

THE FORGOTTEN HISTORY OF THE ORANGE ORDER



THE INSTITUTION'S HISTORIC
STRUGGLE AGAINST THE
ROYAL ARCH PURPLE AND
BLACK DEGREES (1798 – 1925).

Compiled by W.P. Malcomson, M.A. F.E.T.S.

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THE FORGOTTEN HISTORY OF THE ORANGE ORDER

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dedication

This book is dedicated to all the believers over the years that have strenuously resisted the evil encroachments of the Royal Arch Purple and Black degrees.

acknowledgements

I would like to thank all those believers who have stood shoulder to shoulder with us over this past few years and taken a very difficult, yet significant, stand against the secret ritualistic practices of the Royal Arch Purple and Black Orders. Despite being scandalised, shunned and misunderstood they have remained resolutely for the simple, open, all-sufficient, infallible Word of God. They have stood uncompromisingly against this growing cancer of 'ritualism' within the domain of evangelical Protestantism.

introduction

To most people today the degrees of the Royal Arch Purple and Black Orders are viewed as being, and having always been, integral to the true Orange system. In the minds of those who support them, they are looked upon as bastions of the Unionist/Protestant cause, but when examined in the light of history a different story unfolds. Indeed, the Orange Order, for most of its history, looked upon these ritualistic bodies as being incompatible with, and contrary to Orangeism.

The history of the Orange Order is a story of perennial conflict both inside and outside the Institution. Whilst most Orangemen today are familiar with the long-standing external struggle with Rome and Republicanism, few know anything about the prolonged internal battle between a group of rebellious ritualistic Orangemen and the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. This significant conflict raged furiously within the Order between the years 1798 and 1925.

The ritualists were those renegade Orangemen who adhered to the neo- Masonic Royal Arch Purple and Black degrees. Their unflinching aim was to introduce these ritualistic degrees into the Orange Institution and as a consequence make it a mirror of Freemasonry.

The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, on the other-hand, fiercely and consistently resisted every encroachment of these "Heathenish Rites." The Orange Order in Ireland, from the formation of its Grand Lodge in 1798 to the early 1900's, resolutely opposed all such forms of ritualism. The practises of these orders were looked upon as both illegal and deeply injurious to the true Orange cause. It is important to note, in their determined stand, Grand Lodge held the broad support of the wider Orange family.

Members who succumbed to the evil advances of these ritualistic bodies were expelled from the Orange Order and their names circulated to every Lodge in the United Kingdom (which then included the whole island of Ireland).

Sadly today, Orangeism's long principled struggle against the ritualistic and superstitious practices of the Royal Arch Purple and Black Institutions has become "the forgotten history of the Orange Order."

Chapter 1

a battle for simplicity (1798-1801)

THE FORMATION OF THE ORANGE ORDER

21st September 1795

The Orange Institution was founded on 21st September 1795 shortly after the 'Battle of the Diamond' outside Loughgall, Co. Armagh. Three well-known local men of the area, James Wilson, Dan Winter, and James Sloan, formed the institution. History reveals that all three men were dedicated Freemasons and two of the three were local *pub owners*.

The 'Battle of the Diamond' itself lasted only fifteen minutes and was centred on Dan Winter's public house, which was located at the Diamond crossroads. This battle (or skirmish) resulted in Winter's premises being burnt to the ground by the attacking Catholic's who were known as 'the Defenders'. The public house itself was the special focus of the attack as it was the gathering house for the local Protestant militia, the 'Peep O Day Boys'.

Winter's supporters, many of whom were Freemasons, gathered around the debris of the public house and pledged themselves to form a new secret society, made up solely of Protestant men. Devoid of Winter's premises as a meeting place the men retired to James Sloan's public house in the local village of Loughgall. It was here that the Orange Institution was properly organised.

James Wilson was probably the most influential of the founding fathers of Orangeism and was an ardent Freemason. Respected Orange historian R.M. Sibbett records, "Wilson was a member of the Society of Freemasons, which fully qualified him for establishing a new Order of a secret character."

Winter, Sloan and Wilson, accompanied by others, felt the great need to instigate a ceremony of initiation into the new body and not surprisingly Freemasonry was chosen as the model. The three early degrees in the Order were known as the Orange, Orange Marksman and Purple Marksman degrees.

Whilst little is known of the exact content of these three degrees it seems certain that they were highly ritualistic in character, being modelled on the first three degrees of Freemasonry, namely, Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason (collectively known as the 'Craft' degrees or the 'Blue Lodge'). The Royal Arch Purple Chapter book testifies to the effect that these three initial Orange degrees were "elaborate degrees" (p. 59)

Entered Apprentice degree _____	Orange degree
Fellowcraft degree _____	Orange Marksman degree
Master Mason degree _____	Purple Marksman degree

These were the three main degrees that were worked within the Order between 1795 and

1798, although many other ritualistic degrees were finding their way into Orangeism throughout the island of Ireland. Most of the additional degrees can be found today within the Royal Black Institution.

During this early period each individual Orange lodge administered its own control over the working of degrees, as no controlling authority existed to govern the degree system. A Grand Lodge of Ulster, as it were, was formed on 12th of July 1797, although it seemed to exercise little power over the whole island of Ireland.

BLACK ORDER FORMED?

The Royal Black Institution in Ireland traces its official roots back to 16th September 1797 although they have no evidence to how, by whom, or where it was formed. Their only evidence rests on an old unofficial certificate, dated many years later, which makes a passing reference to this dubious date.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND FORMED

21st April 1798

There was no central authority within the Orange Order in Ireland from its formation until 21st April 1798, when a Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland was formed.

The prevailing confusion within the Order, coupled with a large influx of new members, due to the deteriorating political situation in the form of the Republican uprising of the 'United Irishmen', resulted in the formation of a Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland in 1798. This brought much needed stability and leadership to the Order at a strategic period in their history.

Wasting little time, Grand Lodge released a strong statement on 13th December 1798 which reflected the hierarchy's desire to separate themselves from former error.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

13 December 1798

Grand Lodge warned, "That many persons having introduced various Orders into the Orange Society which will very much tend to injure the regularity of the institution. The Grand Lodge disavows any Order but Orange and Purple and there can be none other regular unless issuing and approved by them."

1st degree: Orange degree

2nd degree: Purple degree

From this date forward, the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland accepted only two degrees within the Order, - 'Orange' and 'Plain Purple'. This degree format has survived in Ireland ever since.

NB. Up until 1820 the Purple degree was sometimes known as the Purple Marksman

degree, thereafter as the Plain or Small Purple.

Grand Lodge immediately addressed the bewildering amount of unnecessary ritualism that had found its way into Orangeism, and here began a process of reform which purged out all the varying amount of neo-Masonic ritualistic baggage which had settled itself within the Order. This resulted in the disposal of the original three (elaborate) degrees of the Orange. These were replaced with two simplified degrees of 'Orange' and 'Plain Purple'. Out with the old degrees went the old leadership of James Wilson, Dan Winter, and James Sloan.

Grand Lodge began the great task of implementing simplification by standardising procedures throughout every lodge in Ireland.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

15 January 1799

Those ritualistic Orangemen inside the Order who bore allegiance to the former neo-Masonic degrees were far from happy at this radical reform. Some continued to practise the illegal degrees in a clandestine manner, in blatant violation of the rules of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. The ritualists at this time were mainly concentrated in the County of Armagh area, where they had sufficient strength to pose a threat to the overall authority of Grand Lodge.

Grand Lodge wrote to the secretary of Armagh County - Woolsely Atkinson - warning him about the dangers of their rebellious behaviour. They warned, **“being delegated by the Grand Lodge of Ireland finally to settle the differences that have existed for near twelve months (much to the injury of the Institution)...You cannot be surprised that we feel ourselves much hurt at the illiberality of sentiment which from your conversation many of our Brethren of Armagh entertain of us, but acting as we do with the approbation of the [United] Kingdom (part of Armagh only accepted) and that from the purest motives for the general good of the cause, we despise such calumny which can arise only from ignorance and selfish motives, and which if not counteracted by the firmness of the Grand Lodge of Ireland might possibly prove the destruction of the Orange System.”**

They continued, **“It has been a principal wish of the Grand Lodge of Ireland to prevent any interference or innovation from other Societies with them, and it is with pain we find that comparisons have been made between the proper conduct of the Grand Lodge of Ireland and the improper exactions that have been the injury of other institutions with which we hold ourselves totally unconnected.”**

Grand Lodge seem here to be referring to Craft Masonry (an organisation steeped in occultic practice and anti-Christian teaching) and it's recently birthed offspring the Black Order. Not suprisingly, the Orange leadership was quick to distance itself from any association with such heathenism.

To end any confusion Grand Lodge decided to act in a decisive manner. A committee was set up to report on what was necessary to simplify and standardise the institution.

Grand Lodge was aware of the existence of a spurious highly-ritualistic body known as the Black Order which was trying to link itself to the Orange Institution. Grand Lodge felt compelled to stem the advance of this superstitious order by expelling any of its supporters from the Orange Order.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

20 August 1799

Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland “**ordered that the Deputy Secretary do write to Rev. Richard Powell, Master of a Lodge in Rathdrum, on the subject of his introducing new Orders contrary to the Rules of the Grand Lodge and also of his adopting extraordinary and irregular forms in initiating members into the Orange and Purple Orders.**”

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

1st October 1799

Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland reported that “**Mr Jamison on or about the first of August 1799 on the recommendation of an Orangeman of the name of Peter Lyons of the Armagh Militia Lodge initiated Mr John Whiteaker and Mr Wm. Knight at Mr Moor’s house, Earl St., Dublin. The said Jamison demanded a crown from the aforesaid Mr Lyons for initiating him in the Black Order.**”

They then ordered that his warrant be forthwith called in and that he be “**expelled from the Society of Orangemen.**”

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

17 December 1799

Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland “**received a certificate signed by Jeremiah Biggs, Master; John Parett, Senior Warden; and Mark Loane, Junior Warden; of Lodge 655 held at Bandon for Wm. Pemberton, applying for a warrant for the West Meath Regiment of Militia , who is hereby stated to have received the degrees of an Orange, Purple, Scarlet, and Royal Marksman.**”

They replied and ordered that the Deputy Secretary do “**write to Brother Jeremiah Biggs informing him that by the Rules of the Grand Lodge there is no such office as that of Warden and that Grand Lodge recognises no other Orders save Orange and Purple.**”

NB. The office of Junior Warden was actually a title belonging to the Masonic Lodge.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

10th January 1800

Whilst Grand Lodge undertook a widespread process of implementing simplification, their

campaign of reform was hampered by the variation of ceremonies in certain parts of Ireland. This was most notable in the mode of initiation into the Purple degree. Some country Lodges still employed the ritualistic initiation belonging to the old Purple Marksman degree.

To enforce their purge, Grand Lodge cancelled all membership of the Institution obliging every Orangeman to rejoin a now simplified new Orange Institution. Every Orangeman was re-elected and re-initiated into the 'new simplistic system'.

The Royal Arch Purple Chapter's book 'History of the Royal Arch Purple Order' states, "The keynote was simplicity, all the old "travel" in the Orange Degree was abolished and replaced by a simple catechism and an address." They continue, "The year 1800 was the most active for Grand Lodge in the history of the institution. During the year it met 27 times" (p.56).

The secretary of Armagh County, Woolsey Atkinson, finally resigned from the Orange Order after further differences with Grand lodge. His County (Armagh) seemed to submit to the sovereign authority of Grand Lodge and the new system.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

13th May 1800

The committee which successfully implemented the simplification and reconstitution of the Orange Order earlier that year was again employed, this time, to oversee the problematic Purple degree.

Grand Lodge recorded, "**The committee who have regulated the New Orange System shall take into their immediate consideration what alterations may be necessary to make in the Purple Order and report with all convenient despatch.**"

Whilst we have no historic record of the findings of this enquiry, simplicity was certainly the result (various Grand Lodge statements up until 1820 will bear this statement out).

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

24 October 1801

It must have been to the complete shock and disdain of Grand Lodge after re-constituting the Orange to learn of several incidents where Orangemen were reported to have been initiated into the various Black degrees.

Grand Lodge stamped their authority upon the situation immediately, warning these renegades, "**It having been reported by Several Gentlemen that in violation of the Rules of the Grand Orange lodge of Ireland, some Masters of Lodges in Dublin and elsewhere have initiated Orangemen into Systems which they term Black, Scarlet, etc. Resolved unanimously. That the Grand Lodge of Ireland does acknowledge no other Colour or Degrees among Orangemen but Orange and Purple and that all other colours or Names of Black, Scarlet, Blue or any other Colour are illegal and injurious to the true Orange system, and that if any shall presume after public notice**

of this Resolution to meet in any such Black or other similar Lodge he shall be publicly expelled, and his name sent to every Lodge in the Kingdom.”

This stern warning seemed to drive the ritualists underground as it was the last recorded for ten years.

Chapter 2

the enemy within (1802-1828)

ROYAL ARCH PURPLE FORMED

Facing strong persecution from a now powerful Grand Lodge and realising their beleaguered position, the remaining clandestine Orangemen sought to preserve their old cherished rituals. The only way these ritualists could possibly do so was to form an alternative Purple degree and subtly try to merge it into the current two-degree Orange system. They did this by merging the three old degrees - Orange degree, Orange Marksman degree, Purple Marksman degree - into one large ritualistic degree.

The Arch Purple Chapter's book 'History of the Royal Arch Purple Order' explains: "Sometime between 1800 and 1811, possibly in 1802, a new degree was devised by the Brethren who valued and loved the old traditions and who were concerned by the turn of events"(p. 58). This degree was "developed from the three pre 1798 'old degrees'." (p. 59) This elaborate degree became known as the 'Royal Arch Purple degree'.

Orange degree
Orange Marksman degree
Purple Marksman degree } Royal Arch Purple degree

The Arch Purple Chapter's book also confirms its make-up, how it was designed to "include as much as possible of the travel and ritual of the original three'."

The draft to the Royal Arch Purple Chapter's book diplomatically outlines the roots of the Arch Purple degree, stating, "In light of the evidence available it would appear that the degree given today evolved from certain practices which had their origin in the Masonic Order, together with some innovations which had been introduced by those brethren conferring the degree in different areas being added to the original theme of the pre 1800 degrees to form a new ritual." Even this guarded statement was omitted from the published book!

This degree was worked so secretly that it wasn't until 1811 that it came to Grand Lodge's attention.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OR IRELAND

11 November 1811

Information reached Grand Lodge that the ritualists were at their work. Grand Lodge, being in no mood for compromise, released a blunt warning to these rebels, declaring, "**It having been reported by several gentlemen that in defiance of the Rules of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, some Masters of Lodges in different parts of the Kingdom, have initiated Orangemen into systems which they term Black, Scarlet, Blue, Royal Arch Purple etc.**

It is resolved unanimously that the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland does acknowledge no other colours or degrees amongst Orangemen but Orange and Purple and that all other colours of Black, Scarlet, Blue, Royal Arch Purple, or any other colour are illegal and injurious to the true Orange System, and if any Orangeman shall presume, after public notice of this resolution to meet in any such Black or other similar Lodges, upon due proof thereof he shall be expelled and his name sent to every Lodge in the Kingdom.”

This condemnation is the first ever historic mention of the neo-Masonic Royal Arch Purple degree.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF ENGLAND

30 December 1811

The Grand Lodge of England were quick to show their solidarity with the Grand Lodge of Ireland by the release of this important communiqué within a month of the Irish statement: **“That the Grand Lodge of England does by no means sanction or authorise any Orders or Degrees in the Orange system save the Orange and Purple; and that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Grand Lodge of Ireland, testifying our concurrence of opinion in this point.”**

LIFFORD L.O.L. DISTRICT

(COMPLAINT TO GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND)

16 January 1813

We have no record of the content of the Royal Arch Purple degree until Lifford Orange District complained in a letter addressed to Grand Lodge of Ireland outlining the degrading details of this ceremony, being practiced by clandestine Orangemen.

Lifford testified: **“Dissentions and divisions exist with regard to making men into the Purple Order in this place. Several Lodges introduce the Man to be made, naked and hoodwinked, and go through a long and tedious form, and then he has to take an obligation, in many respects different from that prescribed by the Regulations of the Grand Lodge, at another time a man is entered and has to pass through several forms, and perform several other things, and take another oath, and this they term Royal Arch Mark; and they consider no man a proper Purple Marksman till he has performed all as above; nor will they allow any to visit or sit in their Lodges, till they conform thereto.**

We therefore pray that the Rt. Worshipful the Deputy Grand Master may transmit us a proper Order on this subject and clearly point out if any change has taken place in the Purple Order late, under the sanction of the Grand Lodge, so that we may be able to set this dispute at rest.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

(Response)

27 January 1813

The Grand Lodge of Ireland responded promptly to Lifford's concerns. In a strongly worded statement, they declared: **“Your Memorial containing an account of the Heathenish and indecent ceremonies practised themselves by some calling themselves Orangemen, I laid before the Grand Lodge of Ireland, who heard it read with the most poignant grief and indignation: and I am directed to say, that nothing can be more contrary to our Loyal Institution than such practices. The Principles of the Orange Institution, following the Principles of the Christian Religion, are precise, clear, and simple, easily understood, and easily practised; Piety towards God - Loyalty towards our King, and Good Will to all our Neighbours - To enter into Societies professing and practising these Principles, requires no idle or ridiculous ceremony... we have no mystery, or superstitious Rites; For we well know, where mystery begins, honesty terminates.**



We therefore pray you, Friends and Brother, to make known these sentiments to these Lodges, who have deviated from our Rules.

Entreat them to put away from them Practices which they have adopted so derogatory to our Glorious Institution - tell them these were the very Practices and Ceremonies of the Illuminati of France and Germany, who brought their country to slavery and ruin. Ask them how such Practices can conduce to the Maintenance of the Protestant cause, to the advancement of Loyalty, or the Good of the People? Adjure them to return to the right way, and if through your admonition they shall return, what is passed shall be forgotten; but if they persevere in a course of such gross impropriety, assure them that the Grand Lodge will withdraw their warrants."

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

1st March 1813

These rebellious ritualists refused to desist from such unseemly behaviour whereupon they were expelled, without delay, from the Loyal Orange Institution of Ireland.

Grand Lodge directed Lifford, **"You are hereby required to withdraw the warrants of such Orange Lodges in the County of Donegal, and District of Strabane as have not complied with the Orders of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, with regard to making Men into the Purple Order, and it is clearly to be understood, that no change has ever taken place in the Purple Order, under the sanction of the Grand Lodge."**

Whilst this local difficulty was eradicated, there were more violations being reported to Grand Lodge from other areas of Ireland. Grand Lodge released a wider admonition on the 12th of July the following year.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

12 July 1814

They stated, **"Many of the very best friends of our Loyal Orders have complained of innovations, by ridiculous and even superstitious ceremonies having been adopted in some places by spurious Orders of Royal Arch Purple, Black, Scarlet, Blue and Gold; and by assuming, in some degree, the Rules and Regalia of that very respectable Order, the Freemasons; which, however honourable in themselves, are totally distinct from Orangemen - of these abuses, brethren, we warn you, and earnestly entreat you to avoid them, as whoever continues in such practices cannot be received as a brother of our Order."**

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OR IRELAND

7 July 1817

Grand Lodge was fighting a determined battle to expose and purge out any trace of this iniquity from Orangeism. To assist their campaign they distributed a tough letter of condemnation to every Lodge in Ireland, which read as follows:

“The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland to the Masters, Officers and Members of the various Lodges therein.

Dear Brethren and Beloved friends,

...The Grand Lodge would here close this congratulatory Letter to the Members of our Order, were they not called upon, by Letters from the North, which state, that the silly, shameful, and even idolatrous practice, of mystically initiating into Black, Red, and perhaps Green Orders, still continues.

The Grand Lodge of Armagh, in the year, [Eighteen] Eleven, bore testimony against those ridiculous Innovations.”

(Grand Lodge then printed it's statements of 11th November 1811 and 27th January 1813 which we have previously printed in the proceeding pages of this booklet)`

“Grand Lodge did then, as it does now, most strongly reprobate all Innovations; and we therefore request, that every Lodge of Ireland, that holds in abhorrence those Heathenish Rites, will send its Number, and state of its Account, to the Grand Treasurer, Sir R. Musgrave, Custom-house, Dublin, that such Lodge may be registered as adhering to the true Principles of the Orange Institution, and that all others may be rejected and cut off from our Fellowship.”

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

7th August 1817

Grand Lodge met in Dublin with deep concern at the gradual, yet well-organised, infiltration of the true Orange system by the ritualists.

At the meeting they resolved **“to attend, by their respective representatives, on the 20th day of November next, at a general meeting of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, in Dublin, to take into consideration the state of the Orange Institution, in regard to the Orders and Alterations lately introduced among the Brethren. And to determine how far the same are, or are not, expedient for the well-being of the Institution, as it is become highly necessary to secure unanimity and harmony amongst the Orange Men of Ireland.”**

The rebellion was being brought to a head.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

20 November 1817

This meeting attracted probably the largest and most representative gathering of Grand Lodge members yet to date. Outside of the great array of Grand Lodge Officers, there were 608 representatives from the many Lodges throughout Ireland. Such a turnout revealed the strong sentiment about the subject existing within the Order. The mood of the assembly was defiant.

Orange historian Sibbett records, "It was a full meeting and the following resolutions were agreed to unanimously:

- 1. "That the only original Orders of the Institution are Orange and Purple."**
- 2. "The Orange Order as improved in the year 1800 is sufficiently perfect and requires no alternation whatever."**
- 3. "That as it appears that some confusion has crept into the Purple Order; and for the purpose of producing perfect unanimity and conformity the following committee are appointed to regulate the same."**

The Institution had spoke and spoke firm, the mood of the gathering was unequivocally resolute against the moves of the ritualists.

These resolutions also confirm that there was no official change in the degree system or content of the Orange Institution between the years 1800 and 1817. Despite the determined efforts of the ritualists the two simple degrees of the Order remained unchanged.

A committee was appointed to regulate the Purple Order so as to eradicate any confusion within the ranks which had been introduced by misguided elements. The urgency of this matter is seen in the fact that they met the next day.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

21st November 1817

- 1. "That as uniformity and unanimity are the sure and only basis of security to the Institution it is most earnestly recommended to all Brethren that they will endeavour to adopt that uniformity and preserve unanimity, the advantages of which are so obvious."**
- 2. "That it is also most earnestly recommended to the Brethren that in the admission of new members into the respective Lodges the utmost simplicity of form should be observed."**
- 3. "That the members of this committee are authorised to communicate to every part of the Kingdom the approved form of admission and the requisite means of being known as members of the Institution."**

This committee reiterated the simplistic character of the Purple degree. And so as to preserve uniformity and unanimity they informed every Lodge in the United Kingdom of their position.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

19 January 1820

Grand Lodge was still facing aggravation from the ritualists who refused to conform to the rules of the Orange Institution. A committee was appointed to enquire into the undignified

behaviour and influence of these ritualistic renegades. They were instructed to report promptly and decisively on this matter. This they did within three days.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

22 January 1820

“The Committee, from several circumstances arising out of the present enquiry are led to observe, that various and jarring forms of admission and initiation have found their way into different Lodges, together with ceremonies, &c., not only unknown to the original simplicity of the Institution, but in many cases repugnant to common sense, to the religious feelings of many, most worthy, Brethren, and even to common decency. In order to guard against the future recurrence of this crying evil, the Committee have thought fit to institute a form of admission and initiation which they consider fully adequate to the end in view, and which to be to combine with due brevity a proper degree of the Solemnity, so necessary to be observed, at the important moment of a man’s dedicating himself by a voluntary Obligation, taken in the face of his Brethren, to the zealous discharge of his duties as a loyal Protestant...

In making the change required it has been their study to keep in view and to restore the sublime simplicity of the original Orange Institution; and to keep as widely as possible from approaching - (in the only thing in our Institution which can be classed under the Head or denomination of ‘Mystery’ viz. those Signs & c., whereby we are to guard ourselves and our Association against the danger of hostile intrusion) the system of other recognised Associations.

In making the change requisite, they have not been unmindful of the inculcation of those principles which led our proto-types through the wilderness - and the founders of the Association through the danger which called it into existence, and beset its infancy, viz. - dependence on and confidence in that Power in Whose hand alone are the issues of Life, and the sure foundation of all Prosperity.

All human Institutions are liable to error and corruption - it cannot therefore be a matter of surprise, however it may be of regret, that ours has suffered beneath the hand of time. But the Committee rejoice to think that the Institution having its dilapidations will now be repaired, and that it will stand once more and for long ages to come, firm and beautified in all the grandeur and simplicity of its original foundation; and that the late efforts of our Enemies, which were at first the cause of dismay and apprehension, have been in fact, the cause of much real good: and productive of advantage rather than injury. Thus giving us sure and certain evidence how frequently a protecting Providence is really watching, over the best interests of Man, while to our limited vision he appears to be wielding the Rod of Chastening Affliction.”

The mood of the committee was resolute and clear. It was time to root out the ritualism which some clandestine members had attempted to foist upon the Order, and return the whole institution to the “simplicity of its original foundation.” The “original foundation” being the ritual free Order of 1800. From this time on the Purple degree was known as the Plain or Small Purple. The name Purple Marksman was omitted completely from the Orange

Order as it was being fraudulently used by the ritualists as an excuse to work the old pre-1798 ritualistic Purple Marksman degree.

All membership of the Purple Order was declared null and void and every Orangeman was re-initiated into the simple Purple degree.

OPPOSITION

28th February 1820

The first evidence of opposition to this reform came on the 28th February 1820. The Grand Master of Armagh warned Grand Lodge that, **“Information having reached me of efforts being in progress on the part of a few interested Persons, to create dissention in the Orange Association, by endeavouring to decry the late proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, which have been found to interfere with certain practices of their own, not tending to the good of the Association. – I feel it my duty to caution you against such Persons, and such efforts; they are not friends. I purpose being in Armagh during the approaching Assizes, and will be most happy to afford Information to such as wish for it, but I must warn you against hearkening to designing Persons, who cannot be acquainted with the facts which have influenced the Grand Lodge in their late serious deliberations.**

I rely with confidence on your attending to this warning of your friend, and Grand Master W. Blacker.”

10th April 1820

On 10th April 1820 Orangemen in Burrasakane, County Tipperary reported that they wanted to know the reason “why the higher colours should be suppressed? and praying to act under a different colour from that sanctioned by Grand Lodge.”

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

(RESPONSE)

Grand Lodge replied bluntly that they **“knew of no other colours belonging to the Orange System than Orange and Purple.”**

10th July 1820

A number of rebellious Armagh Orangemen met to organise an Orange meeting to focus opposition to Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. The Clandestine Organisers were Thomas Seaver, Henry Sling, Robert Maxwell, John Simpson, Richard Warmington.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

(RESPONSE)

1822

Captain Thomas Seaver, District Master of Camlough, Co. Armagh, was expelled from the Orange Institution. Seaver was later to move to France and align himself with the radical Republican politics of Daniel O'Connell and the Repeal Movement.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

6th February 1822

The leadership made a very informative statement outlining the strength of the ritualists: **“The Grand Lodge have to state, with great satisfaction, that those disagreements which unfortunately took place in the Order on the change of 1820 are subsiding apace; and the number of Lodges which decline acting under the improved system are reduced to a very few.”**

1824

Henry Sling and sixteen others were expelled from the Orange Institution. 13 Lodges in Rathfriland District were threatened with expulsion for defying Grand Lodge.

13 September 1824

The Royal Arch Purple Chapter. In its book 'History of the Royal Arch Purple Order' records that, "Worshipful Brother Ogle R Gowan in his 'Annals and Defence of the Orange Institution of Ireland' written in 1825 says, in relation to the New Rules of 1820"

“At all events it was ultimately the cause of irritating many of the most virtuous brothers, whose active co-operation would have been most desirable, of weakening the confidence of the Country Lodges, of producing protests from the Metropolitan Lodges, and, finally, of introducing “a despicable knot” of swindlers and factionalists, who had nearly brought disgrace and dishonour upon the untarnished purity of the Society, till at length they were “everlastingly expelled by the uncompromising firmness and virtue of the Grand Lodge on 13 September 1824.”

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND DISSOLVED TO COMPLY WITH THE LAW OF THE LAND

(18th March 1825 - 15th September 1828)

The Orange Order in Ireland was dissolved to comply with parliamentary legislation. Under 'The Unlawful Societies Act' all Irish secret religious societies were outlawed.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND RE-FORMED

15th September 1828

Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland was re-formed on 15th September 1828. Its strong prohibition of the ritualistic Royal Arch Purple and Black degrees remained unaltered.

Chapter 3

an uncompromising stand (1834-1875)

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

(NOVEMBER 1834)

After the re-forming of the Institution it was probably inevitable that the ritualists would, once again, raise their heads. This took a few years to detect, however when it was discovered Grand Lodge took immediate action and released a strong unambiguous censure to every Lodge in Ireland, which declared, **“That we have heard with the deepest regret that there exists in various parts of Ireland Lodges professing to be in connection with the Orange Institution numbering among their members Brethren of this Institution adopting other Orders and degrees than the Orange and Purple, the two original and only recognised Orders by us, that we cannot too strongly express our conviction that all such unlicensed Orders were highly detrimental to our best interest and injurious to the character of our Institution and we hereby request our brethren to abstain from all connection with Black Lodges or Lodges granting Degrees of Royal Arch Purple or Purple Marksman or any other unrecognised names or systems different from those established by our fundamental Rules and we request all Grand Officers of Counties wherein such Lodges exist to use their influence for their suppression or proper conformity to the said Rules and Regulations.”**

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

12th – 14th November 1834

At the Grand Lodge proceedings of the 12th to the 14th November 1834 in Grafton Street Dublin a strong statement of position was reiterated: **“We refer to your consideration the propriety of disavowing, by a resolution to that effect, and connection with Lodges calling themselves Black Lodges, or any other name not provided for in our rules, and repudiate the practice of granting degrees, such as Royal Arch Purple, or Purple Marksman, or whatever the titles may be, which are not in accordance with the regulations and principles of the Orange institution.”**

The Royal Arch Purple degree was still known in some areas as ‘the Purple-Marksman degree.’ This statement from Grand Lodge incorporated both existing titles so as to cover the different local terminologies.

HOUSE OF COMMONS SELECT COMMITTEE ENQUIRY INTO THE ORANGE ORDER

1835

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

REPRESENTATION

(8th June 1835)

The Grand Secretary - Stewart Blacker and the Grand Chaplain - Rev. Mortimer O'Sullivan were selected to give evidence on behalf of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, to the Select Committee of the House of Commons set up to look into Orange Lodges.

In a reply to a question about the nature and true origin of the "higher orders" the Grand Secretary replied, **"I have not the slightest idea, but imagine they arose from the desire of the lower orders to have something more exciting or alarming in the initiation of members. I think it may be a mixture of Freemasonry with that of the old Orange System, a species of mummery innocent of itself and originated in the strong desire that vulgar minds in general manifest for awful mysteries and ridiculous pageantry."**

The Grand Chaplain - Rev. Mortimer O'Sullivan confirmed the Orange Order's strict prohibition of **"granting degrees, such as Royal Arch Purple or Purple Marksman or whatever the title may be, which are not in accordance with the regulations and principles of the Orange Institution."**

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF GREAT BRITAIN

REPRESENTATION

(20th August 1835)

The Grand Secretary of the Grand Orange Lodge of England C.E. Chetwoode was chosen to give evidence, on behalf of the Orange Institution of England, to the Select Committee.

Asked about the "higher orders" he stated, **"These are persons who continue what they call Orders that are not recognised by the Orange Society, what some would consider nonsensical Orders. The Orange Society does not recognise those Orders at all. These were some of the over zealous Orangemen, and they are chiefly confined to the lower orders, who wished to keep up what were considered their old Orders, formerly several Orders were allowed in the Orange Institution, now they have only two as set forth in the rules, Orange and Purple."**

KING AND PRIME MINISTER DISCOURAGE POLITICAL SOCIETIES

1836

The result of this parliamentary enquiry saw the Orange Order and other similar political Orders outlawed by government. The Prime Minister, Lord John Russell decided that a humble address should be presented to his Majesty, “praying that he would be graciously pleased to take such measures, as his Majesty might deem desirable for the effectual discouragement of Orange Lodges, and, generally, all political societies, excluding persons of different religions, and using secret signs and symbols, and acting by means of associated branches.”

The King willingly assented and decreed, “It is my firm intention to discourage all such societies in my dominions and I rely with confidence on the fidelity of my loyal subjects to support me in this determination.”

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND DISSOLVED TO COMPLY WITH LAW OF THE LAND

(14th April 1836 - 3rd August 1846)

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND RE-FORMED

On the 3rd August 1846 a provisional Grand Lodge was elected and set up, with the Earl of Enniskillen elected as Grand Master along with the full complement of Grand Lodge Officers from the old leadership. However, it wasn't until 12th & 13th November 1846 that Grand Lodge was formally operating.

GRAND BLACK CHAPTER OF IRELAND FORMED

(14th SEPTEMBER 1846)

Up until now the Black Order had operated in a disjointed ad-hoc manner. This was in order to avoid any persecution by the Orange Institution. The dissolution of Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland gave an impetus to the ritualists within the Orange family to re-establish their practises.

The Grand Black Chapter of Ireland was formed on 14th September 1846.

(1st MARCH 1847)

On 1st March 1847 the Grand Black Chapter brought together the three different strands of Black existing in the British Isles – the Grand Black Chapter of Ireland, the Grand Black Lodge of the Knights of Malta (Scotland) and the Grand Brittanic Institution (England).

Orange historian Aiken McClelland reports of this union: “There can be little doubt that the reason for the amalgamation was the reconstitution of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland in 1846, and the fear that the new Grand Lodge would succeed in crushing smaller bodies, but would find a larger organisation a more difficult proposition.”

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

1849

Grand Lodge's position towards the varying ritualistic bodies was unchanged. The stringent rules prohibiting the Royal Arch Purple and Black degrees of old remained in place. They re-emphasised the Order's abhorrence of these degrading 'Heathenish Rites'. Every Orangeman must affirm that he would not **“admit or assist at the admission of any member into any other order purporting to be part of the Orange System, than the Orange and Purple, which are the only Orders recognised by the Rules of the Orange Institution.”**

In their book, 'History of the Royal Arch Purple Order', the Royal Arch Purple Chapter admits, "The loose, flexible structure adopted by the Royal Arch Purple Order and its policy of keeping out of sight while staying close as possible to the Orange organisation, especially at Lodge level ensured it survived unscathed."

For the sake of survival, the Royal Arch Purple Order remained a subtle underground movement within the Orange.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

(AUGUST 1861)

The formation of the Grand Black Chapter created much unease within the ranks of Grand Lodge. Opinion was split on how best to deal with it. Some wanted it publicly faced down whilst most felt that the stringent rules of the Orange Institution were sufficient to dissuade Orangemen from joining.

In August 1861 the Grand Chaplain – Rev. Thomas Drew – resigned from the Orange Institution at the Order's failure to root out the Royal Black Institution. This notable loss seemed to precipitate Grand Lodge into action, as, not long after this, they released a strong statement condemning the Black Institution.

(4th DECEMBER 1862)

Grand Lodge declared, **“It having appeared to the Grand Lodge, from some facts recently before it, that the interests and welfare of the Orange Institution, and its effectual working for the objects for which it has been established, are seriously handicapped and endangered by any Lodge or members becoming connected with an Association styled the Grand Black Chapter, this Grand Lodge declares, that, any connection with any association is contrary to the true spirit of the Orange Institution. Therefore the Grand Lodge of Ireland hereby cautions all members of the Orange Institution against becoming or continuing to be in any way identified with that Association.”**

There was clearly no softening within the Orange on its view of the Black. However, they were dealing with a better organised and more formidable enemy now since the formation of its ruling Grand Black Chapter.

ORANGE ORDER PAMPHLET

1875

The Orange Institution outlined its clear position on ritualism in a pamphlet released in 1875 called 'Orangeism: Its principles, its purposes and its relation to society - defined and defended': **"Ritualism should not be left an inch of ground nor a foot to stand on within the domain of Protestantism, a little leaven leavens the whole lump. There is no necessity for keeping on parallel lines with the heresies of Rome...A prudent mariner will never risk the safety of his ship and cargo, or imperil the lives of his passengers, by deliberately going out of his direct course, where deep waters abound, in order to vaunt his skill in navigating through the intricacies of rocks and shoals and lurking sandbanks. In like manner, Protestants should studiously avoid the pit-falls of Rome as they would an epidemic. Too close a similarity to her doctrines, rituals and Church discipline have proved contagious."**

Referring to the alarming growth of ritualism within the Church of England at the time, the booklet warned, **"Any approach to 'High Church doctrine and practice' should be eschewed: it is a mild and deceptive term, under which lie dangerous tendencies and disastrous results. In a word, it may be taken as Romanism in its first stage; for what is in itself a tiny and seemingly innocuous seed, when deposited in a good soil passes through the natural course of germination, and soon reaches the second and more pronounced stage of its development, currently known as "Ritualism;" and if the climate be congenial, and other circumstances propitious, it ultimately bursts forth into full-blown Romanism...It is Popery minus the Pope...Shakespeare spoke truly when he said – 'Disguise! I see thou art a great wickedness. Wherein the enemy doeth much.'"**

The document continues, **"A bold attempt is being made to undo the work of three centuries – to undermine, and finally overthrow, the majestic pile that was built with the bones and cemented with the blood and treasures of martyrs and confessors. And shall we, as their sons, and the heirs of the greatest and most glorious hereditary inheritance – civil and religious liberty – stand by with folded arms and make no effort to arrest the progress of devastation?"**

It continues, **"Latimer's 'candle' has not yet gone out, but its brilliancy is being dimmed by an excrescence – in short, it requires to be snuffed, and the question of the moment is, who is to do it? The Orangemen, I answer, will do it. They have already begun to work, and will not rest until it be accomplished. Where Orangeism flourishes, ritualism cannot gain a footing. The atmosphere is uncongenial to its growth. In Ulster it dare not enter – it would not survive a single day...As surely as Ritualism is a bane (or cause of ruin), so surely is Orangeism the antidote."**

chapter 4

united against error (1876-1878)

(THE LARGEST OPINION POLL CONDUCTED, WITHIN ORANGEISM, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE ROYAL ARCH PURPLE DEGREE)

(1876 -1878)

Leading members of the Grand Orange Lodge of England initiated the largest gauge of senior Orange opinion, on the subject of the Royal Arch Purple Order, between the years 1876 and 1878. This opinion poll was conducted amongst the most prominent and influential Orangemen in the British Isles and was intended to assess their stance on the highly ritualistic Royal Arch Purple degree. This poll was felt essential, so as to counteract a well-organised body of clandestine Orangemen who were planning to foist the Royal Arch Purple degree upon Orangeism.

The response of those gauged was strong, clear and unanimously hostile to the Arch Purple degree. Their resolute views seemed to reflect the feeling that existed within the broader Orange family to this heathenistic degree.

Deputy Grand Chaplain of the Grand Orange Lodge of England, Rev. G.W. Straton proposed to Grand Lodge: **“That it be declared by this Grand Lodge that such words as ‘Properly prepared’, &c., in the Purple Order Ritual give no authority or countenance to any officer or brother to enforce or enjoin an oral Ritual, or an obligation of any kind, to be used in the Loyal Orange Institution of England, other than the two prescribed Rituals, Orange and Purple, sanctioned by Grand Lodge, held at Liverpool, 1876, for the use of the Amalgamated Lodges of England.”**

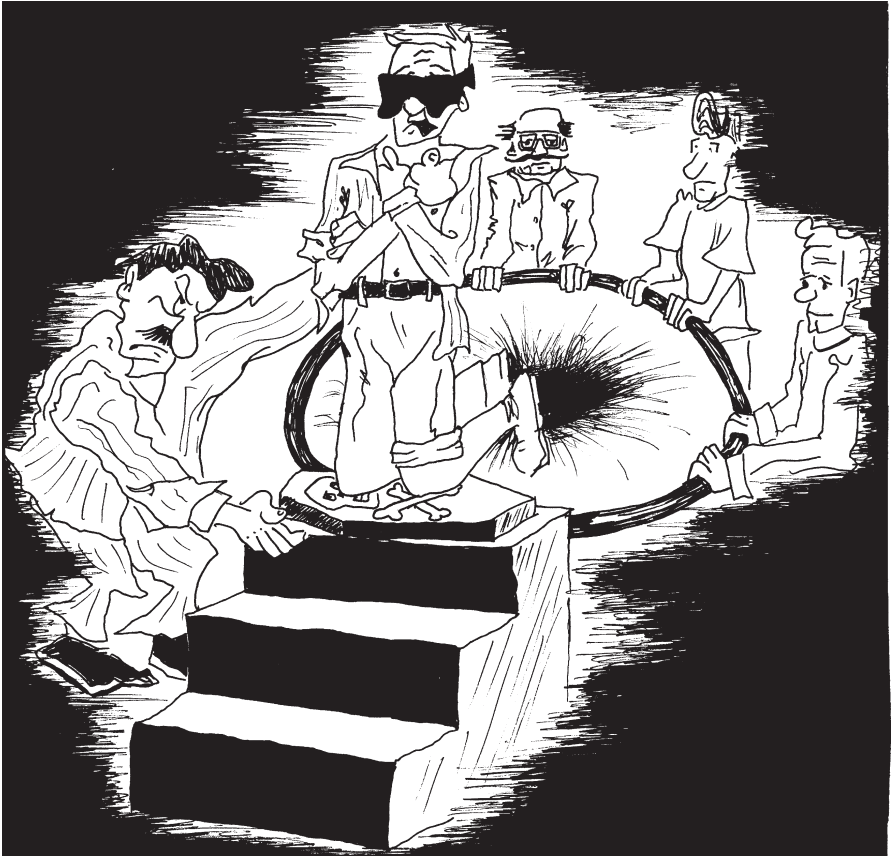
Fellow Deputy Grand Chaplain of the Grand Orange Lodge of England, Dr Badenock supported the Rev. Straton’s position in a strongly worded statement, which had the backing of his own individual lodge, stating **“that complaints having been made, apparently well founded, that Ritualistic practises are being introduced into the Order which are not in accordance with the constitutional and Christian principles and objects of the body, and are in the opinion of this Lodge vulgar and degrading, and fitted to alienate the affections of its influential members from the Order and to arrest its prosperity and usefulness, it is resolved to make an earnest representation to the Imperial Grand Master. The Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, and Grand Secretary to use their best efforts to put a stop to the practises referred to.”**

It was Dr Badenock’s Lodge which co-ordinated this U.K. wide gauge of Orange opinion on the Royal Arch Purple degree.

Lord Enniskillen, in his capacity as Imperial Grand Master of the Grand Orange Council, stated: **“I have been an Orangeman since 1832 or 33, and during that time I have never had anything to do with it or any other Order beyond the Orange and the Purple, agreeably with the standing rules of the Grand Lodge of Ireland; and I never have, nor never will sign any certificate that contains anything beyond those two**

colours. I strongly recommend every Orangeman keep clear of all the numerous and ridiculous innovations” (9th January 1878).

Thomas Macklin, Grand Secretary of the Grand Orange Lodge of Scotland outlined: “With what difficulty much mischievous nonsense has been removed...bearing insulting reproaches from bearded babies crying for toys ... Politically all besides the Orange and simple Purple are absolutely useless, but viewed in relation to religion not only are they useless but profane and degrading, and ought to restrain the men who practise them from laughing at the mummeries and buffooneries of Popery” (22nd January 1878).



Chalmers J. Paton. Grand Master of the Grand Orange Lodge of Scotland stated, “I am of the opinion that all degrees worked by Orangemen other than the Orange and Purple are spurious and unnecessary” (17th January 1878).

William P. Foord, Past Deputy Provincial Grand Master, England stated, “I fervently hope Dr. Badenoch will carry his resolution and press it on Grand Lodge. It is the

only thing I know of what will save the Orange Institution from becoming an organized scandal. _____ has already resigned. I trust the next Grand Lodge may make some progress towards a better state of things than now exists, and if not I shall certainly leave it myself directly, a step I should have taken before but that I know others are waiting to follow me. There are here many Orangemen who have joined the Order and left it (more than the present paying members), and when I meet them. I find they are ready to help us with money but will not come to Lodge, saying they 'can remain Protestants but not Shakers'. That reply I knew referred to the Arch Purple, and it was one I could not answer as I was myself so much shocked at the Blasphemy of that Order that I have never attended one R.A.P. meeting since nor never will.

I can only account for this mischief springing up by the idea that "an enemy has done this" (i.e. sown the tares), it would be well to see if we can detect who it is - this enemy, burn him out, start afresh, and see if we can't do better. We have a noble organization completely spoilt, capable of doing nothing but 'giving the enemy cause to blaspheme' " (28th January 1878).

Lord Enniskillen, in his capacity as Grand Master of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, explained, "It would appear from a perusal of the correspondence and other documents you enclosed that the Arch-Purple (or as you term it an oral) Ritual has been substituted in a large number of the English Lodges for the authorized simple Ritual of the Purple Order. If this be the fact, nothing could be more contrary to the rules of the Institution, or more injurious to its interests, and it must be promptly and firmly dealt with, and the practice suppressed.

I regret that the state of my health prevents my interfering as actively, in this matter, as Brother Badenoch's resolution suggests, and as I would wish to do; but surely the Grand Lodge of England is competent to deal with it, and in my opinion a strong resolution, not merely condemnatory, but prohibitory of this innovation, and enjoying the use of the authorized Ritual only in all the Lodges should be adopted, and a copy of it specially transmitted to every private Lodge in the Kingdom. I enclose you a copy of the Ritual for the Purple Order, which we use in Ireland, and which I think should be the form adopted throughout the Order in every part of the world" (Not dated).

William J. Gwynn. Grand Secretary of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland argued, "It is not the first I received on the same subject. The heresy (as I maintain it to be) of an oral ritual is as a deadly canker eating out the very vitals of true Orangeism, and if it is not rooted out must work its ruin. I view it and all fantastic tomfooleries of Arch-Purple, Black, Scarlet, Green and the like as but unauthorized inventions of self-sufficient spirits loving to have the pre-eminence, and to draw disciples after them.

Any allegation that an oral ritual is recognized and strictly enforced by the Grand Lodge of Ireland is absolutely untrue, although there are many who, violating its real principle, unite themselves with those schismatics who by thus dividing are the very worst enemies of the Orange body. That body is disgraced by members professing to obey its laws, yet jesuitically and secretly adding these silly devices

instead of as real followers of King William holding and knowing one Master only, recognizing only his colours, the Orange and Purple...They wisely love darkness rather than light, for did they come to the light they would incur the hazard of criminal prosecution by the law of the land. Such ignoring of the Orange laws is the parallel of Ritualism in our Church, whereby Christ's Gospel is ignored, and blind man's invitation substituted" (4th January 1878).

Chas A. Reeks, Orange Institution, England stated: "I have had a short conversation with one of our clerical brethren, who remarked that the Ritual used when he was admitted to the Purple Order was, in his opinion, quite sufficient to drive any clergyman out of the Institution...The rev. gentleman is one of four clerical brethren who were scandalized by the ceremonialism of the Arch-Purple Order, and they have not sat in our Lodge since, nor in any other. Surely this is a drawback to the usefulness of our Institution, when these clergymen might have become ere now Masters of Orange Lodges in their several localities, and have made those lodges the centres and rallying points for the Protestant spirit which every clergyman in these dangerous times should strive to awaken and to keep alive in his congregation and parish.

I consider the time spent and the energy expended in conferring the various orders beyond and foreign to the Orange Institution, as so much time and energy wasted so far as promoting the Protestant cause is concerned, which I take it is (or ought to be) the object of every man worthy of the name of 'Orangeman'." But if we as Orangemen feel it our duty to stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of our Protestant religion, against its inveterate foes, then it would be far better to know nothing of the Black, the Scarlet, and the Green, and only view the Institution as "a means to an end" – a lofty, a patriotic, and an honourable end" (4th January, 1878).

Henry Prigg Orange Institution, England stated, "Dr. Badenoch's motion has my hearty sympathy, for I am certain if the heathenish and degrading ceremonies, such as I made acquaintance with at _____ are prescribed and attempted to be foisted upon all the Lodges, the days of Orangeism as a power for good in England are numbered...Let me remark, however, that I believe if some of my men were to be witness of, or be aware of what is going on at some of the other Lodges, they would throw up their membership in disgust...Is there no means of getting better order and respect for the Grand Lodge laws infused into the Order?...

Rites such as the Arch-Purple attract the wrong men into our ranks; we want sober, religious-minded Protestants, not pot-house politicians and practical jokers...Let the Pagan practises be prohibited and put out of the Order, and then men not worth having with their tomfoolery will leave us and go elsewhere, and better men will attract to our ranks. I feel very strongly on these points, and you do I am sure likewise. Believe me, &c" (15th December 1877).

G.E.W. Houlding, Orange Institution, England outlined, "I feel it a privilege and at the same time a duty to add my humble protest against the so-called 'Arch Purple' and other higher orders that are sought to be thrust upon us by some among our number... Not only are many prevented joining our ranks from a misconception of our principles but what is worse, many having joined afterwards leave us through

being made the unwilling actors in a useless and to a refined mind a revolting ceremonial such as that connected with the 'Arch Purple' and other orders.

One of the chief objects, as I understand it, of the late amalgamation [of all the various strands of Orangeism in England] was that of uniting all Orangemen in one common body, which should be provided with a set of rules and regulations for uniform observance which should contain all the rituals and forms necessary for the two orders (Orange and Purple) recognized by the Imperial Grand Lodge; thus simplifying matters removing many a bone of contention. This having been accomplished, it is indeed surprising to find men who of all others we should expect to be loyal to the laws of those in authority over them contending and clamouring for vain forms and 'traditions of men'...Practically losing sight of the spirit of true Orangeism.

I feel convinced that if we wish to gain the accession to our ranks of intelligent and right minded men, we shall do so, not by enveloping our cause with mysterious and profitless orders, but by the free and open dissemination of those truths and principles which animate the life and actions of our noble founder [King William]. God forbid that we should be ashamed of our colours, but let them ever have imprinted on them in living letters, which may be seen and read of all men, the words of our glorious deliverer, 'The Protestant Religion and the liberties of England I will maintain' " (28th January 1878).

Rev. George W. Straton, Deputy Grand Chaplain of the Grand Orange Lodge of England stated, "**Will you kindly enter my protest... against such absurdity and abomination, so very detrimental to the original and regular Orange and Purple Orders according to the printed, scriptural, and admirable forms of admission? I think it requires not only a very ingenious but a very wicked mind to deduce such ridiculous and indecent performances...thank God I was never subjected to any such degradation upon my admission to the Purple Order; in fact, I would not have endured it for a moment, and I acknowledge no Order or class except the Orange and Purple according to the printed ritual of the Institution.**

My Lodge in Leicester, not two years established, already consists of 36 members, all respectable and creditable men, we should have many more distinguished and desirable men join were it not for the degrading performance which took place last year of the Arch Purple. I shall only add that unless it is put a stop to immediately the Institution will be broken up - I for one will withdraw" (19th January 1878).

Alexander E. Miller, Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Orange Lodge of England stated, "**I quite agree with your dislike to the 'Arch Purple', and, if I can manage it, will be at the Lodge meeting for the discussion"** (10th December 1877).

W.H. Torriano, Grand Secretary of the late Orange Association. Great Britain explained: "**I never administered and never would be party to seeing or administering the so-called Royal Arch Purple. I have always considered all the various forms of this Order and all the imitations of the other so-called high Orders, a system of disgusting buffoonery, unworthy of men, gentlemen, and Christians, contrary to the Orange laws and by their oaths contrary to the laws of the land; and had I known when I joined in 1854 that any such practises existed I would never have joined. These**

practises when known must prevent gentlemen from joining” (21st January 1878).

Rev. B.D. Aldwell, Orange Institution, England stated, **“It seems to be burlesque this ‘Arch Purple’. I am sure that educated men must look on the ceremony with feelings of contempt and abhorrence. We should raise our Order, not degrade it. It will never be what it should unless we insist on a written ritual and one as we now have it in accordance with the Word of God”** (11th January 1878).

Rev. James Ormiston, Orange Institution, England explained: **“For many years I have personally sought to discourage the offensive and irreverent formularies, which in the higher Orders have hitherto prevailed in the Institution...Wishing all success to the reasonable proposition of Bro. Badenoch.**

P.S. - I should add that the Institution has to my certain knowledge lost several clerical Members through the disgust caused by the old ritual” (14th December 1877).

T.B.Hill, Past Provincial Grand Master, England affirmed: **“I am glad to find that an effort is being made to sever the connection of the higher orders with the Orange Society. I believe it has caused much harm... I have known much injury done to the cause by members of the high orders. The men (I cannot call them Brothers) who volunteered to divulge the secrets of the Society to O’Connell, in order to assist him in his attacks upon the order were prominent members of the Black Order. The oaths taken are no security, as they are frequently broken and are certainly illegal. I believe few respectable persons would remain amongst us after passing through the ritual required in some degrees.**

PS. – My father (Past Grand Treasurer, John Hill, 50 years an Orangeman) joins me in this” (23rd January 1878).

A.L. Allen, Orange Institution of England, argued, **“I consider the old Arch-Purple Ritual as repulsive to the last degree...It is not enough that it is not enjoined, it should be forbidden. I object to it as being silly and undignified, but most of all as being distinctly profane and irreligious. Having seen the disastrous effects of it, for I speak from experience when I say it has deprived us of several godly men who would have been ornaments to our Institution. If such things are required to interest members of the Orange Institution - to act as a bond (as is alleged), all I can say is, it speaks but little for their genuine Protestantism. In my opinion the kind of Protestant that such an absurd profane farce pleases is the very sort we should be better without. I earnestly trust by God’s blessing the truly Christian portion of our Institution will make an effort to get rid of it”** (19th January 1878).

George Kershaw, Orange Institution, England declared, **“I am exceedingly glad to hear that a motion has been made by our Reverend and much esteemed Brother Badenoch on the subject of the Arch-Purple Ritual, although exceedingly sorry that there is cause for it, hoping that it had ceased to exist...It is a subject that I feel most strongly. For I am still proud of the title of Orangeman, but I must say I am not so proud of the fact of having gone through (virtually though not actually) the mummeries of the Arch-Purple Ritual.”**

He then testified to his shock at receiving an internal Masonic document from an acquaintance, which showed him the true origins of the Arch Purple degree which he had received. He explains: **“I had lent to me by a gentleman who had formerly been one of Her Majesty’s Consuls in the East under the Earl of Aberdeen – he being perfectly ignorant of my feelings, or my connection with any fraternity, a work containing some remarks on the Orders amongst that body (the Freemasons) by a Freemason giving his name and profession (a solicitor) and address, as also his rank in the Order, which was very high.**

The perusal of this work, from which I was permitted to make what extracts I liked, so disgusted me as seeing in it the source of the rites I had just passed through, so analogous are they in many parts, and seeing also therein the result, I firmly resolved to set my face against any further extension of the order beyond the Orange and Purple, so far as concerned myself and those for whom I had regard, and I look upon all such innovations as the Black, the Blue, the Red, Green, White &c., as unworthy the acceptance of Protestants and the most certain way to bring the society down to the level of the Red Republican of 1793 or the Fenian Firebrand of 1865. I do not speak without reason, but can avouch all I have stated.

I consider our Orange Fraternity as formed for the special protection of Protestantism as opposed to Paganism wherever found, whether in the form of Babylonish rite and heathen mysteries of the followers of Nimrod, Bacchus, and Semiramis, or the Saturnalia of Pio Nono and the Whore of Rome, both having the same source and paternal derivation; but to take our stand on the Infallible Rock we contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and as such we must root out from our midst this pollution, and have done with the chamber of imagery and witchcraft. Let us then put on the whole armour, standing shoulder to shoulder, for the truth, looking to our one Master, and shouting, ‘The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.’

I am confident that the Purple Ritual has caused of our most eligible Protestant Churchmen to disconnect themselves from the fraternity...Wishing you God speed in this purging business” (26th January 1878).

The hostility of these godly Orange leaders towards the heathenish Arch Purple and Black Orders reflected the strong broad sentiment which prevailed among the membership throughout the British Isles. There is little doubt today that these principled men would be found far outside the domain of ritualistic Orangeism.

chapter 5

moving towards change (1880-1913)

Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland kept a close eye on all violations of its prohibition on membership of the higher orders. One of the means by which perpetrators were detected was a book full of newspaper cuttings collected by the Grand Secretary called 'Breaches of the Xth Law by Lodges – Transgressors cautioned.' This book was maintained by the Secretary's Office at the Orange Hall, 49 York Street, Dublin between 1875-1880. It included many paper cuttings, which were pasted in, documenting the names and Lodges of rebellious ritualists who had been initiated into the Royal Arch Purple and Black degrees.

ORANGEISM STANDS FIRMLY AGAINST THE ROYAL ARCH PURPLE AND BLACK DEGREES

The Royal Arch Purple Chapter's book - 'History of the Royal Arch Purple Order' explains, "The hostility shown by the Grand Lodge of England towards the Royal Arch Purple Order in 1878 had continued till it amounted to oppression" (p.127). This suppression was so successful that the Grand Black Chapter of England in 1902 was forced to respond.

By the start of the 1900s many of these rebellious Orangemen throughout the British Isles had subtly worked themselves into positions of responsibility within their respective Grand Orange Lodges. This provided them with ideal opportunities to pursue their covert aims.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF SCOTLAND CAPITULATES

13th June 1902

On 13th June 1902 the Grand Orange Lodge of Scotland amazingly capitulated and accepted the Royal Arch Purple degree as an *integral part* of its Institution. This was achieved by replacing the Plain Purple degree with the Royal Arch Purple degree, thus maintaining a two-degree system. The cancer had set in!

Loyal Orange Institution of Scotland. (2 degrees)

1st degree: Orange degree

2nd degree: Royal Arch Purple degree

GRAND BLACK CHAPTER OF ENGLAND

The success of the Royal Arch Purple advocates in Scotland in introducing the degrading Royal Arch Purple degree into the Orange Institution of Scotland provided hope and impetus to the persecuted ritualists of England and Ireland.

The position of the ritualists in England seemed to be getting more and more isolated by the day. Such was the persecution that the Grand Black Chapter of England decided to organise a special meeting to deal with the matter.

13th DECEMBER 1902

The following account is quoted from the printed report:

“ Important Correspondence from Sir Knights that are being persecuted by Orange Brethren who have only taken the small (or paper) Purple Degree, and are objecting to Brethren wearing scarfs with emblems of the Royal Arch Purple and higher Degrees while sitting under an Orange Warrant, under pain of expulsion.

Very lengthy correspondence was then read clearly proving that a strong feeling of hostility pervaded the Orange Order against Sir Knights and Brethren who have taken the Royal Arch Purple and higher Degrees. One very glaring case was of worthy Sir Knight who, having emblems of Higher Orders on his Orange Sash, was asked by the Master of his Lodge to take his sash off, and because he would not, then the Master closed the Lodge.

A subsequent Meeting was called when it was decided that the subscription paid by the above Sir Knight should be sent back to him and told that he was no longer a member of the Lodge.

After much conversation on the subject it was proposed and seconded that a Sub Committee be formed, to carry out such measures for the protection of the Royal Arch Purple and Higher Orders, as may be necessary. Carried unanimously.”

(THE BLACK CONSPIRACY BEGINS)

19th January 1903

Grand Black Chapter of England set up a sub-Committee to respond to the prevailing persecution experienced by its members. This meeting took place on 19th January 1903. The Committee drafted a letter which was to be distributed to every preceptory in England.

The letter read as follows:

“A special meeting of the above Chapter was held in the Club Room, Travis St., Manchester on December 13th 1902. Important letters were read from Sir Knights and Brethren who had been persecuted on account of wearing emblems of the Royal Arch Purple and other higher Orders, while sitting under an Orange Warrant. Such interference is against the principles of the ‘Imperial Grand Orange Council of the World’, and a gross attempt to retard the spread of Orangeism, especially the higher Orders.

It was resolved unanimously to advise all Sir Knights to see that offices (particularly Representatives to Grand Lodge) are filled by good and true Royal Arch Purplemen at the coming election of Officers, and subscribe money to pay for as many Delegates to the next Grand Lodge as they can, to unite in supporting a Resolution - “That this Grand Lodge recognise the Royal Arch Purple Degree as adopted and confirmed by the Imperial Grand Orange Council of the World”.

“Extracts from the English Grand Lodge Reports, re Royal Arch Purple” (see bills herewith), it will be seen that there is a veiled attempt to crush out all Orders except the Orange and

Paper Purple, thus encouraging the persecution complained of above.”

Signed by the “Provincial Grand Master and the Provincial Grand Registrar.”

This was the beginning of a subtle sinister plot to undermine the true Orange system. From this time on the Orange Order in England was marked for decline.

GRAND BLACK CHAPTER OF IRELAND

The success of the Arch Purple ritualists of Scotland in 1902 and the zeal and the plans of the Black ritualists of England in 1903 gave an new impetus to the oppressed ritualists of Ireland.

They were not unmindful of the successful policy of the Black in England to see that “offices (particularly Representatives to Grand Lodge) be filled by good and true Royal Arch Purplemen at the coming election of Officers.”

INDEPENDENT ORANGE ORDER FORMED

11th June 1903

On the 11th June 1903 the Independent Loyal Orange Institution was formed after a political split within the Orange Institution.

After it became established, and unlike the Orange Order, the Independent Loyal Orange Institution took on the ritualistic Royal Arch Purple degree as its 3rd degree.

Independent Loyal Orange Institution (3 degrees)

1st degree: Orange degree

2nd degree: Plain Purple degree

3rd degree: Royal Arch Purple degree

GRAND BLACK CHAPTER OF IRELAND

11th June 1907

By 1907 the ritualists plans within the Black Institution were well advanced. On 11th June 1907, the Grand Black Chapter of Ireland met in Ballymacarret Orange Hall to discuss the ‘Royal Arch Purple Degree’. Under the subject of ‘English Business’ they decided to make the push to introduce the Royal Arch Purple degree into the Orange Institution in Ireland. They formed a committee to oversee this subtle plan.

The 14 man Committee included Rev. J.M.Moutray (who was nominated Convenor of the group), Col Wallace, Wm. Allen and James Davidson.

NB. It is clear that more and more Orange Lodges in Ulster were placing their halls at the disposal of the Black Institution.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND

11th December 1907

On 11th December 1907 'Armagh County Grand Lodge' made a proposal to Grand Lodge as follows:

"This County Grand Lodge instructs its representatives to recommend to the Grand Lodge of Ireland the revival of the old Arch Purple Degree to be worked in connection with the Orange Institution in Ireland, and to have the Laws and Ordinances of the Institution amended by the substitution of the word 'Arch Purple' for the word 'Purple' in the qualifications for admission into the purple Order."

Grand Lodge decided to set up a Central Committee to consider the proposal further. This committee was conveniently filled with ritualists. All they needed now was a push.

10th June 1908

The committee made six major proposals:

1. That the Royal Arch Purple should be recognised, and in future form portion of the Orange System, and that the Rules of the Institution be amended accordingly
2. That the Purple Degree should continue to be given according to the existing ritual.
3. That the Grand Lodge and County Grand Lodges should hold their meetings in the Purple Degree as at present.
4. That in future it should be a qualification for a member of the Central Committee, that the member shall be a Royal Arch Purple.
5. That a Ritual should be drawn up for the Royal Arch Purple Degree, to be strictly observed.
6. That the following Brethren be a sub-committee to consider the Amendments necessary to be made in the Laws and Ordinances in order to carry out the Resolutions viz.

Col Wallace, Grand Secretary
Wm. Allen, Deputy Grand Master
Thos. McCormick, Deputy Grand Master
James Davidson. Assistant Grand Secretary

Amazingly, when we study the make-up of this important committee, we find that three of the four were the Black leaders who belonged to the plotting Grand Black committee of 1907. The fourth, Rev. J.M.Moutray had died late in 1907.

With these men in place and their plot well advanced, the ritualists were set to foist the iniquitous Royal Arch Purple upon the Orange Institution of Ireland.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF IRELAND RESOLUTELY REJECTS THE INCLUSION OF THE ROYAL ARCH PURPLE DEGREE INTO THE INSTITUTION

In their endeavours they succeeded; in that it passed two readings, but when it came

before the Grand Lodge meeting of 8th December 1909, in Dublin, delegates present resolutely rejected the introduction of the Royal Arch Purple degree into the Orange Institution of Ireland.

The sinister plot of these ritualists had been defeated. It was time for them to get back to their unclean drawing board.

ROYAL ARCH PURPLE CHAPTER FORMED

30th November 1911

Realising there was little chance of the Arch Purple degree being integrated into the Orange Institution of Ireland, these clandestine Orangemen, on 30th November 1911, inaugurated their own Institution - the "Royal Arch Purple Chapter of Ireland"- with its own ruling authority known as the Grand Chapter. The formation of the Grand Chapter seemed to give the Arch Purple a respectability they never before enjoyed, albeit it was still looked upon with great suspicion by more godly elements within the Orange Institution in Ireland.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF ENGLAND

1912

The formation of the Grand Royal Arch Purple Chapter of Ireland inspired those Arch Purple ritualists within the Orange Order in England to increase pressure upon the Grand Orange Lodge of England to accept the Royal Arch Purple degree. Their well-organised campaign was proving too much for the dignified Grand Lodge gentlemen who opposed them. However, these honourable men weren't to go down without a fight.

Deputy Grand Chaplain of Grand Orange Lodge of England - Rev. Alexander Roger – records, **"The R.A.P. section, like the Ritualistic Party, as they grew stronger, finally showed their hand. This brought upon them the condemnation of Grand Lodge Officers. The Grand Secretary, Bro. Touchstone, the grand old man of the Order, sent a letter of warning to the Press. The R.A.P. men were furious, and did not forgive him for his actions."**

"When the Grand Lodge met in London in 1912 they assembled in force and refused to pass the recommendation of the Grand Council, which emphasised the non-recognition on the part of Grand Lodge of the R.A.P. An attempt was made in Grand Lodge to carry a resolution tacitly sanctioning this Degree."

Deputy Grand Master, Mr Michael Powell, of Gateshead (a dear old gentleman, who held the Kings Commission as Justice of the Peace) touchingly told the meeting that **"if the R.A.P. was sanctioned he would have to consider whether he could conscientiously retain his connections with the [Orange] Order, and loyalty to his King. He said that the two were in conflict, and loyalty to the King, with him, must take first place, even though it meant severance with an Order with which he had been associated for many years. He also stated that if the Police knew of any R.A.P. initiation ceremony being carried out they could enter in the King's name and arrest the whole company and march them off to the cells."**

The Grand Officers were facing an uphill battle. The leader of the ritualists was a 'Seventh-Day Baptist' Pastor, Lieut-Col. Richardson.

Shortly after this meeting, Assistant Grand Secretary of England, William Touchstone a leading opponent of the R.A.P. died.

Deputy Grand Master, Mr Michael Powell, Deputy Grand Master, Councillor T. Winn Hesse, Deputy Grand Master, David Catt and Deputy Grand Chaplain of Grand Orange Lodge of England, Rev. Alexander Roger met together and entered into a solemn compact **“to use every effort in our power to resist the recognition of the R.A.P. Degree.”**

The righteous stand of these honourable gentlemen was being swamped by an well-organised sinister campaign by the ritualists.

GRAND ORANGE LODGE OF ENGLAND CAPITULATES

1913

The subtle campaign by the ritualists finally succeeded, for in 1913 the Grand Orange Lodge of England accepted the Royal Arch Purple degree as an *integral part* of its Institution. This was achieved by adding the Royal Arch Purple degree to the two existing degrees, thus making it the third degree.

Loyal Orange Institution of **England**. (3 degrees)

1st degree: Orange degree

2nd degree: Plain Purple degree

3rd degree: Royal Arch Purple degree

Not surprisingly, since the acceptance of this superstitious degree, the Orange Order in England has been in slow terminal decline! The institution has gone from a powerful religious institution of tens of thousands of members to a small ineffective body of between two and three thousand members today.

chapter 6

a final stand (1925)

PROTESTANT TRUTH SOCIETY EXPOSURE

1925

The most profound exposure of the Royal Arch Purple, relates to a little known small pamphlet published in 1925 by the 'Protestant Truth Society' called 'Orangeman or Christian: Which?' It was written by the former Deputy Grand Chaplain of Grand Orange Lodge of England - Rev. Alexander Roger and was a *condemnation* of the Royal Arch Purple degree. It was a limited internal document, being circulated solely within the Orange family. This booklet was a final appeal from evangelicals within the Orange Order in England to purge the Royal Arch Purple degree out of Orange Institution of England, after its introduction into the Order in 1913.

LEAVEN AT WORK

Rev. Roger testifies, **"The procedure at these Royal Arch Purple initiations became a byword in Protestant circles in the City of London, and more than one leading Protestant worker expressed not only condemnation of it, but surprise that I, as a Christian minister, and a Grand Lodge Officer, should countenance it. Up to that time I had no definite information as to the procedure other than strange rumours afloat concerning it. But when I discovered that an eye-witness could be found...it became comparatively easy to glean the facts recorded.**

At the next meeting of my own Lodge I described what I had heard, though I at that time I had not had the facts verified by the eye-witness. Of course the RAP men flatly denied that such things could have occurred. Unfortunately they will deny anything reflecting on the degree.

It appears there had been in existence for some years an Organisation known as the Royal Arch Purple Degree which the Grand Lodge of England refused to recognise in any form as being not only illegal in itself, but also outside the scope of the Institution as a loyal Order."

The former Deputy Grand Chaplain relates how he was warned in his early days, **"If I valued peace and comfort in the Institution, I must never interfere or oppose them (Arch Purplemen) in their aims or work."**

He then declares, **"My readers will see the Royal Arch Purplemen occupied a position similar to that of the Ritualistic Party in the Established Church; in fact, some Orangemen have called them the ritualists of the Order. Whatever may be said against them one fact is pre-eminent. However much they disagree with each other at times, they stand shoulder to shoulder to resist any attack upon and criticism of their methods."**

Rev. Roger testifies, “Once a man has taken the Royal Arch Purple it seems to impart a ‘fatal twist’ to his nature and especially to his veracity. I could give instance after instance of deliberately uttered falsehoods – in fact, the principles of truth or fair play are discounted in order to injure those known to oppose the degree.”

THE INITIATION

At the commencement of the night the candidate is required to take an oath binding himself never to disclose any matter pertaining to the Royal Arch Purple Order. He also swears not to have any unlawful carnal knowledge with the female relatives of his brother Royal Arch Purplemen. The oath concludes with the candidate swearing to “keep and conceal the secrets of my Royal Arch Purple brethren” within his breast “murder and treason excepted.”

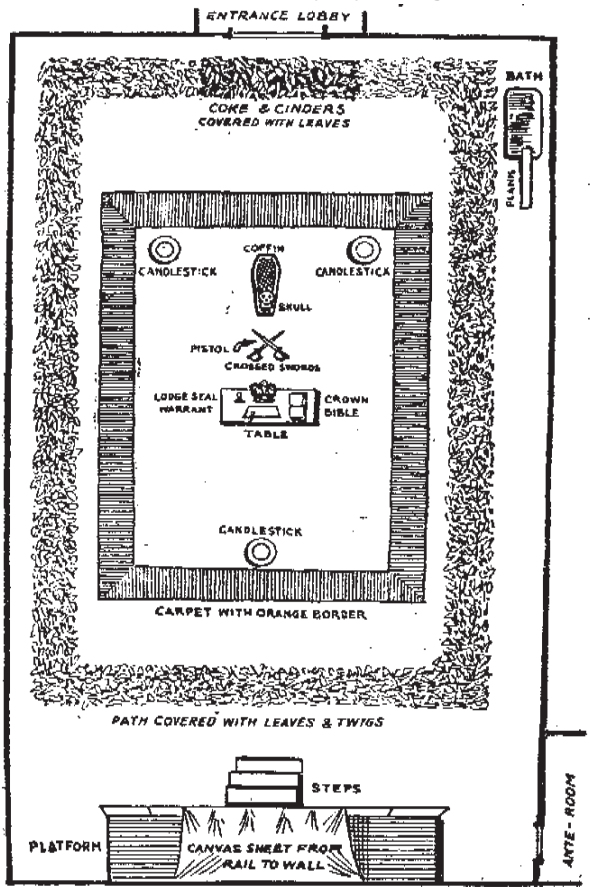
Commenting on the oath the Rev. Roger states: “If clerics aid and abet a contravention of the Law of the Realm what is to be expected of the ordinary lay Orangeman?”

He then exposes the initiation, “The Candidate, duly prepared for the ceremony of initiation, waits in the adjoining ante-room. He has been divested of his coat, vest, collar, boots and socks. He stands barefoot, with his trouser-legs rolled up to the knees, his shirt open at the breast, and blindfolded by a bandage around his eyes.

The oath taken, the candidate is branded with the Seal of the Lodge upon his bare chest- the seal, if a metal one, having been previously heated for the impression.

Before he enters the lodge-room, the reverent master warns the brethren present in these terms: “Now brethren, you must try to control your risibilities tonight, if you can” – a warning doubtless necessary, but alas! impossible to heed.

Accompanied by the harmonium all join in singing the hymn ‘Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire’ followed by a prayer and reading of a Scripture portion by the Chaplain.



PLAN OF LODGE ROOM FOR ROYAL ARCH PURPLE DEGREE

Re produced by kind permission of the Protestant Truth Society

The Candidate is ushered in, in the condition already described, bearing a wand or staff in one hand.

The journey through the wilderness then commences. Three times is the blindfolded candidate conducted round the leaf strewn path in the hall, being whipped upon the bare legs with switches made of small branches of twigs by five or six of the brethren during the circuit of the hall. The Chaplain during this portion as other portions of the ceremony, is engaged in either reading portions of Scripture or certain prayers.

During the first circuit the unfortunate candidate stepping upon the coke and cinders uttered exclamations of pain and surprise. He fell to the floor upon coke-amid renewed laughter. The coke was imported into the ceremony (so the Master said) as a 'special treat' for the unfortunate candidate."

As the candidate is led round the room the first time he sustains a fall, and is raised up, on the words "O death, where is thy sting?" He is then led round again and receives the second fall, and is raised up, on the words "O grave, where is thy victory?" The Royal Arch Purple here apply this text in 1 Corinthians 15, which relates alone to God's people, to *all* its initiates (saved or unsaved).

The Rev. Roger explains how the candidate is **"made to lie upon his back each circuit at a selected spot, whilst the Chaplain said certain prayers over him."**

On the third and final lap round the Chapter room, the initiate sustains his third and final fall, which results in him being raised by the five points of fellowship. First - foot to foot...Second - knee to knee...Third - hand in hand...Fourth - breast to breast...Fifth and last – left hand behind back...

The blindfolded Royal Arch Purple candidate is led over to within four or five feet of the front of a purpose-built three-stepped ladder, symbolising 'Jacob's ladder'. The candidate then steps 'two and a half' paces forward towards the ladder, in an observance called 'the advancement'. This 'two and a half' paces represent the secret mystical number of the Order.

The Rev. Roger says, **"They (the Royal Arch Purple Order) claim to be representative of the two and a half Tribes that led the vanguard of Israel to the Promised Land, and the numerals two and a half are to some extent the badge of their Organisation."**

"He (the candidate) is made to mount the three steps to the platform (representing Faith, Hope and Charity) and bidden to stand on the topmost step, about five feet above the ground level. Next he is turned round with his back to the strong sheet, and with a dexterous push backward by the clerical Master of the Lodge, is thrown into the sheet upon his back. In this position he is carried round the hall, various sly kicks being administered en-route – the candidate vigorously protesting against the kicks." This is the infamous 'riding the goat'.

The lecturers ask the blindfolded candidate: *"What do you stand most in need of?"* The answer is *"Light."*

He continues, **“When the bandage over his eyes is removed, his first view is the points of two swords held in dangerous proximity to the breast and the pistol at his head.**

Finally he is made to stand in front of the coffin, skull, pistol and swords, whilst he takes the oath administered by the Master, the skull being placed in his hands during the oath-taking.”

He is informed of the consequences of disloyalty to the Royal Arch Purple - that of having his throat cut across from ear to ear, his tongue torn out by its roots and his left breast torn open, his heart and vitals taken therefrom, etc. etc.

“The ceremony now concludes and the candidate, after being permitted to resume his divested clothing, returns to the Lodge room and is welcomed as a duly accredited member of the Royal Arch Purple degree.”

BLASPHEMOUS AND UNDIGNIFIED

Rev Roger asks, **“Can you picture a more discreditable parody of Sacred things, conducted as it was amid efforts of the onlookers to restrain inordinate laughter? Does not this introductory invocation to the Holy Spirit bring it within very close proximity of blasphemy? Think of so-called ministers of the Gospel taking part in such a scene! To countenance it at all is to disgrace their profession and bring discredit upon themselves. How can it be designated ‘a sublime degree?’ ”**

The Rev.Roger testifies, **“I have heard of ‘accidents’ occurring as a result of a fall when a candidate was ‘tossed’ in the canvas sheet.”**

He then refers to a fatality in the early 1900's, when one of its members, Samuel Tweedie of Newry, was charged with causing the death of a candidate in that town by a pistol wound.

“It appears that Tweedie was unaware that the pistol used in the ceremony was loaded with other than blank cartridge. The jury acquitted him of culpable homicide under the circumstances.”

The former Deputy Grand Chaplain concludes: **“The chief aspect is the position of a Christian man regarding it. Is it becoming to a Christian man and the self respect of any gentleman to appear in this half stripped condition? Is it necessary in order to secure his adherence to the maintenance of the Protestant Faith in Church and State to enforce submission to what after all is a degrading ceremony bordering upon the blasphemous? That it should be deemed necessary to blindfold the Candidate until nearly the close of the initiation is strongly suggestive.**

My connection with the [Orange] Order has brought me into contact during a period of years with a number of well-known London and provincial clergymen and laymen associated in membership, but the majority have dropped out. The unseemly RAP business has reached their ears and they have quietly resigned rather than countenance it.

Is it too late for Grand Lodge to retrace its steps? By doing so it would prevent an ultimate stranding on the rocks and the discredit which must attach to association with a method of procedure not only questionable on legal grounds, but also on those of Christian morality. If these lines in any way help to attain this end, no one will be more gladdened than the writer.”

This godly appeal by the Rev. Roger for the, now ritualistically controlled, Orange Order in England to purge the Royal Arch Purple degree out of the Institution sadly failed. Their foolish dismissal resulted in many believers resigning from the Orange Institution, including the writer of the pamphlet the Rev. Roger, minister of Immanuel Church, Putney. Editing the booklet was J.A. Kensit, whose father founded the Protestant Truth Society and who, in the end, was killed by Romanists because of his work for Protestantism. He was not afforded the opportunity to resign, but was expelled by the Orange Order for his part in this just publication. The Orange Order in England, as predicted, has reaped a very painful dividend ever since following its wilful rejection of these many able evangelical warnings.

conclusion

The degrees of the Royal Arch Purple and Black Orders, which were once so vehemently rejected by men of principle, integrity and truth in the past, have now become integrated into the overall domain of modern-day Orangeism.

The Royal Arch Purple degree today is an integral part of the Orange Order world-wide apart from its country of origin – **Ireland**. In the Emerald Isle today it still stands distinct, sandwiched between the Loyal Orange Institution and the Royal Black Institution, in an organisation called the Royal Arch Purple Chapter. However, over the years the degree has gradually become accepted within the ranks of the Orange Institution in Ireland. Its ruling authority in Ireland - Grand Orange Lodge, which was once so passionately opposed to all forms of ritualism, is today controlled 98% by 'ritualists'. The broader membership would be closer to 95%. The membership of the far smaller Independent Loyal Orange Institution, which employs the degree as an integral part of its Order, is also about 95% 'ritualists', with its Grand Lodge being 100% 'ritualists'.

Today, both the Orange Order and the Independent Orange Order have enlisted many unconverted men into their institutions in order to swell their diminishing ranks. In the case of the Independents, this is seen more in it's recruiting procedures in England and Scotland. The separated image has clearly gone!

The Bible says, **“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty”** (2 Cor 6:14-18).

Surely it is time to return to the old-fashioned uncompromising anti-ritualistic position of our evangelical Protestant forefathers, who ultimately prepared the path before us? After all, the Reformation dealt a shattering blow to ritualism within the Church. The Reformers believed in the supreme authority and simplicity of the Word of God. To such an end they purged out all the ritualistic false practices of Rome and replaced them with a simple living faith in the risen Lord.

Lorraine Boettner in his book 'Roman Catholicism' explains: “Protestantism has the truth, due largely to its emphasis on the reading and study of the Bible. That truth is set forth as a life to be lived, not as a formula or a ritual. Its emphasis is upon a change of heart and a life of fruitful service” (p. 297).

These elaborate, highly ritualistic, initiations belong far outside the bounds of evangelical Protestantism. Such degrading displays ultimately become a barrier to truth for the initiate rather than an appropriate channel to reach him. This type of nonsense is clearly contrary to the traditional dignified God glorifying mode of service that Protestants have always enjoyed.

Lorraine Boettner further writes: “Elaborate ritual and ceremony, which theoretically are designed to aid the worshipper, usually have the opposite effect in that they tend to take the mind away from things which are spiritual and eternal and to centre it on that which is material and temporal. Artistic ritual...often become ends in themselves, and can easily become instruments which prevent the people from joining in the worship of God” (p. 273).

There seems to be something within the innate nature of man that craves ritual, form and ceremony.

J.C. Ryle declared, in his book, ‘What do we owe to the Reformation?’ “**RITUALISM IS THE HIGHWAY TO ROME.**”

The Orange pamphlet of 1875 succinctly says of Protestant ritualism, “**It is Popery minus the Pope.**”

The passionate and consistent protests of successive Orange leaders down through the years against the ritualistic Royal Arch Purple and Black degrees have now been replaced with complete acceptance. This compromise has not surprisingly resulted in the gradual, yet notable, spiritual and numerical demise of the Orange Order. The Order today, world-wide, being a pitiful shadow of its former glory. The solemn warnings of old have since proved to be prophetic.

The ritualists have clearly won the long polemical war for control of Orangeism although it has been at a great cost to the institution. The old principled, anti-ritualistic, Christian backbone of the Order has been sadly removed, never again to return. Furthermore, the once strong leadership of the Orange has now become weak, watery and largely impotent.

The simple evangelical Protestant principles of our old Orange forefathers have been merged together with the superstitious ritualistic practices of the Royal Arch Purple and Black Orders. The result has been an apostate construction full of mystery and confusion.

The Bible says, “**The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity**” (2 Timothy 2:19).

The past eight years has graciously seen a renewed surge of believers resigning from the Orders on the same grounds as their old godly forefathers. Ironically today, these men of Christian principle are reviled from within the Orange and Independent Orange Institutions as disloyal religious fanatics. How times have changed!

However, such men, like those of old, must surely rejoice in the precious words of Christ, who said, “**Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you**” (Matt 5:10-12).

The Lord is looking for a holy, humble, separated and uncompromising remnant to stand

in this day for His unchanging, undiluted, infallible Word of Truth.

The Bible says, **“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land”** (2 Chr 7:14).

It is surely appropriate for those within the Orders to consider the words of that great Scottish Reformer John Knox, in his disputing with the Popish ritualists of his day, “It is not enough that man invent a ceremony, and then give it a signification, according to his pleasure...if ye would prove that your ceremonies proceed from faith and please God, ye must prove that God in expressed words has commanded them. Else ye shall never prove that they proceed from faith, nor yet that they please God.”

Referring to Deuteronomy 12:32, which says, **“What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it,”** Knox declares, “The plain and straight commandment of God is, Not that thing which appears good in thy eyes shalt thou do to the Lord thy God, but what the Lord thy God has commanded thee, that do thou: add nothing to it; diminish nothing from it. Now, unless ye are able to prove that God has commanded your Ceremonies, this His former commandment will damn you and them.”

Knox concludes, “Such as God has ordained, we allow, and with reference we use...Your Ceremonies cannot abide the Word of God: ergo they abide the fire; and if they cannot abide the fire, they are not gold, silver, nor precious stones...And now I make plain in few words that...God’s Word damns your Ceremonies” (‘The History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland’ by John Knox p.91-94).

behind closed doors

by W.P. Malcomson, M.A. F.E.T.S.

Purchase the book that is rocking the evangelical community in Ulster. This explosive book – ‘behind closed doors’ - is a must for anyone interested in Orange, or secret society, affairs. The book, which is written by former Orangeman Paul Malcomson, MA, goes ‘behind closed doors’ and examines, for the first time publicly, the highly secretive and deeply ritualistic practices of the Royal Arch Purple degree – a degree which 95% of Orangemen travel. It also reveals why the Institution is in such a spiritual mess today.

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THE FORGOTTEN HISTORY OF THE ORANGE ORDER

THE INSTITUTION'S HISTORIC STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ROYAL ARCH PURPLE AND BLACK DEGREES (1798 – 1925)

The history of the Orange Order is a story of perennial conflict both inside and outside the Institution. Whilst most Orangemen today are familiar with the long-standing external struggle with Rome and Republicanism, few know anything about the prolonged internal battle between a group of rebellious ritualistic Orangemen and the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. This significant conflict raged furiously within the Order between the years 1798 and 1925.

The ritualists were those renegade Orangemen who adhered to the neo- Masonic Royal Arch Purple and Black degrees. Their unflinching aim was to introduce these ritualistic degrees into the Orange Institution and as a consequence make it a mirror of Freemasonry.

The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, on the other-hand, fiercely and consistently resisted every encroachment of these "Heathenish Rites." The Orange Order in Ireland, from the formation of its Grand Lodge in 1798 to the early 1900's, resolutely opposed all such forms of ritualism. The practises of these orders were looked upon as both illegal and deeply injurious to the true Orange cause. It is important to note, in their determined stand, Grand Lodge held the broad support of the wider Orange family.

This revealing booklet analyses Orangeism's long principled struggle against the ritualistic and superstitious practices of the 'Royal Arch Purple' and 'Black' institutions. A matter that has become today "the forgotten history of the Orange Order."

Paul Malcomson, M.A. F.E.T.S., is the author of the explosive, recently released book 'behind closed doors.' He is a former member of the Orange Order, the Royal Arch Purple Chapter and the Royal Black Institution having reached the highest degree in the Black – the Red Cross Degree. He resigned from the Orders on Scriptural grounds several years ago.