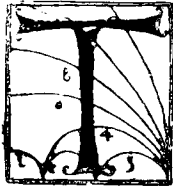


THE ISLAND OF ST. EUSTATIUS AND ITS LODGES.

BY BRO. Th. G. G. VALETTE, G.L. OF THE NETHERLANDS.



THE archives of the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands contain records that throw considerable light on Masonry in the West Indies in the eighteenth century, and some of them are actually associated with the English Lodges and Provincial Grand Masters.

The Island of St. Eustatius is a case in point. For some reason this tiny place—for it is no more than eight square miles in area—was a considerable Masonic centre with three Modern and four Dutch Lodges, both the Moderns and the Dutch Grand Lodge having Provincial Grand Masters. There is also a record of an Antient Lodge, but all that is known of it is to be found at p. 57 of Lane (1895); the only mention of it is in the official List of Lodges in the 1813 *Ahiman Rezon*, where it appears as No. 30. The original No. 30 was a Lodge held at the Goat in St. James' Market, London, and founded in 1754; it lapsed about 1760. Of the Lodge of 1813 Lane says: "Very doubtful if it ever existed, there being no Entry in Minutes or Registers." By the Union it had disappeared, and there is no reference to it in the Dutch Grand Lodge archives. It is unknown to Dutch Masonic history.

The island had been occupied by the Dutch in 1634, at the same time as they colonised Curaçao, and in the eighteenth century it seems to have been a great centre of neutral trade, not always legitimate in character. In 1738 Governor Matthew was appointed English Provincial Grand Master of the Leeward Islands, of which he was Governor, and on 26th June, 1747, he issued a warrant for a Lodge at St. Eustatius, of which the first Master was to be Edward Gilliard. The actual document is in the archives of the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands, and its text is as follows:—

St: CHRISTOPHERS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT
 WORSHIPFULL WILLIAM . . . MATHEW Captn
 General & Governor in Chief in & over all His Majestys
 Leeward Caribbee Islands, St. Christophers, Nevis, Montserat,
 Antigua, Barbouda, Anguilla, & the Rest of His Caribbee
 Islands in America lying and being to Leeward from
 Gaudeloup to the Islands of St. John de Porto Rico Chancel-
 lour Vice Admiral and Ordinary of the Same PROVINCIAL
 Grand Master of the Ancient & Honble SOCIETY of FREE
 & ACCEPTED MASONS in the said Leeward Islands &c.
 . . . &c. . . &c.

Seal.

TO OUR Brother EDWARD GILLIARD And to Our Brethren.
 Andreas Ravens, Peter Puch, John Hifferman, John Godlieb, Frederick
 John, Peter Allier, John Amiel, Robert Steward, Charles Palmer, John
 Howell, Richard Howell, Cornelius Curvilje PZ. John Haly and other
 our Brethren in the Island of Sta. EUSTATIA. . . .

GREETING Thrice GREET you well. . . .

WE HAVING Taken into Our MATURE DELIBERATION the
 Request to Us made for Granting OUR DISPENSATION for Erecting

A lodge of FREE and ACCEPTED MASONS in the Island of Ste. EUSTATIA By the Name of the LODGE OF FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS of Sta. EUSTATIA, AND HAVING by good Testimony of Our Brother EDWARD GILLIARD found him to be of good Morals & Great Skill True and Trusty and A lover of the whole Fraternity where-soever Dispers'd over the Face of the Earth THEREFORE WE have thought fitt to grant this OUR DISPENSATION for Erecting the said LODGE OF FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS in the Island of Sta. EUSTATIA Aforesaid By the name of the LODGE of FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS of Sta. EUSTATIA AND we do Hereby Constitute & Form these Good Brothers into this NEW LODGE Aforesaid. And Do Appoint you BROTHER EDWARD GILLIARD to be Master thereof not Doubting Your Capacity & Care to preserve the Cement of the Lodge &c. And you are to Submitt to the Charges as Masters have done in all Ages Cordially, And you are to Enter immediately upon the Exercise of this office Vizt. in Chusing your Wardens whom We are to Approve of & you are to Rehearse to them the Charges of each Warden And WE Do Hereby recommend to you that you Immediately Enter into the Lodge Book of the Lodge of Sta. EUSTATIA OUR DEPUTATION from our Right Worshipfull BROTHER HENRY Marquis of CARNARVAN Knight of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath GRAND MASTER of the Ancient & Honourable SOCIETY of Free and Accepted MASONS of ENGLAND and WE do Hereby Give you all Joy and Do Recommend Harmony, Hoping your only Contention will be A Loudable Emulation in Cultivating the ROYAL ART and the Social Virtues AND for all you shall do Herein this Shall be to YOU OUR PLENARY and full DISPENSATION. IN WITNESS WHEREOF We have Hereunto from Our Residence in St. Christophers Affix'd OUR PROVINCIAL SEAL and Sign'd the Same with OUR HAND this Twenty Sixth day of June In the Vulgar Year of MASONRY 5747.

YOUR True and Faithfull Brother

WILLIAM MATHEW. P. G. M.

[Endorsement]

1st Deputation by the late Right
Worshipfull P. G. M. the Honble.
Wm. Mathew Esqr. General &
Commander in chief, in and over
all the Brittish Leeward Charribbee
Islands.

This is definitely a Lodge Warrant and not a Deputation, notwithstanding that the word "Deputation" occurs in the body of the text. It precedes the earliest Modern Warrant hitherto known to have been issued by a Provincial Grand Master by seven years. The phraseology does not seem to be derived from either Irish or Scottish sources, but it should be compared with the Irish and Scottish Warrants, and with the earliest warrant issued by a Provincial Grand Master in England, which are all printed at *A.Q.C.* xli., 51-53. It is an intermediate form between the Deputation and the formal Warrants that were first issued by the Moderns Grand Lodge in 1757.

In 1754 the Province was split up and separate Provincial Grand Masters were appointed for Barbados and the Windward Islands and for Antigua. The Marquis of Carnarvon, Grand Master, also issued a Patent of appointment to Edward Galliard for St. Eustatius, Saba and St. Martin, "Dutch Carribbee Islands in America." This document is now in the archives of the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands.

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Provincial Grand Lodge are in these same archives, and from them we learn that the Lodge decided, in March, 1755, to form two Lodges. The Minute is as follows:—

AT A MEETING QUARTERLY COMMUNICATION OF THE
GRAND LODGE HELD THIS 25 DAY MARCH 5755:

PRESENT

Rt. W:	W:	Edward Gilliard	D:	G:	M:
	W:	Nicholas Heyligers	S:	G:	W:
	W:	John Hiffdman	“ J:	G:	W:
		Ralph Sampson	“ G:	Treas.	
		John Aertsen	“ G:	Secy.	
		John Annan	“ Mr.	of Mastrs.	Lodge.
		Samuel Wells	“ Mr.	of Fellow Craft’s	Lodge.
	G:	Aertsen	“ S:	W:	of Mastrs.
	Wm.	Elding Cox	“ J:	W:	of Fellow Craft’s

THE Lodge being duly Opened We Proceed to Business. It Was Resolved by Unanimous Consent, that we Form Ourselves into two different Lodges. The Older by the Name of the Lodge of St. Eustatia, the other No. 2 of St. Eustatia: And Samuel Wells is Chosen Master, Guiliam Aertsen S: W. James Maybeng Junr. Warden, & Joseph Lynch Secy. of No. 1. & John Annan, Mastr, Wm. Elding Cox Senr. Warden, Nicholas Steel Junr. Warden, John Boone Secy. of No. 2.—Lewis Puech Treasr. of No. 1 & 2.

JOHN BOONE. Secy.

The description given of the Officers is somewhat difficult to follow. But the new Lodge lasted barely six months. The Minute of 12th August in the same year reads as follows:—

AT A MEETING QUARTERLY COMMUNICATION OF THE
GRAND LODGE HELD THE 12th AUGUST 5755.

PRESENT.

Right Worshipful,	Worshipful,	Edward Gilliard	D:	G:	M:
	Worshipful	“ Nicholas Heyliger	“ Senr.	G:	W:
	Wors.	“ John Annan	“ Protempora	J:	G:
		Sal. Wells	“ Mastr.	of the Lodge	No. 1.
		Wm. Aertsen	“ Senr.	Warden of Do.	—
		Wm. Elding Cox	“ Junr.	Warden of No.	2.

& the rest of the Brethren of the Lodges No. 1 & 2.

Have Applied to this Grand Lodge, that both Lodges should be Permitted, as it has been apparent from the constant neglect of each & several of the Members not attending the Lodge Days, which if continued, the Craft must be reduced to nothing. It’s Resolved In Consequence of the above application—To Reunite the two Lodges No. 1 & 2 & the Members present have unanimously Chosen the Following Officers: John Annan Mastr., Wm. Aertsen S: W: Wm. Elding Cox J: W:, Lewis Puech Treasr., & John Boone Secy.

JOHN BOONE Secy.

[Endorsement]

Minutes of ye Lodge of
the 25th. of March and of
the 12th. of August A: M: 5755.

In 1757 a Dutch Lodge had been formed, by the name of St. Pieter’s, apparently in an unconstitutional manner. And in 1759 Jacobus Meykel was

appointed Provincial Grand Master under the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands. The date given for the first appointment of this officer by the *Allgemeines Handbuch* (Leipzig, 1900), 1777, is incorrect.

But Bro. Meykel appears to have taken up the appointment only in consultation with Bro. Gilliard, who resigned in his favour, and the English Lodge gave in its allegiance to the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands. It contained many members of Dutch nationality. The letter in which it announced this determination is in the Grand Lodge archives, and it refers to the St. Pieter's Lodge as a spurious body.

A certain Bro. Huet Duplessis had formed a Lodge, *Les Parfaits Maçons*, in 1758, and this also appears to have given in its allegiance to the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands. In 1760 there was constituted a Dutch Lodge, St. Jan den Dooper (St. John the Evangelist). From now onwards St. Eustatius passes out of English Freemasonry, with one exception to be now noted. Politically the island suffered vicissitudes. In 1781 Rodney captured it: it was described as a great centre of neutral trade, frequented by rebellious American colonists. Its later history is confused, but by the Treaty of Amiens in 1813 it finally became a Dutch possession.

Lane's references to the Lodge of St. Eustatius are as follows:—

p. 90. A New Lodge. Island of St. Eustatius [Dutch Island].
Date of warrant or Constitution 6th June 1747. Not in List until
1755. *Erased in 1813.*

p. 104. No. 2. Island of St. Eustatius [a Dutch Island].
Date of Warrant or Constitution—1754. Not in List until 1755.
Erased in 1813.

As will be seen, this can now be amended. The correct date for the Warrant of No. 1, the "New Lodge," is 26th June, and No. 2 can be dated 25th March. We also know that No. 2 only lived six months. The earlier Lodge received the number 268, and No. 2 became 269. In fact, they were both reported together, and at the Quarterly Communcation of 24th July, 1755, they paid a joint amount of five guineas for a Constitution, which was when their numbers were allotted.

But Lane has a reference to yet one more Lodge. On p. 180 we find:—

Union Lodge, named in 1774. Island of St. Eustatious. Date of
Warrant or Constitution 1772. *Erased in 1813.*

Of this Lodge nothing is known in Dutch Masonic history: it is not in any list of the G.L. of the Netherlands. It must therefore have been a Lodge under the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns), but erected in fact within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Grand Master under the G.L. of the Netherlands. It was in this year that Nicolaas Huet Duplessis, referred to above, was appointed Prov. Grand Master of St. Eustatius, Saba and St. Martin, exactly the same jurisdiction as that of Edward Galliard. In 1793 the three Lodges were all erased, and a new Lodge *Concordia* was founded, and seven years later *The Reunion* (1800). At present there are four Lodges only in the Dutch West Indies: one at Paramaribo, one at Aruba and two at Curaçao.

I finish this paper by expressing my gratitude to Bro. Lionel Vibert for comparing the documents about St. Eustatius with the Register of the Grand Lodge of England, and to Bro. W. N. Arntzenius, Conservator of the Archives of the G.L. of the N., for his kindness in bringing these old documents to my notice.

THE HAGUE (Netherlands).