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**NOTES ON IRISH FREEMASONRY
[No. I.]**

**“SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE ON THE LADY
FREEMASON”**

BY

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SENIOR GRAND DEACON, IRELAND.

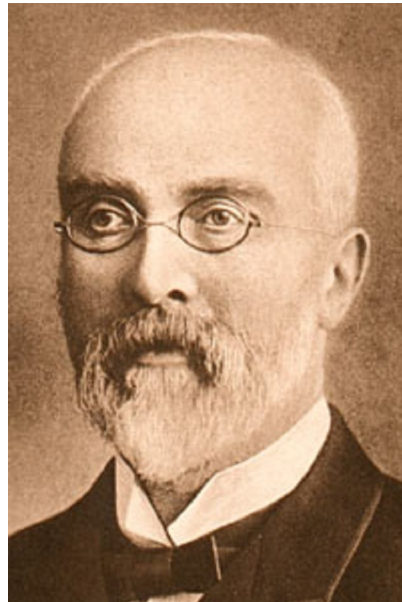
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W.BRO. DR. W.J. CHETWODE CRAWLEY

NOVEMBER 15, 1843 - MARCH 13, 1916

WILLIAM JOHN CHETWODE CRAWLEY, FOR MANY YEARS HEAD MASTER OF THE QUEEN'S SERVICE ACADEMY, DUBLIN, WAS, AFTER A LENGTHY UNIVERSITY CAREER, ELECTED A LIFE MEMBER OF THE SENATE OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN IN 1881. AUTHOR OF VARIOUS TEXTBOOKS AND MANUALS, HE SAT ON THE COUNCIL OF DUBLIN UNIVERSITY, WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE DUBLIN COUNCIL OF TEACHERS' GUILDS AND WAS A MEMBER OF SEVERAL ROYAL SOCIETIES.

COMPILER OF THREE VOLUMES OF *CAEMENTARIA HIBERNICA* (1895, 1896, 1900) AND AUTHOR OF TWENTY-ONE PAPERS PUBLISHED IN *ARS QUATUOR CORONATORUM*, HIS STUDIES INTO THE EARLY HISTORY OF ENGLISH SPEAKING FREEMASONRY HAVE PROVIDED MASONIC STUDENTS WITH A WEALTH OF VALUABLE RESEARCH AND ESTABLISHED HIS REPUTATION AS A LEADING PROPONENT OF WHAT HAS BEEN TERMED THE AUTHENTIC SCHOOL OF MASONIC WRITERS.

**INITIATED : 1873
SCIENTIFIC LODGE No. 250, DUBLIN
WORSHIPFUL MASTER : 1876
TRINITY COLLEGE LODGE No. 357
GRAND SECRETARY : 1880-1893
GRAND LODGE OF INSTRUCTION
GRAND INNER GUARD : 1881
GRAND SWORD BEARER : 1884
GRAND STEWARD : 1887
GRAND TREASURER : 1904 - 1915
*GRAND LODGE OF IRELAND***

NOTES ON IRISH FREEMASONRY.

BY BRO. W. J. CHETWODE CRAWLEY, LL.D.

I.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE ON THE LADY FREEMASON.

UNFORESEEN circumstances precluded me from revising the letter which supplemented Bro. E. Conder's invaluable paper on the Initiation of the Hon. Elizabeth St. Leger, so that the following addition becomes necessary to complete the chain of argument which does away with the possibility of the Initiation having taken place in any of the Regular Lodges named in connection with her story.

Lodges Nos. 95 and 150 have been shown, from our Grand Lodge Records, to be out of the question. There remains Lodge No. 44, to which the initiation is first ascribed in Bro. Spencer's Broad-Sheet, but which, as Bro. Conder implies, has never been a popular candidate for the honour. It was apparently selected as an afterthought, when consideration of the circumstances showed the compiler that the date must be thrown further back than the chronology of the other two Lodges would allow. As far as our Grand Lodge Records go, there is no reason for locating that Lodge at Doneraile.¹ Outside

¹ As will be gathered from page 22, *A.Q.C.*, my statement (*ibid*, page 18,) that there is "no ground for locating this lodge at Doneraile" is to be taken as referring to our Grand Lodge Records. I take this opportunity of similarly amending a quotation from a letter of mine, which Bro. R. F. Gould has done me the honour of incorporating in his monograph on the *Royal Arch Degree*, reprinted from the *Freemason*, 1894. As the quotation stands, it might be held to imply that a Regulation has been recently introduced requiring the First Principal of an Irish R.A. Chapter to be an Actual or Past Master. This is not so; the Regulation is of long standing, and, as far as I am aware, the Grand Chapter of Ireland has always held that none but an Installed Master of a Craft Lodge could be admitted to the chair of First Principal. What I had in mind, when writing to Bro. Gould, was a recent Regulation which imposes Chair Obligations on all three Principals, (not on the First Principal only as previously), and which requires them all to be Actual or Past Masters.

our Registers, however, there are grounds for placing No. 44 there in the early years of the present century, and I propose to show that those very grounds are incompatible with the assumption that the lady was initiated in that Lodge.

The first published account of the tradition, in an authoritative form, is found in the pamphlet that accompanied the famous engraving published in the year 1811. As I was informed by the late Bro. Richard T. Aldworth, of Youghal (a member of the Lady's family), this rare pamphlet was compiled by Bro. Kennedy, who kept an Artist's Warehouse in the Main Street of Cork. He appended a list of subscribers, comprising the names of many well known brethren in the Munster district, notably that of Bro. Millikin, from whom quotations are made in the previous communication.

The point bearing on our present enquiry is that the names of the W.M. and S.W. of "Lodge No. 44, Doneraile," are given prominent positions.

"Rt. Hon. Ld. Doneraile W.M. ... 44.
R.A.S.E.M.¹ of 1.
and Grandson of the Hon.
Mrs. Aldworth."

"Arundel Hill, S.W. ... 44."

Now, the text of the pamphlet to which these brethren subscribed states, in the plainest language, that the initiation took place in Lodge No. 150, and it is inconceivable that they should have permitted such a statement to go forth with their names appended, if they were cognizant of any reason for attributing to their own Lodge the most famous circumstance in the annals of the Munster Fraternity. The improbability is increased, when we remember that this Lord Doneraile, the second Viscount of the second creation, was born in 1755, and must have been in close intercourse with his grandmother, the Hon. Elizabeth Aldworth, for twenty years before her death, and that this Arundel Hill was in his forty-fourth year at the death of his father, the Arundel Hill who was the possible eye-witness of the initiation.² Surely, of all men then alive, these were the two most unlikely to subscribe their names to a statement inconsistent with the claims of Lodge No. 44.

The sequence of the argument lies thus. In 1811, Bro. Kennedy ascribes the initiation to Lodge No. 150, with whose history, or even locality, he is plainly unacquainted; in 1848, Bro. Millikin, recognizing, as a Dublin Freemason, that the claim of the Dublin Lodge No. 150 is untenable, ascribes it to the Munster Lodge No. 95; in 1860, or thereabouts, Bro. Spencer's compiler, realising the difficulties of chronology and locality, ascribes it to the extinct Lodge No. 44. In each case, as knowledge increased, the date is put back; in each case I have shown that the claim cannot be supported. The inconsistency of all the claims put forward on behalf of Regular Lodges goes to prove that the initiation took place in a non-Regular Lodge of the very early type.

Such are the considerations which led me to place the initiation in the epoch before Grand Lodge. It will be observed that the argument is wholly independent of the information which the researches of Bro. E. Conder have brought to light, and without which it would have led merely to a debatable conclusion. That the same conclusion has been reached by two distinct lines of deduction is the best proof of its validity.

Our reasons for thus elaborating the point are to be found, not in the settlement of the Lady's initiation, curious and interesting as that is, but in the fact, so lucidly set forth in Bro. G. W. Speth's remarks³, that it establishes the existence in Ireland of a Speculative Lodge analogous to those at Warrington and in London, at a time when, before Bro. Conder's investigation, we could only suspect that Freemasonry of this type was practised amongst us. I cannot help harbouring a suspicion that there were two other such Lodges in Ireland in the days before Grand Lodge, one at the Eagle Tavern in Dublin, under the auspices of the Earl of Rosse, the other at Mitchelstown, under Lord Kingston. But the grounds for my surmises are so slender that I mention them rather with the view of stimulating research, than of enunciating a definite proposition. We want Bro. Conder again.

The oddest thing about Bro. Kennedy's mention of Lodge No. 44 is that Lord Doneraile and Arundel Hill are named, apparently on authority, as W.M. and S.W. of Lodge No. 44, working at Doneraile in 1810 or 1811, though we know that a Warrant, No. 44, was issued by the Grand Lodge of Ireland to a Lodge at Armagh on the 8th August, 1810. This implies that the former Lodge had given to Grand Lodge no sign of life for many years previously to the issue of the second Warrant. There are grounds for believing it was not alone among Irish Lodges in continuing an independent course as late as the beginning of the present century.

Bro. Hughan, whom nothing escapes, has observed that the Hon. Elizabeth Aldworth figures prominently among the subscribers to Dr. Dassigny's *Serious and Impartial Enquiry*, 1744. But much weight cannot be attached to this, as the names of two other ladies occur

¹ Royal Arch Super Excellent Mason.

² A.Q.C., page 22.

³ A.Q.C., page 20.

amongst the subscribers to Spratt's *Constitutions* of 1751, and no one has ventured, as yet, to accuse them of being Freemasons.

The subjoined facsimile of the signature of the Hon. Elizabeth Aldworth is reproduced by photography from a letter written when well on to her sixtieth year.¹

Grafec: Cousen
Eliz: Aldworth

If ever character revealed itself in handwriting, here is the instance. The signature, regular in form and clear in outline, bespeaks the mind sincere of purpose and well-balanced in faculty.

The obvious importance attaching to the exact date of the Hon. Elizabeth Aldworth's marriage led me to institute a systematic search in the general Ecclesiastical Registers of Ireland, though the Parochial Registers of the particular Diocese in question had been repeatedly searched in vain.²

Since my last communication to the Quatuor Coronati Lodge the original marriage licence bond granted to Richard Aldworth and the Hon. Elizabeth St. Leger has been brought to light. The document had got inserted amongst the archives of a neighbouring diocese, and had thus escaped notice in previous searches.

The original is to be found in the MS. collection of Consistorial Marriage Licences of the Diocese of Cork, now deposited in the Public Record Office, Dublin.

The document follows the legal form of the period, consisting of a bond with a penalty, and is dated 7th of April, 1713, under permission of the Right Rev. Father in God, Charles [Crowe] Lord Bishop of Cloyne.

It bears the signatures of Richard Aldworth of the Parish of Clonfert, Diocese of Cloyne, and that of his surety, Richard Davies, of the Parish of St. Fin Barre, Diocese of Cork, and provides that the marriage between the said Richard Aldworth and Elizabeth St. Leger of "ye Parish of Donnerayle, & Dio: of Cloyne" shall be performed according to the canons of the Church of Ireland as by Law Established, but does not mention any particular church in which the ceremony was to be performed.

It is rather singular that, although this licence had been taken out in Richard Aldworth's own diocese of Cloyne, it should have found its way, as we have stated above, into the archives of Cork and Ross. The only explanation which occurs to me at the moment is, that the parties may have chosen to get married in some church in the latter diocese, possibly in the Cathedral Church of St. Fin Barre, which is mentioned as the Parish Church of the Rev. Richard Davies, the bridegroom's surety or "best man." This seems the more probable, as we have seen that the lady was interred in the family vault of the Davies in that cathedral.

As the lady was 17 years of age in 1710, and her girlhood ended on her marriage early in 1713, we can reasonably hold that her Initiation took place between those dates.

It is worth while to recapitulate the deductions from the Lady Freemason's story that affect the general history of the Craft.

First—There existed in 1710-1712 at Doneraile a Speculative Lodge of the English type. How many others still await discovery?

Secondly—This Irish Lodge used methods of Initiation, etc., not to be distinguished from those perpetuated at the Revival.

Thirdly—As the lady is admitted on all hands to have been F.C., the system in force before Grand Lodge comprised *two* Degrees.

The last deduction will require a deal of explaining away on the part of those Brethren who hold that, because early Scottish Operative Lodges suffered the Ritual to dwindle into the merest mode of recognition, the early English Speculative Lodges cannot have worked more than one Degree.

¹ We are indebted for the photograph to the fraternal courtesy of R.W. Bro. Anderson Cooper, D.G.M. of Munster.

² I was fortunate enough to secure the aid of a well-known expert in such matters, Mr. Edward Evans, to whose persistent research the discovery is mainly due.—W.J.C.C.

ADDENDA.

I.—TEXT OF RICHARD ALDWORTH'S MARRIAGE LICENCE BOND, 7TH APRIL, 1713.

Noverint universi per præsentes nos Richard Aldworth de poch' Clonfert dioc: Cloneñ aŕgeñ, & Richard Davies de poch's' ffinbar' Corcaġ, clicum. teneri & firmiter obligari reverendo in Christo patri & Domino Domino Carolo providentia divina Cloneñ Episcopo in quingentis libris ster' bonæ et legalis monætæ anglîæ solvendis eidem Domino Episcopo aut suo certo attornato Hæreditibus vell successor [] suis ad quam quidem solutionem bene & fideliter faciendum obligamu [] nos & utrumque nostrum Hæredes Executores & Administratores nostros & utriusque nostrum per se pro toto & in solido firmiter per præsentes sigillis nostris sigillat. datum Septimo die mensis April, Anno Domini 1713^o

The condition of y^e obligation is such y^t if at all times hereafter, there shall no appear any canonical let or impediment but y^e [above] bounden Richard Aldworth may solemnize matrimony w [] Eliz' St Leger of y^e parish of Dunnerayle & dioc of Cloyne, spin^r, and [] is no precontract of marriage of either of y^e s^d parties with any [] nor suit depending in any court concerning y^e same, & y^t y^e consent of y^e parents and friends of both parties be thereunto first had and obtained, and lastly y^t y^e s^d matrimony be publickly solemnized according to y^e canons of y^e church of Ireland, y^t yⁿ this present obligation to be void, and of no effect, or else to remain in full force and vertue in Law.

Rich^d Aldworth

L.S.

Signed seal^d & deliv^d
for y^e use of y^e s^d Lord

Bishop in presence of Ric. Davies
James Weekes, Not. Publ.

L.S.

II.—TRANSLATION OF THE LICENCE.

Know all men by these presents, that we Richard Aldworth, of the parish of Clonfert, in the diocese of Cloyne, Esquire, and Richard Davies, of the parish of St. Fin Barre, Cork, Clerk [in Holy Orders,] are held and firmly bound to the Reverend Father in Christ and Lord, the Lord Charles [Crowe] by Divine Providence, Bishop of Cloyne, in £50 sterling, of good and lawful money of England, to be paid to the said Lord Bishop, or his certain Attorney, his heirs or successors; to which payment to be well and truly made, we bind ourselves and each of us, the heirs, executors and administrators of us and each of us, severally, in the whole and entire sum, firmly by these presents sealed with our seals.

Dated the seventh day of the month of April in the year of our Lord, 1713.

[The rendering is as nearly line for line as the methods of the two languages will admit.]

BRO. RYLANDS said that if his recollection served him right, the son of Bro. Hill whose testimony had been quoted, was also alleged to have stated in a letter that he still retained possession of the warrant of the Lodge, No. 44, in which the lady had been initiated. If the date of the initiation was as now suggested and the Lodge was a pre-Grand Lodge independent body, it must be evident that it possessed no warrant at all, and such a mistake on the part of Bro. Hill did not tend to enhance the trustworthiness of his statements. Had any attempt been made to discover whether Richard Hill did possess an old warrant, and if so, which Lodge did it belong to?

