

THE DUKES OF ATHOLL AND FREEMASONRY

BY BRO. W. G. FISHER

THERE are many cases of families with a history of several generations taking part in Freemasonry. Apart from our own Royal family, however, there can be few which have such a record as the Dukes of Atholl (also spelt "Athole" and "Athol"). The family name was Murray and the Murrays and their retainers were hardy Highlanders from Perthshire with a history of mixed loyalties. The first Duke was the 29th Earl and second Marquess of Atholl, Earl of Tullibardine, etc.¹ He was the eldest son and heir of John Murray, who was created Marquess of Atholl, etc., on the 17th February, 1676. The 1st Duke's mother was Amelia Sophia, daughter and sole heir of James Stanley, 7th Earl of Derby, through whom her grandson, the second Duke succeeded to the sovereignty of the Isle of Man and the English Barony of Strange, created by writ in 1628.² So far as we know, the first Duke was not a Freemason in the English Masonic system or a "Gentleman Mason" in a Scots operative lodge. He was blind in one eye and was known as "Iain Cam". He was a faithful supporter of William III, who, in 1696, conferred on him the titles of Earl of Tullibardine, Viscount Glenalmond and Lord Murray. This was in his father's lifetime and the titles became extinct when "Iain Cam" died. On the 6th May, 1703, he succeeded his father as Marquess of Atholl and on the 30th June in the same year he was created Duke of Atholl, Marquess of Tullibardine, Earl of Strathgairn and Strathardle, Viscount of Balquhidder, Glenalmond and Glenlyon and Lord Murray, Balvenie and Gask, all in the County of Perth. Appointed Lord Privy Seal for Scotland in April, 1703, he had previously been installed Knight of the Order of the Thistle, 7th February, 1703/4. In the following year he surrendered his office of Lord Privy Seal and actively opposed the Union of Scotland with England. His second, but eldest surviving son, William, styled Marquess of Tullibardine, having joined the Earl of Mar in the 1715 Rebellion, was attainted by the United Kingdom Parliament and by law could not succeed to his father's titles and estates. The first Duke therefore procured an Act of Parliament vesting the succession in his next surviving son, James. When the first Duke died on the 14th November, 1724, the Jacobites styled the attainted Marquess of Tullibardine as "Duke of Atholl".

JAMES MURRAY, 2nd DUKE OF ATHOLL³

Lord James Murray, born 28th September, 1690, at Edinburgh, third but 2nd surviving son, was a Captain and Lieutenant-Colonel of a Grenadier Company of the 1st Regt. of Foot Guards in 1712 and was later Lieut.-Colonel of the 1st Royal Scots Regiment of Foot. He was also M.P. for the County of Perth from 1715 to 1724. Lord James Murray married, first, Jane, widow of James Lannoy, of Hammersmith, a merchant, and daughter of Thomas Frederick, by whom he had two sons and two daughters. The two sons died in infancy. The elder daughter, Jean, married John Lindsay, 20th Earl of Crawford (Grand Master of England, 1734-35).⁴ The younger daughter, Charlotte, married her cousin, John, who became the 3rd Duke of Atholl. There was no issue of the second marriage. The Duke's second wife was Jean, daughter of John Drummond, of Megginch, Co. Perth.

No doubt the 2nd Duke foresaw some difficulties in regard to the succession, for in 1733 he obtained an Act of Parliament which provided that the attainder of his brother, the Marquess of Tullibardine, so far as it affected the honours and estates of the Dukes of Atholl, should apply only to that brother and his issue and not to any other heirs male of the first Duke.

¹ The *Complete Peerage* describes him as 29th Earl of Atholl, apparently adding the Stewart creation of the Earldom.

² This Barony, in abeyance after the death of the 9th Duke, has, in February, 1965, been determined in favour of John Drummond, of Megginch. (G. Draffen).

³ *Complete Peerage*. Collin's *Peerage of England*, 1767. vii, p. 10.

⁴ *A.Q.C.*, lxxvi, p. 46. He was considered for appointment as the first Grand Master Mason of Scotland, but was not elected. Jean Murray died soon after marriage.

This brought into the succession the issue of his next surviving brother, Lord George Murray, who was pardoned for his part in the '15 Rebellion, but later was again to take up arms in the '45 Rebellion and end his days in exile.¹

We do not know when or where the 2nd Duke was made a Mason; he could have been a "Gentleman Mason" in some Scottish operative lodge or he may have been initiated in an English lodge during one of his frequent visits to London, carrying out the duties of his public offices. We know that he was a Freemason, because he attended the Meeting of the Grand Lodge of England on the 17th April, 1735.² The following is an extract from the minutes of that meeting:—

"Thursday April 17th. 1735.

At the House of the Rt. Honble. The Lord Viscount Weymouth, in Grosvenor Square where mett

The Rt. Honble. The Earl of Craufurd G.M.

Sr. Cecil Wray, Bart. D.G.M.

John Ward Esqr.

Sr. Edward Mansell, Bart. } G. Wardens

The Rt. Honble. The Lord Viscount Weymouth G.M. Elect

Duke of Richmond

Duke of Athol

Earl of Winchelsea

Earl of Balcarrass (*Balcarres*)

Earl of Wymes (*Wemyss, James, 5th Earl*)

Earl of Lowdown (*Loudon*)

Marquess of Bowman

Lord Cathcart

Lord Vere Bartee." (*Bertie*)³

It will be noted that there were several other Scottish Peers present at this meeting. The Grand Lodge of Scotland was formed in the following year, but the Duke did not take any part in this, nor does he appear to have been considered for the Grand Mastership.

A Duke of Atholl is named in connection with an alleged meeting of Knights Templar in 1745 at Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, when Prince Charles Edward is said to have been installed as Grand Master. The "Duke" referred to in the story must have been the Marquess of Tullibardine. The story, the truth of which is extremely doubtful, is told in *A.Q.C.* xxxiii, pp. 40-45, and lxvii, pp. 53-55, and need not be repeated here. It is fairly certain that the 2nd Duke of Atholl could not have been at Holyrood at the time stated.

During the '45 Rebellion he was in London, and his seat, Castle Blair, was seized by his brothers, William, Marquess of Tullibardine and Lord George Murray. He accompanied the Duke of Cumberland to Scotland, but he does not appear to have been in command of any troops.

He was a subscriber to Alexander Gordon's *Itinerarium Septentrionale* which was published in 1726, but this support of Alexander Gordon was probably not because Gordon was a Freemason, but because the *Itinerarium* contained much useful information about ancient remains in Scotland.⁴

The 2nd Duke of Atholl in 1736 succeeded his cousin, James Stanley, 10th Earl of Derby, in the sovereignty of the Isle of Man. The Duke is reported to have immediately appointed his nephew, James Murray (afterwards General James Murray) as Governor of the small kingdom, as it then was. If this is correct, James Murray must have been only fourteen years of age. The Duke himself visited the Island in 1739 and it was recorded at the time as follows:—

"The Duke of Atholl was receiv'd as King in Man, by the Inhabitants of that Island with great Expressions of Joy. The firing of the great Guns was heard distinctly on the Coast of Galway."⁵

¹ There was another brother, Lord Charles Murray, who was concerned in the '15 Rebellion. He was captured and sentenced to be shot as he had been an officer in the Army of the United Kingdom. His brother, the 2nd Duke, obtained a pardon for him, but he died in 1720. He and his brother, Lord George, were the most popular officers in the Jacobite Army.

² The Lodge at Dunkeld was not constituted until 1737. Was it the result of his initiative?

³ *Q.C.A.*, x, p. 252.

⁴ *A.Q.C.*, lx, p. 93.

⁵ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1739, p. 437.

At the same time he succeeded to the English Barony of Strange. Consequently, for four years he was both a representative Peer of Scotland and an English Peer, sitting in the House of Lords. He ceased to be a Scottish representative peer at the General election in 1741. He was Lord Privy Seal (Scotland) from 1733 to 1763, when he was appointed Keeper of the Great Seal and was installed Knight of the most Ancient and most Noble Order of the Thistle on 11th February, 1733/34.

He died full of years at Dunkeld, Co. Perth, on the 8th January, 1764.

His portrait was engraved by Brother John Faber the younger (1695?-1756).¹

JOHN MURRAY, 3rd DUKE OF ATHOLL

John Murray, who succeeded his uncle as 3rd Duke, was the son and heir of the 5th son of the 1st Duke, namely, Lord George Murray, who was the Lieut.-General of the Jacobite Army in 1745. This Lord George Murray was exceedingly popular with his troops and a most able General. He was by far the best officer on the side of the Young Pretender. If his advice had been accepted the Battle of Culloden would have been avoided. His eldest brother, William, Marquess of Tullibardine, was a very sick man in 1745 and had to be supported by two servants whenever he stood up. He was eventually taken prisoner and died the 9th July, 1746, while he was prisoner in the Tower of London.²

Lord George Murray, though wounded at Culloden, managed to escape to the Continent and he finally settled in Holland, where he died, 15th October, 1760.³ His son, John, probably returned to Scotland while his father was still living in exile, for he is described as the Hon. John Murray of Strowan. His maternal grandfather was James Murray of Glencarse and Strowan. John was born 6th May, 1729, and became a Captain in Lord Loudon's Regiment of Foot, which later became the 54th (Highland) Regt. of Foot. He was M.P. for Co. Perth, 1761-64.

As there was some doubt whether he was entitled to succeed to the Dukedom of Atholl and the Atholl estates, he presented a petition to the King, claiming them and asking that a declaration be made that he was entitled to the same. The petition was referred to the House of Lords, who, on 7th February, 1764, resolved "that the Petitioner hath a right to the titles, honours and dignities of Duke of Atholl, Marquess of Tullibardine, Earl of Strathay [*sic*] and Strathardle, Viscount Balquhidar, Glenalmond and Glenlyon, Lord Murray, Balvenie and Gask."⁴

On the 23rd October, 1753, he married his cousin, Lady Charlotte Murray, only surviving daughter of the 2nd Duke. As the 2nd Duke's sole heir she became, on his death, the *suo jure* Baroness Strange and succeeded to the sovereignty and revenues of the Isle of Man. She and her husband in 1765 sold the sovereignty to the Government for £70,000 and a joint annuity of £2,000, reserving, however, their landed interests on the Island.⁵

There appears to be no record of the lodge in which the Duke was made a Mason or the date when he was initiated. The "Antients" Grand Lodge in England, from its beginning, had some difficulty in persuading a Noble Freemason to be their Grand Master. The first was William, 1st Earl of Blesington, who had been Grand Master in Ireland some twenty years before. He was appointed Grand Master of the "Antient" Grand Lodge in 1756 and could be called the "reluctant Grand Master". He was installed as Grand Master by proxy and during the three years he held the office he did not once attend a meeting of his Grand Lodge.⁶ All he seems to have done was to sign Warrants. He was followed as Grand Master by the 6th Earl of Kellie (1760 to 1765) and the Hon. Thomas Mathew (1766 to 1770).

The 3rd Duke of Atholl was elected Grand Master on the 30th January and was installed 2nd March, 1771, at the Half Moon Tavern, in Cheapside.⁷ He appointed Laurence Dermott as his Deputy. For nearly twenty years Dermott had been Grand Secretary.

It was probably the third Duke who promoted the friendly relations which existed for many years between the "Antients" and the Grand Lodge of Scotland, especially when he

¹ *A.Q.C.*, xi, p. 39.

² *G.M.*, 1746, p. 383.

³ Collin's *Peerage*, 1768, vii, p. 9. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for that year, p. 542, reports the death under date, 11th November, 1760.

⁴ *Dictionary of National Biography*. A number of titles are omitted from this list, three of which, namely, Marquess and Earl of Atholl and Earl of Tullibardine are still recited in the titles of the Duke of Atholl.

⁵ *Complete Peerage*.

⁶ *Q.C.A.*, xi.

⁷ Gould; *History of Freemasonry* (Poole edition, iii, p. 42).

was elected Grand Master Mason of Scotland on the 20th November, 1772, and installed as such a year later. He was a man of great character and charm and was noted for his generosity. In a letter dated 7th September, 1774, he expressed his satisfaction that "the Ancient Craft is regaining its ground over the Moderns". Two months later (5th November) he drowned himself in the River Tay at Dunkeld "in a fit of delirium". He was only forty-five years of age.¹

His widow, Charlotte, died 13th October, 1805.² They were buried at Dunkeld.

JOHN MURRAY, 4th DUKE OF ATHOLL³

John Murray, the 4th Duke, was the eldest son and heir of the 3rd Duke and was born on 30th June, 1755, at Dunkeld. On the death of his mother he succeeded to the Barony of Strange and the Lordship of the Isle of Man. He presented his family's third petition to Parliament praying for a Bill to amend the Act of 1765, by which the sovereignty of the Isle of Man was sold to the British Crown, on the grounds that its terms were unjust. The two previous petitions had been dismissed. In spite of great opposition the Bill was brought in and passed.⁴ As a result of this, one-fourth of the customs of the Isle of Man was settled on him and the heirs general of the 7th Earl of Derby. In the year 1828, however, he commuted this for the sum of £417,000.

He does not appear to have made his mark in any public offices, but in 1778 he raised a Regiment of two Battalions named the 77th Regiment of Foot, or Atholl Highlanders. The *Gentleman's Magazine* reported it as follows:—

"The young Duke of Athole [*sic*] is raising a regiment of the same number (1,000 men) on his estate, in which he does not even ask a command. Besides the King's bounty-money, he gives two guineas to each recruit, which is 2,000 guineas out of his pocket. But, tempering zeal for his country with humanity to his countrymen, he obliges himself to maintain the families of the recruits who go from his estate, if they need maintenance, and never, during his life, to raise the rents upon the families of such tenants as resort to his standard."⁵

The minutes of the Lodge of Kelso, No. 58 (S.C.), contain the following reference to the same matter:—

"A special meeting of the Lodge was held on February 12, 1778, when the Right Worshipful explained that Lieut.-Colonel Brown of the Swan in Chelsea, of the Athol Highlanders, being in town and levying men for the corps raising by the Most Worshipful the Duke of Athol, Grand Master of England and Grand Master Elect of Scotland.

The brethren unanimously resolved to testify their zeal for their sovereign and their respect for the Noble Grand Master by marching with Lieut.-Colonel Brown at the head of his recruiting party beating up for volunteers for the Athol Highlanders, and accordingly marched from the Lodge in Procession through the town and at the same time offered a Bounty of Three Guineas over his Majesty's allowance to every man who should enlist in that Corps."⁶

There had previously been a 77th Regiment of Foot, named the Montgomery Highlanders, which was raised in 1757 and disbanded in 1763. The Atholl Highlanders were disbanded at Berwick on Tweed in 1783. Most of the time it was embodied the Regiment was in Ireland. On the 5th October, 1783, the Grand Lodge of Ireland granted Warrant No. 578 for the establishment of a Lodge in the Regiment. The Duke of Atholl had just completed his year as Grand Master of Scotland and was still Grand Master of the "Antients" in England!

Presumably, it was for raising the Atholl Highlanders that the Duke was created, 18th August, 1786, as Baron Murray of Stanley, Co. Gloucester, and Earl Strange.⁷ This enabled him to sit in the House of Lords as an English Peer, during his mother's lifetime; since 1780 he had been a Representative Peer for Scotland. Other offices and appointments which he held were:—

¹ *Complete Peerage*.

² *G.M.*, 1805, ii, p. 981.

³ *A.Q.C.*, xxi, St. John's Card, 1908, includes a portrait and some details of his Masonic career by Henry Sadler.

⁴ *G.M.*, 1790, p. 57. His uncle, General Lord James Murray, introduced the Bill in the House of Commons.

⁵ *G.M.*, 1778, p. 361.

⁶ Minutes of the Lodge of Kelso, No. 58.

⁷ *G.M.*, 1786, p. 815.

- 1780. Fellow of the Royal Society.
- 1793. (4th February) Captain General and Commander in Chief of the Isle of Man.
- 1794-1803. Lord Lieutenant of the county of Perth.
- 1797. (28th June) Privy Councillor.
- 1798. Colonel of the Perthshire Militia.
- 1800. Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle.

The 4th Duke was not a Mason when his father died and the "Antient" Grand Lodge, either desperately anxious to maintain the Atholl connection, or remembering the difficulty they always had in persuading a noble Freemason to be their Grand Master, prevailed upon him to succeed his father as their Grand Master. In order to make this possible, although he was only nineteen years of age, he was initiated, passed, raised and installed Master of the Grand Master's Lodge No. 1, all on the 25th February, 1775. I do not have to point out that this was the Grand Lodge which had accused the older Grand Lodge of violating the ancient Landmarks of the Order. Four months later, on the 25th June, he was installed as Grand Master, in the presence of the Duke of Leinster¹ and Sir James Adolphus Oughton, Past Grand Masters of Ireland and Scotland respectively.

It is owing to his great influence and the services he rendered to the "Antients" that they became known as "Atholl Masons" and "Antient" Lodges as "Atholl" Lodges.

It is a question whether he took more than a passing interest in Freemasonry at this early age. He was little more than a boy, but master of something like 200,000 acres and a most eligible bachelor. The "Antients" had been dominated almost from the beginning of their Grand Lodge by Laurence Dermott who did not rule with velvet gloves and some of the things he did was not always above reproach. Indeed, he had to defend himself and his autocratic behaviour in 1778. In the 3rd Edition of *Ahiman Rezon* he wrote . . . "some of the Modern society have been extremely malapert of late. Not satisfied with saying the Antient Masons in England had no Grand Master, some of them descended so far from the truth as to report the author [i.e. *Dermott*] had forged the Grand Master's handwriting to masonic Warrants, &c. Upon application, his Grace the Most Noble Prince John, Duke of Atholl, our present Right Worshipful Grand Master, avowed his Grace's handwriting, supported the ancient Craft and vindicated the author in the public newspapers." This would have carried more weight if he had produced facsimiles of the disputed signatures. It would also have been interesting to know in which papers this vindication appeared. The newspapers of the period have been well scanned for masonic information but this acquittal of Dermott has still to come to light. The Duke, of course, in the circumstances, would scarcely refuse to support his Deputy, the mainspring of the "Antient's" organization.

It is impossible to say if there was any real friction between the Duke and Dermott, but the former does not appear to have attended many meetings during this first period of office as Grand Master of the "Antients". About the end of 1777 Dermott resigned his office of Deputy Grand Master. The Duke expressed in a letter his approval of William Dickey as Deputy Grand Master and at the same time informed the Grand Lodge that he had accepted the office of Grand Master Mason of Scotland, "as he imagined it might accrue to the advantage of Antient Masonry in England by indubitably showing the tenets to be the same". He is recorded in the *Year Book of the Grand Lodge of Scotland* as "Grand Master Mason. 1778-80".

The Duke declined re-election as Grand Master of the "Antients" in a letter in 1781, of which the following is a copy:—

"Dunkeld, Nov. 29. 1781.

Right Worshipful Grand Secretary,

I had the honour of receiving a copy of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge on the 5th of Sep. and your letter yesterday.

I should accept with the greatest pleasure of the honor the Grand Lodge have done me by re-electing me their Grand Master; but as my Residence is chiefly in the Country it has not been (nor will it I fear be) in my power to give that attendance which is the due of the Ancient Fraternity. I trust that during the time I have had the honor of being Grand Master, the Honor and Interest of the Craft have no way diminished, but for the reason above mentioned, with many thanks to the Grand

¹ "I think that Leinster was still G.M. of Ireland. The G.M. of Ireland is almost an *ad vitam* appointment. (G. Draffen).

Lodge I must beg leave to resign the high office of Grand Master, at the same time the Fraternity may rest assured of my best wishes for their welfare, and the Prosperity of the Ancient Craft.

I remain,
Right Worshipful Grand Secretary,
Your faithful Br. in Masonry,
(Signed) ATHOLL, Grand Master.”¹

In 1791, Laurence Dermott died. For forty-seven years he had ruled the Grand Lodge of England “Under the old Institutions,” admired by many, supported in the end by few, execrated by some. In the same year, the Marquess of Antrim, who had succeeded the Duke of Atholl as Grand Master, also died. The Duke once more accepted nomination as Head of the “Antients” and was unanimously elected and on the 20th January, 1792, installed as their Grand Master. There is no doubt that it was a very popular appointment.

During this second period of office as Grand Master the Duke showed himself to be a zealous, courageous and enlightened leader. He was no longer a figurehead, though much of the administration of his Grand Lodge had necessarily to be left to his Deputies, James Agar (1790-94); William Dickey (1794-1800); and Thomas Harper (1801-13). It was largely due to his enthusiastic influence that the Boys’ School was established in 1798. In *Ahiman Rezon* (7th Edition) he alone is credited with the introduction of a clause in the Secret Societies Act of 1799, which exempted Freemasons’ Lodges from the Provisions of the Act. It was, of course, the result of the united efforts of the Duke and the Earl of Moira, Acting Grand Master of the “Moderns”.

This association with the Earl of Moira lasted many years and was an important factor in the events which led to the Union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813. It also brought about the fraternal recognition by the Grand Lodge of Scotland of the “Moderns” Grand Lodge of England.

The Union of the two Grand Lodges in England in 1813 has been recorded at some length by competent masonic writers, but the story of the bitter opposition he had to overcome in his own Grand Lodge has yet to be told in full. It is a subject which requires more space than is available here. One must state, however, that in order to facilitate matters the Duke of Atholl resigned as Grand Master of the “Antients” on the day of the Feast of the four Crowned Martyrs, the 8th November, 1813. In his place his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent was installed as Grand Master on the 1st December, the same day on which the Articles of Union were ratified. His brother, the Duke of Sussex, Grand Master of the “Moderns”, then became the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England.

The Duke of Atholl continued to take an active interest in Freemasonry. He was Grand First Principal of the R.A. in Scotland from 1820 till his death in 1830.² About the year 1822 he agreed to preside over the Rite of Misraim, an unrecognized masonic rite of 90 Degrees, said to have originated in Milan about 1805. The Sovereign of the Rite in England was H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex, and in Ireland, the Duke of Leinster. After the Union he also became one of four Vice-Patrons of the Girls’ School.

He married, first, 26th December, 1774, Jane, eldest daughter of Charles, 9th Lord Cathcart. She died in Hanover Square, London, 5th December, 1790, aged 37 years, and was buried at Dunkeld.³ He married, secondly, 11th March, 1794, Margery, widow of John Mackenzie (styled Lord Macleod) and eldest daughter of James, 16th Lord Forbes.⁴

The Duke died at Dunkeld 29th September, 1830, aged seventy-five years and was buried beside his first wife.

JOHN MURRAY, 5th DUKE OF ATHOLL⁵

Born 26th June, 1778, the 5th Duke lived under most tragic circumstances. Educated at Eton he was appointed an Ensign in the 61st Foot (South Gloucestershire Regt.) in 1797. In the following year he became mentally ill and for the rest of his life required care and protection. He died in Greville Place, St. John’s Wood, Middlesex, 14th September, 1846. He was not a Freemason.

¹ A.Q.C., xxi, p. 4 of St. John’s Card.

² “Having been made a Royal Arch Mason in the Naval and Military Chapter, No. 40 S.C. in 1820.” (G. Draffen).

³ G.M., 1790, p. 1150.

⁴ G.M., 1794, p. 278, and *Complete Peerage*.

⁵ *Complete Peerage*.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK JOHN MURRAY, 6th DUKE OF ATHOLL¹

The father of the 6th Duke was James Murray, created Lord Glenlyon, 9th July, 1821, 2nd son of the 4th Duke by his first wife. This James Murray married Emily Francis, daughter and in her issue sole heir of Hugh Percy, 2nd Duke of Northumberland.

The 6th Duke of Atholl was born 20th September, 1814, in London. At about the age of 20 years he received a Commission in the 2nd Dragoon Guards. In 1840 he resigned from the Army perhaps because three years before he had succeeded his father as Lord Glenlyon. He was a Lord in Waiting from January to July, 1846, and was installed a Knight of the Thistle, 28th October, 1853. He was also President of the Highland and Agricultural Society from 1858 to 1862, and hereditary Sheriff of the County of Perth.

He rendered most distinguished service to Freemasonry in Scotland, almost from the day he was initiated in the Dunkeld Lodge, No. 14 (S.C.) in November, 1841. On the last day of that month (St. Andrew's Day) he was appointed Depute Grand Master by Major-General Lord Frederick Fitz-Clarence, who was installed Grand Master Mason on that date. Lord Glenlyon was re-elected Depute Grand Master on St. Andrew's Day in the following year. After the meeting of Grand Lodge on that day, he took the chair at the dinner which followed and we are told:—

“His Lordship did the honours of the chair in excellent style and exerted himself to the utmost in keeping up the good feeling and conviviality of the meeting.”²

On the 8th May, 1843, he attended the funeral Grand Lodge held by the Grand Master Mason of Scotland in commemoration of the Duke of Sussex, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, who had died on the 21st April in that year.³

On St. Andrew's Day, 1843, he was elected Grand Master Mason of Scotland. He held this office for 21 years, much longer than any other G.M.M. of Scotland. All that time he worked with unflagging zeal for the improvement of Scottish Freemasonry. He also held the supreme office in other degrees. For example, he was installed a Knight Templar in the Lothians Preceptory on 29th November, 1843, and on the following 11th March he was appointed Chancellor of the Order of the Temple and was Grand Master of the Order from 1846 to 1864. Exalted in the Royal Arch Chapter No. 1, Edinburgh, in 1843, he was Grand First Principal, 1844-46, and also from 1847 to 1850. After the meeting of Chapter No. 1, on the 23rd September, 1844, the First Principal said:—

“The Companions will, I am sure, join with great pleasure in dedicating a bumper to the health of her most gracious majesty, the Queen and the more so as on the present occasion she was the guest of our Most Excellent First Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, Companion Lord Glenlyon, who was during the last twelve months exalted in this Chapter. Her Majesty's confidence was unbounded, having dismissed her guards and trusted to the far-famed hospitality and loyalty of the Atholl Highlanders for protection.”⁴ 5

The Atholl Highlanders at that time were the bodyguard of the Dukes of Atholl and it was about this time that Queen Victoria gave her royal assent to the maintenance of this private “army”. It is the only private “army” permitted in the United Kingdom.

On the 14th September, 1846, he succeeded his Uncle as 6th Duke of Atholl, or, as he spelt the name from about 1847, “Athole”. In order to be consistent we will continue to use the word “Atholl” especially as this was restored by his son and successor.

In the early days of his Grand Mastership he realized the value of visiting the Lodges under his jurisdiction. As Depute Grand Master he visited St. Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh, on 29th November, 1842, accompanied by several office bearers of Grand Lodge.⁶ He visited the Lodge again in 1847 when he was Grand Master Mason.

For more than one hundred years a Grand Master Mason of Scotland had not visited Glasgow. This was remedied on the 1st June, 1847, when the Duke attended a meeting in the Great Hall at the Trades Hall, Glasgow, for the purpose of installing Sheriff Alison as Prov. Grand Master of Glasgow. Sheriff Alison was Archibald Alison (afterwards Sir

¹ *Complete Peerage*.

² *Freemason's Quarterly Review*, 1841, p. 440.

³ *F.Q.R.*, 1843.

⁴ *F.Q.R.*, 1844, p. 479.

⁵ He was a Founder Member of the Supreme Council of Scotland, A. & A. Rite in 1846. He was Sovereign Grand Commander, 1849-1864. He was admitted to the Royal Order of Scotland in Edinburgh on 30th November, 1848, being given the characteristic of “Conclusion”. (G. Draffen).

⁶ *F.Q.R.*, 1842, p. 440.

Archibald) the author of *The History of Europe* and *The Life of John, Duke of Marlborough*.¹ The Duke visited Glasgow again on the 27th February, 1851, to attend the annual Masonic Ball and on the 9th April to lay the foundation stone of Victoria Bridge, which replaced one which had withstood corroding time for 500 years. On the 12th December, the same year, he visited the Prov. Grand Lodge of Aberdeen, the first G.M.M. to do so.

Many difficulties arose during the time he was Grand Master Mason of Scotland, but he showed considerable firmness and tact in dealing with them. The facilities provided by Masonic Clubs in Edinburgh and Glasgow was abused by brethren as well as by visitors who were not all Masons. They caused so much scandal that the civil authorities and Grand Lodge had to intervene. Then there was the rather strained relations with English Freemasons following some tactless remarks by Dr. Crucefix regarding some Scottish Freemasons, who, he claimed, came into England, claiming relief from funds intended for English Freemasons and their dependants. In 1850 an attempt was made to elect someone else as Grand Master. The incident led to tumult and disorder in Grand Lodge. The Duke dealt with the matter calmly and judiciously and in the end was re-elected by an overwhelming majority.²

He was very jealous of what he considered to be the ancient rights and privileges of Scottish Masons. Bro. D. Murray Lyon tells the story of a "brush" the Duke had with the Prince Consort:—

"... When in 1851 Prince Albert was invited to lay the foundation stone of the Fine Arts Gallery in Edinburgh, his Grace failing to persuade his Royal Highness to join the Order, declined under protest to countenance the proceedings. Again, in 1861, when made aware of the Prince Consort's intention to plant the corner-stones of the new Post Office and Industrial Museum at Edinburgh, his Grace addressed a letter to his Royal Highness, in which he said: 'I consider it my duty, as Grand Master Mason of Scotland, again respectfully to protest against the infringement of the ancient privilege of the Masonic Bodies to lay the foundation-stones of public buildings in Scotland'. The Prince replied that he had made enquiry and found that Freemasons possessed no such exclusive right as had been claimed by his Grace".³

This, however, did not diminish the high regard Queen Victoria had for him and she visited him during his last illness.

The Empress Eugenie of France and her husband also treated him with great respect. When on a visit to the Emperor Napoleon III in the autumn of 1861, the Duke was not expected back in time to preside over his Grand Lodge on St. Andrew's Day. Arrangements had been made for the Depute Grand M.M. to take his place when, to the surprise of the Grand Officers, he arrived in time to carry out his duties at the Festival.⁴

The Grand Lodge of Scotland had never possessed a place of its own, its meetings being held in various halls in Edinburgh. In 1856, however, a sum of £3,500 was voted for the purchase of a house in George Street, Edinburgh, with the intention of building on the site, a permanent home for Grand Lodge. The ceremony of laying the foundation stone was conducted by the Duke of Atholl on the 24th June, 1858.⁵ The new hall was consecrated by him on the 24th February, 1859, and since that time Freemasons' Hall in George Street, Edinburgh, has been the headquarters of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.⁶

The Duke was married 29th October, 1839, at Blair Drummond, to Anne, only daughter of Henry Home-Drummond. She was born 17th June, 1814, in Edinburgh. From February to December, 1852, she was Mistress of the Robes and was a Lady of the Bedchamber from 1854 to 1897. She died at Dunkeld, 18th May, 1897, having outlived the Duke for 33 years. He died of a cancer in the neck at Blair Castle, 16th January, 1864.⁷ A Funeral Grand Lodge was held in his honour and a dirge was composed for that occasion by the Grand Bard, James Ballantine. In 1865 a Celtic Cross was erected to his memory by Masonic friends on Logieriat Hill, overlooking the Vale of Atholl.⁸

¹ F.Q.R., 1847, p. 233.

² F.Q.R., 1850, p. 493.

³ D. Murray Lyon's *History of the Lodge of Edinburgh (St. Mary's Chapel)*, No. 1, p. 393.

⁴ Murray Lyon, p. 392.

⁵ *Freemason's Magazine*, 1858, i, p. 518.

⁶ *Freemason's Magazine*, 1859, i, p. 518.

⁷ "His brother, Lord James Plantaganet Murray, was Depute Grand Master of Scotland, 1873-1874; He was initiated in St. John's Lodge, Dunkeld, No. 14, on 6th January, 1848. He also became Grand Z of Scotland, 1859-1863. He was a member of the Supreme Council for Scotland, 1857-1875, and was admitted to the Royal Order in Edinburgh, on 31st March, 1856, with the characteristic 'Excellence'. He died in 1875." (G. Draffen).

⁸ Murray Lyon, p. 393.

JOHN JAMES HUGH HENRY STEWART-MURRAY, 7th DUKE OF ATHOLL¹

His Grace was the only son and heir of the 6th Duke and was born at Blair Castle on the 6th August, 1840.

He was introduced to Freemasonry at an early age for when in 1856 his father invited upwards of 100 brethren from Dundee to visit him at Blair Castle, some of them were shown round the grounds by the young Marquess of Tullibardine.² He was only 18 years of age when he was initiated in the Lodge of St. John, No. 14, Dunkeld (now the "United Lodge of Dunkeld") on St. Andrew's Day, 1858. On the same day he was taken to Edinburgh to attend Grand Lodge, which was held on that day to re-elect his father as Grand Master Mason. The Marquess was passed in the Dunkeld Lodge on 12th January, 1859, but four years were to elapse before he was raised and then it was far from the place where he first saw the light. He was raised on the 24th March, 1863, in St. Paul's Lodge, No. 374, Montreal, which still works under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England.³

This delay in being raised to the degree of M.M. may indicate a lack of that enthusiasm which had characterized previous members of his family who had distinguished themselves in Freemasonry. He was, however, Senior Grand Warden of Scotland from 1866-68 and Provincial Grand Master for Perthshire West, from 1864 to 1886.

In 1859 the Marquess obtained a Lieutenancy in the Scots Fusilier Guards and was a Captain from 1864 to 1866. Through his grandmother he succeeded to the Barony of Percy when his great-uncle, Algernon Percy, 4th Duke of Northumberland, died on 12th February, 1865.

On his father's death he became 7th Duke of Atholl and on the 1st December, 1865, he registered at the Lyon Office, Edinburgh, the assumption of the name of "Stewart" before that of Murray. This was in consideration of his descent from and representation of the Stewarts, Earls of Atholl.⁴ He was installed Knight of the Thistle, 14th May, 1868.

On the 29th October, 1863, he married Louisa, eldest daughter of Sir Thomas Moncrieffe, of Moncrieffe. She died in Italy on the 8th July, 1902, and was buried at Blair. The Duke died on the 20th January, 1917, and was succeeded by his son, the Marquess of Tullibardine.

JOHN GEORGE STEWART-MURRAY, 8th DUKE OF ATHOLL⁵ (b. 1871)

The 8th Duke revived faintly the Masonic glories of his predecessors for as Marquess of Tullibardine he was Grand Master Mason of Scotland from 1909 to 1913.

He was initiated in the Dunkeld Lodge on 24th October, 1892, and was exalted in the R.A. Chapter No. 40 in 1909 and installed in the Lothians K.T. Preceptory in 1920.

Before he succeeded as Duke of Atholl he had a distinguished career in the Army. He was a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Horse Guards in 1892 and was promoted Lieutenant in 1893, Captain, 1899, Brevet Major, 1900, and Lieut.-Colonel in 1903. He served in the Sudan in 1893, being present at the Battle at Atbara and at the capture of Khartoum. He was mentioned in despatches and awarded the D.S.O. (15th November, 1898) and the British and Khedive's Medals. He also served in the South African War from 1899-1902 and was three times mentioned in despatches. He was called to further service during World War I and was again mentioned in despatches and was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath. He was awarded the White Eagle of Serbia, 3rd Class, with Swords. The many appointments he held from time to time, included: Brig.-General and Brigade Commander, H.Q. Unit (1918); Colonel Commandant, Scottish Horse; Hon. Colonel, 10th Liverpool Regiment; Hon. Colonel, 3rd Bn. The Black Watch; Hon. Brig.-General (Retired) Territorial Army, 1927; President of the Perthshire Territorial Army Association. He was Lord Lieutenant of Perthshire and was installed Knight of the Thistle in 1918 and appointed to the Privy Council on 21st November, 1921.

As Marquess of Tullibardine he was M.P. for West Perthshire from 1910 to 1917. Shortly after succeeding his father as the 8th Duke of Atholl he was appointed Lord High Commissioner of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and received the Freedom of Edinburgh in 1928.

¹ *Complete Peerage and Burke's Peerage*, 1963.

² *Freemason's Magazine*, 1856, p. 665.

³ *A.Q.C.*, xxii, p. 334.

⁴ *Herald & Genealogist*, iv, p. 471.

⁵ *Complete Peerage and Burke's Peerage*, 1963.

He married 20th July, 1899, Katherine Margery, 4th daughter of Sir James Henry Ramsey, Bart., of Banff. She was a most distinguished lady in her own right and was M.P. for Kinross and West Perth from 1923-1938, and Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Education. 1924-29. She was made a Dame of the Order of the British Empire in 1918 and was Hon. D.C.L., Oxon, Durham, McGill and Columbia (New York).

The Duke died on the 16th March, 1942, and the Duchess on 21st October, 1960. They did not leave a son to succeed to the title and estates.

JAMES THOMAS STEWART-MURRAY, 9th DUKE OF ATHOLL¹

The 9th Duke was brother and heir-apparent of the 8th Duke. He was born 18th August, 1879, and like his brother chose the Army as a career. As a Major in the 1st Bn. Cameron Highlanders he served in South Africa from 1900 to 1902. In World War I he was wounded in 1914 and was taken prisoner.

He was initiated in the Dunkeld Lodge, but was never advanced beyond the rank of Entered Apprentice. Consequently he made no progress in Freemasonry. He was inclined to be eccentric, for after succeeding to the Dukedom he always called himself Lord James Murray.

He died unmarried 8th May, 1957.

GEORGE IAIN MURRAY, 10th DUKE OF ATHOLL

The 10th Duke of Atholl was a distant cousin of his predecessor in the title, tracing his direct descent from the Right Revd. Lord George Murray, Bishop of St. Davids, 2nd son of the 3rd Duke.

His Grace, who is the present Duke of Atholl, is not a Freemason.

These notes have been prepared on the basis of a brief list of dates relating to the Dukes of Atholl, supplied to the Lodge by Brother George Draffen of Newington, R.W. Subt. Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Scotland and Past Grand Librarian. The writer was invited to expand them into a Paper that would tell the story of this great Masonic family in fuller detail. Brother Draffen has very kindly read the Paper, and certain additional information supplied by him appears in the footnotes indicated by his name.

Bro. A. R. Hewitt, Librarian and Curator of Grand Lodge, drew attention to the following:—

EXHIBITS

From the Grand Lodge Library:—

Warrant of Lodge No. 138 (Antients), dated 1st August, 1774, bearing signatures of the 3rd Duke of Atholl, Grand Master, and of Laurence Dermott, Dep. G.M.

Certificate, dated 6th May, 1811, issued by the Atholl Lodge No. 131 (Antients), Newcastle-upon-Tyne, one of the comparatively few Lodges bearing the name of Atholl.

Photograph of portrait (in possession of Grand Lodge) of the 4th Duke of Atholl.

An 'In memoriam' medallion issued on the death of the 3rd Duke of Atholl, bearing a bust of the Duke and the inscription 'Ioannes Murray. Athol Dux'. Silver, by Kirk. Shown in obverse and reverse. Rare.

On the conclusion of the paper a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Bro. W. G. Fisher on the proposition of the W.M., Bro. P. R. James, seconded by Bro. J. R. Clarke, S.W., and further comments were also offered by Bro. A. R. Hewitt and Bro. R. E. Parkinson.

Bro. P. R. James, W.M., said:—

Brother Fisher has done well to bring to our notice the connection between the Dukes of Atholl and Freemasonry. His paper, being mainly biographical, does not lend itself to comment but, in pondering over it, a paradox has occurred to me which I am unable to explain, though it is not strictly relevant.

Both the third and fourth Dukes were not only Grand Masters in England but also became Grand Master Masons in Scotland. This was quite in order as they were, naturally, Ancient Masons. It is well known that the Moderns made certain alterations in the ritual

¹ *Burke's Peerage*, 1963.

and that it was the Antients who were regarded as orthodox in the Sister Grand Lodges. How then could four—not counting H.R.H. the Prince of Wales—G.M.Ms. of Scotland become also Grand Masters of the Moderns' Grand Lodge in England? According to a letter from Dr. Thomas Manningham (D.G.M. 1752-56) one of the four, Lord Aberdour, G.M.M. 1755-57, G.M. 1757-61, having been consulted together with "several other Scottish noblemen and gentlemen that were good Masons" was of the opinion "that the Masonic ceremonies were identical under the Grand Lodge of Scotland and the older Grand Lodge of England, both of which knew only three orders, viz. Masters, Fellow-Crafts and Apprentices".¹ There is a contradiction here which calls for investigation.

I have much pleasure in proposing a hearty vote of thanks to Brother Fisher for his interesting paper and to R.W. Brother George Draffen of Newington for his part in its preparation.

Bro. J. R. Clarke, S.W., said:—

I have much pleasure in seconding the proposal of the W.M. and congratulate Bro. Fisher on the zeal and assiduity he has shown in preparing the paper. My mention of one of two points of detail does not detract from this.

So much do I admire Dermott's character and work that I would not question his rebuttal of the charge that he had "forged the Grand Master's handwriting to masonic Warrants". I do not think he could be expected to produce facsimiles of the disputed signatures and publish them in *Ahiman Rezon*. If any of the Warrants are still in existence a handwriting expert should be able to settle this question. Otherwise Dermott's word must be accepted. It will be remembered that in the early days of the Antients Grand Lodge he had to defend himself against a charge of being an irregularly made mason and he was vindicated. At the beginning of this paragraph Bro. Fisher himself has given good reason for the 4th Duke's absence from Grand Lodge during his first period of office, which ended when he was only twenty-six. It is not necessary to hint that there was even the slightest friction between him and Dermott. There was, indeed, friction between him and his Grand Lodge towards the end of his second period, when the minutes show clearly that he was annoyed by the petty obstacles which were being placed in the way of the Union.

One further small point is that the official short title of the Act of 1799 is "The Unlawful Societies Act".

Bro. A. R. Hewitt, I.P.M., said:—

When the name Atholl is mentioned in connection with Freemasonry one tends to think immediately of the 3rd or 4th Dukes, not realising that other holders of the title were members of the Craft. We are grateful, therefore, to the speaker for having assembled biographical information about those others who were Freemasons. There are just two comments I would like to make. The first is quite minor, namely, that in one of his comments Bro. Draffen says that he thought the Duke of Leinster was Grand Master of Ireland when the 4th Duke of Atholl was installed, viz. in 1775. According to Heron Lepper's *History*, Leinster was Grand Master in 1770 and 1771 and again in 1777.

My second is that Bro. Fisher, referring to the Atholl association with Lord Moira, states that it also brought about the fraternal *recognition* by the Grand Lodge of Scotland of the 'Moderns' Grand Lodge of England. I would quarrel with his use of the word 'recognition'—the so-called 'Moderns' Grand Lodge was the premier Grand Lodge of the world and did not seek, nor did it need, such recognition. The 'Antients' had, over the years, grossly misrepresented to Scotland the status and work of the premier Grand Lodge. Moira took the opportunity of explaining to the Scottish brethren the extent and importance of the premier Grand Lodge and, to quote Grand Lodge Minutes, 'the origin and situation of those Masons in England who met under the authority of the Duke of Atholl'. The brethren of the Scottish Grand Lodge told Moira that, until then, they had been greatly misinformed of the circumstances having always been led to think that the Grand Lodge of the 'Moderns' was of recent date and of no magnitude but 'being now thoroughly convinced of their error they were desirous that the strictest union and most intimate communication should subsist between

¹ Gould, ed. Poole, iii, 60.

the premier Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Scotland'. This was not fraternal recognition but a desire by the Grand Lodge of Scotland to make amends for the coolness which had existed for many years between Scotland and England, through no fault of the former, I would hasten to add, but due entirely to Laurence Dermott and his Grand Lodge.

The exchanges between Moira and Scotland are set out in the Grand Lodge Minutes.

I would like to add my thanks and congratulations; it gives me great pleasure to support the motion.

Bro. R. E. Parkinson *writes*:—

I have read Brother Fisher's paper with great interest, and congratulate him on a useful piece of work, bringing together such a mass of information about the Atholl family in compact form.

Apropos his footnote (1), p. 62, on the Duke of Leinster:—

William Robert Fitzgerald was second son of James, 20th Earl of Kildare, who became 1st Duke of Leinster in 1766; he was known as Lord Offaly in 1765 and, in the following year, when his father became Duke of Leinster, he assumed the courtesy title of Marquess of Kildare. He was made a Mason in Naples during his Grand Tour, when only eighteen years of age. His certificate is reproduced in the *History of the Grand Lodge of Ireland*, Vol. I, p. 204. His letters home during his tour have been printed by the Irish Historical MSS. Commission, but there is little, if anything relating to his Masonic experiences. However, as the letters are almost all addressed to his mother, perhaps this is not surprising.

He was installed Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, 24th June, 1770, when just turned twenty-one; he was re-elected the following year, and again in 1777. He succeeded his father as 2nd Duke in November, 1773.

The Grand Master of Ireland is still formally elected every year, though as Brother Draffen points out, the appointment is nowadays practically *ad vitam*. The first to hold the office for more than one or two—in a few cases, three—years was Richard 2nd Baron, and later 1st Earl of Donoughmore, who ruled from 1789 till 1813.

Bro. Harry Carr, Secretary, *writes*:—

It is deeply regretted that a long period of illness prevented Bro. Fisher from answering the various comments above, and the last work we had from him prior to his death contained his MS. corrections and sundry additions to the paper itself, all of which have been embodied in the text.