Camberwell were not all, as Besant imagined, commuters. Many were employed locally in retailing and small-scale manufacturing. While Besant saw south London as bereft of social and cultural facilities, Dyos showed how the last stages of development included the provision of halls and public facilities, usually in association with churches or local government.

Among these facilities, Dyos notes, was a masonic hall.[185] This was the Surrey Masonic Hall.[186] A Surrey Masonic Hall Company had been established in November 1872 in order to provide a suitable building for masonic activities in the new urban districts of South London. *The Freemason* enthusiastically supported the endeavours of the company, reporting the issue of its prospectus and carrying a description of the proposed building.[187] In July 1873, Bro. John Thomas was appointed as Architect,[188] but unfortunately he died shortly afterwards, and Bro. Edward Clark, a Past Grand Superintendent of Works was appointed in his place.[189] The builder was Bro. John Oliver of Denmark Hill.[190] The foundation stone was laid with masonic honours in May 1874. The building was dedicated in July 1875, and *The Freemason* carried an imposing lithograph of the building.[191] The venture was a commercial disaster. The Masonic Hall Company went bankrupt just two years later, and the building was acquired at auction by Oliver.[192] Matters were made worse when damage was caused by floods.[193] Nevertheless, despite all these problems, the Surrey Masonic Hall provided facilities for the kind of cultural activities which, Besant claimed, were thin on the ground in south London. For example, in 1877, the Surrey Association for the Advancement of Science, Art and Literature held a grand concert there.[194] In 1880, the hall was eventually acquired by the South London Choral Association, whose leading lights were

[185] Dyos, *op. cit*., p. 178.
[186] Bailey and Cryer, *op. cit*., pp. 88 (illustration), 169-70, who state that the history of this building has been lost. It can easily be reconstructed from *The Freemason*. Bailey and Cryer state that the site of the hall was purchased in 1931 by a motor company and redeveloped.
[187] *The Freemason* 6 July 1872, p. 468; 30 November 1872, p. 345;
[188] *The Freemason* 19 July 1873, p. 473.
[189] *The Freemason* 4 October 1873, pp. 643-4.
[190] *The Freemason* 1874, pp. 341-2.
[191] *The Freemason* 17 July 1875, pp. 310-11; the lithograph is facing pp. 80 in this volume. It is reproduced in Barker and Cryer, *op. cit*.,
[192] *The Freemason* 28 July 1877, p. 313; 4 August 1877, p. 324; 23 September 1877, p. 394. Oliver attempted to establish a Surrey Masonic Club there: *The Freemason* 17 November 1877, p. 493.
[193] *The Freemason* 31 August 1878, p. 428.
[194] Ebenezer Lock, *History of the South London Choral Association* (London: The Surrey Masonic Hall, 1892), p. 19. A copy of this book is in the British Library, pressmark 7896.de.42.

Leonard and George Venables, two music teachers and advocates of tonic sol-fa, who were also keen masons.[195] The funds from the masonic lettings enabled them to develop the Surrey Masonic Hall into a significant cultural centre. A large concert hall was added to the building, regular concerts, lectures and music classes were held there, and a library and reading room was created.[196] The Surrey Masonic Hall shows how freemasonry could be significant in developing the civic life of the new conurbation of south London. I would like to explore this theme a little more by looking briefly at the early history of some lodges in Battersea in south-west London.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, Battersea was a small riverside village whose main occupation was market gardening. In 1838, the London and South Western Railway was opened, whose terminus was at Nine Elms in the east of the parish. During the next thirty years, the area was criss-crossed by new railways, and large railway workshops were opened. The huge station at Clapham Junction emerged as the heart of the new urban area. The population grew from 6,887 in 1841 to 150,558 by 1891. To the north of the railway, bordering the river, was an area characterised by manufacturing industry and mostly working class housing, some very poor quality. Around Clapham Junction station and to the south of the railway, major retailing centres developed from the 1870s, together with middle class housing, particularly around the two green lungs of Clapham and Wandsworth Commons. Battersea was best known at the beginning of the last century for its radical politics. Its MP was John Burns, the first working man to serve in a cabinet. Battersea Borough Council pioneered municipal socialism, creating one of the first direct labour schemes, opening state-of-the-art baths, wash-houses and libraries, and providing high-quality council housing. The Council refused for many years to fly the Union Jack from the town hall, and courted national controversy with its support of the anti-vivisection movement. This radical tradition continued well into the twentieth century; in 1913 its mayor was the Black Pan-Africanist John Archer and from 1922-9 Battersea was represented in parliament by the Indian communist Saklatvala.[197]

[195] *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 29, 31.
[196] *Ibid* ., pp. 23-31.

[197] For overviews of Battersea's history, see Patrick Loobey, ed., *Battersea Past* (London: Historical Publications, 2002); Reginald J. Prescott, 'Village Under the Smoke: The Story of Battersea and its People', *The Battersea Booklist Quarterly*, 2nd ser., nos. 11-14; Roger Logan, *South Battersea: The Formative Years 1851-1900* (Wandsworth: Wandsworth Historical Society, 1977); Priscilla Metcalf, *The Park Town Estate and the Battersea Tangle: a Peculiar Piece of Victorian London Property Development and its Background* (London: London Topographical Society, 1978); Chris Wrigley, *Changes in the Battersea Labour Movement 1914-1919* (Loughborough: Loughborough University, 1978); Janet Roebuck, *Urban Development in 19th-Century London: Lambeth, Battersea and Wandsworth* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1979); Sandra Wallman, ed., *Living in South London: Perspectives on Battersea 1871-1981*

The earliest Battersea masons belonged to a Moderns lodge which met at the King's Arms in nearby Wandsworth.[198] This lodge was established as early as 1723, but the earliest information about its membership dates from 1794. Wandsworth was at this time a small river port at the confluence of the River Wandle with the Thames. The membership of the lodge reflected the industries then established in Wandsworth, and included a miller, a calico printer and two coal merchants. The lodge also contained members from places further up the Wandle, such as Beddington and Merton, reflecting links between the industries along the small river. While some members of the lodge were well-to-do, there was a large artisan element. In 1794, most of the members were still from Wandsworth, but as the years went by men from Battersea increasingly joined the lodge. Many of these Battersea recruits were lower class, including a bricklayer, a coachman and a number of market gardeners. The large artisan membership of the lodge would have made it vulnerable to the economic downturn after 1814, and indeed it disappears from sight after 1813, being finally erased some years later.

Battersea is best known in masonic history as the home from 1853 to 1934 of the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls. The opening in 1853 was marked by a public procession of Grand Lodge and a huge garden party in the grounds, attended by between three and four thousand visitors. However, it seems that the presence of the R.M.I.G. did not help spread freemasonry in the locality. The first lodge to be firmly based in Battersea was the Earl Spencer lodge no. 1420, named after the local Lord of the Manor and consecrated in 1872. The history of this lodge encapsulates many major themes of the development of freemasonry in this area. First, the founders came mostly from New Wandsworth, reflecting how freemasonry was associated with the growth of the politically conservative middle class areas of south Battersea.[199] Second, the greater professionalisation of

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(London: Gower, 1982), pp. 17-82; Coral Lansbury, *The Old Brown Dog: Women, Workers and Vivisection in Edwardian England* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), pp. 3-25; Ben Rudder, *Builders of the Borough: A Century of Achievement by Battersea and Wandsworth TradesUnion Council from 1894 to 1994* (Battersea: Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Union Council, 1994); Sean Creighton, 'Battersea and the New Unionism', *South London Record* 4 (1989), pp. 31-46; Sean Creighton, 'Organised Cycling and Politics: the 1890s and 1900s in Battersea', available on-line at http://www2.umist.ac.uk/sport/Creighton.html. Sean Creighton has also published in photocopied form a number of very useful articles, including 'The Ancient Order of Foresters in Battersea and neighbouring districts', 'John Archer: Battersea's black progressive and labour activist' and 'From Exclusion to Political Control: Radical and Working Class Organisation in Battersea 1830s-1908', available from Agenda Services, 18 Ridge Road, Mitcham, CR4 2ET. [Ruddock; Jo Stanley, Battersea Town Hall]

[198] Bailey and Cryer, *op. cit.*, p. 115. Information about membership is taken from returns at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

[199] The founders who signed the petition for this lodge were: Edward Spooner, gentleman, of 2 Spencer Road, New Wandsworth; William Christopher Todd, gentleman, of New Wandsworth; Charles

local government led to a new class of salaried officials who were to play a significant role in the local growth of freemasonry. The first master of the Earl Spencer lodge was Edward Spooner, who was an officer of the Westminster Vestry, and the other founders included engineers and surveyors connected with local vestries. Some of the founders of the Earl Spencer lodge were involved in the development of other societies and associations in the area. Spooner, for example, was an officer of the New Wandsworth Philanthropic Society.[200]

Although Earl Spencer lodge was created to provide a masonic meeting place for the inhabitants of south Battersea, it suffered constant problems with its accommodation. It met at a succession of taverns and hotels in the district, eventually moving north to the Albert Palace, an ambitious attempt to create a new Crystal Palace adjacent to Battersea Park. The Albert Palace went bankrupt in 1887, and the lodge sought permission to move to Cannon Street in the centre of London. These moves caused constant anxiety to the secretariat in Great Queen Street. A memorandum on the lodge by an Assistant Grand Secretary at the time of the collapse of the Albert Palace suggests complete bewilderment: 'Is New Wandsworth in Battersea?', he wrote, 'Is the Swan Hotel in New Wandsworth?'. A final despairing note suggests that, for this official at least, south London was a foreign country: 'Dodd tells me there really is no decent place for a lodge in Battersea, he lives at Lavender Hill and therefore knows something of the neighbourhood'.[201]

Despite these difficulties, the lodge had at this time 52 members, mostly from south Battersea.[202] While the membership comprised a mixture of tradesmen and professional classes, particularly notable was the involvement of men connected with the vestry, such as Peter Haythornthwaite, who served as Secretarry and Master of the lodge, was a member of both the Vestry and the Borough Council, and was the conservative Mayor of Battersea in 1909-10. Also striking is the contribution to the lodge of the new class of local government employees, including for example, a librarian, the steward of the local dispensary, a workhouse master, and a vestry clerk.

Jackson, gentleman, of Clyde Villa, Southfields; Thomas Buckham, civil engineer, of Spencer Road, New Wandsworth; James Neal, contractor, of Spencer Road, New Wandsworth; Arthur Southam, surveyor, of Clapham; and Joseph Hiscox, gentleman, of Lavender Hill; cf. John Monk, *The History of the Earl Spencer Lodge No. 1420 1873-1973* (n.p.p., n.d.).

[200] Spooner used stationery of the Westminster Vestry and the Philanthropic Society in his correspondence about the establishment of the new masonic lodge.

[201] These peregrinations are recorded in the returns of the lodge in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry; cf. Monk, *op. cit.*

[202] For details of lodge membership, see the returns in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

When the Albert Palace finally closed, the lodge was forced briefly to move to Putney, but, following the opening in Lavender Hill of a new restaurant, Stanley's, the lodge was able to return to Battersea. The owner and manager of the restaurant became members of the lodge, and Stanley's became a major centre of freemasonry in Battersea for many years. In 1908, a refurbishment of the restaurant prompted the Earl Spencer lodge to move to the Criterion Restaurant in the Strand. Immediately, the character of the lodge changed. The number of Battersea initiates declined, and new members of the lodge began to be drawn from further afield. This process became more marked after the First World War. Of 22 initiates between 1918 and 1925, only three were from Battersea; increasingly members lived in such new suburbs as Hanwell, South Ealing and Lee. The lodge now meets in Freemasons' Hall. When the lodge celebrated its centenary in 1972, no members lived in Battersea and its members had forgotten why their lodge bore its eminently local name.[203]

A similar process of divorce from the locality took place even more rapidly in a lodge consecrated shortly after the Earl Spencer lodge, Mount Edgcumbe lodge no. 1446. This was based in north Battersea, and the founders included owners of riverside wharves and factories, as well as a local doctor.[204] A letter accompanying the petition again emphasised the need for a local masonic venue. It described how a lodge had previously met in Chelsea, but had moved to the city. This necessitated members travelling more than five miles to attend each lodge meeting, and many had resigned their membership of the craft for this reason alone. The letter claimed that they would take up freemasonry again if they could meet in the immediate vicinity. The warrant was granted on condition that the lodge met in Battersea. Within eight years, however, the inn where the lodge met was demolished and the lodge asked for permission to move, claiming that it was impossible to find a suitable meeting place in Battersea and that it was unable to recruit members in the locality. Eventually, permission was given for the lodge to move to the Bridge House Hotel at London Bridge.[205] It quickly lost its Battersea connection

[203] The lodge wrote to Freemasons' Hall asking for an explanation of the name: Lodge file, Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

[204] The founders who signed the petition for the lodge in 1873 were: William Ough of the Wellington Lime and Ancient Wharf, Lambeth; A C Burrell, tailor, of Piccadilly; John Coates of Oak Wharf, Battersea; Robert William Whiteley, wine merchant, of Devonshire Place, New Wandsworth; Frederick Pemberton of Worcester College, Falcon Road; William Kempston, M.D., of Oak House, Battersea; T. White of Home Road, Battersea; and Daniel Parlabean of Harroway Works, Battersea.

[205] *The Freemason*, 3 (1870), p. 95, carried the following advertisement: 'Bridge-House Hotel, London Bridge. This hotel has facilities for Masonic Meetings, arbitrations, public dinners, balls, &c., and is allowed to be in real domestic comfort one of the best in the metropolis, possessing the advantage of a moderate scale of charges, which, with excellent cuisine, Wines of the first quality, and

altogether. Its members began to be drawn chiefly from south-east London, with a large proportion connected with the building trade.[206]

The lack of masonic lodges in Battersea became a matter of concern to some inhabitants, and Dr Philip Davis, a food scientist and journalist, who claimed to be 'the leading journalistic confectionary-trade expert in the world', launched a campaign for a local lodge, and in 1891 he wrote forcefully to the Grand Secretary as follows: 'Ten years ago the population of this district was 107,262 persons and at that time (if I am accurately informed) two, if not more, craft lodges met within its limits; this year's census shows that the population has increased to 150,458 – nearly equal to that of Newcastle-on-Tyne – and today not one lodge meets within its confines. They have all removed on the plea that there is no suitable accommodation for them; have gone beyond the local radius; are scarcely recognised any longer as local lodges, and freemasonry is at a much lower ebb in this vicinity than it should otherwise be under any circumstances'. Davis stressed that the lack of a lodge meant that there were many lapsed masons in the area, and felt confident that a new lodge would quickly recruit a hundred members. He outlined ambitious plans to build a large masonic hall opposite Clapham Junction station, and asked for his petition to be quickly granted to enable him to purchase the land for the hall.[207]

Thus was established Bolingbroke lodge no. 2417, but difficulties about shared use of the premises meant that the proposed masonic hall was never established, and Bolingbroke lodge was again dogged by the familiar accommodation problems. Nevertheless, the lodge rapidly grew to more than 50 members, drawn mainly from the area around Clapham Junction.[208] With the opening of a new town hall in 1894, the lodge moved

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the care and attention shown to guests, justifies the preference accorded to it. Tariffs on application to Joseph H. Spencer'.

[206] This change can be traced in the lodge's returns in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

[207] Letter accompanying the petition for the lodge in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

[208] Davis quickly fell out with the brethren of the Bolingbroke lodge. By 1894, he was petitioning enthusiastically for the establishment of a lodge based in the City to be called the Chinook Lodge. In August 1894, a mason called Combeil wrote to the Grand Secretary forwarding a notice of Davis's bankruptcy and stating that "This man - I learn - was bankrupt in Manchester some years ago. I wish we had some means of getting rid of such blots on masonry...' He also sent a list of Davis's creditors who included the firm of Jones and Aylett in Battersea who were owed seven hundred pounds. Charles Munslow wrote as expressing the concern of Bolingbroke lodge concern about Davis's petition: 'It is very difficult indeed to convey in a letter and I am even not sure that I am not committing a very great masonic sin in doing so, but really the facts are such that before allowing Bro Davis to put forward an application for a warrant to another lodge you ought to know the facts of the case..'. The petition for the Kohinoor lodge was refused, and on 15 February 1895, Davis was excluded from freemasonry: Refused Petitions, Library and Museum of Freemasonry.

there, taking the precaution of initiating the caretaker first.[209] The use of the town hall encouraged employees of the vestry and borough council to join: in 1903, the Council's Superintendent of Works was initiated.[210] The lodge had strong connections with local conservative groups – Charles Munslow who was lodge secretary was for example secretary of the Clapham Conservative Association[211] – and the socialist Borough Council made increasing difficulties about the lodge's use of the town hall.[212] In 1904, the lodge moved to Stanley's Restaurant. It continued to be the principal focus of freemasonry in the locality until after the First World War, organising for example a masonic service of commemoration at the Town Hall in 1919, which was attended by the mayor and other local dignitaries.[213] Although the lodge was still meeting at Clapham Junction in the 1960s, its local links had been substantially weakened as a result of the expansion of membership in the 1920s. In 1924-5, 22 new members were initiated, but only two of these were from Battersea, while eight were from north London. It now meets at Freemasons' Hall in central London.

One of the most imaginative attempts to promote masonry in Battersea was associated with the building of the Shaftesbury Park Estate in the 1870s, an estate of model cottages designed for clerks and respectable members of the working class built by the Artisans Labourers and General Dwellings Company Limited, which also built similar estates in Queen's Park, Forest Gate and elsewhere.[214] The foundation stone, laid by Lord Shaftesbury, declared 'Healthy Homes the First Condition of Social Progress'. This pioneering

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[209] A letter of 28 February 1894 in the lodge returns in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry requested permission to initiate John Pigott, the messenger-caretaker of Battersea Town Hall, as a serving brother who would supply the lodge with refreshments. The letter pointed out that initiation of Pigott would be advantageous for Bolingbroke lodge and any other lodge which would meet in the town hall.

[210] Hubert Mark Green.

[211] Munslow used notepaper of the Conservative Association when writing to Freemasons' Hall.

[212] The returns of the lodge contain repeated requests for dispensations to meet elsewhere because the council had refused permission for the lodge to use the town hall.

[213] A dispensation was necessary to wear masonic clothing during the service, and a copy of the announcement for the service was included in the letter requesting dispensation, preserved among the lodge's returns at the Library and Museum of Freemasonry: 'A masonic service has been organised by the Bolingbroke Masonic Association, assisted by members of all lodges of instruction and regular lodges of the South West District ... to piously celebrate victory and peace after the Great War, thus affording an opportunity to express the truly masonic teachings of which our Order is founded. Freemasons residing within an easy radius of the Town Hall will assist by their presence at this festival of thanksgiving'.

[214] Loobey, op. cit., p. 128; Creighton, 'Battersea and the New Unionism', *loc. cit.*, p. 34; Metcalf, *op. cit.,* pp. 35, 44, 46; *Artizans Centenary 1867-1967* (London: The Artizans and General Properties Company Limited, 1967); Erica McDonald and David J. Smith, *Artizans and Avenues: a History of the Queen's Park Estate* (London: City of Westminster Libraries, 1990).

'workman's city' included a lecture hall and recreation ground. In the words of a report by the company: 'It is proposed to erect on this estate 1200 houses suited respectively for clerks, artisans and labourers, in addition to a lecture hall, co-operative store, school rooms, baths, wash-houses, etc. A reservation of three acres is allotted for recreations and pleasure grounds...The houses will be so constructed as to combine elegance and comfort with economy; but as the Directors regard a healthy house as the cheapest, and in the long run the most comfortable, strict attention has been paid to secure dry and well roofed habitations.'[215] The estate was visited by Disraeli and others, who expressed their enthusiasm for the development.

The Artisans Labourers and General Dwellings Company was founded by William Austin, an illiterate Northampton builder, who felt that he owed his success to having renounced drink at the age of 47. In difference to Austin's strict temperance views, there were no pubs on the Shaftesbury Park Estate. In 1870, Austin was replaced as chairman of the company by a radical journalist and social reformer, Dr. John Baxter Langley.[216] Austin afterwards grumbled that 'I'm no scholar, so they outvoted me. I was too honest for them, so that's why they voted me out'. Langley himself was a controversial figure. He had cut his teeth as a radical journalist on the *Manchester Times* in the 1840s. He was one of the prime movers of the Reform League, which agitated for an extension of parliamentary suffrage. In 1858, Langley gave the 'physical force' chartist Ernest Jones financial support for his weekly newspaper, the *People's Paper*, but Jones was unhappy with Langley's more moderate political stance and the two soon fell out, with Jones eventually accusing Langley of selling out by taking a paid lectureship in support of a more moderate reform programme.[217] Langley was also deeply interested in social questions, supporting Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant when they were prosecuted for obscenity for publishing a book on methods of birth control. Langley supported Josephine Butler's campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts, and at her behest stood as a parliamentary candidate in against this legislation at Colchester in 1870. During a public meeting in this campaign, rotten vegetables, chairs, and plaster and mortar from the ceiling were thrown at Langley and the clothes were literally torn from his back. Nevertheless, by splitting the liberal vote, Langley's candidature at

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[215] *Artizans Centenary*, p. 9.

[216] On Langley, see further *The Era of the Reform League: English Labour and Radical Politics*, ed. J. Breuilly, G. Niedhart and A. Taylor (Mannheim, 1995), p. 333,. In 1876, Langley caused a storm in freemasonry by his trenchant opposition to the use of masonic funds for the restoration of cathedrals: Andrew Prescott, 'Charles Bradlaugh and Freemasonry' *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, forthcoming.

[217] Miles Taylor, *Ernest Jones, Chartism and the Romance of Politics 1819-1869* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 181, 183-5.

Colchester was a turning point in the campaign to repeal these acts.[218] Langley was a unitarian and an opponent of conventional churches and religion, establishing his own 'Church of the Future' and advocating the use of Sundays for educational purposes. Accordingly, not only was the Shaftesbury Park Estate free of pubs, but churches were also absent.

Among Langley's many enthusiasms was freemasonry. He was the first Inner Guard of Era Lodge No. 1423, which was consecrated at the King's Arms Hampton Court on 1 February 1873, becoming Junior Warden in 1874 and Master in 1876.[219] In that year, the Era Lodge established a Royal Arch chapter, and Langley was the founding J. He also served as Inner Guard of the Royal Oak Lodge No. 871, which met in Deptford. Langley was as controversial within freemasonry as he was in the outside world. He caused outrage when, supporting a campaign against the use of grand lodge funds for the restoration of cathedrals, he wrote to The Freemason claimed that the carvings of the front of cathedrals were remnants of phallus worship. Langley saw freemasonry as a means of helping to realise a wider social vision for the Shaftesbury Park Estate in Battersea. In 1874 Langley wrote to the Grand Secretary, John Hervey,

[218] Jane Jordan, *Josephine Butler* (London: John Murray, 2001), pp. 121-5.
[219] [F. O. Raynaud], *Era Lodge No. 1423: The First Hundred Years* (n.p.p., 1973), pp. 2, 19; *Era Chapter No. 1423: One Hundred Years of Progress 1876-1976* (n.p.p., 1976), p. 2.

describing the new estate at Battersea, and declaring that 'there is a desire on the part of the superior officials, superintendents of works and other residents on the estate to be admitted into masonry in a lodge connected with the new town; and the Directors cordially second that desire'.[220] Langley himself would be the first master of the lodge, and the lodge would eventually meet in the public hall planned for the estate. Langley added that 'The petitioners specially desire that the first stone of the new lodge and public hall may be laid with masonic honours..'

The signatories of the petition were mostly people connected with the company who lived in various parts of London.[221] Only one gave his address as the

[220] Correspondence accompanying the petition for the lodge, Library and Museum of Freemasonry. It seems that it proved impracticable to lay the memorial stone with masonic honours; a letter from Hervey to Langley on 16 August 1878, states that 'With regard to the laying of the memorial stone of the Artizan's buildings, I am afraid that at this season of the year it will be difficult to obtain the attendance of sufficiently distinguished and influential men': Grand Secretary's Letter Book 1876-7, Library and Museum of Freemasonry, f. 108.
[221] They were: Langley; Thomas Horton, secretary, of Oakley Street, Chelsea; Edward Fithian, Secretary, of Great College Street, Westminster; Frank John Lancaster, of the Architect's Department of the Metropolitan Board of Works, who lived in Tipthorpe Road, Lavender Hill; E Mallett, of Little Britain; Frankenburg; G. Mallick, physician, of Herne Bay; J. Elgood, solicitor, of Brunswick Square; John Shuttleton, confectioner, of Mare Street, Hackney; John Johnson, engineer, of Goswell Road; Stephen Lacey, gentleman, of

Shaftesbury Park Estate itself, a glass merchant named Solomon Frankenburg. The petition was granted, and it seems that the Grand Secretary himself assisted in the design of the new hall. However, in 1877 disaster overtook Langley. Much of the day-to-day supervision of the building work had been left to the Company Secretary, William Swindlehurst. There were rumours of irregularity in the handling of funds and inadequate purchasing procedures. In June 1877 the company appointed a committee of inquiry. It was found that the board had given Swindlehurst supplies of blank cheques and that he had taken some of the profits from the sale of company land.[222] A particular concern was that building materials had been purchased from a single merchant, Solomon Frankenburg, who had often charged twice the going rate.[223] Frankenburg was, of course, a signatory of the petition for the Shaftesbury lodge. In July 1877 Swindlehurst and Langley were arrested for fraud, and in the following October they were sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment.[224] Langley was expelled from freemasonry, and the Pro Grand Master cancelled the warrant for the Shaftesbury lodge.[225]

The estate was nevertheless completed and the hall built. In 1882, some members of the Crichton lodge no. 1641 attempted to revive freemasonry on the Shaftesbury Park estate. The Crichton lodge was established in 1876 at the Surrey Masonic Hall, and most of its members were connected with the London School Board, its founders including the Superintendent and the Clerk of the Board.[226] The leading light of the new lodge, which became the Duke of Albany no. 1963, was Robert James Voisey, a local schoolmaster who had been Master of the Crichton lodge.[227] The two main reasons given for the

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Canonbury Place; Michael Underwood, manager, of Ludgate Hill; and Joshua Hollings Grigg, physician, of Albemarle Street, Piccadilly. None of these petitioners appear to have been Directors of the Artizans', Labourers' and General Dwellings Company, suggesting that the masonic mission to the Shaftesbury Park Estate was a personal enthusiasm of Langley's.

[222] The Artizans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company Ltd., *Report of a Commitee of Investigation appointed at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Shareholders on the 2nd of June 1877* (London: National Press Agency, 1877), pp. 8-10.

[223] *Ibid*., pp. 8-9; *Artizans' Centenary,* p. 16; McDonald and Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

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[225] The petition was cancelled on 28 August 1877.

[226] The petition is printed and discussed in Andrew Prescott, 'The Study of Freemasonry as a New Academic Discipline', proceedings of OVN conference at Leiden March 2003, forthcoming.

[227] On Voisey, see further below. The founders who signed the petition for the Duke of Albany Lodge were: Voisey; Robert James Vincent, schoolmaster, of Larkhall Lane, Clapham; Charles Wilson, schoolmaster, of Bloom Grove, Lower Norwood; William Thomas Pink, schoolmaster, of 29 Bridge Road West, Battersea; Robert Stokoe, schoolmaster, of Grayshott Villas, Shaftesbury Park Estate; Henry Maidment, schoolmaster, of Raywood Street, Battersea; John James White, schoolmaster, of Stormont Road, Lavender Hill; Vincent Marché, schoolmaster, of Gloucester Road, Camberwell; Charles Henry Stone, schoolmaster, of Soames Terrace, Denmark Park' George Gill, publisher, of Ramsden Road, Battersea; Thomas Harrap, vestry clerk, of Crown Terrace, Lavender Hill.

establishment of the new lodge in the petition was, again, the lack of masonic lodges in Battersea, and also the availability of a specially designed masonic hall on the Shaftesbury Park estate.[228] Reflecting its origins in the Crichton lodge, many of the founders of the lodge were schoolmasters.

After three years, the Duke of Albany had had enough of the Shaftesbury Park Estate. A petition of the members complained that:

'1. The Lodge Room is too large for our numbers, is overcrowded with chairs and other furniture used for purposes extraneous to freemasonry, and is neither clean nor in comfortable repair. It is not adapted for the correct working of the third degree, and its entrance cannot be properly tiled. It is disfigured with notices of dance classes and smoking concerts, and the glazing of the daylight windows is most dangerously imperfect, causing much illness and suffering to the members and especially to the Worshipful Master and Officers. We may add that we only rent the premises from a yearly tenant, and that we may have notice to quit our occupation at very short time.
2. The ante-room is small and inconvenient for the work of the lodge.
3. The approaches are untidy and easily accessible to outsiders.
4. There are no conveniences whatever for the purposes of refreshment'

The last was a particularly intractable problem; the temperance character of the estate meant there was nowhere to go after lodge meetings. Moreover, the lodge had been unsuccessful in recruiting from the inhabitants of the estate itself, who were restricted to clerks and artisans. The failure of the two Shaftesbury Park lodges to recruit significant numbers of members from the inhabitants of the estate is striking. One of the most notable features of life on the estate was the large number of social organisations which flourished there. These included a Band of Hope, a dramatic club, a Friends of Labour loan society, a rifle corps, sports teams, an annual flower show and a lodge of the Good Templars. The failure of freemasonry to put down roots on the Shaftesbury Park estate may be ascribed to a number of reasons. Possibly the fees associated with

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[228] 'The motives which impel us to seek this favour at the hands of your Royal Highness are, among others, the following:- 1. The Crichton Lodge, 1641, to which most of your petitioners belong, has been so successful...that it must soon cease to admit any more to the lodge. 2. The place and time of meeting of the Crichton Lodge are inconvenient to many gentlemen, our friends, who are anxiously seeking admission into freemasonry. 3. The only lodge held in Battersea for Battersea masons and intending candidates is the "Earl Spencer", all those formerly meeting in this district having been removed to "The Bridge House" and elsewhere. 4. We have been able to secure the Masonic Hall on the Shaftesbury Park Estate, which was originally built for Masonic purposes under the supervision of our late lamented Grand Secretary, for our meetings'. cf. Wilfred J. Wickham and E. John Stannard, *History of the Duke of Albany Lodge No. 1963* (n.p.p., 1982), pp. 2-3.

freemasonry may have been too expensive for the clerks and artisans who lived on the estate. However, many people of this social class were members of masonic lodges elsewhere, and there is no reason to think that, for such community leaders on the Shaftesbury Park estate as John Vooght who had been a member of the Clapham vestry, the fees charged by freemasonry were a barrier to membership. A bigger stumbling block for men such as Vooght, who were mostly teetotal, is more likely to have been the association of freeemasonry with eating and drinking. As has already been noted, the difficulty of arranging a festive board on a temperance estate was a problem for the Duke of Albany Lodge. Whatever the explanation, it proved impossible to implant freemasonry on the Shaftesbury Park estate; wider social networks were necessary to nurture it.

The Duke of Albany Lodge moved to the Albert Palace, where the Earl Spencer lodge also met. The Albert Palace itself was by no means well suited for masonic meetings, since an admission fee was charged for entrance to the palace and it was necessary to show the summons to get reduced or free admission.[229] While the lodge was at the Albert Palace, it recruited a number of shopowners and tradesmen in the immediate locality, such as Battersea Park Road and Queens' Road. With the bankruptcy of the Albert Palace, the lodge was forced, after a series of heated meetings, to move to the Surrey Masonic Hall, although as the minutes note, 'a universal feeling was expressed that as the warrant was first granted on the understanding that it was to be a Battersea lodge, the Lodge should be brought back to Battersea whenever a convenient meeting place could be found…' This proved to be a forlorn hope, and the lodge never returned. As soon as the Lodge moved to Camberwell, its membership started to be drawn from a wider geographical area. In 1893, while some of the initiates were from Battersea, such as the manager of the public baths there, the majority were from many different parts of London, with some from as far afield as Watford and Southampton. While the Duke of Albany Lodge retained its strong links with educational professions, its Battersea connections gradually disappeared.

Robert Voisey, the first master of the Duke of Albany and the first schoolteacher to obtain London Rank, appears to have been a major influence in developing freemasonry in Battersea. A famous teacher training college was established in Battersea called the St John's Training College. With the expansion of educational provision in London through the work of the London School Board, many teachers trained at Battersea were appointed to posts in London. The Battersea Club was established for old members of the college, and it was suggested that a masonic lodge would help cement these social bonds. This led to the creation of the Sir Walter St

[229] Wickham and Stannard, *op. cit.,* p. 3.

John Lodge No. 2513.[230] Voisey served as Inner Guard at the consecration and, as an honorary member of the lodge, worked assiduously to build it up.[231] The lodge played a part in the establishment of the Union of Training College Lodges in 1914. Curiously, the lodge never met in Battersea, meeting first at the Surrey Masonic Hall, then afterwards at the Holborn Restaurant. Nevertheless, the Sir Walter St John Lodge illustrates how, while more general lodges in south London often lost their original local connections, those associated with specific local institutions frequently help preserve the memory of those bodies after they have disappeared. The training college was closed in 1923 and amalgamated with the college of St Mark in Chelsea. Marjons, as it was known, itself moved to Plymouth in 1973. The masonic lodge was opened to students of Marjons in 1931, and became completely open in 1934.[232] It still meets at the London Masonic Centre, and thus preserves memories of a Battersea institution which has now otherwise vanished.

A similar process can be observed with school lodges. Some old boys of two local grammar schools, Sir Walter St John's School and Battersea Grammar School, established a lodge for staff and old boys of the schools in 1907, Old Sinjins lodge no. 3232. This was one of the first school lodges. One of its masters was the headmaster of Sir Walter St John's school and historian of Battersea, John George Taylor, and during his period of office a meeting of the lodge was held in the school's Great Hall. The lodge regularly held services in the ancient parish church of Battersea, and a number of vicars of Battersea joined the lodge. The school was closed in 1986, but the masonic lodge, although now open to all, remains very conscious of its connection with the school, and thus plays an important part in preserving the memory of this important Battersea institution. Similarly, another local grammar school, Emanuel, formed a lodge for old boys in 1933. This lodge was to play an important part in the formation of the Federation of School Lodges in 1947.

Institutional links of this kind seem to have been particularly important in fostering freemasonry in Battersea. These links were not confined to educational bodies. In 1917, Sowest lodge no. 3797 was formed, which met at first in Richmond, then moved to Stanley's. Most of the founders of this lodge worked for the London and South Western Railway. The lodge was active in sponsoring the formation of a number of other lodges in the area before the Second World War. Railway workers were one of the main occupational groups in Battersea, and an important focus of social activity. This link with a masonic lodge is therefore particularly interesting. A recent issue of the newsletter

[230] Thomas Ansell, *A History of Sir Walter St John Lodge of Freemasons No. 2513* (London, 1944);
[231] Ansell, *op. cit.*, p. 6, 8, 11
[232] Ansell, *op. cit.*, p. 21

of the Friendly Societies Research Group drew attention to copies of the *South Western Gazette* in the Public Record Office, which was published in the 1880s and 1890s to support the company's widows and orphans fund. The paper helped campaign for the establishment of the Railway Guards Friendly Society. It would be interesting to establish how far there were links between the activities reported in the *South Western Gazette* and the formation of the Sowest lodge.

The history of these Battersea lodges thus suggests a number of important themes in understanding the history of freemasonry in the Greater London area. Accommodation has been a recurrent issue. The difficulty of finding suitable local facilities encouraged lodges to move into central London, where they often lost their local character. This sense of local identity was frequently more effectively preserved by lodges based on local schools, companies and other institutions. Although the growth of freemasonry may seem unconnected with the radical politics of Battersea before the First World War, there were some interesting overlaps. The development of council services meant more public sector workers, and these local government often became masons. The socialist programme of the Council thus helped foster freemasonry. Both the middle classes and working classes of Battersea shared a common sense of civic patriotism, and a belief that clubs and societies were important in promoting this. Labour historians working on Battersea such as Sean Creighton have vividly described the lively working class club culture of Battersea at this time. Creighton points out how the belief in the importance of sociability and conviviality reached across the class divide, although there were differences over how far leisure should be supported from the rates. Creighton describes the activities of Peter Haythornthwaite, the conservative Mayor of Battersea and staunch member of the Bolingbroke lodge, as a leading light of the Pioneer Cycling Club in Battersea. The overlaps between the membership of clubs such as the Pioneer club and the masonic lodges are important further areas for investigation.

The changes which overtook freemasonry in Battersea after the First World War reflect a complex range of issues: the nature and character of the expansion of masonic membership between 1919 and 1926; the growth of new suburbs; and the continuing question of accommodation. Nevertheless, by 1970 the situation had returned to that of a hundred years previously: no masonic lodges met in Battersea. However, this situation has changed in the past few months. The former premises of Sir Walter St John's School in Battersea High Street have reopened as a private preparatory school. The old school lodge, Old Sinjins, has taken the opportunity to move its meetings to the school. Freemasonry has returned to Battersea.

APPENDIX

PROVISIONAL LIST OF CRAFT LODGES AND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTERS CONNECTED WITH THE BATTERSEA AND WANDSWORTH AREAS OF SOUTH LONDON

The following is a preliminary attempt to list all craft lodges and associated Royal Arch chapters which have either met in or have strong institutional connections with the area which forms the modern London Borough of Wandsworth. As noted, the lack of any London equivalent of a provincial yearbook (apart from the solitary *London Masonic Handbook* published by London Management in 2000), together with the tendency of London lodges to move around the metropolitan area, sometimes even moving into adjoining provinces, makes it difficult to identify lodges connected with particular areas of London. The following list is therefore extremely tentative and should be treated with great caution.

Lodges have been identified from a variety of sources. Up to 1894, Lane's *Masonic Records 1717-1894* makes the identification of lodges from a particular place very straightforward. However, without the aid of a continuation of Lane the tracing of London lodges formed after 1894 is extremely difficult. The lists of lodges in the various editions of the *Masonic Yearbook* and the warrant books held in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry provide the main source, but frequently lodges can only be identified as connected with an area of London if they have distinctive local names. It is certain that the following list omits some important lodges.

Details of the meeting places of lodges formed after 1894 have been derived from lodge histories, the lodge subject files held by the Library and Museum of Freemasonry and the *Masonic Yearbook*. The latest edition of the Directory of Lodges and Chapters in the *Masonic Yearbook* is 2000, so it is possible that some lodges may have changed their meeting place since 2000. There are frequently discrepancies between Lane, the *Masonic Yearbook* and lodge histories as to the exact year in which meeting places were changed. These can only be resolved by reference to the relevant lodge records, and it has not been possible to check all these discrepancies, so again dates for meeting places should be treated with caution.

Lodge histories held by the Library and Museum of Freemasonry are noted, but no attempt has been made to record histories of Royal Arch chapters. In some cases, lodges of instruction are still held in Battersea and Wandsworth even when the lodge itself has moved outside the area. No attempt has been made to record these. The identification of lodges, etc., associated with additional degrees raises a separate and even more

complex set of issues, and no attempt has been made to itemise these bodies here.

Lodge at the King's Arms, Wandsworth

A lodge was warranted by the Premier Grand Lodge to meet on 30 March 1723 at the Queens' Head, Great Queen Street, London. This moved the Turks' Head, South Street, Wandsworth, in 1753, and to the King's Arms in the High Street, Wandsworth, in 1757. It was erased on 20 November 1782, and restored 13 February 1788. It was finally erased again on 3 March 1830. Numbering as follows: 1729: 14; 1740: 13; 1755: 11; 1770: 11; 1780: 11; 1781: 11; 1792: 11; 1814: 21

Britannic Lodge No. 33 (named in 1774)

Warranted by the Premier Grand Lodge on 17 July 1730. Met at Rainbow Coffee House, York Buildings, London, from 1730-1739, then at Gun, Suffolk Street to 1746. In 1746, moved to the Bowling Green, Putney, then in 1758, to the Castle, Putney. In 1765, moved to the White Lion, Putney, 1765. Erased 23 April 1773, but reinstated soon afterwards. Met at the Thatched House Tavern, Pall Mall, from 1774, and thereafter has met in central London area. Numbering as follows: 1729: 75; 1740: 62; 1755: 37; 1770: 33; 1780: 29; 1781: 29; 1792: 27; 1814: 42; 1832: 38.

Wandsworth Lodge

A warrant was authorised on 9 July 1849 for a lodge to meet at the Spread Eagle Inn in Wandsworth, to be numbered 825, but the warrant never seems to have been issued and the lodge was erased in 1852.

Panmure Lodge No. 720

Warrant 2 October 1857; consecrated 30 November 1857. Numbered 1022 according to 1832 numeration; renumbered 720 in 1863. Sponsored by Domatic Lodge No. 177 and Lodge of United Pilgrims No. 507

Meeting places:
Swan Tavern, Clapham Road, Stockwell, 1857-1862
Loughborough Hotel, Loughborough Park, 1862-1867
Balham Hotel, Chestnut Grove, Balham, 1867-1909
Waldorf Hotel, Aldwych, 1909-1920
Holborn Restaurant, 1920-1922
Hotel Cecil, Strand, 1922-1930
Frascati's Restaurant, 1930-1935
Freemasons' Hall, 1935-1993
Duke of York's Barracks, King's Road, Chelsea, 1993 to date

Mother lodge of Crystal Palace Lodge No. 742, Macdonald Lodge No. 1216, Royal Arthur Lodge No. 1360, Old England Lodge No. 1790, Veritas Lodge No. 4983

Preston Lodge No. 766 (renamed William Preston Lodge, 1867)

Warrant: 14 December 1858; consecrated 22 January 1859. Numbered 1068 under 1832 numeration; renumbered 766 in 1863. Sponsored by Beadon Lodge No. 619

Meeting places:
Star and Garter Hotel, Lower Richmond Road, Putney, 1859-1868
Clarendon Hotel, Anerley, 1868-1871
City Terminus Hotel, Cannon Street 1871-1940
Freemasons' Hall, 1940-1950
Charing Cross Hotel, 1950-1980
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1980 to date

Royal Arch chapter consecrated 21 March 1874.

Edward Newton, *History of the William Preston Lodge No. 766 (1859-1959)* (London, 1959)

Wandsworth Lodge No. 1044

Warrant issued 9 Dec. 1864. Consecrated 3 May 1865 at the Freemasons' Hotel, Wandsworth Common. Sponsored by St Luke's Lodge No. 144.

Meeting places:
Freemasons' Hotel, Wandsworth Common, 1865-1870 (unauthorised meetings held at the Spread Eagle, Wandsworth, 1868)
The Spread Eagle, Wandsworth, 1870-1879
The Lecture Hall, Wesleyan Chapel, St John's Hill, 1879-1880
East Hill Hotel, Alma Road, 1880-1882 (Lane gives 1883)
Town Hall, Wandsworth, 1882-1889
East Hill Hotel, Alma Road, 1889-1895
Municipal Buildings, Lavender Hill, 1895-1902
Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1902-1908
Criterion Restaurant, Piccadilly, 1908-1921
Hotel Cecil, Strand, 1921-1931
Northumberland Rooms, Northumberland Avenue, 1931-1935
Freemasons' Hall, 1935 to date

Mother lodge of Wandle Lodge No. 2699 and Valentia Lodge No. 3097 ('a lodge primarily for candidates and joining brethren who had some connection with Oxfordshire')

A Royal Arch chapter attached to the lodge was consecrated in 1880. It was known as the Mid-Surrey Chapter, and met at Camberwell (presumably at the Surrey Masonic Hall). The chapter ceased to work in 1886, and was erased in 1895.

G. F. Pulleyn, *Wandsworth Lodge No. 1044: History of the Lodge*, 2nd ed., with additions by A. E. A. Prowting (n.p.p., [1965])

Earl Spencer Lodge No. 1420

Warrant issued 2 Nov. 1872; consecrated 31 May 1872. Sponsored by Crystal Palace Lodge No. 742.

Meeting places:
Freemasons' Hotel, Wandsworth Common, 1872-1874
Northcote Hotel, Battersea Rise, 1874-1876
Swan Hotel, Battersea Bridge Road, 1876-1881
Craven Hotel, Lavender Hill, 1881-1886
Albert Palace, 1886-1888
Rock Tavern, Battersea Park Road, 1888-1889
White Lion Hotel, High Street Putney, 1889-1894
Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Gardens, 1894-1910
Criterion Restaurant, Picadilly, 1910-1926
Prince's Piccadilly, 1926-1931
Holborn Restaurant, 1931-1935
Freemasons' Hall, 1935 to date

Mother lodge of Shaftesbury Lodge No. 1527 (warrant cancelled), Putney Lodge No. 2766, and Old Fraternity Lodge No. 3547

Royal Arch chapter consecrated in 1916

John Monk, *The History of Earl Spencer Lodge No. 1420 1873-1973* (n.p.p., n.d.)

Mount Edgcumbe Lodge No. 1446

Warrant issued 5 July 1873; consecrated 13 September 1873. Sponsored by Macdonald Lodge No.1216.

Meeting places:
Swan Tavern, Battersea Bridge Road, 1873-1881 (the building pictured in W. J. B. Rowe, *Mount Edgcumbe Lodge No. 1446 1873-1973*, is The Old Swan in Battersea Church Road. The Swan Tavern was apparently immediately to the south of Battersea Bridge, and was demolished when the new bridge was built)
Bridge House Hotel, London Bridge, 1881-1897
Holborn Restaurant, Holborn, 1894-1954
Cafe Monico, 1954-1959
Cafe Royal, 1959-1967
Angus Steak House, Aldwych, 1967-1980
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1980 to date

Royal Arch chapter consecrated 23 June 1885.

Mother lodge of Crest of Mount Edgcumbe Lodge No. 7431.

W. J. B. Rowe, *Mount Edgcumbe Lodge No. 1445: 1873-1973* (n.p.p., n.d.)

Shaftesbury Lodge No. 1527

Sponsored by Earl Spencer Lodge No.1420

Warrant was issued 26 December 1874. Intended to meet in the Shaftesbury Hall, Shaftesbury Park Estate. Following arrest of John Baxter Langley, the moving force behind the establishment of the lodge, the warrant was cancelled by the Pro Grand Master. The lodge was never constituted, and was erased on 28 August 1877.

Royal Commemoration Lodge No. 1585

Warrant issued 8 December 1875; consecrated 21 March 1875. Sponsored by Royal Arthur Lodge No. 1360 and Mount Edgcumbe Lodge No. 1446.

Meeting places:
Star and Garter Hotel, Lower Richmond Road, Putney, 1876-1878
Fox and Hounds Hotel, Upper Richmond Road, Putney, 1878-1890
White Lion Hotel, High Street, Putney from 1890-1900
Holborn Restaurant, Holborn, 1900-1954
Oxford Street Corner House, Oxford Street, 1954-1967
National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, 1967-1974
Royal Commonwealth Society from 1974-1981
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1981 to date

Royal Arch chapter consecrated 3 June 1922

Mother lodge of Column Lodge No. 5284, and Star of Friendship Lodge No. 6496

F. C. Baker, *Royal Commemoration Lodge No. 1585, Centenary History 1876-1976* (n.p.p., n.d.)

Clapham Lodge No. 1818

Consecrated 24 June 1879. Sponsored by the Royal Leopold Lodge No. 1669.

Meeting places:
Alexandra Hotel, Clapham Common, 1879-1880
Criterion Hotel 1880-1934
Freemasons' Hall, 1934 to date

Duke of Albany Lodge No. 1963

Warrant 8 March 1882; consecrated 4 May 1882. Sponsored by Crichton Lodge No. 1641.

Meeting places:
Masonic Hall, Shaftesbury Park Estate, 1882-1885
Albert Palace, 1885-1888
Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New Road, Camberwell, 1888-1912
Frascati's Restaurant, 1912-1942
Freemasons' Hall, 1942-1995
Mark Masons' Hall, 1995 to date

Mother lodge of Lodge of Remembrance No. 4895, Pillar Lodge No. 5484, and Dextras Dare Lodge No. 7054

Wilfred J. Wickham and E. John Stannard, *History of the Duke of Albany Lodge No. 1963* (n.p.p., 1982)

Argonauts Lodge No. 2243

Warrant 6 January 1888; consecrated 12 March 1888. Sponsored by Tuscan Lodge No. 14. According to the petition, 'The Lodge is being started by amateur oarsmen belonging to various clubs on the Thames, the principal part being taken by the London Rowing Club, which is Head of the River, and the Thames Rowing Club which comes next, Bro. Monteuuis, a well-known oarsman of the London Rowing Club being the first W.M.'. Its membership was still in 1988 restricted to members of rowing clubs.

Meeting places:
Cromwell Hall, Putney Bridge Road, 1888-1893
Putney Constitutional Club, 1893-1898
Frascati Restaurant, Oxford Street, 1898-1903
Imperial Restaurant, Regent Street, 1903-1926 ('in pursuit of the Manager, Mr. A. Oddenino, in the well-founded conviction that in catering terms his was a star to be followed..')
Royal Adelaide Galleries, King William Street, 1926-1935
Cafe Royal, Regent Street, 1935-1940
10 Duke Street, St James/Cafe Royal (alternating), 1940-1942
Freemasons' Hall / Holborn Restaurant (alternating), 1942-1945
Cafe Royal, Regent Street, 1946-1969
Lloyd's Library, 3 and 4 Lime Street, 1969-1975
Old Committee Room, Lloyd's, Leadenhall Street, 1975-1979
Freemasons' Hall, 1979-1980
The City of London Club, 19 Broad Street, 1980-1992
Kingsley Hotel (now Thistle Bloomsbury Hotel), Bloomsbury Way, 1992 to date

Mother lodge of Windmill Lodge No. 6547 (a golfing lodge) and Remigium Lodge No. 7343 (another rowing lodge).

[Dacre Simpson Harvey], *The Argonauts Lodge No. 2243 1888-1988* (London, 1988)

Bolingbroke Lodge No. 2417

Warrant 5 November 1891; consecrated: 6 January 1892. Sponsored by Duke of Fife Lodge No. 2345.

Meeting places:
Stanley Hall, Cairns Road, Northcote Road, 1891-1892
St Mark's School, Battersea Rise, 1892-1894
Municipal Buildings, Lavender Hill, 1894-1905

Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1905-1942
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1947-1970
4 Whitehall Court 1970-1971
Clarendon Restaurant, Hammersmith Broadway,1971-1980
Freemasons' Hall, 1980 to date

A Royal Arch Chapter is attached to the lodge

Mother lodge of St Michael Le Querne Lodge No. 2697, Lodge of Affinity No. 4164, Macaulay Lodge No. 5010, and Bucklebury Lodge No. 8129

Sir Walter St John Lodge No. 2513

Consecrated 28 June 1894. Sponsored by Crichton Lodge No. 1641.

Meeting places:
Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New Road, Camberwell, 1894-1898
Holborn Restaurant, 1898-1955
Wingfield House, Stockwell, 1955-1980
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1980 to date

Royal Arch chapter consecrated 30 September 1944

Mother lodge of Old Sinjins lodge No. 3232

Thomas Ansell, *A History of Sir Walter St John Lodge of Freemasons No. 2513* (London, 1944); E. C. B. Doe, *A Short History of the Sir Walter St John Lodge* (n.p.p.; 1994).

Wandle Lodge No. 2699

Consecrated 21 March 1898. Sponsored by the Wandsworth Lodge No. 1044.

Meeting places:
Wandsworth Town Hall, 1898-1904
Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1904-1939
Freemasons' Hall, 1939 to date

Royal Arch chapter consecrated 26 April 1909, which also met at Stanley's Restaurant.

Mother lodge of Sowest Lodge No. 3797, Southfields Lodge No. 4588, Prolate Lodge No. 5029, Graveney Lodge No. 5285 and Temple Porchway Lodge No. 7209.

G. H. Rixson, *The Wandle Lodge No. 2699: Jubilee Year 1948...History* (n.p., [1948]

Putney Lodge No. 2766

Consecrated 21 July 1899. Sponsored by Earl Spencer Lodge No. 1420.

Meeting places:
Parish Offices, Putney, 1899-1901
Winchester House, Lower Richmond Road, 1901-1976
Hurlingham Club, 1976-1991
Cole Court Masonic Centre, Twickenham, 1991 to date.
On moving to Cole Court, the lodge joined the Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex.

Mother lodge of Wandsworth Borough Council Lodge No. 2979, Fairfax Lodge No. 3014, South West Polytechnic Lodge No. 3680, Think and Thank Lodge No. 4112, East Sheen Lodge No. 4173, and Putney Bridge Lodge No. 6686

A Royal Arch chapter attached to the lodge was granted a charter in August 1902 and consecrated in October 1902. However, the lodge is not shown as possessing a Royal Arch chapter in the 2000 *Directory of Lodges and Chapters*.

Allan Beaver, *Middlesex Matters, A History of Middlesex Freemasonry in celebration of the 125th anniversary of the founding of the province on 22nd January 1870* (Addlestone: Ian Allan, 1995), pp. 292-293

The Putney Lodge No. 2766...1899-1974 (n.p.p., 1974).

Wandsworth Borough Council Lodge No. 2979

Consecrated 24 Sept 1903. Sponsored by Putney Lodge No. 2766.

Meeting places:
Trocadero, 1903-1922
Hotel Cecil, Strand, 1922-1931
Hotel Rembrandt, Thurloe Place, South Kensington, 1930-1956
Kensington Palace Hotel, De Vere Gardens, Kensington, 1956-1971
Dominions Hotel (afterwards Lancaster Gate Hotel), Lancaster Gate, 1971-1975
Wessex House, St John's Hill, 1975-1981
Winchester House, Lower Richmond Road, Putney, 1981-1983
South East London Masonic Hall, Penge, 1983 to date

Mother lodge of Lodge of St Mary Balham No. 3661, Wandsworthians Lodge No. 5365, Clapham Park Lodge No. 5446, Wandle Park Lodge No. 5508, Earlsfield Lodge No. 5745, and Balham Park Lodge No. 6955

Fairfax Lodge No. 3014

Consecrated 4 March 1904. Sponsored by Putney Lodge No. 2766.

Meeting Places:
The Railway Hotel, Putney, 1903-1918
The Clarendon Hotel, Hammersmith,1918-1979

Richmond Hill Hotel, Richmond, 1979-1991
West London Masonic Centre, Churchfield Road, West Ealing, 1991 to date

A Royal Arch Chapter attached to the lodge.

Fairfax Lodge No. 3014: Jubilee 1904-1954 (n.p.p., n.d.)

Lavender Hill Lodge No. 3191

Consecrated 29 November 1906. Sponsored by Burgoyne Lodge No. 902.

Meeting places:

Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1906-1938
Freemasons' Hall, 1938 to date

Royal Arch chapter consecrated on 18 May 1923

Mother lodge of Continuity Lodge No. 4651 and United Friendship Lodge No. 5746

Old Sinjins Lodge No. 3232

Consecrated 29 April 1907. Sponsored by Sir Walter St John Lodge No. 2513.

Meeting places:
Gaiety Restaurant, Strand, 1907-1911
Pagani's Restaurant, Strand, 1911-1941
Freemasons' Hall, 1941-1995
Duke of York's Headquarters, King's Road, 1995-2002
Former premises of Sir Walter St John's Grammar School, Battersea High Street, 2002

J. G. Taylor, *A Short History of the Old Sinjins Lodge (No. 3232)* (Chelsea: George White, 1935); John F. Nichols, *Notes on the History of the Old Sinjins Lodge No. 3232,* (Battersea: E. C. Freeman, 1957)

Balham Lodge No. 3388

Consecrated on 5 October 1909.

Meeting places:
Balham Hotel, Balham, 1909-1936
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1936-1970
Clarendon Restaurant, Hammersmith Broadway, 1970-1979
Coburg Hotel, 129 Bayswater Road, 1979-1981
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1981-1982
National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, 1982-1986
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1986-1993
Park Court Hotel, Lancaster Gate, 1993-1995
Masonic Hall, Oakfield Road, West Croydon, 1995 to date. On moving to Croydon, the lodge transferred to the Province of Surrey.

A Royal Arch chapter attached to this lodge was consecrated on 27 September 1944. In 1978, the chapter transferred to the Province of Surrey, but since Balham Lodge was not at that time willing to make a similar transfer the chapter was attached to the Streatham Vale Lodge No. 5623.

Lodge of St Mary Balham No. 3661

Warrant 14 April 1913; consecrated 10 June 1913. 'The lodge takes its name from the Parish Church of St Mary Balham, and its foundation arose from a conversation between a few members of the Church, while engaged in some special parish work'. Sponsored by Wandsworth Borough Council Lodge No. 2979.

Meeting place: Freemasons' Hall, 1913 to date

Royal Arch chapter attached to the lodge.

Mother lodge of Streatham Hill Lodge No. 3784 and Tooting Bec Lodge No. 6837

[D. Bryant], *Lodge of St Mary Balham 3661, 1913-1934* (n.p.p., n.d.]

Sowest Lodge No. 3797

Consecrated 27 September 1917 at Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street. Sponsored by Wandle Lodge No. 2699.

Meeting places:
Greyhound Hotel, Richmond, 1917-1919
Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1919-1940
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1940-1992
Cole Court Masonic Centre, Twickenham, 1992-1999
South East London Masonic Centre, Penge, 1999 to date

A Royal Arch chapter was consecrated on 24 February 1921, and also met at the Ardington Rooms. Subsequently moved to Gardners Restaurant, London Bridge, Tolaini's Restaurant, Wardour Street, and the Star and Garter, Kew Bridge. Following a serious fire, moved to Cole Court Masonic Centre, Twickenham. This required the chapter to become a Middlesex chapter, so chapter became attached to Victory Lodge No. 6191, a daughter lodge of Sowest lodge.

Mother lodge of Wilberforce Lodge No. 5186 and Victory Lodge No. 6191

Beaver, *op. cit.,* p. 338
Sowest Lodge No. 3797: Short History of the Lodge 1917-1967 [included in brochure for Jubilee Meeting, 29th September 1967]
Sowest Lodge No. 3797 75th Anniversary 1917-1992 (Twickenham, 1992)

Southfields Lodge No. 4588

Consecrated 30 November 1923. Sponsored by Wandle Lodge No. 2699.

Meeting places:
Park Tavern, Merton Road, Southfields, 1923-1929
Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1929-1942
Freemasons' Hall, 1942 to date

Continuity Lodge No. 4651

Consecrated 3 November 1924. Developed from the Second Lodge of Instruction of Sowest Lodge No. 3797, but sponsored by Lavender Hill Lodge No. 3191.

Meeting places:
Stanleys Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1924-1936
Freemasons' Hall, 1936-1990
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1990-1992
Corvino's Restaurant, Beaufort House, Middlesex Street, 1992 to date

Mother lodge of Perpetuua Lodge No. No. 7246. In 1990 Continuity and Perpetua Lodge merged to form Continuity and Perpetua Lodge No. 4651.

M. H. S. Bradish, *Continuity and Perpetua Lodge No. 4651 1924-1999* (London, 1999)

Prolate Lodge No. 5029

Consecrated 12 October 1928. Sponsored by Wandle Lodge

Meeting places:
Cafe Royal, Regent Street, 1928-1980
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1980 to date

Wilberforce Lodge No. 5186

Consecrated 13 October 1930. Sponsored by Sowest Lodge No. 3797. All records of this lodge prior to 1950 have been lost.

Meeting places:
Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1930-1938
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1938-1970
Royal Angus Hotel, 39 Coventry Street, 1970-1975
Coburg Hotel, 129 Bayswater Road, Bayswater, 1975-1980
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1980 to date

Royal Arch chapter consecrated 19 May 1949

Mother lodge of Broomwood Lodge No. 6060

Graveney Lodge No. 5285

Consecrated 21 May 1931. Sponsored by Wandle Lodge No. 2699.

Meeting Places:
Rembrandt Hotel, Thurloe Place, South Kensington, 1931-1933
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1933-1978
Clarendon Restaurant, Hammersmith, 1978-1980
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1980
Masonic Hall, Staines, 1980 to date. On moving to Staines, the lodge joined the Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex.

Beaver, *op. cit.,* p. 318

Wandsworthians Lodge No. 5365

Consecrated 15 July 1932. Sponsored by Wandsworth Borough Council Lodge No. 2979.

Meeting Places:
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1932-1968
Wimbledon Hill Hotel, Wimbledon, 1968-1976
Wessex House, St John's Hill, 1976-1993
Masonic Hall, Grove Road, Sutton, 1993-1999. On moving to Sutton, the lodge joined the Provincial Grand Lodge of Surrey.
Stoneleigh Inn, Stoneleigh, Surrey, 1999 to date

Royal Arch chapter formed in 1948

Mother lodge of Lumen Lodge No. 5786 and Piscator Lodge No. 7557 .

[D. C. Ferne], *A History of the Wandsworthians Lodge No. 5365* (n.p., [1982])

Old Emanuel Lodge No. 5399

Consecrated 6 March 1933. Sponsored by the Westminster City School Lodge No. 4305.

Meeting places:
Hotel Rembrandt, Thurloe Place, South Kensington, 1933-1951
Stanley's Masonic Hall, Lavender Hill, 1951-1954
Fleming's Restaurant, Oxford Street, 1954-1955
Bridge House Restaurant, 1955-1957
Star and Garter Hotel, Richmond, 1957-1972
Wessex Hotel Clapham Junction 1972-1979
Mark Masons' Hall, St James', 1979-1983
Freemasons' Hall 1983-1998
Park Court Hotel, Lancaster Gate, 1998-1999
Blakemore Hotel, 30 Leinster Gardens, 1999 to date

J. N. Cook, *Old Emanuel Lodge No. 5399: Fifty Years On - Research and Recollections* (n.p.p., 1986)

Clapham Park Lodge No. 5446

Warrant 6 December 1933. Consecrated 31 January 1934. Sponsored by Wandsworth Borough Council Lodge No. 2979.

Meeting places:
Carpenters Restaurant, Clapham, 1932-1949
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1949-1968
The Dog and Fox Hotel, Wimbledon, 1968-1973
The Wessex Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1973-1980
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1980-1992
Cole Court Masonic Centre, Twickenham, 1992 to date.
On moving to Twickenham, the lodge joined the Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex.

Royal Arch chapter consecrated in 1938.

Beaver, *op. cit.,* p. 320; *Clapham Park Lodge No. 5446: Golden Jubilee 1934-1984* (n.p.p., 1984)

Wandle Park Lodge No. 5508

Warrant 7 November 1934; consecrated at Freemasons' Hall 17 December 1934. Sponsored by Wandsworth Borough Council Lodge No. 2979.

Meeting places:
Cafe Monico, Shaftesbury Avenue, 1934-1942
Freemasons' Hall, 1942 to date

Wandle Park Lodge No. 5508: Installation Meeting and 50th Anniversary (n.p., [1985]).

Earlsfield Lodge No. 5745

Consecrated 1938. Sponsored by the Wandsworth Borough Council Lodge No. 2079.

Meeting places:
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1938-1969
Royal Angus Hotel, 39 Coventry Street, 1969-1972
Angus Steak House, 74 Regent Street, 1972-1978
Wessex House, St John's Hill, Clapham Junction, 1978-1980
National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, 1980-1982
Freemasons' Hall, 1982 to date

United Friendship Lodge No. 5746

Consecrated 1 June 1938. Sponsored by Lavender Hill Lodge No. 3191.

Meeting places:
Stanley's Restaurant, Lavender Hill, 1938-1945
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1945-1969
Fountain Hotel, Garratt Lane, 1969-1973
Cole Court Masonic Centre, Twickenham, 1973 to date.
On moving to Cole Court, the lodge joined Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex.

When Wilberforce Chapter No. 5186 (attached to Wilberforce Lodge No. 5186 and consecrated in 1949) moved to Cole Court in 1991, it was necessary that it should become attached to a Middlesex lodge. The chapter had previously had close relations with United Friendship Lodge, so became United Friendship Chapter.

Mother lodge of United Continuity Lodge No. 7096

Beaver, *op. cit.*, pp. 325-6

Broomwood Lodge No. 6060

Consecrated 1945. Sponsored by Wilberforce Lodge No. 5186.

Meeting places:
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1946-1970
Great Western Royal Hotel, Paddington, 1970-1982
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1982 to date

Victory Lodge No. 6191

Consecrated 7 January 1946. Sponsored by Sowest Lodge No. 3797.

Meeting places:
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1945-1959
Oxford Corner House, 14 Oxford Street, 1959-1966
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1966-1970
Cole Court Masonic Centre, Twickenham, Middlesex, 1970 to date. On moving to Cole Court, the lodge transferred to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex.

A Royal Arch Chapter is attached to this lodge.

Beaver, *op. cit.*, p. 338

Wendlesworth Lodge No. 6640

Consecrated 4 June 1948. Sponsored by Prolate Lodge no. 5029

Meeting places:
Piccadilly Hotel, Piccadilly, 1948-1982
St Olave's Hall, Hart Street, London, 1982-1986
London Masonic Centre, Clerkenwell, 1986 to date

Putney Bridge Lodge No. 6686

Consecrated 13 September 1948. Sponsored by Putney Lodge No. 2766

Meeting places:
Winchester House, Lower Richmond Road, 1948-1982
Star and Garter Hotel, Kew Bridge, 1982-1985
Park Royal Hotel, Western Avenue, 1985-1987
West London Masonic Centre, Churchfield Road, Ealing, 1987 to date

Balham Park Lodge No. 6955

Consecrated 4 April 1950. Sponsored by Wandsworth Borough Council Lodge No. 2979.

Meeting places:
Ardington Rooms, Clapham Junction, 1950-1970
National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, 1970-1985
Wessex House, St Johns Hill, 1985-1987
South East London Masonic Centre, Penge, 1987 to date

A Body without a Soul? The Philosophical Outlook of British Freemasonry 1700-2000

Paper given at conferences organised by the Free University of Brussels, Cornerstone Society and Canonbury Masonic Research Centre, November-December 2003

Let me start by showing you a short newsreel film. It shows the Provincial Grand Master of Kent, Lord Cornwallis, laying the foundation stone of a new church in the Kentish town of Birchington-on-Sea on 31 October 1932.

Film of laying of foundation stone of church at Birchington-on-Sea 31 October 1932. A low resolution copy of this clip can be downloaded at:

http://www.britishpathe.com/product_display.cfm?searchfilm=freemasons+kent

Masonic ceremonies for the laying of the foundation stones of public buildings were commonplace in Britain up to the Second World War. These included not only churches, but also railway stations, bridges, docks, hospitals, schools and even a Turkish bath. However,