

The Museum Collection

No.32

A Theory regarding the Origin of The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes



An in depth look at the origin of the
Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes

by

E. Graham Dunstan, C.P.

Circa 1922

©COPYRIGHT 2013

Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, Grand Lodge of England

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRODUCED
STORED IN A RETRIEVAL SYSTEM OR TRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY MEANS,
ELECTRONIC, MECHANICAL, PHOTOCOPYING, RECORDING, OR OTHERWISE
WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

Introduction

For over 25 years since having a copy of an early 1920's Journal to read, I have searched various sources to find this particular book with no success until I started in earnest to write a new book about the history of the R.A.O.B. and pleaded for information from all sections and Banners that would help me in my research. The outcome of this plea for information has resulted in receiving a flood of old documents and ephemera regarding the R.A.O.B. that is proving difficult to catalogue and research, however, it makes fascinating reading and has given me a much more comprehensive view of the early days in our Order, may I give my sincere thanks to all who have come forward in supplying me with much needed information, their names will be acknowledged in the final book when it is printed. This particular book has been given to me by a member and dear friend of the Grand Lodge of England.

To fully understand this book however, one must refer to three publications by Bro. J. P. Dowling of the Grand Surrey Banner, namely, "The Nine Lectures on the History and Mystery of Buffaloism", "Is the Order Antediluvian" and "The Old Ritual" which can be obtained from the same source as this series.

These books can be very interesting to the historical student and those who are interested in researching our Order and preserving same so that it is not forgotten, or very boring to those who like a bit of light reading.

The subject matter of the books by Dowling are a very in depth look into the mystery surrounding our Order and the authors view of how the R.A.O.B. originated in Egypt and the use of Bull worship. What Dowling perceives as the start of the R.A.O.B. is still not supported by any documentary evidence, perhaps a reference to Mervyn Payne's book "The Origin and Development of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes" should be taken and his remarks about the writings of J. P. Dowling.

In this particular work by Bro. E. Graham Dunstan the start of the R.A.O.B. is thrown wide open with his thoughts, he exposes some of the myths about the difference between the bull worshipers of ancient Egypt and the Buffalo Order. It has to be remembered though that this book was written in 1922 so some of his remarks may not apply to the current date.

The more I read the contents the more questions arise in my mind, will we ever know the truth!! It has been a pleasure for me to be able to key in all the contents and I hope you enjoy reading same.

Mick Walker

September 2013



“Books are not made to be believed, but to be subjected to inquiry. When we consider a book, we mustn't ask ourselves what it says but what it means...”

Umberto Eco.

A THEORY
REGARDING
THE ORIGIN

OF

The Royal Antediluvian
. . . Order of . . .
Buffaloes



GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

* * *

By
E. GRAHAM DUNSTAN, C.P.
C. Min. "Acorn" Lodge, 119, G.L.E.
10 NEAL STREE, BRADFORD, YORKS

Original Date:
AUGUST 29th 1921

Revised and added to
JUNE 30th 1922

[COPYRIGHT]

**A Theory regarding the Origin
of the Royal Antediluvian Order
of Buffaloes**



Grand Lodge of England.



*By E. GRAHAM DUNSTAN, C.P.,
C. Min., "Acorn" Lodge, 119, G.L.E.,
10, NEAL STREET, BRADFORD, Yorks.*

**A Theory regarding the Origin
of the
Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes
Grand Lodge of England.**



As it has become a generally conceded and accepted fact that the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, (Grand Lodge of England) is becoming a mighty power for good in the land and a serious challenger for supremacy with any or all the sister Orders, in the work and aims of doing good, which they all attempt with more or less similarity, it naturally behoves us to make ourselves thoroughly conversant with the truth respecting its origin: the true facts of its antiquity, if there be any, together with all proofs appertaining to these points in particular, and any others in general; which may, or may not be open to challenge, either by ridiculing unbelievers or true seekers for information.

As it is self-evident that our Order sprung either (1) from one man's brain; or (2) from some members seceded or excluded from another Order, who founded our Order in spite of competition; or (3) the natural growth of a branch from its parent society, or from any other unknown source, we will follow various channels open to us, and see whether any link can be found by which we can deduce absolute proof of the actual origin of our Order.

Firstly we will look at the most natural phase which strikes us at first sight, namely, a branch from some parent society, and to that end we will examine the history of secret and other societies, to discover, if possible, that most particular one.

As printing was not invented until 1430, and was unknown in England until 1474, we must not take our authorities before these years very seriously, unless vouched for by, and with

reliable manuscriptorial evidence, duly authenticated, as all old records are, if, genuine. Although we are styled the “Antediluvian” Order, we must not lay too much stress on that name. We all know that it means “before the Deluge or (Flood)” giving an impression of immense antiquity; but, as that tragic occurrence happened circa 4500 BC desolating the earth, or, at least part of it, also destroying all and sundry, with certain exceptions, which we all know of, we cannot expect proof of any society existing then from which we may have sprung.

[The history of the deluge is manifold, being claimed by Indian (Amer.), Hindoo, Hebrew, and biblical, the most authentic being the Babylonian, being found on cuneiform tablets, circa 2100 BC. As the Tenth Patriarch, Noah corresponds to the tenth prehistoric Babylonian King, Atrabasis, the hero of the Babylonian Flood story].

Our next landmark would be, the Tower of Babel which most authorities put at about 3000 BC, also claimed by some as having some bearing on the origin of Masonry, in its first and ancient form. A version of the incident of the “Confusion of Tongues” exists among the cuneiform tablets in the British Museum.

It would perhaps be as well to explain, that cuneiform writing is the term applied to the arrow headed characters found on stone, papyri, etc., in Assyria, Persia, and in Mesopotamia, some of which are several thousand years old. The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes is NOT mentioned THERE.

Solomon’s Temple was built 1012 BC, which is another stage in the history of Masonry by tradition, but gives us nothing to lay hold of with respect to our origin.

Then we come to the first fairly reliable records, those of Flavius Josephus, who lived circa AD 37 to 95. His great work; “Antiquities of the Jews”, gives much valuable information respecting Biblical history, and though assisting research, strengthening evidence, etc., concerning Masonry, does not assist us very much.

There now intervenes a great gap, which covers the Transition Period, when our country came successively under the rule of the Romans, AD 43: the Jutes, 449: the Saxons (a Teutonic

race from it what is now known as Holstien, formerly Danish, note Prussian; the original founders of the Anglo-Saxon race), in the period between 477 to 495: then the Danes in 787, whom Alfred the Great interviewed and shifted in 878. Then Sweyn of Denmark subdued England (1013), and the Norman invasion "put the lid on" in 1066. During all these periods it may well be accepted that there were secret societies either formed, or forming, but we know nothing of them. The very first we have any actual records of, is the institution of the Knights of St. John (1099), created after the capture of Jerusalem (during the First Crusades), and during the reign of William Rufus. We have no detailed account or their ritual; in fact they seem to have enjoyed a very short life as they are not heard of again until 1308. Their first foundation seems to have been purely military, and possibly ceased with that particular campaign.

Next, in the reign of Henry the First (1118), the Order of Knights Templars was duly established, which really seems to be the first actual formation in England of a Society, secret or otherwise, formed for purely charitable and philanthropic purposes, and which could be feasibly accepted as the Origin of all or any similarly chartered societies.

[But, here enters simultaneously the strangest argument against our Order having its origin in any of the duly accepted secret societies, by "accepted" we mean properly authenticated. That argument is the total absence of any RELIGIOUS foundation in our Order. Here we have the duly authenticated origin of a Secret Society or Order, admittedly semi-punitive and openly philanthropic, but nevertheless having, basis of pure religion, and that in those unlightened times.]

They were organised to protect and assist all pilgrims in their journeys to and from Jerusalem, and hold their name through having been granted a special temple by Baldwin II for their devotions and accommodation. They were non-military, carried no arms, and wore no helmets, etc., thus being the opposite to the Knights of St. John. They became definitely established here in 1180; the present Temple Church, London being super-imposed on what was the original site of their chief home in this country. Its circular shape, and other

architectural features, point to a link with some ancient ritual, being based on the idea of the five pointed star of incomplete triangulation, surrounded by the Eternal Circle.

In the twelfth century they founded religious houses in various parts of Europe, and became thus possessed of great wealth. This caused their downfall. Kings and Popes grew jealous of their influence; they underwent great persecution, until Pope Clement V. abolished the Order in 1312.

Before this, however, in 1308, Edward II had annexed all their wealth and property in England, which he transferred to the Order of the Hospitaliers of St. John, a relict or revival from 1099, who afterwards were known as the Knights of Malta.

These were at first devoted to the sick, but, seeing the horrible plight of the Christians in the East, they turned themselves into military monks to protect these Christians from the infidels.

For these kind offices and intentions they were promptly and methodically chased by the Mahomedans from Jerusalem, to Rhodes, to Cyprus, and eventually to Malta.

Emperor and King Charles V ceded Malta to them, and they remained there until Napoleon, on his way to Egypt in 1798, shifted them on again, dispersing them. Emperor Paul of Russia then took them under his wing, but they had no Grand Master until 1879. Baron Hardegg of Austria was installed as such in 1905. [*It has evidently survived the Great War, as on June 26th 1922, Prince Eitl, son of the ex-Kaiser (Gen. Hindenburg acting as G. Sword Bearer), as GM, duly initiated eight new members into the Order, with all due processions, ritual, etc., etc.*] The modern English Institution of the Knights of St. John serves to commemorate the old name, and continue something of their original service. Our modern ambulance corps are of this, there is also a Masonic branch of that name. And here we come across a link which may as well be mentioned here, before we return to the fourteenth century, although it has no conclusive proof.

There was formed a Society, about 1750 called the "Modern Knights Templars". Lodges were held in "encampments", the members were robed as "Knights", including swords, candidates

were initiated dressed in the robes of a pilgrim, being announced at the “tyle” on a brass trumpet. This helps not regarding Buffaloism, but this may, or may not be the actual society on which the “Knights of the Golden Horn” have modelled their ideas. This would give them authenticity with a vengeance. A curious analogy might be interpolated here, that although we, as a “Royal” Order, carry the Royal Arms as an insignificant appendage on our Grand Seal, and nowhere else on the emblem, the Golden Horn diploma, although NOT “Royal” can carry the Royal Arms, solo, on a “shield, fully emblazoned, most prominent, and truly supported”.

[Extract, “Barnsley Chronicle”, June 3rd 1922. “Buffaloism” No.18 Wellington Encampment held its 25th anniversary No. 72 Birdwell Encampment and 79 Wombwell Encampment represented”. Are these “Golden Horn”? Are they accepted as “Buffs”? They seem to be recognised as such in Barnsley.]

To resume. In the fourteenth century a German monk, by name of Rosencrutz, founded a secret society named Rosencrucians, shrouded in mystery. This hardly comes under our category, being principally interested in alchemy, the discovery of the Elixir of Life, and the Philosopher’s Stone. Anyway, it was secret, and dangerous. And now we come to two men, who, though not perhaps actually the authors of the catastrophe; contributed greatly to the overthrow of the first French Empire, and all through the influence of a Secret Society formulated by one, if not both. They are mentioned here, as they have been wrongfully classed as Free Masons and they have also been publicly mentioned as having something to do with our origination. The first was one Mesmer, a German doctor; born 1733, a Rosencrucian to the backbone, and the inventor of mesmerism (or animal magnetism, introduced 1766, afterwards proved to be practically a fallacy). The second was one Cagliostro, born 1743, also a Rosencrucian. He was an Italian charlatan, whose real name was Josef Balsamo, and a pupil of Mesmer. Mesmer removed to England for a short time, and eventually settled in Germany, dying there in 1815.

Cagliostro, or Balsamo, remained in France, and established amongst the middle classes (always a disturbing element) the “L.P.D. Society” this purporting to be a form of Masonry, but

that was only in the imagination of Balsamo. Anyway, he soon obtained a great following, very wide spread and dangerous, as the full title will show "*Lilia pedibus destrua*" broadly meaning: "The Lily shall be trampled underfoot". A somewhat broad hint advising very pointedly toward revolution, the Lily being then the national emblem of France.

Balsamo got mixed up with Marie Antoinette in the Diamond Necklace Scandal and was imprisoned in the Bastille, 1789. The "L.P.D." inflamed by this and many other occurrences, over taxation, regal waste, and oppression then arose, took and destroyed the Bastille the same year. Revolution broke out, but Balsamo had escaped to Rome, where he was very promptly re-incarcerated, eventually died in the Fortress of San Leone, 1795.

Perhaps it will be asked: "Why all this dissertation about history, dates, etc.? The answer is this. We are trying to get at the origination of our Order, and that can only be proved by historical facts. Tradition is not proof, facts are. If, during our resume of history, particularly applied to Secret, or even Friendly Societies, we do not come across some hint of an Order, we most perforce conclude that it did not exist in those days, at any rate, before 1700.

We have seen up to the present that we have ample evidence of other societies, either the actual creations, or the source from which they spring, in some cases very definite. We know a great many societies, ancient, secret, and otherwise, use either the plain single equilateral triangle, the five pointed star, or the six pointed star (double equilateral triangle). Who first authorised this? Which is the most entitled? Are they all entitled to them? Or are none? We knew that in various parts of India certain ruins bear the imprint of the five or six pointed star, more particularly the five. This was the Ancient Symbol of Eternity, it being impossible to detect its commencement or ending. It is also symbolical of the five senses, also of the Pentateuch, this giving it great antiquity and meaning. The five pointed star is called a pentagram, and the first authentic report of its actual use in any way is by Pythagoreans, their leader, Pythagaros, a Greek philosopher (circa 582 B.C.),

regarding it as the symbol of Health. Plato (429 B.C.) regarded it as the symbol of Well Being, others as a sign of Happiness. It is very general now it is a charm, signet or amulet.

In China these signs have also been observed and noted, some of which have even been claimed to have originated with Confucius, who lived circa 700 B.C. Cortez, a Spaniard, discovered Mexico, 1519, and subdued it. He came across a very ancient race in the central region, the Aztecs, an American Indian tribe with cities centuries old, and similar in design and building materials to Mesopotamia, and the inhabitants more or less of the Circassian type, showing traces of Old World culture. How did they get there? We know that land obtained in many places where there is now water. We know that the European Sea was once 600 feet below its present level, making land continuous from Africa to the far West of Ireland, and probably embracing Greenland. We know that the Behring Sea has not always divided North America from Eastern Asia. The principal point of interest to our attention is the fact that both the five and six pointed stars are CARVED not painted, on their ancient altars and pediments, together with a symbol similar to an animal's head, with, outstretched horns. This could be a representation of a bull's head, as they may have been worshippers of Apis, the Egyptian God in the form of an Ox. Many try to lay the flattering unction to their soul that the worship of Apis was our origination. That can be answered and contravened in many ways. The Sacred Ox had to be found with several distinctive and imperative marks, and could be either bull or cow, provided the marks were there. That is why there were two temples to Apis. It could also be a representation of the solar disc; resting between two horns, if they were sun worshippers. It is interesting to note that there is a similar sign in Egypt, being the head dress worn by the goddess Hathor (mostly depicted as a cow, the horn shaped protuberances being the ears of the cow) or Isis, circa 1400 B.C.

In face of all these facts, how can we discriminate? Similarity is not proof: All societies have signs, passwords, grips and ceremonies, initiatory or otherwise; some are very similar to ancient customs, some are very similar to each other. But there must have been the one original ceremony, from which all

others have been copied, perhaps exactly, or in part, and for this original we must go far back to the Palaeolithic Age, to the most ancient form of worship, sun or fire.

Primeval man first took fire naturally, then regarded it is a spirit to be feared and shunned (very possibly by actual painful experience), afterwards something to be conciliated, hence worship. It was universal at one time in Mongolia, American Indian tribes, Mexico, India and Persia. The perpetual fires of the Greek prytaneum and the Roman regia were forms of hearth ritual. The Semetic use of perpetual fire altars, more incidental than essential, have merged into our own ritualistic lighting in our churches. Many may conclude our Royal Lights came from thence; but, as we do not worship them, neither are they lit perpetually, we can only safely assert that we, along with others, use them as a part of a ceremony copied from somewhere. Always the same dead end. Then there must be an Initiation Ceremony. This comes from a Latin word meaning "beginning" and signifies introduction to something. Many detect a similarity, and possible source of our, or other, Orders in the vigil of a Knight elect before his creation, mostly observed in a crypt or chapel, always before an altar, but there are more ancient rituals than that.

In primitive races, ages past, there have been rites preparatory to coming of age, etc., which sometimes lasted weeks. Isolation is paramount with fasting, sometimes mutilation, and other privations. The final mysteries are always unfolded in an atmosphere calculated to arouse awe and dread. It may comprise simulation of death, and resurrection, taking a horrible oath, during which the novice invariably passes from darkness to light, sometimes exemplifying a new birth, but more usually showing knowledge emerging from ignorance.

[The following is an extract from an old "Masonic" Charge, circa 1738: 'Freemasonry is an ancient and honourable institution: ancient, no doubt it is, as having existed from time immemorial: and honourable it must be acknowledged to be, as by a natural tendency it conduces to make those so, who are obedient to its Precepts', etc., etc. This seems to imply, that the R.A.O.B. was formed by a Mason, on imitative lines, the

phraseology of the last line or two proving its antique authenticity. Here the whole thing is introductory: in our Ritual the latter portion comes after the Oath and Illumination.]

The great thing which strikes one in these researches is the fact that in *almost all other societies*, savage or otherwise, there is always a great element of religion or of worship, or an appeal to, or recognition of some supreme power. This element is missing in our Order, strengthening the belief that its creation was either satirical, or pantomimic. We certainly allude to the "Great and Mighty Spirit of Brotherly Love" but there we are appealing to an attribute, rather than to a Supreme Being or Power. Why, cannot we have a "SUPREME AND GLORIOUS GRAND PRIMO OF THE UNIVERSE"? Why cannot we, in a broken link, rejoice in a brother having obtained rest in "THE GLORIOUS LINK OF EVERLASTING PEACE AND REST, IN THE GRAND LODGE OF ETERNITY"? Why have Burial Services, Chaplains, Ritual almost Ecclesiastical and then bar religion as our basis? We are hypocritical; aping at being something we will not allow ourselves to believe in.

It is very possible, by allowing the five pointed star as one of our rightful emblems, and accepting the Pentateuchal Theory, to strengthen the ideas as to our antiquity, but we have no ACTUAL proof. Our "Radiant Star" is not this particular star. It should be a star from which rays emanate, for our illumination, warmth and guidance. We might take it as an emblem of the "Star of Bethlehem", and use it similarly as a guide to some desired end. We cannot have this star as a symbol of "Eternity", we already have the "Circle of Infinity" (also embodied in our "Link") and two separate symbols of the same attribute would be redundant, but it could be used as a reminder of the "Five Senses", the five Mediums of intelligence, knowledge, and life.

All these ideas for the "Star" are useable, but none are authentic to our Order.

So, although all our ceremonies, etc., are very similar to ancient rituals, we cannot, nor must not, claim that we are guaranteed descendants of those ancient bodies from whom we have copied our ceremonies. Too much has been attempted

in this direction, almost to the point of ridiculing whatever locus standi we have succeeded in establishing.

For instance, should new brethren with any reading and knowledge, clergy, etc., be presented with their emblem, etc, with the lecture on page 19 of issue of Journal, April, 1922! First impressions are lasting. There is no "Royal" Banner on any emblem, Noah was not of royal descent. There are four pillars on the emblem, not three; two are covered.

Therefore all the following paragraphs based on this "Trinity" are meaningless and actually utterly misleading. The daring statement that the High Priest of Memphis solemnly officiating before the sacred (and perhaps sacrificial) altars of their ancient worship is synonymous with the "opening of a Lodge in the Old Ritual, with spirit fire", gives one pause, especially to Buffs of thirty years standing, who knew those old rituals. Again, the god of Memphis was Ptah, known otherwise as Hephæstus, the artisan god, or god of fire, principally allied to the lightning or volcanic fire: [Their belief was that he either came down to earth from heaven, or that he was projected from the earth's interior]. But this was all absolute religious worship!

Bull worship was instituted by Kaieckos in the Second Dynasty, and was known as the renewal of the life of the God Ptah: His new name was Apis. Many attempt to place this as our origin, but the attempt is absurd for very many reasons, but we will only give one here. Apis was regarded, approached, worshipped, and feared as a GOD, not as an attribute, but as an omnipotent god head, the basis of a far reaching religion and worship. How, then, can we having NO religion in our Order (in fact religion is practically ostracised), claim origin from something in which religion and worship are paramount?

Again, similarity is not proof of universal generation, or construction, and imitation must obviously prove a prior claim somewhere, for the origin of whatsoever thing, idea, or belief has been imitated, or copied. Because one human being has ears longer than another; we must not put him down as a lineal descendent of Baalam's ass! It has not yet been conclusively proved that any society has sole claim to, or rights of the use of any emblem or sign, although it is advisable to

have a difference, to avoid any chance of misuse being made of them.

Thus it would not do for the Masons and the Buffs to have similar passwords, grips or signs: The reasons are obvious, unless they were affiliated, which of course they are NOT.

All symbols and signs have either a mythical, mystical or religious origin; the modern society coming nearest to the ancient, being the most probable legal successor. But even this idea is not certain. The Druids, 1781 (who, though working on Masonic lines did not emanate from the Masons); the Oddfellows, 1814 and the Foresters, 1834, all have authentic and dated origin.

All the foregoing can prove their origin, and give the exact date of their formation. That they have formed their ritual on something prior is certain, for, in stating the date of their creation, they particularly admit that fact. Not so the R.A.O.B. We can trace no date, no anything. Just because we use the "Star" and "Ring" etc, as the Chinese, Aztecs, etc., used, it does not follow that we originated there. Just because the Egyptians worshipped Apis, in the form of an ox, we must not re-christen it a "Buffalo", and claim parentage therefrom. Just because the sign of Hather or Isis is somewhat similar to the buffalo's head, we cannot claim brotherhood with the Assyrians. Just because we use fire, or light, for our initiations, we must not claim descent from the ancient fire worshippers. Just because the first thing the candidate sees is "Light", we must not assume any relationship with Free Masonry.

In all ancient records of secret societies, primitive, ancient and medieval, the name of "The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes" is *absolutely unknown* and *absolutely untraceable*. So we must come nearer to modern times and look for it under some other name or title.

There was an old society called "The Order of the Bull" claimed as our progenitor, but this was purely political, which puts that claim out of court. I am now, therefore, going to place before you almost irrefutable and practically conclusive evidence that out of one man's brain, either through pique, joke or some other reason, a society was formed, inaugurated

and enlarged, destined to become what is at the present time one of, if not the most powerful and far-reaching secret philanthropic societies known, and there is most ample evidence that it is growing faster than ever. Richard Brinsley Sheridan was born 1751 (*remember this date very particularly; also remember 1750 is the date of the formation of the "Modern Knights Templars, page 8, q.v.*), in Dublin; and partly educated at Harrow. He showed great capacity in dramatic composition: his first comedy, "The Rivals", being produced in 1775, at Covent Garden Theatre. This so pleased David Garrick, then at Drury Lane, that negotiations were opened up, resulting in Sheridan becoming part, and eventually sole, proprietor of Drury Lane Theatre. This was about 1777. The "School for Scandal" came about 1778. In 1780 he entered Parliament, filled one or two Ministerial offices, resigned 1812. He lived two years after, his last days being full of ill-health and pecuniary difficulties. Whilst at "The Lane", he, together with one or two other theatrical cronies, joined a "Judge and Jury" Club: now the theory is, that he determined to create something more strong; ceremonious, and, withal satirical.

During my residence, in Woolwich, 1909 to 1915, there were several "Judge and Jury" clubs in lively existence, invariably held Sundays in the back room or back parlour of a beer house. The entry was by knocks, two quick followed by one, if my memory serves me correctly, and everyone had to enter singly, there was no admitting three or four together. A Tyler was in evidence; they had a password, given letter by letter, changed weekly; there were charges and fines; on a schedule similar to ours, and pennies were "D's"; in fact, this "fining" seemed to be the chief aim of the club. Here allow an interpolation. "D" does not come from "Denarius" which was a silver coin value 7³/₄d., Eng., circa 269 B.C. "D" must be an abbreviation, of denari, Latin for "pence" [*It is also used in the costermongers' back slang and amongst theatricals*]. The first toast was by permission, and taken to the judge. The addressing sign was identical with our First Degree sign. They had two others: The Palmed Thumb (1), given with the left hand in conjunction with the First Degree sign, and "The Horns" (2), also given with the left hand, in conjunction with the First Degree sign,

for certain ceremonies which I am rather hazy about. The funds were used for, either a supper at end of three months or an outing at end of six months. Tobacco was "weed", and beer was "food". One peculiarity I noticed. Visiting was taboo. A member of one "J and J" was not a member of all, and could not enter any other unless duly initiated. Plural membership usually produced humorous results, such as complications by temporarily forgetting each individual password, etc., etc.

But to return to Sheridan.

Who can tell what obsessed the man? One rumour has it, that, being twice refused admission as a Mason, he took this step as a means of instituting a rival society, partly for his own advertisement (he was known to be very vain), and possibly to throw ridicule on the Masons, his great powers of satire making that perfectly possible. Again, it may have been from a desire to create a society to assist the middle classes at a cheaper and not so prohibitive rate as Masonry. Still, again, being of the theatre and knowing all the Bohemian qualities in theatricals, it may have been a beneficent idea to form the nucleus of a series of meeting places for all touring theatricals, all under his supreme command in London. Anyway, the society was formed, and to see how far Truth will take us by argument, we will see how the various peculiarities of our Order fit in with *this* theory. There are various names given to the original foundation: "City of Lushington" from the "Lushington Arms", where it is said it was first held. [*Tradition again, as all the oldest members and initiates are deceased.*] The second, "City of Truth" of which two names I lean towards the latter, as there are various names given to the original hostelry, although possibly all the same place. This being accepted as a fact to work from, gives rise to a very sufficient and, reasonable origin of the officers of a Minor Lodge, City Registrar, etc., etc.

Take the fact that the Alderman of Benevolence must be a Primo and usually has just passed the Royal Chair. As alderman is an ancient Saxon title "older-man", given to governors, magistrates, etc., and it usually denotes the higher section of a "City" Council, the comparison becomes more clear. "A.B" must be a Primo and Primo has magisterial powers in

the Royal Chair, fining, etc., again; as the Senior Alderman generally sits by a Judge in Assizes, in absence of Mayor, so "A.B" sits by "W.P" Again; the Clerk of a "City" is usually the "Registrar", the Master of Civic Ceremonies usually the City Chamberlain; and London has recently elected a City Marshal to be of first assistance to the Lord Mayor. In the Order, also, we know they used to have a "City Taster", and a "City Physician" facts known by many in the Order today; and many brethren have lively memories of them. I understand that the "City Taster" was the most dearly coveted office in the Lodge. The "City Physician's" duties will be perhaps remembered as a peculiarly "touching" part of an initiation.

Again, when we touched on initiations, privation and mutilation were mentioned: Some very old Buffs can remember those agonising minutes whilst chained to the spot. Then the "burnings" and "blood-letting!" It is a certainty they thought that they were mutilated, and if not suffering actual privations, they would look upon the occasion of their initiation with gratification and joy; but it would be because of the end of the ceremony.

Just another, word, and see if that will not encourage greater belief. Shakespeare lived 1564-1616. Sheridan was a dramatist. Shakespeare was the shining light of the drama, as dramatist and poet. *Ergo*, Sheridan revered him; naturally.

Thus we have: "Shakespeare supporting the whole dramatic world; and of it: The King", thus leading us to strengthen our belief that it was, originally, a theatrical idea. Again, a touring actor, tours the provinces. He is a "provincial actor" Thence, Provincial Grand Lodge, which I believe emanated from a District Primo Lodge. It is almost certain that actors on tour in a certain district would foregather and hold a Lodge on Sunday evening or morning, the only opportunity, and the "eldest" Primo would naturally take charge of a District Primo Lodge.

[This becomes more easy to believe, when we remember that touring companies in those days were mostly "stock" and spent weeks in the same town or district without travelling].

Now, a few words regarding our Motto: "Nemo Mortalium Omnibus Horis Sapit".

This is one of the historical sayings of the younger Pliny, a Roman historian, who died circa AD 113, The generally accepted version of it is “No Man is at all hours wise”. [*There is no such word as man in Latin*] Pliny himself, who should be an authority on his own words, has it expressed thus: “Wisdom is not always with mortals”.

The presentation of a banner bearing this motto, by Elizabeth to someone, is very much open to doubt, and I hardly think that the R.A.O.B., being at that period non existant, was concerned in the ceremony. The incident is related by historians as follows, but some of her biographers omit it altogether, so it appears somewhat mythical.

This tradition, however, could be accepted in the form of a parable, or guide, to exemplify the necessity of our brethren being careful to think before speaking: to assert nothing detrimental to a brother without due proof: and be generally circumspect in their dealings one with another.

It was during the reign of Elizabeth, circa 1568, when, hearing of a plot to place Mary Queen of Scots on the throne, and supersede Elizabeth, certain of her nobles met in secret, to find means to defeat this plot. Elizabeth heard of this, and, thinking that the conference was directed against her person (and everyone knows what her masterful temperament was), she concealed herself behind the tapestry. When she heard the *real* issues at stake, she rushed out, and, whilst apologising for mistrusting them made use of that ancient phrase as applied to herself (a mortal). “Man” is certainly incorrect, in any case. If we like to fall back upon “tradition” again, and use this in the Order, there is nothing to prevent it. It conveys pretty sentiment; still, we cannot be authoritative and claim it as our own, as the Most Honourable and Exalted Order of the Garter can claim theirs from Edward III, 1327, the date of *their* creation. With regard to the word “Antediluvian” it appears to have been used to satirise extreme age; as we have it on actual record that the officers in old Lodges generally assumed long white beards a la patriarch. We use the word nowadays as meaning fossils, etc., belonging to a period prior to human memory. The word “Royal” is an honour, and authentic, or it

would have been deleted long ere this. We have it on “traditional authority” (oh! that useful word tradition!!) that the Prince of Wales was initiated into our Order circa 1778, which is (or was) recorded on a “Royal Chair” I believe still existent in the hostelry which was once the “Lushington Arms” (or whatever its ancient title was) near to Drury Lane Theatre. There is no trace of a Prince Regent in this reign at all. This chair must be accepted as true, because there are many old Buffs some, I hear, in the Bradford Province, who have not only seen the actual chair, but SAT THEREIN! There is a small plate on the back giving details, date, etc.

In respect to the name. Why, Buffaloes? It is possible that Sheridan decided on the Sign of Isis in a further attempt at implied age, and seeing the similarity to a bull’s head (taking the ears for horns) had switched off to this; and he could hardly have found a better pseudonym, brave, strong, self-denying even to death to save its own kind: a stranger to cowardice: living in herds, but never deserting their cows and calves, always protecting them, every one magnificent attributes to live up to.

Another idea is this. It may have been originally “Buffoon” or “Buffoonery” “one who makes fun” or “the practice of making fun”. This is NOT analogous to a clown; they are vastly different. A “Buffoon” is one who makes real fun, or satire, with a definite purpose, and was a very high profession, being practically the modern form of survival of the ancient post of the “King’s Jester”. Hence, “Primo Buffo” is infinitely more likely to be an abbreviation of “BUFFOON” than “Buffalo”, the first five letters being EXACT.

Now, a word regarding our “Royal Lights”, which should be red and blue. Why? Why not yellow and pink? What authority have we for saying they must be red and blue? If the primary colours are intended (as some maintain) why these two only, excluding the third? because there are only three, all told red, blue and yellow.

There is an idea they represent male and female, and this is claimed by some source of imitation, but I prefer the following explanation: That these colours are accepted as symbolical of Fire and Water, which, both have power to take, as well as to

preserve life. Both are indispensable to life, in the form of light, heat, and moisture. They can also be taken to represent a memorial to the fire worship of prehistoric days, and the Deluge; or to the Creation of the Earth (which came from the sun), and its narrow escape from destruction. In ancient ritual the red, being symbolical of the sun or fire, was always placed on the right; blue on the left.

[This also proves that we have copied the colour of our lights from someone, by using those two colours, and no others. They MAY represent our Orders; "Primo" and "K.O.M." as these were the highest until "R.O.H." then unknown to them: that also is BLUE.]

These ideas of our origin seem to me to be practically irrefutable, the Order must have originated SOMEWHERE and SOMETIME. There are brethren alive today who have actually undergone the ritual that I have described. The similarity to the old "Judge and Jury" must also strike one as fairly conclusive. It has been suggested that expelled Buffs may have formed these clubs, but I doubt it, as I don't think they had such a fine code in those days as to expel offenders.

They were not founded by the Grand Surrey Banner, as I happen to know that the G.S.B. did not look on them with any favourable eye, and at one hostelry the G.S.B. and "Judge and Jury" meetings were held simultaneously, one upstairs, the other in a back room downstairs. I also saw a lot of the workings of the G.S.B., as the members there thought nothing of coming down into the best room, full regalia on, and full of talk and other things.

I asked you to remember the date 1750, also to remember that the "Modern Knights Templars" were formed in 1750. Now, whether our theories *re* Sheridan are correct or not, as to the commencement of the Order, or whether we must hold, him responsible for the enlargement or improvement of the Order, it is evident that the "Judge and Jury" was one of the original bases. But, whilst searching for light on this most elusive question, I accidentally stumbled upon another Secret Society formed between 1600 and 1700, (the actual date is early in the seventeenth century), which we will now fully consider.

There is no record *who* formed it, but it was formed in London, and it runs in my mind that it may well be the exact Order. Drawn upon by Sheridan to construct his "R.A.O.B." and it may also prove to be the actual origination even of the "Judge and Jury" Club.

But you shall judge for yourselves.

Its name was the "Odd Fellows" (two words; no connection with the 1814 Society). It had deep Initiatory Rites, very terrifying and theatrical. One password was "F-I-D-E-S", given letter by letter; one sign was "Right hand on left breast, used with the words, 'On my honour'. Another sign was holding the lower part of the left ear with thumb and first finger of the right hand; they had also the "Palmed Thumb" and the "Dexter Horns" (see page 19) the "Horns" being given on the RIGHT hand, uplifted. The password was changed every half year. There were three Degrees White, Blue, and Scarlet. Members used to wear aprons trimmed with their Degree colour.

Now, let us note the parallels and analyse by comparisons:-

If we may accept the "white" as the forerunner of our "green and white" for the Kangaroo, or First Degree, and eliminate the "R.O.H." which is a Degree of practically recent formation, then we have an exactly similar range of rank, and exactly similar in colour and detail to our own (Second, blue, and Third, scarlet).

rites, "Very terrifying and theatrical".

Old G.S.B. and G.L.E. rites opened in the dark, chains and spirit-fire were used: blood-letting implied: burning hair, etc., strongly hinted at: Was not that terrifying?

Disguises were worn, beards, etc., with other effects. Was not that theatrical ?

WORD, "F-I-D-E-S", given letter by letter. Carried forward by the "Judge and Jury", ours is given in sections. I wonder if ours was EVER given letter by letter?

NEW PASSWORD every half-year. Did not the G.S.B. and G.L.E, in the old days alter their passwords periodically by code from Grand Lodge? Did not "Wellington" and "Napoleon" have their turn, instead of, and as an alternative to,

“Shakespeare”? Did not the “Judge and Jury”, alter theirs weekly?

SIGN, Right hand on left breast. Is not that our “Sign of Fidelity”? (again introducing “FIDES”). And I have it on good authority that the other signs either have been, or are, in use now in our noble Order. Do we not give “On my honour” in certain of our Degrees and with the same sign?

Take the three Degrees, and wearing of colours. Do we not wear jewels hung by ribbons? Is there not a certain prescribed colour for each?

Green .. Kangaroo, or First Degree.

Blue .. Primo, or Second Degree.

Scarlet .. Knight, or Third Degree.

Pale Blue .. R.O.H., or Fourth Degree.

Do not the last three wear aprons (and gauntlets) edged with their own particular Degree colour?

Does not a Provincial Grand Primo wear a dark mauve sash, with same coloured jewel ribbon, and his apron (and gauntlets) trimmed his special colour?

Is not the analogy clear, brethren? I remember perfectly well my denunciation that “Similarity is NOT proof”, but such a remarkable series of similarity cannot be all coincidence, more especially as long standing members of our Order have convinced me that the signs, etc, were once identical. So I venture to assert that it is clearly proved, that this latter Order is our actual source of origin, which, being added to and enlarged by Sheridan (possibly intended originally as an “Order of Buffoons”), gradually emerged from its somewhat questionable attributes to become “One of, if not the most honourable, far reaching, and useful Orders ever formed by man” the probable date at its actual birth being about 1650.

E. GRAHAM DUNSTAN, C.P.,

C. Min., “Acorn” .Lodge, 119; G.L.E.,

10, NEAL STREET, BRADFORD, Yorks.

August 29th, 1921.

Also available in the Museum Collection series

- No.1 General Laws of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.
- No.2 Minutes and Proceedings of the Finance Committee August 1895.
- No.3 Culshaws Story of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.
- No.4 Claims and Fantasy Part One.
- No.5 Minutes of the first meeting of the Grand Primo Lodge of England.
- No.6 Changi Prisoner of War Lodge No.1.
- No.7 Abridged History of Grove House.
- No.8 Ceremony and Chorus.
- No.9 World War One Ambulances.
- No.10 The Nine Lectures.
- No.11 Dowlings Origin of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.
- No.12 The Royal Lights.
- No.13 The Mystic Ring.
- No.14 The Old Ritual.
- No.15 League of Light.
- No.16 The York, Weston Super Mare.
- No.17 The Seminars.
- No.18 Benevolence.
- No.19 Peter the Hermit.
- No.20 Light.
- No.21 Gradus.
- No.22 Mystic Buffaloism.
- No.23 Symbology.
- No.24 The Airship R101.
- No.25 The Seal of the R.A.O.B. G.L.E.
- No.26 Ceremonies of the Knights of the Golden Horn.
- No.27 Changi & Unique Lodges.
- No.28 The Opening of Grove House Orphanage.
- No.29 Aldridge Souvenir.
- No.30 Grand Secretary's tour of India.
- No.31 Souvenir of our new Orphanage.
- No.32 Theory of the R.A.O.B.
- No.33 R101 October 2013

Copies of these and other publications by the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes Grand Lodge of England can be obtained from the Grand Secretary, Grove House, Skipton Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 4LA