FREEMASONRY THE CHINESE WAY

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REGULAR FREEMASONRY IN CHINA

Overview

Regular Freemasonry has an extensive and complex, although somewhat convoluted, history in China. With this in mind, a brief summary of the hierarchical structure of the various lodges is provided as a precursor to the subsequent detailed analysis of the English, Scottish, Irish, French and Massachusetts Constitutions.

The Hierarchical Structure in China

English Constitution

The United Grand Lodge of England was the first to establish a hierarchical structure for the government of Freemasonry in China. The first Provincial Grand Master was Bro Samuel Rawson.

1847–66 Provincial Grand Lodge of China
1866–75 District Grand Lodge of China
1875–1963 District Grand Lodge of Hong Kong and South China
1877–1955 District Grand Lodge of Northern China
1963—— District Grand Lodge of Hong Kong and the Far East

Scottish Constitution

In 1905 the first District was established under the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Their first District Grand master was Bro Dr G P Jordan.

1905–58 District Grand Lodge of Hong Kong and South China
1921–55 District Grand Lodge of North China
1958—— District Grand Lodge of the Far East

Irish Constitution

With the arrival of the brethren under the Grand Lodge of Ireland, their Grand Lodge established a District Grand Inspector in 1933. Their first appointee was Bro P M Streit.

1933–38 District Grand Inspector
1938–47 Grand Inspector
1947–54 Grand Inspector for Hong Kong and China
1954–67 Grand Inspector for Hong Kong, China and Malaya
1967–88 Grand Inspector for the Far East
1988—— Provincial Grand Lodge of the Far East

Massachusetts Constitution

When American brethren established a lodge under the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in 1864, the office of District Deputy Grand Master was created immediately, but it was not until 27 December 1891 that Bro D C Jansen was installed in that office.

1864–1950 District Deputy Grand Master
Pre-District

Who would have thought, in 1758, when the members of Lodge Salomon, in Gothenburg, a port on the west coast of Sweden, deliberated the issue of a ‘warrant of constitution’, that this would be the precursor to Freemasonry in China? The lodge granted the request of seven of its members who were employed by the Swedish East India Company, thus enabling them to hold meetings away from home whenever their ship docked and they came ashore. The lodge was named Prince Carl’s Lodge, after the ship in which the seven voyaged. Records are scarce. However, we do know from their fire-damaged records on the first voyage that they held a meeting at Cadiz, a port of call, when four Swedish sailors from the Swedish naval vessels at anchor were balloted for initiation.

Outward voyage of Prince Carl
(1) Gothenburg, (2) Cadiz, (9) Canton

In China, foreigners were only just tolerated. Their ships were only allowed access to certain ports and the sailors were only permitted to go to certain areas, and then only on specific days. Records indicate that in 1759 a collection was taken aboard the vessel ‘Adolf Friederich’ for a Masonic Society. It is interesting that some of those who subscribed were later signatories on an application to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Gothenburg for a warrant.

An English Constitution lodge, the Lodge of Amity, meeting in Canton, is recorded on the list of lodges for the premier Grand Lodge of England in 1768. It is thought that this lodge existed for approximately thirty years. No records exist for its consecration or for any returns sent to Grand Lodge.

In the 1780s the Grand Lodge of Sweden, in line with other Scandinavian, Finnish and German Grand Lodges, adopted a change in degree systems. This became known as the Swedish Rite, and consisted of eleven degrees divided into three groups. This structure appealed to the Swedish Canton brethren, when in 1787 they applied to the Grand Lodge of Sweden for a full warrant (refer to Appendix A). The lodge was to be known as the Elizabeth Lodge, after the wife of the Grand Master, the Duke of Sodermanland. On 20 September 1788, Elizabeth Lodge was consecrated.

The first Worshipful Master of Elizabeth Lodge was a stalwart of Swedish Freemasonry in Canton, Brother Smedberg. It was stipulated that the Deputy Master should be a captain of a ship belonging to the Swedish East India Company that regularly sailed to Canton. It was also decreed that the Worshipful Master would always be a Supercargo. The by-laws state: ‘the date of regular meetings shall be whilst the Swedish East India Company’s ships are in China’.

The Grand Lodge of Sweden has the minutes relating to 36 meetings of Elizabeth Lodge, to 1796. During this time, 29 were initiated or affiliated into the lodge. The phraseology of the minutes is quaint; for affiliation, they record: ‘four brethren were adopted by the lodge in order to gain promotion’.

It is recorded that Brother James Chalmers was the fourth and last Worshipful Master of Elizabeth Lodge. Bro Chalmers wrote to the Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Gothenburg, saying that the trading ships were now going to Macau and, with the merchants and the like leaving Canton for Macau, the membership of the lodge was decreasing to an alarming level. Bro Chalmers also mentioned an English lodge in his correspondence, which would appear to be the Lodge of Amity. Elizabeth lodge had its last meeting on 23 February 1812. The lodge was placed in abeyance until 1878, when it was erased.
With the union of the premier Grand Lodge (Moderns) and the Grand Lodge of the Antients in 1813, Lodge of Amity was deemed to be defunct, since it had never made a return to Grand Lodge, and consequently was erased.

Unfortunately, this marks the end of the early Masonic lodges in China.

**Light Returns**

The stimulus for the return of Freemasonry to China was the sheer enthusiasm provided by 12 brethren meeting in the Commandant’s quarters in Victoria, on the island of Hong Kong. From this meeting on 29 April 1844, the Commandant, VWBro J H Cooke, and the other eleven brethren, forwarded a petition to the United Grand Lodge of England for the formation of a lodge. Their efforts were successful, and on 18 September 1844 a warrant was granted for the formation of Royal Sussex Lodge No 735. The lodge met at Victoria, and for the first three years that the lodge operated it was under the direct control of London.

It is interesting that some brethren examining the history of the lodge at a later date were investigating the theory that Royal Sussex Lodge was named after the Irish Royal Sussex Regiment, because of the number of Irish foundation brethren. However, it was established that none of the foundation members was a member of an Irish jurisdiction lodge, and the lodge was in fact named after the Duke of Sussex, HRH August Frederick, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) from 1813 to 1843. Royal Sussex Lodge flourished and it was not long before the brethren were entertaining thoughts of petitioning for a new lodge.

With many of the populace moving to Canton from Hong Kong, Royal Sussex Lodge applied to the UGLE to relocate its charter to Canton. On 18 February 1848, Royal Sussex Lodge held its first meeting in Canton. The buildings along the river were known as ‘factories’. Here the merchants and foreigners conducted their business, slept and socialized. In one of these factories, known locally as ‘The Club’, it was reported in an article in *The Far East* in 1854 that, apart from a library, billiard room, rowing club and assembly room, there existed a Freemason’s lodge.

Life in the Orient was never going to be dull, partly because of the vast cultural differences existing between the Celestials and the foreigners. An incident occurred in 1856 when Chinese officials boarded a vessel flying the British flag and took away the Chinese crew. The Irish captain, being on another vessel at the time, escaped capture. The British Consul demanded the return of the twelve crew, and the Chinese authorities refused, saying that some were pirates. Chinese then attacked and captured the forts of the Bogue. The greater Chinese community, interpreting this as a great Chinese victory, burnt down the factories, and destroyed the wharves and port facilities. All of the foreigners were compelled to leave Canton, with most returning to Hong Kong. So, once again, the members of Royal Sussex Lodge were in Hong Kong with the warrant of their lodge. Because of all the upheaval, the lodge went into abeyance in 1858.

Significantly, the Royal Sussex Lodge while operating in Canton sponsored the first Royal Arch Chapter in China in 1851. The Celestial Chapter held its first meeting in March 1852 and the following year a Provincial Grand Chapter was formed in Canton, with one Chapter, namely Celestial Chapter No 735.

We saw previously how Royal Sussex Lodge was flourishing in its first years of operation in Hong Kong, before it moved to Canton. Zetland Lodge No 768, a daughter lodge of Royal Sussex Lodge, had its first meeting on 24 June 1846. It was named after the new Grand Master, Thomas, second earl of Zetland, who succeeded the Duke of Sussex, and who reigned as Grand Master of the UGLE from 1844 to 1870.

There were great celebrations amongst the Masonic brethren when, in 1847, Grand Lodge in its wisdom deemed that, with two lodges operating in Hong Kong, it had sufficient reason to form a Provincial Grand Lodge of China. The first Provincial Grand Master was Bro Samuel Rawson. He was the inaugural First Principal of Celestial Royal Arch Chapter in Canton. Bro Mercer succeeded Bro Rawson as the Provincial Grand Master. In 1859 the United Grand Lodge of England, in an endeavour to distinguish the Provincial Grand Lodges overseas from the Provincial Grand Lodges in England, decreed that those overseas would be known as District Grand Lodges.

Life in Hong Kong became difficult. Parliament was asking persistent questions on the cost of running the colony. A new Governor was appointed and taxes were imposed on the colony’s inhabitants. Zetland Lodge was having its own problems with decreasing membership and apathy. On one occasion when Bro Samuel Rawson visited Zetland Lodge, he was elected a member and immediately elected into the office of Master Elect. As an indication of the plight of Freemasonry in the area, Bro H Kingmiel, a member of Victoria Lodge, said some twenty years later:
There was a time when Masonry in Hong Kong was like the dying flame of a candle flickering in the socket, and there was no one to work the solitary Lodge which existed in the place. Bro Rawson was then resident in Canton, and at a cost of great trouble, inconvenience, and expense to himself, he took energetic measures to gather the almost dying embers together... Bro Mercer... brought to the discharge of his high position the union of many qualifications. A gentleman, both by descent and nature, a scholar, a man of the highest principles, and an ardent Mason, he contributed in no slight degree to the consummation of Bro Rawson’s work.

Masonry finds a home in Hong Kong
The enthusiasm with which Zetland Lodge commenced its Masonic history is indicated by the efforts of the lodge to construct its own Masonic building. The ceremony was carried out with all pomp and decorum. The Provincial Grand Master, Bro Samuel Rawson, led a procession of Masonic brethren in regalia who were preceded by the bands of the 59th Regiment and the United States naval vessel Susquehanna. When HMS Cleopatra made the signal that the sun was at its meridian, the bells proclaimed high noon and the stone was lowered into position. After the Provincial Grand Master tried the stone with the plumb, level and square, he poured corn, wine and oil on the stone, and the building was declared dedicated to Freemasonry. When the brethren returned to the lodge room, they were addressed by the foundation Master of Zetland Lodge, Bro Mercer.

The Bungalow, as it was affectionately called by the brethren, was replaced by a larger, more impressive building in 1865. This new Masonic building was situated in Zetland Street, in the central business district. In 1944 this building was destroyed by American bombing, as Hong Kong was occupied by Japanese forces. Construction was commenced on the present Zetland Hall in 1949 and the building dedicated to Freemasonry on 30 January 1950.

Shanghai, Northern China
China opened Shanghai to foreigners in 1845. Brethren from Royal Sussex and Zetland Lodges were transferred to this port. They and other Masons in Shanghai were interested in forming a lodge. Consequently, in 1849 a petition was forwarded to the United Grand Lodge of England for the formation of a new lodge, to be called Northern Lodge. The first meeting of Northern Lodge No 832 was held on 1 December 1849, dispensation having been received from the Provincial Grand Lodge of China to hold a meeting. A copy of the dispensation appears as Appendix B. The Master elect, although a member of Royal Sussex Lodge, recorded his Mother Lodge as Lodge Edinburgh (Mary’s Chapel) No 1, Grand Lodge of Scotland. The Senior Warden was a member of Zetland Lodge, and the Junior Warden was a member of a Bengal Lodge.

The lodge prospered. In December 1849 the following meetings of Northern Lodge were held:
11 December both the first and second degrees were worked;
15 December two first degrees;
22 December two third degrees;
24 December two seconds and one first degree;
27 December four first degrees, followed by a banquet.

It would be interesting to read the report from the Inspector of Workings if it occurred today.

This lodge presented a certificate to the candidate for each degree. Some of the by-laws were different from today's:

* Of interest is one referring to balloting: If two negatives appeared, there should be no further ballot, but if one appeared then the ballot should go around for the second time. If the negative was repeated, then exclusion resulted.

* The final toast was a little different: ‘to all poor and distressed Masons wherever they may be dispersed over the globe and may they have a speedy and prosperous return to their respective homes should they wish it’. This was followed by a minute’s silence.

One of the earliest documents of the lodge in existence is a receipt for three dozen bottles of sherry.

During a visit of the Provincial Grand Master, Bro James Rawlings, the Worshipful Master of Northern Lodge approached him with the request to form a Mark lodge attached to Northern Lodge. As the number of Royal Arch Freemasons were very few, the request was denied. However, the Provincial Grand Master agreed to form a lodge of Mark Master Masons and advance qualified brethren. On 15 December 1854, nine brethren were advanced to the Mark degree.

Once again, events occurred which affected the prosperity of the lodge. This was a crucial period in the history of China; the unrest during the Manchu dynasty has been amply illustrated in the previous section dealing with the Hung Society. The foreign section of the community was becoming unsettled, particularly when in 1857 an attempt was made in Hong Kong to kill the European population there by poisoning the bread. Lord Elgin was appointed by the British authorities to act on behalf of the British government in dealing with the Emperor of China. Initially the Emperor dismissed the demands of Lord Elgin and it was not until he advanced on Peking with 20,000 troops and destroyed the Summer Palace that the Treaty of Peking was signed. A degree of tranquillity returned for some forty years.

During this period of Freemasonry, the Royal Sussex Lodge can boast of many influential members. We shall look briefly at two of these brethren:

Richard John, Viscount Suirdale, was the Foundation Senior Warden, and afterwards became the 4th Earl of Donoughmore. Many of the Earls of Donoughmore have been Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, from the 1st Earl who was Grand Master from 1789–1813, to the 7th Earl.

Robert Freke Gould was an eminent Masonic historian. When the Royal Sussex Lodge shifted its warrant to Shanghai in 1863, he was the first affiliate and was later elected the first honorary member of the lodge. In Northern Lodge, he was a Past Master and also the first honorary member of that lodge. He was a Past Provincial Grand Master (EC) of the Provincial Grand Lodge of China, one of the founders of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No 2076 and its second Master. On 3 July 1865, at the request of the English, Scottish and Irish brethren, Bro Gould officiated and laid the foundation stone of the Masonic Hall at Shanghai.

It was becoming increasingly evident that the prosperity of the lodges in Shanghai was in doubt. This was not due to any actions of the authorities towards Freemasonry, but rather the process of attrition. Bro Farmer resigned as District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge of North China. He was replaced by Bro W O Barrington, who was appointed the Grand Inspector responsible for the running of the District Grand Lodge of North China (EC). On 21 December 1950, Bro Barrington forwarded a letter to Royal Sussex Lodge and the other remaining English Constitution lodges. The letter asked the lodges, ‘to consider if they should, due to the shortage of resident members, amalgamate with other lodges or transfer their charter to meet elsewhere or they would fade out in an undignified manner’.

At a meeting of Royal Sussex Lodge on 24 April 1952, the following resolution was passed:

that in view of the shortage of Resident Members and the probability of further depletion, the Brethren of this Royal Sussex Lodge No 501 EC now meeting at Shanghai, deem it advisable and in the best interests of the Lodge that the Royal Sussex Lodge No 501 EC shall transfer to and meet at Hong Kong after the summer recess of the year 1952.

Thus the Shanghai history of Royal Sussex Lodge closed that night, and the lodge returned to the city from whence it started, as the first lodge after the rebirth of Freemasonry in China.
The following lodges under the English Constitution, St George’s Lodge No 4575 in Shanghai, and Union Lodge No 1951 and Coronation Lodge No 2931, both from Tientsin (southeast of Beijing, or Peking, near the coast), handed in their charters in 1952. In 1953 Northern Star of China No 2763, of Tsingtao (port city, also known as Quingdao), and Tongshan Lodge No 3001 closed. The following year (1954) Far Cathay Lodge No 2855, of Hankow (inland, on the Yangtze River), and in 1955 Doric Lodge of Ching-kiang No 1433, from Shanghai, finally handed in their warrants. Tuscan Lodge No 1027 decided in 1954 to move their charter to London, consequently on 8 December 1954 the lodge had its first meeting at its new location in London.

Shanghai, once a bustling centre of Masonic activity, was now significantly reduced, with only Northern Lodge of China No 570 (EC) and its associated Chapter Zion No 570, Lodge Cosmopolitan No 428 (SC) and Doric Lodge No 1433 (EC) remaining. Soon Doric Lodge handed in its warrant. An era in English Constitution Freemasonry came to an end in 1960 when, after 111 years of Freemasonry in China, Northern Lodge of China No 570 (EC) and its Chapter Zion No 570 closed and surrendered their warrants.

**Early Scottish Freemasonry in China**

Scottish Freemasonry came to China by way of Lodge Cosmopolitan No 428, which was consecrated on 28 December 1864 in Shanghai. The consecration ceremony was carried out within an English Constitution lodge. The minutes record:

> In the absence of a special commission, the Northern Lodge of China, as Senior Lodge in Shanghai, was opened in due and ancient form by Worshipful Past Master L.G. Dunlop and the Charter from the Grand Lodge of Scotland having been read by Brother S. Rawson, Past Provincial Grand Master for China, EC, Bro R.F. Gould, Past Master, No 570 EC, and P.P.G.S.W. of Andalusia SC, acting as Installing Master, called on Brother the Revd. John M.W. Farnham to Consecrate the New Lodge, which being done the Right Worshipful Master Elect and Brethren of the ‘Cosmopolitan’ were presented by Brother Sidford, W.M. of the Tuscan Lodge No 1027 EC and having done homage to the Worshipful Master in the East, representing Grand Lodge, Brother Gould then made proclamation . . . After prayer by the acting Chaplain, the Northern Lodge of China was closed and the Lodge Cosmopolitan opened in the first degree, Brother Charles Melville Donaldson, (after assenting to the usual charges) was Installed as first Right Worshipful Master and saluted with the usual honours.

As the fortunes of Shanghai multiplied, so did the prosperity of the Shanghai lodges. Cosmopolitan Lodge was no exception. In all, there were four Scottish Constitution lodges consecrated in Shanghai. Lodge St Andrew of the Far East No 493 was consecrated on 28 June 1869 in Shanghai. The charter was returned to Grand Lodge in February 1874 and the lodge went into a period of dormancy. On 4 February 1919 the lodge reopened in Shanghai and continued there until February 1953, when on 5 February of that year the charter was transferred to Hong Kong.

Another Scottish lodge in Shanghai was Lodge Saltoun No 936. This lodge was consecrated on 23 December 1902 and became dormant on 18 September 1952. The youngest of the Scottish lodges consecrated in Shanghai was Lodge Shanghai Kilwinning No 1382, being consecrated on 14 November 1933, but unfortunately became dormant on 19 May 1947.

Let us now return to Lodge Cosmopolitan No 428 SC. Ominous clouds were descending on this Scottish Lodge. On 3 January 1961, the secretary wrote to the Grand Secretary, saying:

> It is with the deepest regret that I have to inform you that the active membership of our lodge being now reduced to five, and as further two bros are expected to leave, in the near future, it is not any longer possible, for us, to carry out our regular meetings . . . We have therefore taken the following steps which we trust will meet with your full approval.

1. We have declared the lodge dormant indefinitely.
2. We have put to an end the lease of our present premises and sold out all the lodge furniture in order to reduce our expenses.
3. We have kept only the necessary implements etc. enabling us to reopen the lodge, should this be possible, at a later date.

The present Master of the Lodge expects to remain in Shanghai for some time and will keep you informed of the situation here.
The Grand Secretary replied that the lodge would go into dormancy for one year and that the Grand Master Mason and the Grand Secretary hoped to visit Hong Kong shortly.

On 16 February 1962 the Master of Lodge Cosmopolitan wrote to the Grand Secretary as follows:

Even during these last years, when the activities of the lodge were declining rapidly, we always did our best to keep up the moral qualities and the special reputation of this well named ‘Cosmopolitan Lodge’ for, till recently, its membership of 21 Bro was represented by 11 nationalities.

Now, as the W M of this lodge, I am awfully sorry to tell you that this new year of 1962, virtualizes the worst situation ever known, for if at the time of my last letters dated of the 3rd of January and 24th of February 1961, we were still few members, having some hopes for possible new activities, but alas I now remain the only member of the lodge in Shanghai. So, on account of this very special situation I would not recognize myself the moral right ( and I feel indeed very reluctant) to close for ever our dear lodge which has, during nearly a century, so well succeeded to keep always intouched [sic] the Light of our Master and Great Architect of the Universe as well as His Human virtues.

So could the Cosmopolitan Lodge, on account of the very special conditions prevailing remain, for a certain period dormant? So leaving to its members the greatest possibilities to resume activities in another land.

In reply, the Grand Secretary wrote:

It distresses me very much, to think that Lodge Cosmopolitan can no longer function in Shanghai . . .

Some two months ago I had a long talk with one of your distinguished Past Masters, Bro George E. Marden. He and his son, John were with me in Edinburgh. Amongst other things we discussed that Lodge Cosmopolitan No 428 might be transferred to Hong Kong and there to continue as a Lodge of Research.

The necessary requirements were effected in the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge on 2 August 1962.

Thus, the light of Freemasonry was extinguished in Shanghai and, as a consequence, in mainland China, after thirteen years of communist rule. It was fitting that the first lodge in Shanghai under the Scottish Constitution was the last to remain.

**The Irish Influence**

A lot of the Irish Constitution lodges were started by means of ‘Military’ or ‘Travelling’ warrants. It has been established that in 1813 the number of such warrants issued was: Irish Constitution, 190; English Constitution, 141; and Scottish Constitution, 21. By the 1860s the number of these warrants had increased to 230 for the Irish Constitution, 166 for the English Constitution, and 23 for the Scottish Constitution.

It was by the means of one of these military warrants that Irish Freemasonry arrived in Hong Kong. The 2nd Battalion of the 20th Regiment (the Lancashire Fusiliers) arrived in December 1863. This regiment had a military warrant for Sphinx Lodge No 263 IC, which had been issued on 6 October 1860. The Irish brethren wasted no time, and on 30 December 1863 the lodge had its first meeting in what was known as Kowloon Camp. In July 1864 the Fusiliers were called to active service in Japan and, as a consequence, left Hong Kong. When the regiment arrived back in Hong Kong on 28 July 1866 it continued its Masonic activities in Zetland Lodge's rooms until 2 March 1867, when the Lancashire Fusiliers departed for South Africa.

The first Irish lodge to be consecrated in China was Lodge Erin. It was consecrated at Shanghai on 12 March 1920, when an ‘occasional meeting’ was held. Out of the twenty-two foundation members, nineteen brethren had to receive the Irish obligation of affiliation. It is interesting to note that the charter of Lodge Erin was first held by a lodge at Keady, County Armagh, erected in 1768 and cancelled in 1833, and then by Corinthian Lodge, of Christchurch in New Zealand, from 1878 until 1891. Lodge Erin was very active in the area of charity, having 20% of all dues and fees going to that cause. Whether it was common practice is unknown, but one of their meetings was recorded as having commenced at 9.15 pm and ‘at 11.30 pm the lodge was closed in Peace, Love and Harmony’. 
At a meeting of Lodge Erin at Grosvenor House, Shanghai, on 8 February 1952, the following motion was moved: ‘The Charter of Lodge Erin No 463 IC be sent to Hong Kong and that Lodge Erin change its place of meeting from Shanghai to Hong Kong.’ This lodge was facing the same predicament as the other lodges. On its books it had eight resident members and sixty three absent members. The lodge moved to Hong Kong and the first meeting was held at Zetland Hall on 2 April 1952.

A new lodge, Shamrock Lodge No 712 IC, was consecrated on 8 February 1947 at the temporary Masonic Hall, Hong Kong. Eighteen foundation members, with regalia borrowed from Lodge Erin in Shanghai, and 135 guests assembled to witness the occasion. This warrant, as was often the case with Irish warrants, had been previously issued. In the first instance it had been issued to an unnamed lodge at Stradbally, County Leix, on 1 April 1790 and cancelled on 7 October 1813.

The Irish eyes were smiling on 29 September 1981, when Emerald Lodge of Hong Kong No 883 IC was consecrated by the Deputy Grand Master and acting Grand Master, RWBro Major George Mears Malone, who travelled out from Ireland for this auspicious occasion. (The Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, Lord Donoughmore, had died earlier that year.) WBro H S Mok was the Foundation Master, an honour accorded him by virtue of his being the senior Past Master of the Irish Constitution in China.

Enter the Americans

Freemasonry in Shanghai in the 1860s was booming. Trade was running at an unprecedented level and the ships of many countries were plying their trade. The American trade was predominant and at the consecration of Lodge Cosmopolitan No 428 SC, the largest proportion of petitioners from a single country was American.

In December 1864, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts granted a warrant for Ancient Landmark Lodge. This lodge also enjoyed close harmony with the English Constitution. For a number of years, the District Grand Master of the English Constitution, with his officers, conducted their installation ceremony. Then the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts appointed a District Deputy Grand Master to oversee the new lodge. The appointee, RWBro D C Jansen, had his patent signed on 27 December 1891 and it was read in the Ancient Landmark Lodge in September 1892. Bro Jansen’s term was rather short as, during an installation meeting of the lodge in November 1894, he passed to the Grand Lodge Above. His successor was RWBro A W Danforth.

It was not until 1903 that several members of Ancient Landmark Lodge petitioned the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts for a new lodge to be formed, to be known as Cathay Lodge. However, the name Cathay was changed at the request of the English District. They foresaw confusion with their own Far Cathay Lodge. The name chosen for the new lodge was Sinim Lodge, and Sinim Lodge, the second lodge under the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, was consecrated on 30 March 1905. The charter of this lodge was transferred to Japan in 1952, where it remains to this day.

Also in 1903, the members of Ancient Landmark Lodge petitioned the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts for third lodge, to be called Orient Lodge and to be stationed in Shanghai. Once again the name was objected to, as Orient Lodge already existed in Massachusetts, so the name was changed to Shanghai, and the lodge was consecrated on 6 January 1905. Mention should be made at this stage that lodges under the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts do not carry lodge numbers. Also, the lodge may function as a lodge under dispensation (UD) until the charter is granted and the lodge consecrated. In the case of Shanghai Lodge, the dispensation was granted on 8 October 1903 and this lodge operated as Orient Lodge until it was consecrated as Shanghai Lodge in January 1905.

From 1909 the Americans desired to have a Lodge of Instruction. This came to fruition in 1913 and was known as the American Lodge of Instruction, being funded by the Massachusetts Constitution lodges in Shanghai. The American Lodge of Instruction served the three Massachusetts lodges, Ancient Landmark, Sinim and Shanghai until 1929, when it was replaced by the Shanghai Lodge of Instruction. The difference between the two was that the American Lodge of Instruction concentrated on perfection of ritual, while the Shanghai Lodge of Instruction also provided more general Masonic education. Candidates were required to attend a meeting of the Shanghai Lodge of Instruction before proceeding to the next step.

Trade north of Shanghai was dominated by American ships and merchants, while south of Shanghai their influence was minimal. As a result of this imbalance, American Freemasonry was concentrated in Shanghai and, to a lesser extent, areas north. From 1920 to 1928 there were four lodges operating under dispensation. These lodges were then consecrated under the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, from Darien in Southern Manchuria, to Harbin in Northern Manchuria. These lodges operated for a number of years. When
the resident members left for other pastures, the attending lodge membership decreased to a level where the viability of the lodge was lost.

With the formation of the District Grand Lodge of China under the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts on 24 November 1914 American Freemasonry received a new impetus. By the end of 1917, nearly 300 members belonged to this jurisdiction.

International Lodge (Massachusetts Constitution) in Peking was opened by dispensation on 24 July 1915. Among the foundation members were three Chinese brethren. The first of these was Bro L C Chang, who was initiated on 2 February 1916, and was installed as Master of the lodge in 1926. At a meeting of International Lodge in 1922, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts attended and conferred the third degree on Bro Wang Chung Hui, the Prime Minister of China.

In 1950 the three Massachusetts lodges in Shanghai and one in Peking went into recess. Discussions took place in 1951 to transfer the warrant of Sinim Lodge from Shanghai to Tokyo, Japan. Approval was granted on 19 April 1952. The first meeting of Sinim Lodge held at the Masonic Temple, Tokyo, was on 16 September 1952. The District Deputy Grand Master, RWBro Hyman Hodes, brought the original warrant from Hong Kong and officiated at the open installation ceremony. It was attended by 350 visiting Freemasons, their wives and friends.

The French Connection
When the French expansionist activities in Europe failed in the mid-1800s, they turned their attention to the establishment of a colonial empire. The colonial empire amassed by France was only surpassed by that of Britain.

The Grand Orient of France, which was still ‘regular’, consecrated Loge le Reveil de l’Orient on 10 November 1868 at Saigon. This was followed by another four lodges in Indo-China. Between 1868 and 1874, two lodges were established in China under the Grand Orient of France. These were Lodge Confucius, in Hong Kong, and Lodge Foederis Arca, in Shanghai.

On 11 May 1868, Lodge Confucius was constituted. The eight petitioners were a merchant, a lawyer, a mechanic, and five ocean-going captains. An interesting development in the history of the lodge occurred in November 1868, and is explained in the following letter sent from the District Grand Secretary (English Constitution).

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Via Marseilles
The Grand Master
‘Grand Orient de France’
16, Rue Cadet
Paris
Most Worshipful & dear Sir & brother,
I have the honour to inform you, that Brother William Reynvaan having been obliged to leave the Colony of Hong Kong, the paraphernalia and Correspondence, sent out by your goodself have been handed over to the ‘District Grand Lodge of the British Freemasonry in China’ and I shall feel obligated, being charged with the safe custody thereof, by your communicating to me your wishes with respect to the future disposal of the same at your earliest convenience.

I have the honour, to be,
Most worshipful & dear Sir & brother,
Yours faithfully and fraternally
F.C. Sauermann
District Grand Secretary for China
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Another letter to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Orient:
Very Dear Brother Cheverot,

Bordeaux, 3rd January, 1869

I received your letter of the 30th of last month only yesterday, informing me of the departure from Hong Kong of Bro Reynvaan. This piece of news has surprised me and displeased me. First of all, by the steps that this brother has caused me to take with the Grand Orient and also by the rather expensive purchases that I had to make for the installation of Lodge Confucius.

Since 19th June, when I sent him a first case containing regalia, jewels, Masonic books, etc, and also the Constitutions and rituals, I have received no further news from him. I had no idea that he was leaving the colony and I was very surprised that I did not receive an acknowledgement not only for the first case, but also for a second one containing swords and other Masonic implements.

I would be very grateful, very dear Brother, to receive some explanation as to how Bro Sauermann has explained to you the departure of Bro Reynvaan. If it is on account of bad business or for any other reason, I will have to take steps in order to save parts of the sum that I have committed. After all, I made these purchases to please him.

I do not know what to do with the documents you sent to him and I am as embarrassed as you are at not knowing the whereabouts of Bro Reynvaan. Those who had joined this brother in a request for a Constitution are navy captains whose names I do not recall, and I would be thankful to you for letting me have this information, in order to enable me to enquire at the Maritime Office in Bordeaux.

Kindly let me have also the address of Brother Sauermann, to whom I shall write by the next China Mail to know whether, with the Constitutions, he has not received the various objects that I sent at the same time.

Awaiting the pleasure of your reply, please receive, very dear Brother, my very fraternal greetings.

A. Boulton, Jr,
Past Master of the Franc.: de Aquit.:.

A further letter to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Orient:

Very dear Brother Cheverot,

Bordeaux 27th January, 1869

As you asked me in your letter of 12th instant, I state below the first information which I have gathered from a letter from Bro Reynvaan dated in San Francisco. He advised me of his complete ruin after bad speculations on opinions [futures?]. This is the first letter that I have received from him since June. He told me that, when he left Hong Kong, he wrote a letter to Bro:. Longueville who was absent, asking him to continue what he had started for the formation of Confucius Lodge. It appears that, without doubt, Bro:. Longueville has done nothing. I am writing to him today in Hong Kong, because he was in possession of my dossier of information and various items which I sent, at the same time asking him to look after the items which are in the hands of Bro Sauermann.

I received news of Bro:. Longueville from the Maritime Office: I was told that he is traveling around Chinese waters, which he has not left for 2 years, so it is quite certain that he will receive my letter. If you have any details to tell me about this matter, I would be obliged if you could write to me so that I will not be inactive, and I will communicate to you any other information which I receive.

Please receive, very dear brother, my most fraternal greetings

A Boulton, Jr,
Past Master of the Franc.: de Aquit.:.

My research has not revealed any activity of this lodge except that recorded in the China Directory for 1874; only two of the founders are listed as being resident in Hong Kong.

In 1873 a second lodge was in the process of being established in Northern China in the French concession of Shanghai. The Lodge Foederis-Arca had eight petitioning members, two of which came from the English Constitution lodges in Shanghai. An unhappy event occurred for the proposed lodge, which is related to in the following communiqué:
Memo for the Grand Orient of France
Concerning Lodge Foederis-Arca,
Or.: Of Shanghai.
Memo addressed to the Grand Orient of France by Bro Ch.: Of Shanghai (China).
The Grand Orient of France has given the Worshipful Lodge Foederis Arca of the Or.: Of Shanghai, China, the necessary powers to work in the 3rd symbolic degree. The Worshipful Lodge was about to start its work when an enemy arrived, preventing its installation.

This is what happened:
Bro. Baron, an officer of this lodge, had agreed to put at his disposal an apartment in his building as a meeting place for the Brethren of the lodge being formed; this building is built upon land which is under lease by this brother from some Jesuit fathers. When the lease expires, and this will be very soon, due to certain regulations which are common in this country, the house will become the property of the Jesuits, who will then have the choice between renting the house or not to Bro. Baron.

The Jesuits, having been informed that a French lodge was about to be installed in the house of Bro. Baron, informed the latter that they would never allow a lodge to be established on their property. It was a threat, and the end of the lease.

However, in the French Concession there is not a single house suitable for the installation of a lodge and Bro. Baron would have been unable to leave his house – which is fitted out and which is suitable for his kind of business – without great damage; moreover no other house in the concession would be convenient.

Therefore, if he were forced to leave the house which he now occupies, he would have no alternative but to build another house. Business in China and Shanghai, especially for French nationals, is not good enough to allow him to build a new house. On the other hand, in agreement with all the other members of the lodge, it was decided that Bro. Baron could not be sacrificed to the unrelenting enemy of our institution. In consequence, it was agreed to keep the installation of the Worshipful Lodge Foederis Arca in suspense until such time that another meeting place could be found.

Bro Ch.: Ducos de la Haille
Orator of the Worshipful
Lodge Foederis Arca
At the Or.: Of Shanghai (China)

I have been unable to ascertain if any meetings of this lodge took place. The lodge took an exceptionally long time, some three and a half years, to reach its development stage. Its petitioning numbers were small and there seemed to be a reluctance to discuss with the lodges of the other two Constitutions in Shanghai the possibility of using their lodge rooms.

Both of these French lodges were formed at a time when the Grand Orient of France was recognized. However, in 1877 the Grand Orient of France severed relations with regular Freemasonry by removing from the ritual all reference to TGAOTU, and the VSL from the lodge furniture.

War
With the Japanese forces advancing through mainland China, the first Masonic location to feel the effect of war in this area was Shanghai. The Japanese authorities sealed the Masonic buildings and various Masons were interrogated regarding Freemasonry. Many a Mason was imprisoned in the Bridgehouse Prison while awaiting the convenience of the interrogators to question them. Many examples of torture and shocking conditions of internment took place. This Japanese reaction to Freemasonry was repeated as they continued their advance.

It is said that a ritual was smuggled into one of the camps at Shanghai and was used in rehearsing the ceremonies under the guise of playing a game of cards. In Hong Kong there were two camps, one at Shamshuipo, a well guarded POW camp, and the other a civilian camp at Stanley. The District Grand Secretary of the English Constitution reported to Grand Lodge in 1948:

Being the Officer Commanding the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps, I was a prisoner in the military camp at Shamshuipo, so none of those who were mobilized could take part in these meetings in
the strictly civilian camp at Stanley. I was, however, able to hold a Lodge of Instruction, as a Preceptor, for the first four months of our captivity. After that we were separated from our men and put into a punishment camp, where we had no room to move, and absolutely no privacy or possibility of conducting meetings.

In the Stanley camp, some began to hold meetings in the quarry. On 1 December 1942, Zetland Lodge held a meeting to mark the annual installation ceremony. There were twenty-seven present, including the District Grand Master, who read extracts from *The Builder*. After prayer and the decision to meet bimonthly, the meeting was closed with prayer. However, the next meeting had to be cancelled, as some antagonists of the Order had heard of the meeting. If the Japanese had learned of this meeting, it would have been fatal; the risk was too high. The second annual meeting was held in December 1943, under a Banyan tree. There, the Master stated that according to the *Book of Constitutions* he could only serve two terms as Worshipful Master. He then appointed WBro A E Clarke, the senior Past Master present, as Worshipful Master of Zetland Lodge. The third annual meeting was only attended by five brethren, the rest either having passed to the Grand Lodge Above or being in such a condition they could not walk to the Bungalow. Other lodges held similar meetings, all with a high degree of secrecy.

In Brother Owen Hughes’ book *Gay Duck*, he said of the internees:

Many of them have since told me how much they valued the fact of being Masons during their years of captivity. Those of whom had a mind to do so had ample opportunities to rehearse themselves in their ritual, which must have had a lot to do with the quality of our work in the years to follow, and I can assure you the work really was good. When I saw them a couple of weeks after the surrender they were all skin and bone. They had existed, men and women, old and young, on a diet which the medical authorities reckoned was insufficient in calories to keep them alive, and I feel certain in my own mind that if they had not been released, the Winter of 1945 would have taken a terrible toll.

Activities of Masons in places like Changi are recorded elsewhere, and are beyond the scope of this paper, except to say that the price those Freemasons paid to their country and to their beloved Craft will remain an inspiration to succeeding Freemasons for ever.

**Early Chinese Initiates**

*China*

Unfortunately the period of hostilities and occupation resulted in many Masonic records being lost or destroyed. And there were many instances where lodge records were sent to Tokyo after the places were occupied by the Japanese Imperial Forces.

From available records we are able to establish that the first Chinese to be initiated into Freemasonry was Bro The Boen Keh, ‘Lieutenant of the Chinese’, who was initiated in 1857. Bro Shan Hing Yung, a Lieutenant in the Imperial Chinese Navy, was initiated into the English Constitution lodge at Canton, Lodge Star of Southern China, in October 1889. A merchant, Bro Lie Khong, was initiated into Corinthian Lodge of Amoy, EC, in October 1895.

The District Board of General Purposes of the District Grand Lodge of Hong Kong and South China, under the Mastership of Bro Sir C P Chater, CMG, became concerned with the admission to the Order of the local Chinese. This resulted in a ruling, in 1898, that it was:

considered inadvisable to provide facilities to the natives of the (Chinese) Empire to enter the Order and thus gain an opportunity to use its privileges for the spreading of revolutionary principles, such uses being distinctly forbidden in Masonry.

It must be remembered that, at this time, activity to overthrow the Manchu Dynasty and return it to Chinese rule was rife, and as it is against the principles of Freemasonry to become involved in any such activity. The Masonic authorities wanted to ensure that they distanced themselves from any involvement of spreading revolutionary principles, either actual or perceived. It is very gratifying when you analyse the situation in the later section, ‘Current Status’, to discover that we have, at least in the English and Irish Constitutions,
Masonically integrated with the local Chinese.

**Australia**

Lodge of Tranquillity No 1552 EC, meeting in Sydney, has the distinction of being the lodge in which the first Chinese was initiated in Australia. Quong Tart was initiated on 8 October 1885. He was a successful and well respected businessman who had journeyed to Australia with his uncle in 1859 at the tender age of 9 years. His name was incorrectly recorded by an immigration official on his arrival to Australia; his birth name was Mei Guang Da.

Quong Tart was active in the affairs of his countrymen. After a visit to the goldfields and witnessing the addiction of the Chinese to opium, he commenced an anti-opium campaign and petitioned the government to ban the opium trade. The Emperor of China, in 1888, bestowed on him the title of Mandarin of the Crystal Button. He was affectionately known as the Australian Mandarin.

Bro Quong Tart died on 26 July 1903. For the funeral, he was dressed in his Mandarin robes, and his Master Mason’s apron was placed on the coffin. The Worshipful Master of Lodge of Tranquillity, WBro Archdeacon Langley, gave the eulogy, after which hundreds of mourners accompanied the coffin to the Rookwood Cemetery. The procession was led by his son, and forty Freemasons in regalia accompanied the body of Bro Quong Tart to his final resting place.

In an article appearing in the *Keystone* of 31 October 1919, mention is made of Brother William Yinson Lee having being initiated into Lodge Southern Cross No 91, United Grand Lodge of New South Wales, in 1903. The article mentions that Bro Lee was a Lewis. Correspondence with the Secretary of Southern Cross Lodge, VWBro Peter Court, PDGIW, has revealed that the first mention in the lodge minutes of Bro William Yinson Lee was on 14 October 1909, recording him as rejoining the lodge. An earlier entry records that William Robert George Lee was initiated on 18 August 1890.

Bro Court goes on to say:

After the affiliation of William Yinson Lee on 14 October 1909, nothing more was of importance in this regard until William Ling, storekeeper, aged 35 years, and Raymond Lee, horsebreeder, aged 28 years, both initiated on 11 April 1912... Probably cousins or relatives of Chinese extraction. Perhaps both were related to William Yinson Lee.

Prior to the formation of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales in 1888, Southern Cross Lodge was known as Southern Cross Alexandria Lodge No 664, Grand Lodge of Scotland. Enquiries undertaken with the Grand Lodge of Scotland revealed that no brother named Lee had been a member of the lodge between the date of consecration, 30 November 1881, and 1888, when it came under the jurisdiction of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales.
Freemasonry but was also the Grand Secretary of the Chinese Masonic Society in Australia.

Lodge Tranquillity No 1552 (EC), which became Lodge Tranquillity No 42 (UGLNSW), and Southern Cross Alexandria Lodge No 664 (SC), which became Lodge Southern Cross No 91 (UGLNSW), are both still operating. The jurisdiction of New South Wales has been extended to include the Australian Capital Territory, and is now known as the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Current Status  (to 2002 the last decade is currently being researched)

On 1 July 1997 the former British colony of Hong Kong was absorbed into China and reverted back to Chinese rule. I have been most fortunate in obtaining information from the District Grand Secretary of the District Grand Lodge of Hong Kong and the Far East, WBro P J Nunn, PAGDC, and most of the following information comes from that source.

The English District has sixteen lodges, with a total membership of 1300. However, only 400 of these are domiciled in Hong Kong, and approximately half of these are local Chinese brethren. The percentage of local Chinese membership is increasing.

Since 1990, in the English District three lodges have been consecrated. On 31 October 1990 the Rotarian Lodge of Hong Kong No 9378 was consecrated. Originally, this lodge comprised mainly Rotarians, but now it is mixed, with approximately 75% local Chinese brethren. The Lodge of Lu Pan of Hong Kong No 9387 was consecrated on 29 November 1990, and is 99% local Chinese brethren (Lu Pan was the patron saint of Chinese builders, carpenters, etc.) Then on 27 May 2000 the St Paul’s Lodge No 9718 was consecrated. This lodge was formed by ex-pupils of St Paul’s School, which is adjacent to Zetland Hall, the Masonic Centre in Hong Kong, and comprises approximately 99% local Chinese brethren. Bro Nunn comments: ‘one unique feature is that they meet on Saturdays, and usually dine (Chinese food) with wives and children in attendance—it’s great and it works’.

It is unfortunate that the Scottish Constitution lodges have not changed much in their composition. Total membership is approximately 250, with a large percentage of these retired overseas. About 5% of their membership is local Chinese.

Our Irish brethren have increased their membership. They have an additional four lodges, with the extra bonus of now having their own Provincial Grand Lodge, in lieu of the Inspectorate. They have a total membership of 440, with approximately 95% of the membership being local Chinese.

| Lodge Sino Lusitano of Macau No 897 | Founded June 1988 |
| Lodge St David No 903 | Founded March 1990 |
| Lodge Baden Powell No 929 | Founded April 1996 |
| Lodge of Installed Masters No 1001 | Founded December 1998 |

With the formation of Lodge Sino Lusitano of Macau, situated some 48 miles down the coast from Hong Kong, the Irish brethren then created in December 1988 the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Far East. Lodge St David started as a Lodge of Musical Research, and each year they support a music scholarship. The incumbent Provincial Grand Master is a member of Lodge Baden Powell, and is also the Commissioner of Scouts in Hong Kong. The Lodge of Installed Masters has replaced the Irish Lodge of Instruction, but will also, if the occasion arises, work degree ceremonies.

After the British government signed the necessary documentation to return Hong Kong to China, the Chinese authorities travelled to Hong Kong to take opinions from interested parties, for example, religious organizations and societies who had some concerns for the future. Freemasonry, under the leadership of RWBro Christopher Haffner, PDistGM (EC), and assisted by other brethren, made representations to this committee. The Chinese committee in response to the concerns of the Masonic delegation said, in part, that they saw no reason why Masonry should not continue after 1997 provided we complied with the law and that under no circumstances should we attempt to spread into mainland China. It is interesting that in 1993 the British government in Hong Kong amended the Societies Ordinance where Freemasonry was on the exemption list of societies for registration. However, by 1995 a change in Government policy determined that Freemasonry would be deleted from the ‘Exemption Schedule’ and, like other organizations, was now required to register. Brethren in authority in Hong Kong are careful they do not antagonize the Chinese authorities by creating lodges in mainland China.

Bro Nunn reports that some Masons from Hong Kong visited the Masonic buildings in China—no meetings were held and no regalia carried. When the communists came to power, and with the lodges closing down owing to the departure of the expatriates, the empty buildings were taken over by the
authorities. In Amoy, the Masonic building was demolished in the year 2000 after a typhoon had destroyed the roof and caused other structural damage. A large wooden ceiling-rose was retrieved and is now in the Masonic Museum in Hong Kong.

The Masonic building in Shanghai houses Medical Associations and a library. Tinjian Masonic building is still recognized by the façade, but inside the changes are considerable. The building is used as a boutique, with the manufacturing of the items being carried on upstairs. The building at Wei-Hai-Wei exists, but there is nothing to indicate its previous use. It is now used by the Chinese Navy Training Department for family planning! At Qingdao, the building is locked and barred. All travel to these centres to view the buildings is formally arranged with the Chinese authorities.

Masonic Building at Wei-Hai-Wei

Concluding Remarks
The research I undertook for this paper has given me a wonderful insight into another culture, a paradoxical culture, one so dissimilar from my own, yet shares with mine many common threads. Chinese secret societies have evolved over the centuries, adapting their behaviour and characteristics in accordance with the times. Chinese secret societies have many features in common with secret societies of other cultures; this is not to suggest that one evolved from the other.

The rise of secret societies during the latter stages of the Ming dynasty coincided with the development of symbolic Freemasonry in China and throughout the world. The Chinese seized the opportunity to adopt a title from a respectable and influential society, thereby vicariously gaining the respect of the Europeans.

This is not to say, however, that the ‘Chinese Masonic Society’ did not practice certain fundamental tenets of Freemasonry; some were very active in community affairs and raising monies for charities. They were not active in the political affairs of the host country (although they were strongly active in the political affairs of China).

Migration was, for the Chinese, a means to amass wealth and fortune. As in other communities, they found that their cultural differences, language, and their frugal existence made it harder for them to assimilate into the European community. They formed offshoots of the Hung Society, or Society of Heaven and Earth, such as the Yee Hing Secret Society, Chee Kung Tong, etc. These provided a meeting place for them, where they had fraternal friendship, benevolence, and social discourse with people from the same geographical area of China, thus in many ways substituting for a family.

In the original teachings of the Hung Society, the candidate, during his initiation in the society, was taken on a symbolic journey of the soul through the underworld. The teachings of Freemasonry can be associated with a symbolical journey where we strive to perfect our principles and control our passions from birth to death. Both Societies believe in benevolence, assisting their fellow man and moral self-improvement.

Freemasonry in Hong Kong (China) is alive and prospering. The lodges that have taken the initiative to promote their activities in the local community and attract their membership will succeed. My discussions with WBro P J Nunn, the District Grand Secretary of the District Grand Lodge of Hong Kong and the Far East (EC), left me encouraged by their enthusiasm.

Regular Freemasonry brought to the foreigners the same privileges and comfort that the Hung Societies brought to the Chinese. China has seen lodges established under Sweden, England, Scotland, France, Ireland, Massachusetts and the Philippine jurisdictions—such a richness of Masonry.
My thoughts are directed to an oft-cited verse by R L Sharp.

A BAG OF TOOLS
Isn’t it strange
That princes and kings,
And clowns that caper
In sawdust rings,
And common people
Like you and me
Are builders for eternity?

Each is given a bag of tools,
A shapeless mass,
A book of rules;
And each must make –
Ere life is flown –
A stumbling block
Or a stepping stone.

My appreciation is extended to those who assisted me in my wonderful journey through The Hung Society and Freemasonry the Chinese Way.

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WBro Ian Maddox, PSGD, Grand Librarian UGLQ.
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WBro Richard Num, Secretary South Australian Lodge of Research, GL SA&NT.
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WBro George Preston, Grand Lodge Office, GL Scotland.
RWBro Graham White, OAM, PAGM, Grand Secretary UGLQ.

Lastly I acknowledge the support and profession guidance from my son and Bro Mark Stead, FC.

My apologies are extended to anyone who may have been inadvertently omitted from this list.
Appendix A

Petition for the formation of Elizabeth Lodge

[Chaplains Cross]

We Carl, by the Grace of God, etc, etc, wish everyone peace, unity and progress, etc, etc, etc.

[followed by three pattée crosses]

For as much as it is the declared wish of the Grand Freemasons’ or the Provincial Grand Lodge of Gothenburg, and in particular with regard to the petition presented to us by Brother John Adolf Smedberg, Confidant of Solomon, Supercargo of the Swedish East India Company, together with several zealous Brother Freemasons, to obtain the right to found a Lodge which shall spread the light of the three St John’s Degrees, from the Apprentice Degree up to and including the St John’s Master Degree, for which purpose they have in obedience petitioned for Our gracious consent; We therefore, after gracious consideration of the same, have found this petition to be in accordance with Our Laws, and in accordance therewith on the 21st day of March of this year we especially establish a Capitulation and Instruction, by means of which we therefore graciously order that the aforementioned Brother Smedberg, together with assistant Brethren to be appointed by him for this purpose, shall erect and consecrate a new St John’s Lodge to work in the Empire of China in the city of Canton under the name of Elizabeth Lodge under the jurisdiction of the National Grand Lodge of Sweden and under the supervision of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Gothenburg.

To this end We have graciously chosen the coat of arms and colours below, to be used on the apron and in the work of the Lodge.

[Coloured drawings of apron, coat of arms and a sash or collar follow]

For the same reason We further decree that Brother John Aldof Smedberg, Supercargo, shall be Worshipful Master of the Lodge for as long as he remains in China. The choice of the Deputy Master and other Officers shall be in accordance with the ninth and tenth paragraphs of the Capitulation and Instruction of the Lodge.

And We hereby extend to the Brethren of Elizabeth Lodge all the privileges and rights that are permitted within the laws and are accorded to all St John’s Lodges. We extend to them the gracious shelter and protection of the Supreme Threefold Great Architect of the Universe. Furthermore, We have signed this with Our own hand and caused Our own seal to confirm what has taken place in the East of the City of Stockholm, from the summit where We, as the Representative of Solomon, have Our Seat, where the radiance of light illuminates the work and darkness is dethroned, this 20th day of the 11th month in the 1,787th year after that in which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was born.
Appendix B

Dispensation for Northern Lodge of China

We, Samuel Rawson Esq. Provincial Grand Master of British [sic] Masons in China and Masonic Jurisdiction thereto belonging

To our Worthy Brother Archibald Dunlop

Greetings

Reposing the Greatest Confidence in your Zeal, Fervour and Constancy in the Craft

We do

(By virtue of the power and authority in us vested)

Hereby authorize and empower you to call to your assistance a sufficient number of known and approved Masons in Shanghai, to open a new Lodge to be held there and to proceed to the appointment of the officers of a new Lodge there to be established and constituted to be called and known by the name of

THE NORTHERN LODGE OF CHINA

According to the most ancient and honourable Customs of the Craft, in all ages and amongst all nations in the known world and not contrariwise and make report to us of all your proceedings. This dispensation to remain in force until a Reply is received from the Grand Lodge of England to the application for a Warrant for the New Lodge.

Given under our hand and seal, at the City of Canton, this 5th day of October A.D. 1849 – A.L. 5849.