



GRAND COUNCIL OF KNIGHT MASONS



1923 - 1998

NOTABLE EVENTS

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FOREWORD

Two previous histories have been published. One on the 25th Anniversary of the Constitution of The Grand Council of Knight Masons and the other in 1977. This is a shorter history, which contains notable events and also brings our history up to date, with particular emphasis on the 75th Anniversary of the Constitution of Grand Council which took place in 1998.

The research and preparation for the publication has been carried out by R.E. Sir Kt. Michael J. Ward, the Provincial Grand Superintendent for Leinster, with the assistance of R.E. Sir Kt. Bernard V. A. Woods, Grand Scribe. They have both given hours of their time, without which, this valuable work could not have been written. On behalf of Grand Council, I wish to thank them both.

I commend this work to all members of Knight Masonry.

Arnold J. Cooke
Most Excellent Great Chief

The Grand Council of Knight Masons 1923 - 1998

Notable Events

In the first half of the 18th century Masonic ritual experienced a period of rapid evolution in the course of which the Royal Arch became a separate entity from the Craft Degrees taking with it the legends of "Josiah" and "Zerubbabel". For some time the Royal Arch worked both legends and in order to do so duplicate sets of Officers were appointed.

There is a note in John Fowler's handwriting written about 1810 or earlier in which he gives the degrees their correct names of Babylonian Pass (or Red Cross of Daniel) - hence the popular name of Red Cross - Jordan Pass and Royal Order. This also was the opinion of the late Brother J. Gilbert Smyly who was then Grand Secretary General of the Supreme Council 33rd degree and one of the most profound Masonic historians in the country.

How it came about that in the first decade of the 19th Century the Kilwinning Knight Templar Encampment took charge of them and gave them the names of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West, by which they have since been known, would be difficult if not impossible to unravel almost 200 years after the event took place.

The Kilwinning Encampment worked the Red Cross degrees under the names of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West but with the sub-title "commonly called the Red Cross Masons". They retained control of them without let or hindrance until the establishment of the Supreme Grand Encampment in 1836 when control was handed over to the Supreme body.

When the Regulations for Original Chapter of the Rose Croix were drafted it was stated that the French Sword degrees were not known in Ireland. It follows from this that the Councils of Knights of Sword, Knights of East and Knights of East and West which were started about this time must have used the old Irish Red Cross ritual.

One of the Regulations for Original Chapter stated that a candidate for the Rose Croix degrees, besides being a Knight Templar must also have the Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West. It is evident from this that these degrees could not possibly have been the 15th, 16th and 17th of the Ancient and Accepted Rite.

It was made quite clear when the Supreme Grand Encampment published its Constitutions in the following year 1837. The title given to this issue was "Constitutions of the Supreme Grand Encampment of High Knights Templar, Knights of Malta and the preceding degrees of Knights of the Sword, Knights of the East and Knights of the East and West, commonly called Red Cross Masons".

In the rules governing Subordinate Councils and Encampments Rule No. 1 reads:-

"All regular assemblies of Knights Templar and Knights of Malta are called Encampments and all regular assemblies of Knights of the Sword, Knights of the East and Knights of the East and West (commonly called the Red Cross Masons) are called Councils."

During the 87 years that the Templar Order had control of them, our degrees went through a very trying time but it was not until most of those members of Kilwinning Encampment who had been responsible for the taking over of the Red Cross Degrees had passed on, that efforts began to be made to call them the 15th, 16th and 17th degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. However the Knight of the East and West is based on the Book of Ezra (the Irish Working) and not on the Book of Revelation (the Ancient and Accepted Rite working).

Council No. 1 was founded in Cork on the 15th November 1838. The opening Minute reads:-

"The first Council of Ireland of Knights of the Sword, Knights of the East, and Knights of the East and West opened their Chapter for the first time on the evening of Thursday the 15th November 1838. The last recorded minute of this Council is dated 1875.

The first effort to push the degrees out of the Supreme Grand Encampment was made by Archdeacon Mant in 1846 ten years after its establishment. A Committee was appointed to revise the Laws and Brother Fowler was a member of that Committee. What happened can only be surmised but the degrees of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West still remained under the control of the Supreme Grand Encampment.

In the Laws and Constitutions of the Great Priory issued about 1880 Law 66 reads:- "No Preceptory shall confer any degrees other than those recognised by the Great Priory as belonging to the Order of the Temple, viz.: Knight Templar, Knight of Malta, Knight of the Mediterranean Pass, Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West, commonly called Red Cross Masons".

Extracts from a Memorial submitted to the Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master and the Great Priory of the Order of the Temple in Ireland:-

"That the Degrees in question have from time immemorial, so to speak, been intimately associated with and have served as a connecting link between the Royal Arch Degree and those of the High Knights Templar and Knights of Malta as practised in Ireland."

"That the Degrees in question are closely associated with the events connected with the building of the second Temple at Jerusalem and are, therefore, peculiarly Masonic in their Character."

"That the conferring of the Degrees in question as hitherto under the sanction and protection of the Great Priory of the Temple in Ireland, cannot in any sense encroach or trespass upon the prerogative of the Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree of Ireland who exercise control over the various Degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Rite above those of the Three Craft Degrees of Freemasonry, inasmuch as the side Degrees in question are not (as has been erroneously supposed) included in the thirty three Degrees of the last-named Rite."

The Supreme Council referred the matter to the Grand Chapter of Prince Masons and before that body Brother J. Gilbert Smyly who was then Secretary General of the Supreme Council read a short paper on our degrees in the course of which he said:-

“The names of these degrees are confusing and misleading. In the Ancient and Accepted Rite the 15th degree is Knight of the Sword or of the East, the 16th degree Prince of Jerusalem, the 17th degree Knight of the East and West. The names of the degrees commonly called Red Cross were originally The Red Cross of Daniel or the Red Cross of Babylon, the Jordan Pass and the Royal Order: early in the 19th century these names were changed to Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West. This alteration was probably due to a mistaken assumption that they were the same as the 15th, 16th and 17th degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

The early history of Irish Freemasonry is obscure but it is quite certain that early in the 18th century there were ceremonies connected with the building of Solomon's Temple which are now represented by the degrees of Craft Masonry, others with the restoration of the Temple by King Josiah now represented by the Royal Arch, others with the rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubbabel now represented by the Red Cross Degrees and others with the occupation of the Temple by the Knights Templar”.

It has been recorded that as a result of the discussion on the subject the following Notice of Motion was adopted on the 18th January 1934 and approved by the Supreme Council 33rd degree:- “The Grand Chapter of Prince Masons recognises that the degrees of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West as worked by the Grand Council of those degrees have always formed a part of Ancient Irish Masonry”.

In a brochure entitled “The Higher Degrees of Freemasonry” published in 1903, it was stated:-

“In Scotland the degrees of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West are controlled by the Grand Royal Arch Chapter and are known by these names with the sub-title “Red Cross or Babylonish Pass”. It was also pointed out that in order to avoid misunderstanding, the Royal Arch authorities inform the recipients of these degrees that they are not to be confounded with the 15th, 16th and 17th degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

In Scotland they are known as the “Degrees of the Captivity” - “The Release” or Knight of the Sword, “The Restoration” or Knight of the East and “The Rebuilding” or Knight of the East and West.

The coming into being of The Grand Council was in this wise.

A number of Knights Templar, who had received the Knight Masons Degrees, approached Great Priory on the subject of transferring the Degrees of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West to a proposed body who would undertake that these Degrees would be conferred under the Jurisdiction of that body. At a meeting, a Notice of Motion by Very Excellent Sir Knight Gerard Black, G.C.T., “That pursuant to report of Committee, all rights and privileges touching the Red Cross Degrees, which are at present vested in the Great Priory be transferred to a Grand Council for these Degrees.”

In November 1922 the Committee reported to Great Priory their unanimous opinion “That the degrees be not conferred under the Statutes of Great Priory and not being degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite; neither under the Royal Arch nor Supreme Council 33rd Degree, be conferred under ‘A Grand Council of the Red Cross Degrees’, who shall have supreme and uncontrolled charge of them”.

This was carried unanimously.

The newly appointed Grand Council at its first meeting on the 18th June 1923, notified the Great Priory that it was now in a position to take over and exercise those rights and privileges with which they were invested. The first President, actually Most Excellent Great Chief, was Gerard Black, who had been installed in the Degrees on the 9th January, 1901, in Preceptory 245, Commercial, possibly by Sir Knight Gerald Byrne, who was probably the last person to give these Degrees within a Preceptory in Dublin.

The first Grand Scribe was Sir Knight James O'Hara, who also received the Degrees in Preceptory 245. As far as can be traced, Preceptories 245 in Dublin, Sharavogue in Birr and Shaftesbury in Belfast were amongst those few Preceptories who exercised their rights in giving these Degrees. As can be readily imagined, the new Grand Council was faced with a very big task and their first undertaking was to appoint a Committee to draw up and recommend a list of Laws and Constitutions. Another Committee was appointed to collate the various forms of the Antient Irish Ritual. This required much research as these Degrees are from the most Antient Branch of Masonry practised in Ireland and form the highest Masonic Degrees of what was then the Antient Irish Universal Rite.

In the original Constitutions, the Grand Council was stated to have been appointed by the Great Priory of Ireland and was called the Grand Council of the Degrees of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West, and consisted of 21 members, exclusive of the Most Excellent Great Chief, Grand Treasurer and Grand Scribe, who were to hold office for three years, after which seven members were to retire annually, but shall be eligible for re-election. The present titles of Grand Officers were adopted in the newly passed Constitutions, but it is interesting to note that the officers only consisted of the Most Excellent Great Chief, High Priest, Grand Treasurer, Grand Scribe, Grand Senior Knight, Grand Junior Knight and Grand Captain of Guards.

In April, 1924, the Most Excellent Great Chief granted two warrants; to the Great Chief's Council and to Sharavogue Council. The first mention of the application and the issue of a Warrant was at the December Meeting in 1924, when Lurgan was granted one by the Most Excellent Great Chief, as, it was stated, "in urgent circumstances." In similar circumstances a Warrant was issued to Shaftesbury Council, Belfast.

The Grand Council having set the Laws and Constitutions and the Ritual working satisfactorily, then took up the question of clothing and the red sash with crossed swords, apron and sword was approved and came into use. It was also decided that the names of candidates for Subordinate Councils had to be submitted to Grand Council and forwarded one month before a Stated Meeting of Grand Council.

In September, 1925, an application was made and granted for a Council outside Ireland, and a Warrant was issued to Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia; this Warrant was subsequently returned and now hangs in the Grand Council chamber.

For some considerable time, the Grand Council, Great Chief's Council and another Dublin Council, Babylon No. 6, met and transacted their business, including the conferring of Degrees, in the Knights Templar Chapel in Freemasons' Hall, 17 Molesworth Street.

The two Dublin Councils were joined by a third, Persia No. 8, in 1926 and all three held a joint Meeting in 1927, when seven Candidates from Cork received the Degrees, and it was this meeting that established the custom of having a different person in the Chair for each Degree.

The Grand Council, seeing its work increasing and its numbers multiplying, looked around for better accommodation which ultimately resulted in a room at 19 Molesworth Street, being taken over in 1928.

In 1929, it is recorded that a Sir Knight J. H. Hamill was elected as Grand Scribe.

Joseph H. Hamill and his brother George W. were destined to play very important parts in the early days of Grand Council. Both truly loved Knight Masonry and they were the stalwarts of the new body during its first twenty years. After their installations they quickly mastered the Ritual and were responsible for constituting new Councils and conferring many Degrees. Sir Knight Joseph Hamill eventually reached the highest office as Most Excellent Great Chief.

The number of Councils continued to grow and by 1931 the Meetings of Grand Council had to be held in the Prince Masons room; also in this year the honorary rank of Past Grand Senior Knight was created and a Committee of Privileges was appointed; the forerunner of the General Purposes Committee.

By 1932, there were seventeen Councils working. The Order made great progress in Northern Ireland, and to facilitate the work, an office of Provincial Grand Superintendent was created in 1934.

Masonic history was made in September, 1937, when Grand Council Officers visited Washington in the United States of America, for the purpose of constituting three Councils in America.

The Order suffered a great loss in the early part of 1940, with the passing of the first Most Excellent Great Chief, Sir Knight Gerard Black. Sir Knight Edward H. Burne, his Deputy for many years, was elected to fill the vacant office and he appointed Sir Knight Joseph H. Hamill as his Deputy.

The Minutes of Grand Council record that in October, 1941, there took place the dedication of the Grand Council's Standard.

A keen loss to the Order was announced in February, 1943, with the passing of Most Excellent Sir Knight Edward H. Burne. At the December Meeting, in the same year, Sir Knight Joseph H. Hamill was installed and invested as Most Excellent Great Chief, and he appointed Sir Knight W. J. Gillespie as his Deputy.

The formation of a General Purposes Committee was suggested in place of the Committee of Privileges in 1944, and it was formed and passed by Grand Council the following year. Also in 1944 the establishment of Darius Council No. 38 in Dublin met a long felt want as it met in the afternoon and so was more convenient for many Sir Knights.

During the 25th anniversary year, 1948, the Councils meeting in Ireland presented a new chain of office to the Most Excellent Great Chief and it was recorded that the Order was glad of the opportunity to display their great esteem and regard for Most Excellent Sir Knight Joseph H. Hamill.

In the latter part of the following year, Grand Council agreed to support the expense of a Knight Masons window in the new Hall in Londonderry, which will be used by the Maiden City Council No. 34. It was noted that the window had a copy of the Grand Council Standard incorporated in it.

At the December 1949 meeting of Grand Council the Great Chief announced that Knight Masonry had suffered a serious blow in the passing of the Deputy Great Chief, Right Excellent Sir Knight W. J. Gillespie, who had been a tower of strength in Northern Ireland.

Sir Knight Gillespie had received his Degrees in Ulster Cameron Preceptory in 1921 and he was the first Scribe of Ulster Cameron Council No. 4. During the following year, 1950, Right Excellent Sir Knight R. E. Parkinson was appointed Deputy Great Chief.

Also in 1949, a Warrant was issued for a Grand Council of Instruction and the inaugural meeting was held on Friday 8th June 1951. Very Excellent Sir Knight V. N. Gorman was invited to act as Scribe and his appointment was confirmed by Grand Council in February 1952. Towards the end of the same year the following recommendation from the Grand Council of Instruction was approved. "That all members of the Grand Council of Instruction should be styled Very Excellent Sir Knights and entitled to the honours of Grand Rank, including the right to wear the Regalia of Grand Officers." The Great Chief explained that the members of the Grand Council of Instruction would not wear gauntlets, those being reserved for the Grand Officers of Grand Council. At the same meeting the By-Laws of the Grand Council of Instruction were passed by Grand Council.

In December 1951 the Great Chief had the sad duty of announcing the passing of Most Excellent Sir Knight J. Milne Barbour, to whom Grand Council had paid the highest tribute by making him an Honorary Past Great Chief.

An interesting decision is noted in the minutes of the Grand Council meeting in December 1954, "that at future Meetings of Grand Council, the Grand Officers will wear Evening Dress with white gloves, except on such occasions as Grand Council shall meet in the afternoon when dark lounge suits, white linen and white gloves shall be worn."

The enlarged Grand Council chamber was used for the first time when Grand Council met there in February 1956. Before any business was transacted a Ceremony of Dedication took place, after which Grand Council was opened in ample form. Latter in the year we read that Sir Knight James McC. Allen was invested and saluted as Grand Scribe for Instruction.

The Joseph Karmel Benevolent Fund was set up in 1957 when the Great Chief was very pleased to announce that he had received a cheque for £250 from the children of the late Very Excellent Joseph M. Karmel, to be used for Masonic Charity in memory of their father. The Fund was to be devoted to the relief of any Knight Mason requiring help.

The first Trustees of the Fund were Thomas W. Damery, Alfred E. McAfee, George R. Morris and the Great Chief.

An interesting item of history was presented to Grand Council by Right Excellent Sir Knight Greenaway in 1962, when he handed over a framed Certificate, which had been issued to Bro. William Carson in August 1858 certifying that he had been regularly admitted, initiated and registered in the books of the Supreme Grand Encampment of Ireland as a Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West.

A sad note was recorded in the minutes of the June 1964 meeting of Grand Council, when Right Excellent Sir Knight J. H. Keers, acting as Great Chief, referred to the death of our beloved Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Raymond F. Brooke. He paid tribute to him as a man and a Mason, who was also a Knight Mason.

The same meeting also heard of the resignation of the Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight Joseph H. Hamill, and of the Special Meeting of the Grand Council General Purposes Committee, held on 2nd June, at which the nomination of Right Excellent Sir Knight John H. Keers as Great Chief was the only nomination. Right Excellent Sir Knight Keers paid a warm tribute to Most Excellent Sir Knight Hamill for his long service to Grand Council both as Grand Scribe and Great Chief. Right Excellent Sir Knight John Keers was duly elected and then installed as Most Excellent Great Chief. The new Great Chief appointed Right Excellent Sir Knight W. F. Woodworth as Deputy Great Chief.

Within the year the Great Chief had the sad task of announcing with regret the great loss to Knight Masonry in the death of our Great Chief Emeritus, Most Excellent Sir Knight Joseph H. Hamill. He had joined the order in 1925, receiving his Degrees in Babylon Council and later becoming a founder member of Persia Council and its first Scribe. He was elected Grand Scribe in 1929, appointed Deputy Great Chief in 1941 and elected Great Chief in 1943.

In the summer of 1965, a proposal was first made that a Standard should be provided for the Great Chief. A Standard was approved, but it was not until the latter part of 1968 that it was carried into Grand Council for the first time.

In the autumn of the same year, it was reported to Grand Council that the number of Knight Masons in our Councils in the United States of America now exceeded one thousand since the first Council was opened there in 1937.

A year later the Grand Scribe announced that he had had correspondence with the Provincial Grand Superintendent for the United States of America with a view to forming a Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America. Three years later, a report was made to Grand Council that the Concordat for the formation of the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America has been completed and signed on behalf of both Grand Councils and also has the agreement of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland.

Towards the end of 1968, a portrait of the late Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight Joseph Hamill, was presented to Grand Council by the widow of Excellent Sir Knight Orpen; the offer was graciously accepted and the portrait was hung in the Grand Council chamber.

A report was made to Grand Council of the visit undertaken by the Great Chief and the Grand Scribe, early in 1969, to Scotland and the Edinburgh No. 1 Lodge and Council where they saw a demonstration of the Degrees of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East and Knight of the East and West.

It was also noted at this time that King Cyrus and King Darius in the first two Degrees are represented by different persons and never by the Excellent Chief of the Council who presides in the Knight of the East and West Degree.

With the formation of the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America, it was recommended and agreed by Grand Council, in December 1969, that there should be an exchange of Representatives.

The Golden Jubilee meeting of Grand Council took place on Saturday 23rd June 1973 in the Member's Room at the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society's premises in Balmoral, Belfast. The Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Kt. John H. Keers, in his address, gave a brief history of the formation of Grand Council in which he emphasised that the Degrees of Knight Masonry were regarded as a necessary step before proceeding to the Templar Degree. He also said that the decision to form the Grand Council of Knight Masons resulted in the great spread of Knight Masonry not only in Ireland but also in Africa, the United States of America and the Far East. A thanksgiving service was then conducted by the Grand Priest.

Before the Grand Council was closed, the Most Excellent Great Chief asked permission to confer the Honorary rank of Past Grand Senior Knight on Excellent Sir Kt. Dr. John A. Wallace, the Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland.

There were 249 Sir Knights at the Meeting and 204 were present at the luncheon afterwards.

In December 1975 Grand Council approved the creation of the office of 2nd Captain of the Guard.

At the June Meeting of Grand Council in 1976, the Great Chief announced that it gave him the greatest pleasure to announce the appointment of Right Excellent Sir Knight James McC. Allen as Deputy Great Chief. Later in the same year the Great Chief asked permission to confer the honour of Past Grand Senior Knight on Sir Knight Maurice O'Connell, the Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland.

The office of Great Chief's Sword Bearer was approved by Grand Council at its December Meeting in 1977; and at the next Stated Meeting, Very Excellent Sir Knight Harry Blee presented his Officer's Sword to the Great Chief for use in Grand Council, as the Great Chief's Sword.

The Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight John H. Keers, told Grand Council at the June Meeting in 1978, that he would not be going forward for nomination for 1979 due to ill health. At the September meeting the General Purposes Committee recommended Right Excellent Sir Knight James McC. Allen to be the next Great Chief and at the December Meeting he was declared elected.

In February 1979, the Great Chief asked for approval of Grand Council of the honour of Past Grand Senior Knight for Excellent Sir Knight James O. Harte, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland.

The following month at an Occasional Meeting of Grand Council Right Excellent Sir Knight James McC. Allen was installed as Great Chief and he then informed Grand Council that he had appointed Very Excellent Sir Knight James Lutton to be his Deputy.

At Most Excellent Sir Knight James McC. Allen's first meeting as Great Chief, in June 1979, it gave him great sorrow to have to report the death of the immediate Past Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight John H. Keers, who had served the offices of Deputy and Great Chief for 20 years.

At the October Meeting, Excellent Sir Knight Arnold J. Cooke was nominated as Grand Scribe and at the December meeting he was elected and installed to that office.

At the same meeting Right Excellent Sir Knight George Malone tendered his resignation as Provincial Grand Superintendent for Leinster on his appointment as Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland. He was succeeded by Right Excellent Sir Knight Hans Hamilton.

In the autumn of 1982, the Great Chief welcomed the Great Chief of the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America, Most Excellent Sir Knight W. McCracken and, with the approval of Grand Council, conferred on him the honour of Past Grand Senior Knight.

At the meeting of Grand Council in June 1984 the Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight J. McC. Allen, announced that, as he was approaching his 90th year, he would not be going forward for nomination as Great Chief for 1985 and at the following meeting he nominated Right Excellent Sir Knight James Lutton, the Deputy Great Chief, as his successor and this was received with acclamation.

Sir Knight Lutton was formally elected at the December meeting and installed as Great Chief in March 1985. After the installation 209 Sir Knights of whom 59 were Grand Officers dined with the new Great Chief. A year later Right Excellent Sir Knight John C. Magowan was installed as Deputy Great Chief.

It was with great regret that Grand Council learnt, in June 1988, of the death of the Great Chief Emeritus, Most Excellent Sir Knight James McC. Allen.

At this meeting a recommendation was put forward by the General Purposes Committee that consequent on the change to Saturday Meetings and with the increasing number of members attending Grand Council, the October, December and February meetings should be held in the Grand Lodge room rather than the Grand Council chamber. This was agreed and the next October meeting was the first to be held in the larger room and it was well filled.

At the summer meeting in the following year, it was proposed by the Great Chief that the Senior and Junior Knights should be given the title of Right Excellent; this proposal was approved by Grand Council.

At the same meeting the General Purposes Committee recommended that the vacant representation for the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America should be filled by Right Excellent Sir Knight William Orr.

He was presented with his Certificate and Representative's Jewel at the October meeting.

In September 1989, the Great Chief and the Grand Scribe visited the United States of America to hold an Occasional Meeting of Grand Council in Bellevue, Ohio, to constitute a new Council to be called Emerald Council No. 70.

When the Grand Officers for 1990 were being nominated, the Great Chief explained that Right Excellent Sir Knight George Morris did not wish to continue as Grand Treasurer, which office he had served for 28 years and the Deputy Great Chief, Right Excellent Sir Knight John C. Magowan, a Chartered Accountant, was nominated to succeed him. The Grand Scribe, Right Excellent Sir Knight Arnold J. Cooke, was appointed Deputy Great Chief and Excellent Sir Knight Bernard V. A. Woods was nominated to succeed him as Grand Scribe.

At the meeting of Grand Council in February 1990, the Great Chief spoke of the sudden and most unexpected death of Right Excellent Sir Knight George M. Malone, who was also Deputy Grand Master. His death was a great shock to Sir Knights and Brethren throughout the Order.

At a later part of this meeting the Great Chief presented a cut glass bowl, engraved with the insignia of Grand Council, to Right Excellent Sir Knight George R. Morris in recognition of his very long service as Grand Treasurer.

At the meeting of Grand Council in October 1991, the Great Chief spoke of the sad loss to Freemasonry in the passing of Right Excellent Sir Knight Samuel J. Martin, Past Grand Senior Knight and also the Past Most Excellent and Supreme Grand King.

Regrettably at the next meeting of Grand Council the Deputy Great Chief reported that the Great Chief was absent due to a serious illness. Within two months he had to announce the great loss of our beloved Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight James Lutton. He spoke of his distinguished career in Masonry and in Society at large and said that he would be greatly missed as a true friend.

Also at the February 1992 Meeting of Grand Council, the General Purposes Committee reported that due to the very recent death of the Great Chief, it would recommend that the appointment of his successor should be postponed.

This was completed at the October Meeting when the General Purposes Committee recommended that Right Excellent Sir Knight Arnold J. Cooke be elected by Grand Council as the Most Excellent Great Chief. This proposal was greeted with spontaneous and sustained applause.

The new Great Chief was duly obligated and installed in his high office at an Occasional Meeting of Grand Council in January 1993. Later in the year he announced the appointment of Excellent Sir Knight Mervyn W. Morrison to the position of Right Excellent Deputy Great Chief.

The Scribe of the Grand Council General Purposes Committee, Right Excellent Sir Knight John C. Kearon, who was in his 85th year, signified his wish to resign from the post he had held for seventeen years. The Great Chief said that John Kearon had been most helpful to all Sir Knights and a great source of advice and co-operation over the years. A presentation was made to Right Excellent Sir Knight John C. Kearon at the meeting in February 1993. The Grand Scribe, Right Excellent Sir Knight Bernard Woods, was appointed to take over the duties of the Scribe of the General Purposes Committee.

The resignation of Right Excellent Sir Knight William Orr from the post of Grand Scribe for Instruction was announced in June 1993. Tribute was paid to the sterling work he had done for the Grand Council of Instruction over many years and it was said that his encyclopaedic knowledge of Knight Masonry was truly unique. He was succeeded in this post by Very Excellent Sir Knight Ronald R. McNeilly.

At the Meeting of Grand Council in February 1994, a special presentation was made to Right Excellent Sir Knight George R. Morris to mark the appreciation and affection of the entire membership of the Order for the splendid work he had done over thirty-five years as Secretary and Treasurer of The Joseph Karmel Benevolent Fund.

At a later point of this meeting the Leinster Knight Masons Liaison Committee presented the Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight Arnold Cooke, with a framed photograph of the plaque containing his Coat of Arms, which had been erected recently in the Grand Council chamber, to join those of former Great Chiefs.

In November, the Great Chief travelled to Salem, Ohio, to constitute a new Council to be called Killarney Council No. 76, bringing to five the number of Councils in the United States of America which still were warranted to Grand Council.

At the first Meeting in 1995, it was reported that the Great Chief's Conference, had met the previous month, to agree and compile the final draft of the revised Laws and Constitutions for consideration by Grand Council, after they had been distributed to all Councils. At the same meeting the Grand Scribe for Instruction reported that the proposed reprint of the Ritual Book was progressing and should be ready for approval by the Grand Council of Instruction before the final approval of Grand Council.

The Great Chief presented Ode Books for the use of Grand Council as a gesture of thanks for the generous support provided for his recent visit to Ohio.

An Occasional Meeting of Grand Council was opened in ample form in Limerick, in May of the same year, to Constitute and Dedicate a new Council to be called Eden Council No. 73; the first in this area, its nearest neighbours being Sharavogue Council in Birr and Cork Council in the City of Cork. The Deputy Great Chief installed The Provincial Grand Superintendent for Leinster, Right Excellent Sir Knight Michael J. Ward, as the first Excellent Chief.

In October, at the Meeting of Grand Council in Omagh, Co. Tyrone, the Great Chief announced with much regret the passing of Right Excellent Sir Knight George R. Morris, Past Grand Senior Knight, a Trustee and Past Secretary and Treasurer of The Joseph Karmel Benevolent Fund.

At this Meeting the revised Laws and Constitutions and also the Book of Ritual and Ceremonial were approved by Grand Council.

The Grand Scribe reported that agreement had been reached with the Grand Scribe E. of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland to revive the exchange of Representatives. Scotland had proposed the Most Excellent First Grand Principal, the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, as a suitable Grand Representative of the Grand Council of Knight Masons near the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. The General Purposes Committee recommended the Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight Arnold J. Cooke, as a suitable Grand Representative of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland near to the Grand Council of Knight Masons. Grand Council wholeheartedly approved both recommendations.

The members of Victory Council No. 42, Omagh, presented a portrait of the Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight Arnold J. Cooke, and he was delighted to accept it and agreed that it should be hung in the Masonic Hall in Omagh.

A copy of the portrait, presented in Omagh, was also presented to the Great Chief by the Leinster Knight Masons Liaison Committee, in December, to be hung in the Grand Council chamber in Freemasons' Hall, Dublin.

A Knight Mason Jewel for forty years continuous membership was recommended to Grand Council and approved at the meeting in June 1996.

At the meeting in December 1996 the Great Chief warmly welcomed Most Excellent Sir Knight Reese L. Harrison, Jnr., the Great Chief of the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America, and, with the enthusiastic approval of Grand Council, conferred upon him the Honorary Grand Rank of Past Grand Senior Knight.

Towards the end of 1997 a new Grand Priest was elected in the person of Very Excellent Sir Knight Rev. Edwin Hunter, of Cork Council No. 10.

1998 - the Seventy fifth year of Grand Council

Most Excellent Great Chief - Arnold J. Cooke - Seventh Great Chief

The first meeting of the year, in February saw the retirement of Right Excellent Sir Knight J. C. (Jack) Magowan, who had filled the offices of Deputy Great Chief and afterwards Grand Treasurer of Grand Council and Secretary/Treasurer of The Joseph Karmel Benevolent Fund. He was held in great affection and esteem by the members of the Order and the Grand Council was very pleased to be able to make a presentation to him which had been contributed by his many friends.

On the 25th April the Most Excellent Great Chief was pleased to Constitute and Dedicate a new Council at Carnlough in County Antrim, to be called the Glencloy Council No. 47.

The following month a large number of the members of the Order gathered in Armagh for the first major event of the anniversary year.

A Service of Thanksgiving held in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, on Sunday 24th May.

Prior to the service the members of Grand Council led by the Great Chief and the Deputy Great Chief were received by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Armagh, and the Armagh District Council at the Council offices, formerly the palace of the Archbishop of Armagh.

Lunch for the Sir Knights visiting Armagh was organised by St. Patrick's Council No. 24, Armagh, and they were also instrumental in assisting with the arrangements for the service.

The Thanksgiving Service was conducted by the Very Reverend Herbert Cassidy, the Dean of Armagh, who received the Most Excellent Great Chief and Grand Council at the Cathedral and they were escorted to their seats. During the Service the Most Excellent Great Chief formally presented to the Dean a Processional Cross and some furniture, which had been designed with the assistance of the cathedral architect to be placed by the West Door, as a gift from the Grand Council of Knight Masons.

The new Grand Priest, Very Excellent Sir Knight Rev. Edwin Hunter, delivered the sermon.

Amongst those in attendance were the Lord Lieutenant, the Deputy Lord Mayor of Armagh, Right Worshipful Brother K. J. G. Patterson, Assistant Grand Master, Most Worshipful Most Honourable the Marquess of Donegall, Past Grand Master, Most Excellent Companion D. B. Fincher, Grand King, Most Illustrious Brother J. A. Moran, Secretary General of the Supreme Council, together with the Provincial Prior of East Ulster, several District Grand Kings and Provincial Grand Masters.

A Special Meeting of the Grand Council of Knight Masons was held on Saturday 20th June in Belfast at the Balmoral Conference Centre.

Grand Council was pleased to welcome visiting delegations from the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland and from the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America.

Scotland were represented by the First Grand Principal, Most Excellent Companion Right Honourable The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, accompanied by his Grand Scribe E., Right Excellent Companion Grahame J. Smith.

The United States of America were represented by their Great Chief, Most Excellent Sir Knight Thurman C. Pace, accompanied by his Grand Scribe, Right Excellent Sir Knight Douglas L. Jordan and several other Sir Knights.

During the Meeting the Most Excellent Great Chief conferred the honour of Past Grand Senior Knight on Most Excellent Companion Right Honourable The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, Most Excellent Sir Knight Thurman C. Pace and Right Excellent Sir Knight Michael W. Walker, the Grand Secretary of Grand Lodge.

Later in the Meeting the Great Chief of the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America, Thurman C. Pace, created Most Excellent Sir Knight Arnold J. Cooke a Past Most Excellent Great Chief (Honorary) of the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America and then declared the Grand Scribe, Right Excellent Sir Knight Bernard Woods to be a Past Grand Senior Knight (Honorary) of their Grand Council.

The Most Excellent Great Chief also welcomed to the Meeting our Representative of the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America at the Grand Council of Knight Masons, Right Excellent Sir Knight William Orr.

Amongst those present at this Meeting was Very Excellent Sir Knight Archer B. Purvis, an Honorary Past Grand Director of Ceremonies, who later in the year was appointed to the position of Right Excellent Grand Superintendent for the State of Ohio in succession to the late Right Excellent Sir Knight Benjamin J. Frankland.

The Charity Collection which was taken on this occasion was to benefit the Masonic Benevolent Institutions.

A Banquet was held after the Meeting, at which we welcomed our Ladies, and at which the Most Excellent Companion Right Honourable The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine made a presentation to the Most Excellent Great Chief of a silver drinking bowl and also the appropriate spirit with which to fill it.

Most Excellent Sir Knight Arnold J. Cooke then made presentations of Dublin crystal to the First Grand Principal of Scotland and to the Great Chief of the Grand Council of Knight Masons of the United States of America.

The following week a dinner was held in Freemasons' Hall, Dublin, hosted by the Grand Council for our visitors from the United States of America. Before dinner the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Councillor John Stafford, joined the party in the Hall and welcomed our visitors from the United States of America.

Other celebrations were held by Councils in various centres and all involved are to be congratulated on the work and dedication they gave to the many functions during this seventy-fifth anniversary year.

SUMMARY OF COUNCILS

No.	Name	Place	Constituted
	Great Chief's	Dublin	9th April, 1924
1	Sharavogue	Birr	9th April, 1924
2	Shaftesbury	Belfast	31st March, 1926
3	Lurgan	Lurgan	1st January, 1925
4	Ulster-Cameron	Belfast	12th May, 1925
5	Green Isle	Bulawayo	10th October, 1925
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	Steeple	Antrim	31st October, 1981
6	Babylon	Dublin	9th November, 1925
7	Newry	Newry	5th June, 1926
8	Persia	Dublin	27th May, 1926
9	St. Patrick	Salisbury, S. Rhodesia	14th September, 1927
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	Matthew Lynn		
	Memorial	Belfast	30th October, 1982
10	Cork	Cork	6th October, 1927
11	Iveagh	Rathfriland	21st September, 1929
12	St. George's	Arklow	12th October, 1929
13	Media	Dublin	27th February, 1930
14	Urney	Cavan	3rd October, 1931
15	Erne	Enniskillen	28th March, 1931
16	Mourne	Newcastle, Co. Down	17th January, 1931
17	Rosetta	Belfast	16th May, 1931
18	Nineveh	Waterford	12th December, 1931
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	St Columb's	Londonderry	19th October, 1988
19	Westhaye	Belfast	10th September, 1932
20	Portadown	Portadown	22nd February, 1933
21	Bangor	Bangor	17th June, 1933
22	Dungannon	Dungannon	23rd September, 1933
23	Crawfordsburn	Crawfordsburn	9th December, 1933
24	St. Patrick's	Armagh	5th May, 1934
25	Seven Towers	Ballymena	29th September, 1934

No.	Name	Place	Constituted
26	St. Patrick's in America	Monroe, N. Carolina	14th September, 1937
	Warrant returned and re-issued to Shamrock	Johannesburg South Africa	11th May, 1968
27	Shamrock, Thistle & Rose	Raleigh, N. Carolina	14th September, 1937
	Warrant returned and re-issued to Bellevue	Belfast	20th April, 1968
28	Harp, Cross & Eagle	Warrington, N. Carolina	14th September, 1937
	Warrant returned and re-issued to Shannon	Akron, Ohio	10th May 1969
29	Cyrus	Dublin	8th December, 1936
30	Myra Castle	Saintfield	19th November, 1938
31	Mid-Ulster	Portadown	3rd June, 1939
32	Paumanok	Long Island, New York	10th February, 1943
	Warrant returned and re-issued to Whiteabbey	Whiteabbey	28th February, 1970
33	West Down	Banbridge	19th June, 1943
34	Maiden City	Londonderry	25th September, 1943
35	Tandragee	Tandragee	18th September, 1943
36	Hollywood	Hollywood	27th May, 1944
37	Shandon	Cork	1st November, 1944
	Warrant returned and re-issued to Oak	Ballinderry	9th October, 1993
38	Darius	Dublin	9th October, 1944
39	East Belfast	Belfast	27th May, 1944
40	Coleraine	Coleraine	16th September, 1944
41	Moneyrea Union Band	Moneyrea	23rd June, 1945
42	Victory	Omagh	26th October, 1945
43	Roe Valley	Limavady	18th May, 1946
44	Straid	Straid	29th March, 1947
45	Mount Zion Temperance	Belfast	13th June, 1947

No.	Name	Place	Constituted
46	Stewartstown	Dunmurry	8th November, 1947
47	Pearl	Lagos, Nigeria	24th September, 1948
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	Glencloy	Carnlough	25th April, 1998
48	Ards	Newtownards	25th September, 1948
49	St. John's	Donaghadee	20th November, 1948
50	Lord Arthur Hill	Blaris	19th February, 1949
51	Victory	Belfast	28th May, 1949
52	The Glen	Ligoniel	28th May, 1949
53	Britannia	Belfast	28th May, 1949
54	Drogheda 411	Drogheda	15th April, 1950
55	Belfast	Belfast	3rd November, 1950
56	Carrickfergus	Carrickfergus	3rd November, 1951
57	Broomhedge	Lisburn	25th August, 1951
58	Gateway to the West	Pittsburgh	27th June, 1951
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	Zarthan (dormant)	Ndola, Zambia	6th February, 1973
59	Latharna	Larne	25th April, 1953
60	Trinity	Letterkenny	3rd October, 1953
61	Geo. W. Hamill		
	Memorial	Magherafelt	1st May, 1954
62	Kilwinning	Zanesville, Ohio	20th February, 1957
63	Erin	Harrisburg, U.S.A.	11th November, 1957
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	Celtic (dormant)	Lusaka	8th November, 1975
64	West Virginia	Clarksburg	21st February, 1959
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	Buckeye (dormant)	Zanesville, Ohio	1976
65	Carnmoney	Carnmoney	23rd October, 1959
66	Sharon	Belfast	28th March, 1960
67	Hamilton	Hong Kong	21st October, 1960
68	Dalriada	Ballymoney	17th September, 1960
69	Maralin	Maralin	6th May, 1961
70	Kincora	Denver, Colorado	21st October, 1961
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	Emerald	Bellvue, Ohio	14th September, 1989

No.	Name	Place	Constituted
71	Comber	Comber	15th September, 1962
72	Connacht	Sligo	6th April, 1963
73	Maryland	Maryland, U.S.A.	28th August, 1965
	Warrant returned and re-issued to		
	Eden	Limerick	27th May, 1995
74	Natal	Rosburgh, Durban	5th August, 1967
75	The Castle	Clough	6th June, 1992
76	Killarney	Salem, Ohio	18th November, 1994
77	Jubilee	Ballymacarret	25th June, 1977
78	The Thiepval	Broughshane	21st September, 1996
79	John H. Keers		
	Memorial	Killyleagh	27th October, 1979
80	Heart of Down	Spa, Ballynahinch	18th October, 1980