

THEN AND NOW – SOME ‘REMINISCENCES’

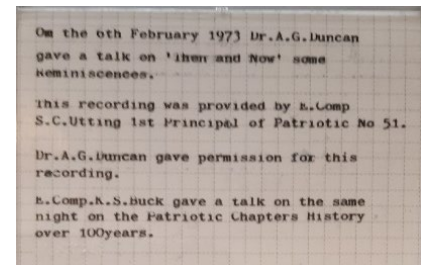
Presented by
Dr A G Duncan MD OSM, MEGS (1958 -1973)
to
Patriotic Chapter No. 51 on 6th February 1973

Digitised by Adam Terry, transcript by Susan Terry,
Edited by Tony Terry, Scribe Ezra Patriotic Chapter No. 51
Final proofing by Tony Hales, Essex Provincial Communications Team.

Introduction by Tony Terry, Scribe Ezra, Patriotic Chapter No 51

This is a transcript of one of two tape recordings which were discovered within the metal archives box of Patriotic Chapter in 1994. The tape recordings, dated 6th February 1973, were listened to at a Patriotic Chapter convocation in 1996, but have never been heard since. Thanks to modern technology, they have now been digitised for the benefit of all Freemasons to enjoy a nostalgic piece of living history and be transported back over fifty years to hear reminiscences going back to the Victoria era.

As Dr Duncan mentions in this recording, much tribute is paid to his predecessor Frank Douglas Turner CBE MB OSM, the Grand Superintendent 1935 – 1957, whose significant achievements within the Province of Essex were the results of his forward thinking and thoughts on how Freemasonry should change for ensuing future generations. Enjoy this unique Masonic journey back in time.



THEN AND NOW – SOME ‘REMINISCENCES’



Most Excellent, Companions, I feel I should first apologise for the title for the remarks I’m going to make this evening and its, perhaps, rather deliberate vagueness. After all the word might mean anything from yesterday to a couple of hundred years ago and now it’s hardly any more precise. It could include this year or even this decade. So, you just accept it from me I have made it vague, partly for a reason and, of course, the word ‘reminiscences’ itself is sufficiently imprecise, especially with me when I mean to make reference to some things which are clearly outside my own memory of being part of a preceding century and so the word ‘reminiscence’ again is not quite entirely accurate.

In other words, the title leaves me quite flexible in what I’m going to say. I am not shackled by my own title and perhaps that’s a good point from which to kick-off because I’m going to wander into the last century first and remind you that the Victorian era was anything but a time of flexibility. What they believed, they believed rigidly, uncompromisingly and sometimes with a degree of intolerance which rather shocks us today and I think their Masonry was no exception to that.

One has only to read some of the records of Masonic affairs of the 19th century to know that our predecessors in Masonry were sometimes astonishingly rigid in outlook and in what they said and wrote. And that attitude was not limited to the Victorian era. It existed well into the present century and I'm sure some of us can remember in the 1920s the arguments that used to take place over rituals, the emphasis given by the various Masonic schools to the correctness of their own ritual and the incorrectness of everybody else's. And how they would claim the immutability past, present and future of what they published between the covers of their little blue books and their little red books. 'Not a comma had ever been altered, nor would ever be altered' so some of them claimed. And one used to get the impression sometimes that if the Master of the little lodge of instruction even paused to draw breath in the wrong place, he forfeited his right to the matchbox which was the customary reward of perfection of ceremony.

And that filtered down to some extent into the private lodges, I can well remember some of the things that used to be said, not with any malice but with some emphasis, in that Masonic Hall, at Abbeygate Street, here in Colchester. I can remember even visitors, more than once, praising very warmly the work of the lodge, whilst saying most rude things about the ritual that the lodge employed because it didn't happen to fit their own. "*Your ritual*" I remember one visitor said "*Your ritual is anathema to us!*"

And that was really not a bad reflection of an outlook so recently as the 1920s. So recently, as long after the Victorian era had become a thing of the past. And perhaps the best illustration I can give in Royal Arch Masonry of the outlook that prevailed, certainly in the latter part of last century, was illustrated by the ceremony of 'Opening the Chapter'.

For most of the last century, the ceremony of 'Opening a Chapter' was carried out in most Chapters by the three Principals, the Past Principals sometimes, and the Scribe Ezra. Sometimes they eliminated the Past Principals and, in a few Chapters, the Chapter was opened by just the three Principals and Scribe Ezra and nobody else. But the routine really was that all Past Principals could be present but no Companions, they were excluded from the ceremony of 'Opening the Chapter'.

At least that prevailed very largely in London and the South of England. In the north, with their sturdy independence of the Durham, Northumbrian, Lancashire and Yorkshire people, they became much more enlightened and they admitted the Companions very often, with the agreement of their Grand Superintendent of the Province, they admitted the Companions to the opening ceremony long before it became permissible in the South.

And between 1880 and the end of the century, the year 1900, there were no less than three occasions on which enlightened Companions endeavoured to persuade the Supreme Grand Chapter to pass a resolution permitting Companions, or encouraging Companions, who were not yet Principals to be present at the Opening of a Chapter. And three times the resolution was thrown out by Supreme Grand Chapter. Only in 1902 did it get through against the advice of the President of the Committee of General Purposes of Supreme Grand Chapter, they passed the resolution saying "*It is expedient that all Companions be permitted to be present at the Opening of a Chapter*", and that was only in 1902.

I emphasise that date, partly to show how comparatively recent that enlightenment came and partly to remind you that that was just about four years before the Exaltation into Royal Arch Masonry, here in the Patriotic Chapter, of Frank Douglas Turner who was to, in his Masonic lifetime, to see so many changes in Royal Arch Masonry and who was to play such a part and to exercise such great influence in those changes and their application. It was only four years before his time that there was this enlightenment, perhaps the first enlightenment that had come out of Supreme Grand Chapter since the George Adam Brown Committee of 1836.

We cannot doubt, and I say this without criticism but just as a fact, we cannot doubt that something of that rigidity of outlook must have been apparent to any thinking Initiate of that time, the beginning of this century, and to any thinking Companion, newly exalted into Royal Arch Masonry. It is impossible to doubt that they would perceive something of the shackles with which Freemasonry was bound. I do not doubt that Frank Douglas Turner did recognise something of the need for progress in Masonry and particularly in Royal Arch Masonry.

Now I cannot refer from personal knowledge to anything in the next 20 years but I'm quite sure that there must have been apparent in Patriotic Chapter with its frequent association with him and hearing him occasionally speaking after dinner, speaking in ceremonies and taking part in them as he did sometimes as an Officer of the Chapter. I cannot doubt that there must have been occasions on which he showed his thoughts to the members of this Chapter. Alas it is not likely that they were recorded and I doubt whether one would find anything in the Minutes that would give a real pointer to what he was thinking.



E. Comp. Dr. F. DOUGLAS TURNER,
Past Assistant Grand Sojourner,
Prov. Second Grand Principal.

So, I think we have to rely on what I'd like to think of as the 'middle period' of Douglas Turner's Royal Arch Masonry. The time from 1926 onwards when he became the permanent Second Principal of this Province and began to, from that position of authority, began to show his ideas and to record them actually in print. It was from a year or two after that that I began to have the privilege of occasionally sitting with him, chatting with him and listening to his comments and being invited to tell him my own ideas of things, as he liked to hear other people's views as well as make his own available to them.

Keep an eye on that, not that I distrusted on him and I always listened, however, 1926 then was the time when Douglas Turner was, I think, really crystallising his views and although many of you could perhaps think back before that time to things that he said and things that he suggested, they didn't filter beyond Patriotic Chapter very much into the rest of the Province. It was only after he became Second Principal that he began to have the opportunity to put things into a wider field and especially, of course, from the year 1934 onwards.

Now 1934 was another milestone in this Province, with the establishment of the Essex First Principals Chapter. Installed Masters Lodges had, of course, been known and since the latter part of the 19th century but nobody thought of forming an Installed First Principals Chapter until the year 1934. The first one of course that was ever founded was the one established in this Province of Essex. We are not quite sure who first thought of it. Whether it was Herbert Goodwin, the Provincial Grand Scribe Ezra or whether it was the 2nd Provincial Grand Principal, we are not quite certain, but we do know that Douglas Turner took up the idea with enthusiasm, that he interested and then enlisted the active support of Sir Courtney Warner, Grand Superintendent of the Province, and by the autumn, later on in the year 1934, the Chapter was firmly established.

1935, of course, saw the death of the Grand Superintendent, Sir Courtney Warner, the appointment of Douglas Turner as Grand Superintendent and his occupancy of the Chair of the Essex First Principals' Chapter in its second year. And immediately he started the idea of an inaugural address from the occupant of the Chair, and he gave it himself, of course, as being the First Principal of the Essex First Principals Chapter. It was in that inaugural address that he disclosed so much of his ideas and emphasised the importance of interesting the Companions of the floor of a Chapter and he specifically drew attention to the number of features in which that principle could be followed.

It is worth mentioning one or two of them in his own words. For instance, he says "*The ritual of the Installation of Principals provides nothing when the Companions on the floor of the Chapter return to the Chapter whereby, they may not know what has happened during his absence. Generally, they are told nothing - they come and sit down and are treated as if the Installation of their new rulers was no concern of theirs.*"

And you must have heard him, just as I heard him, many a time revert to that same comment. He used to say "*It is the height of discourtesy bringing the Companions after the Installation of their Principals and just tell them to sit down and not even have the common courtesy to tell them what has been going on during their absence.*" And, perhaps that was the most important item, if any single item could be chosen, in illustrating what was to be his attitude throughout the time in which he was Grand Superintendent of this Province. The absolute necessity of interesting, of keeping the interest, of the Companions of the floor of the Chapter.

One or two other items worth mentioning, I think, the Proclamation and the Salutation, nothing, not new in Royal Arch Masonry but certainly the Proclamation had not been used as a routine in Royal Arch Chapter. Douglas Turner insisted that it was the right way of the Companions learning what had happened. A Proclamation such as is given about a new Master in Craft and with it the Salutation. Well, there was nothing new about a salutation. One can find rituals dated the middle 19th century, which do mention a salutation to the newly Installed Principals to be given in the conclaves and to be given by the Companions on their return but it had very largely dropped out of use and my predecessor emphasised that it was a suitable thing to give.

Incidentally, I came across recently a ritual in which it said about the salutation to the newly Installed Principals. The Companions are admitted and the newly Installed Principals are given salutation and greeting with the Grand or Royal Sign seven times. Now the Grand or Royal Sign seven times in a Chapter, was a bit surprising to us. Of course, it's no surprise to hear that the Principals can be greeted. Obviously, you are in touch with this ritual of the 1840s. The presentation of the Charter, of course, is just a matter of common sense as following the practise of the lodge and it is naturally handed over because it is the authority for holding a Chapter.

The investiture of the Immediate Past Zerubbabel, again something which used to happen in the 19th century but had completely fallen out of use until it was reintroduced by Douglas Turner. And the Addresses which are now so familiar to us, the Address to the Principals, Address to the Officers and the Address to the Companions. They of course are well known features of the rituals of the 19th century but they had completely gone out of use until he revised them. And, sitting down with me one day, we made the language a little bit more up-to-date than that it used to be. Some of you, maybe even today, a little bit puzzled about the archaic language of the Address to the Officers but I can assure you the original one was really fantastic. We altered that quite considerably.

The things that Douglas Turner mentioned, he didn't always pursue subsequently and it's interesting to observe noticing those items he encouraged. It's also interesting to note those that didn't catch on or that he didn't pursue, perhaps he had second thoughts about them. In that inaugural address, for example, he did recommend what he called the Long Closing which perhaps is more accurately described as the Dismissal Charge, the charge to be given after the Chapter is closed but before the Companions had departed. It's not an address charge that I find at all attractive as statements in it are highly inaccurate and the sentiments it expresses, I do find it a little bit repugnant and I'm not surprised that I only heard that Dismissal Charge once in all the time I attended Chapters at Abbeygate Street. Only on one occasion did I hear it and I have no great wish to hear it again and I know I heard Douglas Turner had suggested in Greyfriars Chapter that we should adopt it or that we should in any way occasionally hear it.

He also recommended the Address on the Banners. Now the set Address on the Banners, which is to be found in those rituals that give the catechisms in Royal Arch Masonry, the so-called lectures which were question and answer. And the set Address on the Banners I think is a rather dreary business, is very largely a repetition of what is to be read in the book of Exodus and it doesn't give the slightest attention to their very remarkable historical aspects of the leading standards and the ensigns on the staves but certainly it is worth pursuing that subject, not as a said lecture but in one's own words.

The same applies to the giving of the Certificates and the Royal Arch Certificate. Douglas Turner said in his address *"Give the certificate, present the certificate, there is a very nice short lecture on it, in print, but if you use it give it as if you hadn't learned it from the book. Try giving it in your own words or as if it were in your own words."* Well of course later on we got definitely to the idea that we would give it in our own words and not simply making it sound as if they were our own words.



Of course, the most important item Douglas Turner struggled for was the liberalisation of the Installation occasions so more of the Installation ceremony, very little of which really calls for secrecy, far more of the Installation ceremony could be seen by the Companions who were not Principals or Past Principals. And although he did not live to see it, I think he knew in his later years that it was certain to come. I think he looked forward with confidence to the fact that it would come. Perhaps he didn't think it would come as early as 1962 when we became able to admit Companions to such a lot of the Installation ceremony. Nevertheless, I feel that he was able to look forward to the time when he knew that revolutionary idea would get through in Grand Chapter.

It didn't get through without a little bit of a struggle, you know. There were still some objections and later in the 1950s, when I felt I knew the Third Grand Principal of that time sufficiently well to try and enlist his sympathy to the idea, I almost got my head bitten off in reply and was very abruptly turned down. However, it did happen after he had gone and another Third Grand Principal had taken his place.

And when 'Appendix A' and 'Appendix B', as we call them, were first published, you may remember that the description of the Robes and Sceptres were still kept in for the privacy of the conclaves and these two documents were sent round to all the Grand Superintendents asking for their comments. And my own comment was *"There was not the slightest reason to treat the colour of the Robe and the meaning of the Sceptre as a private matter. They could quite properly be brought out into open Chapter"* and I still remember the rather plaintive remark of one of my colleagues from another Province saying *"Well we really must keep something for the conclaves"* an astonishing illustration of secrecy for secrecy's sake. That was only in 1962. Today I think we've gained a very great deal by what Douglas Turner struggled for so long to achieve, the liberalisation of the Installation ceremony in the Royal Arch.

The item which you have already heard referred to this evening and the document read by your Scribe Ezra as the Grand Chapter Communication. I'm not going to talk at length about that. It is, of course, a very important pronouncement and the Chapters of course will give it the attention it deserves and will obey it in the spirit and in the letter. And I'd like to remind you that one of the important points it contains is that warm approval that the Pro First Grand Principal gave to those parts of the English jurisdiction which have eliminated the *Reverential* or *Hailing Sign* from any talking to the Principals. Well as you know, we did that in Essex a few years ago when we stopped addressing Principals with the Reverential or Hailing Sign and most of the Essex Chapters now adopt the *Sign of Fidelity*. I like to think that although we were a little bit in advance of the ideas expressed by Lord Cadogan last November, nevertheless we had the right ideas.

It's interesting to go back to some of the history of this. The Reverential or Hailing Sign was once given by the Grand Chapter Officers themselves who were concerned with Consecrations in London. That

meant the Grand Scribe Ezra and the Grand Director of Ceremonies or the Deputy Grand Ceremonies and whenever they consecrated a Chapter in London, they did the Consecration and then Installed the Principals. And they called upon those in the conclaves to salute the Principals with the Reverential or Hailing Sign and when the Companions were admitted the Grand DC called among them to salute the Principals with the Reverential or Hailing Sign. And that went on till about 1950. It's only about 1950 that the Grand Chapter Officers concerned with Consecrations dropped it. Why did they drop it? Because they said they thought it wasn't quite proper and what gave them the idea that it wasn't quite proper?

Well, all sorts of things perhaps, but in 1948 you may remember, Doctor Turner put into what we call the 'little pink brochure' the suggestions for Chapters of Essex, for the Royal Arch Chapters. And he included in those suggestions quite a number of his ideas about how the ceremony could be improved. And I remember a copy of these suggestions being handed over to one of the leading lights of the Aldersgate Chapter of Improvement and he read it with interest and he didn't much like it; not very surprising perhaps because it does cut across quite a lot of what is done by the Aldersgate Chapter of Improvement. They do not have quite a number of the things that are adopted in those suggestions and which are quite well known to us in the Province of Essex. And one of the things in the 1948 edition of the little pink brochure is that the Companions shall be admitted, the prayer, the Principals proclaimed and saluted with a Reverential or Hailing sign. *"That"* said Shepherd Jones *"is all wrong. There are no salutes to any Companions in Royal Arch Masonry"* and we used to hear him over and over again in season and out of season *"There are no salutes to any Companions in Royal Arch Masonry."*

So, it wasn't very surprising that presently this got back to Grand Chapter and the Grand Chapter Officers thought the Aldersgate Chapter of Improvement is a very important teaching authority and must take notice of it and they stopped giving these salutes. Then in 1955, a few years later, a letter came round to the Provinces from the Grand Scribe E, Sydney White, stating that in the opinion of himself and of the Grand Director of Ceremonies it was not proper to give the Reverential or Hailing Sign to Principals or to anybody else. One could only give it to the Altar and that is really when this idea of giving it to the Altar, instead of giving it to the Principals, first started. And although that was in 1955, and although in 1956 the next year, there appeared as part of Regulation 4, *"There are no salutes to any Companion in Royal Arch Masonry."* Yes, the words were the words of the Supreme Grand Chapter but the voice was the voice of the Excellent Companion from the Aldersgate Chapter. And although it was definitely laid down then, really not much notice of it was taken and it didn't really filter through to the Chapters. And in Grand Chapter itself it didn't seem to be a very great significance.

If you attend Grand Chapter, you'll observe that usually only three people are on their feet making remarks to the Principals. There's the Grand Scribe Ezra reading the Minutes, the President of the Committee of General Purpose presenting the Report and moving any resolutions required and the Vice President of the Committee who seconds those resolutions and, believe it or not, for the last 15 years those three people have all been doing different things. They have now tidied it up as you heard this evening, they've been so untidy over it at Grand Chapter and really so imprecise in how they've been dealing with the subject since 1950, that I do rejoice in Lord Cadogan's comments bringing it definitely before all the Chapters of the English jurisdiction with an instruction that they are to conform to certain things which are now definitely laid down. I very much welcome the comments that he made and I'm rather pleased we were already conforming to them.

Another interesting thing happened last year, actually on that same date as you heard mentioned in the Grand Chapter Communications, I think I've time to tell you about it, and it goes back, the origins of it go back quite a long long way. They go back, really most people think today that the matter of Penalties and their easing and a different outlook about them started with John Rylands' paper to the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, was taken up by Bishop Herbert's resolution and tidily they got through Grand Lodge. But believe me, it started there long before that and it started, well in a sense, it started here in a

Colchester lodge when, in the late 1920s, a certain member of one of the lodges in Colchester had very strong views about the Penalties in Craft Masonry. He felt that they were being over emphasised and used far too much and, in the Obligations, they were made far too emphatic. And so, he gave notice to his lodge one evening that at the next meeting he would move a resolution expressing those views. And, in due time, the summons for the next meeting was circulated together with the words “*Notice of Motion to move that it is un-Masonic to administer an Obligation under a threat*”.

Now, of course, they are very very drastic words. They not only reveal the individual dislike like of the use of Penalties but they really constitute a wholesale condemnation of something that was absolutely universal throughout Masonry and you can imagine the flutter in the dovecotes of the Provincial Office when the summons from this lodge reached them and Herbert Goodwin the [*Provincial*] Grand Secretary, I’ve no doubt, took the first train to Great Queen Street and discussed it with the Grand Secretary with the inevitable result that back came a pretty stern message saying this resolution, which notice had been given, was quite improper. It was not to be discussed, not to be debated, it was to be withdrawn and, of course, withdrawn it was and allowed to drop out of our memories and the whole thing subsided.

But a number of us still felt that the Penalties were really rather being overemphasised and when we were going to establish Greyfriars Lodge in 1930, and we spent about two years, many of us, in preparing for that establishment of a new lodge and rehearsing and deciding what procedure we will adopt.

The founders decided that they didn’t want to alter the words, any of the words in the ritual, they’d got no idea doing that, but they decided that they would always stand during an Obligation with the Sign of Fidelity. They would not stand with the Penal Sign. It emphasised the wrong aspect we thought of an Obligation, we preferred to think as an Obligation required: “*I’ll do that*” not all the awful consequences.

So, in 1930 when Greyfriars Lodge was started with Douglas Turner as its first Master, we began to stand with the Sign of Fidelity for all Obligations and we have done so ever since. The Sign of Fidelity we regarded as appropriate and, when in 1935, we established Greyfriars Chapter we went on with the same procedure. We decided that in Greyfriars Chapter we would use the Sign of Fidelity for standing with all the five Obligations that occur in Royal Arch Work and we have done so ever since.

Now last year Grand Chapter approved that Grand Superintendents of a Province, if he wishes may appoint a Deputy and that was finally sanctioned on November 8th with the passing of the Minutes in Grand Chapter. The Grand Scribe Ezra immediately sent notification of this round to all Grand Superintendents in case they hadn’t been at Grand Chapter, and with it he sent a document. A document setting forth the suggested procedure for appointing and investing a Deputy Grand Superintendent. It described how the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies is to bring in the one who is to be appointed to present him from the West to the Grand Superintendent, who will reply with a few words. The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies then takes the Companion concerned to the appropriate place for Obligation where he assumes the proper position and then the Provincial Director of Ceremonies is to say “*To order Companions*” and the Companions all stand with the Sign of Fidelity. And that’s straight from the horse’s . . . straight from Great Queen Street. It has now the approval of Great Queen Street, that it is quite proper to stand during an Obligation with the Sign of Fidelity.

Of course, they’ve never been told that we’ve been doing it for 40 years or so in Greyfriars but perhaps it did leak back to them and they have now given it their blessing. Now I go round to a great many Chapters. Oh, incidentally you know, I think that is the very first occasion on which Grand Chapter has given any guidance about this and the rituals don’t give much guidance. Some of them say stand with a Sign of Fidelity and there some of them say stand with the Sign of Reverence and some of them merely say stand and leave it to one’s own imagination as to what we are to do and that, I find, occurs in some of the Chapters.

I go round to a great many Chapters you know and see in person a great many Obligations and although in Greyfriars Chapter I always give the Sign of Fidelity, as we all do in Greyfriars Chapter during the Obligation, when I'm visiting another Chapter, I like to do what that Chapter does and conform to their own views. And so, I don't know what they're going to do so I just watch the Director of Ceremonies and I keep a surreptitious eye on the Director of Ceremonies and what he does, I do. If he gives the Sign of Reverence then I do, if he gives the Sign of Fidelity then I'd give that. Of course, difficulty arises when the Director of Ceremonies, as not infrequently happens, changes his mind halfway through the Obligation and then I am really stuck, however, I should change my mind as well or whether I should pretend not to see it and simply cast a blind eye to the fact that I'm the odd man out. But in future I will not be the odd man out. I shall stand now in all Obligations, whether in my own Chapter or in somebody else's Chapter, the Sign of Fidelity very firmly given in the full confidence that it is now got a cloak of respectability on it as sanctioned by Supreme Grand Chapter and circulated to all provinces for Grand Superintendents to use when appointing a Deputy and, if they can use it for appointing a Deputy Grand Superintendent then, believe me, they're going to use it also in the Obligations of all Royal Arch work.

My takes can tire I think, you know, my other rambling reminiscences had better terminate there. For one thing. I'm not going to attempt to cover all field of changes, you're well familiar with them. The changes that have occurred in Royal Arch Masonry during particularly the lifetime of Douglas Turner. I like to think that we do know far more about Douglas Turner than might have been the case. The very fact that he was of such great influence in these things and it also reminds us that we do know so very little of those who used be an influence in Royal Arch Masonry and that does seem rather pity.

Judge Philbrick, who was Grand Superintendent of this Province for many years and for a few years was actually Third Grand Principal. What do we know of him, of his outlook, of his ideals. even T J Ralling himself of such great importance to you and to the Province of Essex for a period extending over half a century or more, to many of us a rather shadowy figure. When he got that communication from Supreme Grand Chapter in 1902 sensing a change in things, did he welcome it or did he rather resent it and just accept it or was he just indifferent to it? I wonder! I wish we knew more about the views of those who have preceded us. Yet sometimes I think we know more about Lord Blayney of 1766 date, a very important date in Royal Arch Masonry, than we do of a great many who have followed him.

I wonder what Patriotic Chapter was actually doing in the way of the Opening ceremonies during last century and until 1902? Had it jumped the gun? Was it like Durham and Northumberland where it was already having a liberalising outlook or was it one of those invited to change and, of course, changed. And a great many other items that we accept today or we have adopted at Douglas Turner's suggestion. When did they come into use in Patriotic Chapter, were they known at all last century or when did we first get them suggested here in the Chapter which was primarily at the first importance to Douglas Turner during his formative years, the years in which I like to think he was approaching the climax of his aims in Royal Arch Masonry?

So, I made some suggestions to the one who is unofficially your 'Keeper of the Archives', hoping that he might be able to glean something. I hope you will give him an opportunity to say, to tell you, what he may have come across of particular interest. And for my own part, Most Excellent, thank you very much for your kind attention to my rather rambling reminiscences. Believe me when I tell you their importance, not only from the idea that it's nice to think back on the past and see the development of what we enjoy today but it's a duty also, an affectionate duty, as well as a proud privilege for one to try and keep alive in its fullest sense our recollections of the one who has been so much importance to you in Patriotic Chapter, to me in Greyfriars Chapter and to this Province and I think if we can indulge in frequent reminiscence on the topic we should be paying our debt in some sense and certainly fulfilling what I have described as an affectionate duty. **Most Excellent, thank you very much and your Chapter for its kind attention to my reminiscences.**