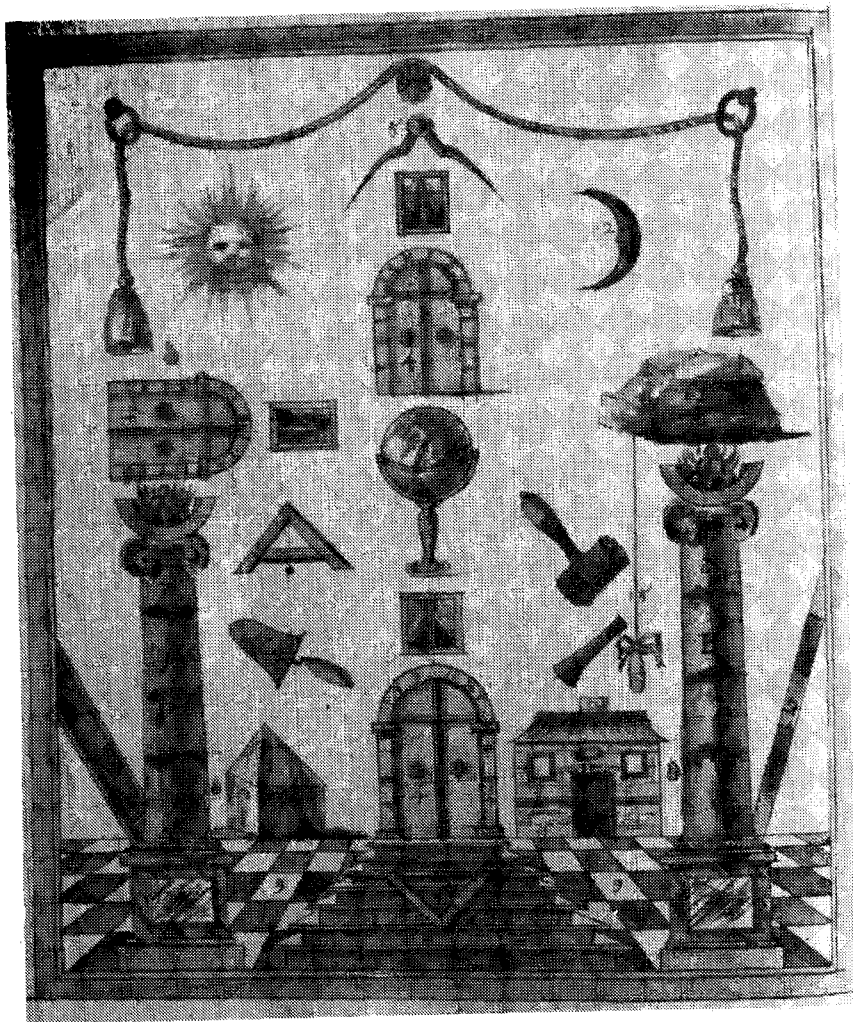


**THE BRITISH
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF PORTUGAL**

**NINETEENTH ANNUAL REPORT
AND REVIEW 1992**

**13, Rua da Arriaga,
1200 LISBON**



Symbolic depiction of a Master Mason's Lodge, circa 1760.

A SHORT HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY IN PORTUGAL

by Anthony C. Beck

Author's Note

Within the compass of about 20,000 words, this Paper sets out to describe Portuguese Freemasonry during 265 mostly troubled years. It is a story that is inextricably interwoven with the history of the country, to an extent altogether outside the experience of most Freemasons elsewhere. As in other Latin countries, there has been unwavering opposition from the Roman Catholic Church. And as in other countries ruled by autocratic monarchs or by Dictators — and Portugal has been free of the last only since 1975 — Freemasonry has been linked and even identified with liberalism and Republicanism, and frequently outlawed. For one reason or another, Portuguese Freemasons in hundreds and thousands have been tortured, killed, imprisoned, exiled, and deported. Yet the Order has never failed to survive.

Because of these persecutions, very few Masonic Lodge records or private papers have survived from any period in Portugal. Indeed, for the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, two of the principal sources of information are the records of the Inquisition and of the Intendant-General of Police. Masonic historians have quoted sources which were at times no more than hearsay. Differing versions of events have appeared, imaginatively embellished.

Since 1990, however, there has been the first part of a projected four-volume *História da Maçonaria em Portugal*, by the distinguished historian Professor A. H. de Oliveira Marques. The first volume covers the hundred-odd years to 1820, very fully investigated with the help of records that have been inaccessible, or poorly researched by others. For many years, even decades, of the period the story continues to remain incomplete; but, so far as it goes, this is the definitive history, with extensive detail of rituals, Lodge memberships, biographies, and a comprehensive bibliography.

For the century after 1820, the most reliable history is still that of Dr. Manuel Borges Grainha, published in 1913 in Portuguese and French. This contains errors, and has many gaps, and in due course the further volumes of *História de Maçonaria em Portugal* will replace it. For the twentieth century the whole story which is still unfolding has yet to be told authoritatively: there are a number of sources, including again Dr. A. H. de Oliveira Marques.

This Short History is especially indebted to these two authors and numerous facts are either quoted or confirmed from them. Where one or the other has not been followed, or other material has been introduced, there is a reference to the bibliography at the end. Naturally errors and opinions are the responsibility of the author. The Paper should be read in the knowledge that amplification to the story since 1820 will some day be generally available, and perhaps some corrections will have to be made.

Having in mind a varied readership, not only of non-Freemasons but of those who know little of Portugal, some essential background has been included. Portuguese and European history over the past 265 years sets the stage: the motivation of the players would be surprising without some understanding of Freemasonry itself: and the plot would be inexplicable without an appreciation of the opposition to the Order in Portugal. It will be seen that there is a bias towards the "English connection". This is partly because the major branch of international Freemasonry is in its origins an English phenomenon; and partly because the history of Portugal over most of the period has been closely linked with that of Great Britain.

(There may be some inconsistency in dates before 1752, when England at last adopted the Gregorian calendar of 1582 and calendar years everywhere began on January 1st).

General Introduction

On 10th June 1992 there was celebrated at Earls Court in London, with much publicity and television coverage, in the presence of 12,500 Freemasons and their guests, the 275th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of England. It was also the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Installation of HRH The Duke of Kent as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England. Such glasnost has tended to be as unusual in European Freemasonry as the interest that it therefore created. Of the 117 Grand Lodges throughout the world that are "recognised" by the United Grand

Lodge of England, 84 were represented. The total number of Freemasons indirectly represented at this extraordinary gathering was more than five million.¹

This is therefore an interesting time to look back on any part of the story of Freemasonry, and not least in Portugal, where the Institution has had a long but chequered history.

From the beginning, as in other Latin countries, there was extreme opposition from the Roman Catholic church, assisted as in Spain by the persuasive hands of the Inquisition. With the French Revolution and after, when Portuguese Freemasons were in the vanguard of liberalism and often political activists, opposition came from autocratic governments. Then, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, as the country slowly absorbed the forms of constitutional government, Freemasons sided with one party or another and were for many years divided amongst themselves. It was not until 1869 that differences were submerged and almost all came together under the rule of a single Grand Lodge, the Grand Oriente Lusitano Unido. The Institution expanded throughout the country but with the closing years of the century, there was involvement once more in politics, with Freemasons at the forefront of republicanism.

From the end of the Portuguese Monarchy in 1910, with which event individual Masons had much to do, there were 16 years of governmental confusion, Freemasons being often in government, before a military coup led the country into nearly 50 years of Dictatorship. For 39 of those years, up to the Revolution of 25 April 1974, Freemasonry was altogether proscribed. It returned then, and along two quite separate paths and is once more growing rapidly. (And, additionally, since 1990, amongst expatriate British, Lodges have been formed directly under the English Masonic Constitution, the first since the Napoleonic Wars).

To most of the five million Freemasons represented at Earls Court in June 1992, such vicissitudes will be inexplicable. Freemasonry generally, whatever local differences in philosophy there may be, is peaceful, its purposes to encourage tolerance and respect for others, to practise charity and to work for the community as a whole, to aim for high standards of behaviour, to avoid confrontation and sectarian divisions of any kind. For all those following the lead and precepts of the United Grand Lodge of England, discussion of religious and political matters within a Lodge is altogether prohibited. How then could Freemasonry in Portugal have be-

come so involved in national affairs and aroused so much opposition?

The Origins of Modern Freemasonry

Some of the traditional sources of Freemasonry can be found in early Judeo-Christian beliefs, history, and traditions. Some features can be traced to the Knightly Orders of the Crusades, especially the Templars. The specific origins of modern Freemasonry are found in the network of master masons with their craft unions and lodges who built the cathedrals and castles of mediaeval Europe. At the very end of the sixteenth century, in Scotland and England, a few of these lodges of working or "operative" master masons admitted "gentlemen" as non-operative or "speculative" masons. Then, during the following century, Lodges began to be formed, composed exclusively of non-operative "Free-masons". Their objectives were amusement, with philosophical discussions and philanthropic activities, no doubt at times offering mutual support. If any Lodges — and there were not very many — were a cover for political activists, Royalists or Roundheads, Catholics and Jacobins, there is no evidence.

Early in the eighteenth century, there was a significant increase in the numbers. Ruling Lodges were established, first in London, and subsequently in Dublin, Edinburgh, Paris and elsewhere, which formalised the proceedings of their member Lodges. All of these ruling Lodges drew on the same tradition: in their Constitutions, one followed another in adapting some of the supposed rules and hierarchy — and ritualising the working costume — of master-masons; and adding other features including elements of a history. Into this mixture was breathed also some of the questioning philosophical spirit of the eighteenth century, the Age of Reason.

In different countries Freemasonry naturally began to vary. Especially, Freemasons in England and France, two old adversaries, joined in some respects but separated in others, from their capital cities of London and Paris, took the lead in establishing Freemasonry along two significantly different tracks. It has been the destiny of Portuguese Freemasonry to follow both: indeed only very recently has a full distinction been made.

Modern Freemasonry therefore began in Great Britain. Two centuries before, England had separated from the Church of Rome. A savage Civil War, and an experiment with Republicanism under Cromwell, were now history. One King, Charles I, had been executed, and another, James

II, deposed. Since 1688 the whole country of Britain had been ruled, to an extent almost unknown elsewhere, by an elected Parliament under a constitutional Monarchy, chosen by the people. True, until 1745, there was the Jacobite threat to internal peace, but the frontiers of the island fortress were essentially secure, the framework of its religious beliefs was established, and its political institutions grew stronger every year.

In very marked contrast, for the most southerly countries of Europe, there was to be little change for many decades — even centuries — from the rule of absolute monarchies and an authoritarian Church. In France, nonetheless, as the eighteenth century developed, the spirit of the times was increasingly humanist and rationalist, anti-monarchical, anti-clerical. And some French Freemasons became directly involved in political action: some Lodges were forums for radical discussions and bases for activists. This was a watershed for Freemasonry. From the middle years of the eighteenth century, the majority of Freemasons throughout the world continued to follow the guiding principles established by (what became in 1813) the United Grand Lodge of England; but a sizeable minority in many countries took their lead from the Grande Oriente de France and extended Freemasonry into involvement in the political arena.

Today the major division between the two main branches of Freemasonry hangs on whether there is a personal belief in a Creator. At the beginning of the eighteenth century a belief in God, the "Great Architect of the Universe" in the Masonic phrase, was of course hardly questioned, whether in Catholic or in Protestant Europe. Today still, for all Grand Lodges which follow the general direction of the United Grand Lodge of England, belief in a Supreme Being continues to be required of every Freemason, whether Christian, Jew, Moslem, or Hindu. By contrast, belief in God or a Supreme Being is not a requirement of membership under the Grande Oriente de France (though there are other French ruling Lodges which do require such a belief).

The philosophy and character of Freemasonry under the leading Grand Lodges of England and of France thus became different. Masonic communication between Lodges of the one with the other is forbidden but this was not always so. Many Portuguese Freemasons over the centuries have followed the path of the Grande Oriente de France, some perhaps in angry reaction to an authoritarian Church, others because Freemasonry could offer a cloak for political activism. Often however there is evidence of uncertainty, of cross-currents, as the many and ancient ties with Eng-

land have drawn Portuguese Freemasons towards the United Grand Lodge of England. Thus in 1993, there is the Grande Oriente Lusitano Unido with 500 members and 30 Lodges following the French path; and the Grande Loja Regular de Portugal with 350 members of 15 Lodges, which is a fully recognised member of the international community of "regular" Freemasons.

But these developments were yet to come. From the 1720s onwards, from the British Isles, Freemasonry spread to other European countries, and to their new colonies across the face of the world. Not least, in North America, deep roots were quickly established, and today regular Freemasonry is to be found in every State of the Union.

The First Grand Lodges

In February 1717 Freemasons from four Lodges in London met at the Apple Tree Tavern in Charles Street, Covent Garden, to agree on rules for membership of the Craft and to constitute the first Grand Lodge of England. (In 1813 this merged with the Atholl Grand Lodge to become the United Grand Lodge of England). On St. John the Baptist's day, June 24, the first Assembly was held at the Goose and Gridiron Alehouse in St. Paul's Churchyard. From this beginning, in the following decade, about 50 recognised Lodges were formed, mostly in London.

Outside England the first affiliated Lodges were in 1728 in Madrid and Gibraltar, numbers 50 and 51. Others quickly followed in India, France, Germany, and Savannah, Georgia. In 1725, a Grand Lodge of Ireland was formed, establishing its own Lodges, and in 1736 a Grand Lodge of Scotland, equally independent. In Paris, a ruling Grand Lodge was established also in 1736. Modern Freemasonry thus began international expansion.

Early Years — The First Portuguese Lodges

In eighteenth century Portugal, English influence was established early with the signing of the Methuen Treaty in 1703, for mutual support during the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-13) and particular advantages for wine and English wool. English ships began to carry a high proportion of Portuguese trade: in 1721, arriving at Lisbon, there was an average of one English ship daily, Portuguese shipping being hardly a third of

this. The English colony in Lisbon numbered "many hundreds if not thousands", the largest foreign group, engaged in almost every kind of activity, inter-mixed with the population. English books, clothing, customs, even language, began to be as well known as Italian and French.

It is therefore likely that Freemasons were among the many English travellers to Portugal. Dr. Oliveira Marques writes that "it would be very probable that the first efforts to set up an English Lodge in Lisbon coincided more or less with the first Lodge in Madrid, in 1728. Tradition even suggests the year 1727 . . . though this seems less likely. And in fact, 15 years later . . . John Coustos . . . in evidence to the Inquisition . . . pointed to 1728 as the year of the first Lodge, founded by an Englishman, named Dugood". Coustos apparently referred to William Dugood, who lived in Lisbon (Rua dos Remedios, Lapa) until the earthquake of 1755, and who had been a Freemason in England. However nothing is known of the first years of this Lodge and it was not then recognised by Grand Lodge of England.

It recommenced with "força e vigor", possibly in 1733, and on 17 April 1735 Lord Weymouth, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England, received "a petition from several Brethren now residing in and about the City of Lisbon in Portugal humbly praying that a Deputation may be granted to Mr. George Gordon", (a Mathematician, known to have contributed to an etymological dictionary published in 1730), "for constituting them into a regular Lodge". This petition was granted, and a Provincial Grand Lodge created, implying that other Lodges were contemplated.¹

Referring to the inauguration, a letter in the St. James' *Evening Post* records that "Lord George Graham, Lord Forrester, and a great many gentlemen belonging to the English fleet were present at constituting the Lodge"; and that "a great many merchants of the Factory and other people of distinction have been received and regularly made Freemasons". This claim may not have been an exaggeration though unfortunately there are now no records to support it. Certainly, however, on June 9 an English squadron of 26 ships arrived in the Tagus to support the Portuguese fleet against Spain, and this substantial force remained for two years.

The Lodge received the number 135 in the Grand Lodge of England, later changed to 120. It seems to have consisted exclusively of Protestant

English and Scots and was known as the Loja dos Hereges Mercantes, the Lodge of the Heretic Merchants. It remained more or less in existence until 1755 but regrettably little is known of it or its members. Perhaps all records were destroyed in the great Lisbon Earthquake of that year.

From about 1733, another Lodge had been established, also by George Gordon, with membership mostly from the Catholic Irish in Lisbon, though with some Protestants. This Lodge was composed of a mixed group of clerics, shop- and inn-keepers, naval and army officers, teachers, doctors, and met a restaurant in the Remolares. It was called, rather grandly, the Royal House of the Freemasons of Lusitania and it may have been in the process of applying to the Grand Lodge of England for recognition in 1738 when its activities were investigated by the Inquisition.

The Inquisition

The Inquisition had been in Portugal, crossing the border from Spain, for 200 years, from 1535. It was at times in conflict with the civil authorities because it acted without reference to them, and whilst not continuously prominent, its dungeons and Inquisitors were justly feared and there were occasional autos-da-fé. Now, in 1738, Freemasonry was condemned as heretical in the Bull, *In Eminenti Apostolatus Specula*, of Pope Clement XII; and in Portugal as in Spain the Inquisition was ready.

Some of the results in Portugal, from the viewpoint of a prejudiced observer, can be seen in the words of an Austrian Freemason, Chevalier von Born, (writing in 1785 in his *Journal für Freimaurer*) quoting from *Procedures Curieuses de l'Inquisition de Portugal contre les Francs-Maçon*, published in 1745: "There is a land wherein the light of day never penetrates, the inhabitants of which wander about in perpetual darkness, and must give themselves up conditionally to the direction of guides, who, proud of their owlish eyesight, accompany them through the obscurity, and presume to show them the right direction. . . .

"These pilots through the eternal gloom that there reigns supreme, have no more interesting employment than that of extinguishing every ray of light which may be unexpectedly let in. . . . This land is Portugal, that Paradise of the monks, that seat of ignorance and prejudice, and the theatre of superstition. Some of the Brethren have sought to introduce Freemasonry there; to scatter the seeds of enlightenment, remove from some Portuguese the chains with which education and fanaticism have en-

circled their understanding, and teach them to familiarise themselves with the sparks of light which the All-wise Creator has infused into every man".

Another writer, quoted by a German historian, more explicitly compared the sufferings of Spanish and Portuguese Freemasons during the 1740s, considering them to be more or less equal, save that "the Brethren in Lusitania had a still more agonising, blood-strewn path to follow. . . . Through evil-smelling dungeons, through the torture chambers of the Inquisition, it led to ghastly charnel-houses, to the iron collar of the garotte, to the flaming stakes of numerous auto-da-fé, to the galleys or to exile on some Devil's Island."

These descriptions may be exaggerated, persecutions were not continuous, and they have to be placed in the emotional and chauvinistic context of the 1740s: but they indicate the strength of feelings already evoked by Freemasonry.

Freemasonry and Catholicism

The Bull of 28 April 1738 was the first of a dozen Papal Bulls over the next 150 years condemning Freemasonry, and in view of their great importance in Portugal, the Roman Catholic position should be noted. At the time of this first condemnation, incidentally, there existed about 270 Lodges of which about 220 were in the predominantly Protestant British Isles: denunciations from the Papacy could then be as much political as religious in their objectives.

The "Humanum Genus" of Leo XIII in 1884 is frequently quoted as summarising the Roman Catholic case against Freemasonry, although there have been other pronouncements since. It reaffirmed the earlier Bulls, and with the greater authority, from 1870, of the doctrine of Papal infallibility. "Humanum Genus" acknowledged that Freemasons were "most widely spread and firmly established" but maintained that "by accepting any that present themselves, no matter of what religion, they (the Freemason) gain their purpose of urging that great error of the present day viz. that questions of religion ought to be left undetermined, and that there should be no distinction between varieties. And this policy aims at the destruction of all religions, especially at that of the Catholic religion, which, since it is the only true one, cannot be reduced to equality with the rest without the gravest injury".

Freemasons were to be subjected to the heaviest ecclesiastical punishment, the greater excommunication, deprived of spiritual privileges whilst living and the rites of burial when dead, because "in truth, the sect grants great licence to its initiates, allowing them to defend either position, either that there is a God, or that there is no God."²

As already noted, Freemasonry following the English Constitution and all recognised by it does fundamentally require belief in a Supreme Being and is therefore open to men of many religions, (for which it is not in any way a substitute). On the other hand, those following the Grande Oriente de France are essentially agnostic. Papal opposition to English Freemasonry is nevertheless unchanged today, though it has at times wavered.

Repression by the Inquisition

In September 1738 the Papal Nuncio in Lisbon published a long statement, condemning Freemasonry as prejudicial to the State and opposed to the true faith, and calling on all clerics to denounce Freemasons. Repression and toleration alternated for the next 100 years, depending largely on the prejudices of individual monarchs and on perceived dangers to the security of the State. The power of the Church was waning (20 years later the Jesuits were expelled from Portugal for being too meddlesome); Catholics were divided in their loyalties to Church, State, and Monarch; there was increasing resentment of the extra-ordinary, supra-national powers of the Inquisition; each regime had a different perception of the supposed dangers of Freemasonry; above all perhaps, even in reactionary Portugal, there was an awareness of the winds of change blowing across Europe which reached their climax — though not their end — in France in 1789.

But in 1738 these factors were on the horizon. The first moves by the Inquisition against Freemasonry in Portugal were concerned with the Irish Lodge, which had, on first hearing of the Papal Bull, at once suspended meetings. Voluntarily the Lodge informed the Inquisition, which proceeded to take evidence. A Dominican Father, Charles O'Kelly, a non-Mason but confessor to a number of the members, was called and gave general information about it. Seven members of the Lodge followed (though, curiously, not its Protestant Master) and answered questions at length and apparently without reservation. Some Lodge records survive, and from the Inquisition record of the investigation also, the names of its

24 members are known, their ages and occupations, the degrees awarded, the decoration of the Lodge and the masonic clothing, the signs and passwords, some of the ritual, and other interesting information. The Lodge followed closely the English pattern.

No further action was taken: the Inquisitors concluded that "the said society was no more than a means of conciliating and fomenting the human society and of helping one another in matters affecting their interests or honour, and that all that took place was harmless for their own amusement and enjoyment . . . and that the oath of secrecy did not apply to matters of Religion or of State . . . by the unanimous agreement of all, the said society was dissolved merely with the news that it was banned by the Holy See . . . there was no need for further investigation. . . ."^{3a}

This was very different from the treatment already accorded other Lodges in Italy and elsewhere or in Portugal later and for the next three years there is little information. Perhaps the English Lodge, Hereges Mercantes, continued to meet, maybe on ships in the Tagus, but the example of the Irish Lodge must have shown that caution was necessary even by Protestant foreigners. Yet into Lisbon there was an influx of foreign merchants and craftsmen, many of them French, and some Masonic activity, perhaps involving Portuguese citizens, would have been likely. No doubt the Inquisition continued to monitor what was clearly heresy, and so no doubt did the Police for other reasons.

The International Background

With the Treaties of Utrecht in 1713/14 at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession, an exhausted Europe was nominally peaceful for two decades. But old rivalries had not been eliminated, only subdued. The European ruling dynasties, though increasingly undermined by popular politics, were not finished, and much of the newly discovered world was still unclaimed. In 1739, England and Spain were again formally opposed over South America in the so-called War of Jenkins' Ear.

And in 1740, there began another general European War, that of the Austrian Succession, not to be ended for eight years. Within the British Isles, the Jacobites were nourished still by France, to be finally crushed with the slaughter at Culloden in 1745. In the Far East, the Dutch had gained the ascendancy over the Portuguese; but in India the French and

English fought in surrogate fashion via rival princes until becoming formally in conflict in the Seven Years War from 1756. In 1757 in one of the decisive battles of modern history, at Plassey, Clive's victory led to control of India. And, across the Atlantic in 1759, outside Quebec, a brief conflict on the Plains of Abraham similarly placed Canada in English hands.

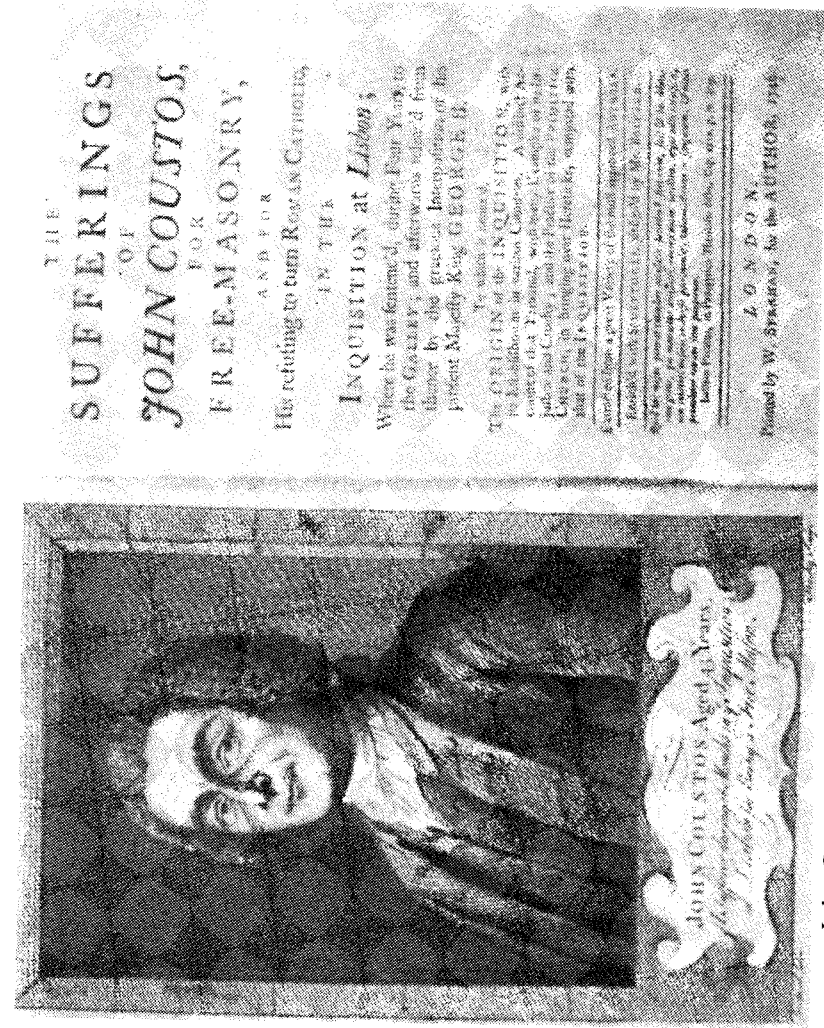
It was a time of intellectual experiment and enquiry. Descartes and Locke had taught doubt of traditional values. With the eighteenth century, Voltaire and Bentham, Rousseau and Diderot, Newton and Adam Smith, and many others, were prepared to question anything. Establishments — in the modern sense of defenders of the status quo, whether political, scientific, philosophic, economic, social, or religious, — fought back. France for example did not give even limited toleration to Protestants until 1787 (a Protestant was executed at Toulouse in 1762 on the charge of converting Catholics to heresy). The times were troubled and cabals and plots abounded: in any country those who were not for the King were assumed to be against him. Spain and Portugal were especially reactionary, closed to new ideas, dynastically powerful, and strongly Catholic. Freemasons not only acted secretly and were thereby suspect of treason, but, whatever their religion, they were heretics also, rejecting Papal ordinance.

The Inquisition and Jean Coustos

The story of Jean Coustos sheds considerable light on early Freemasonry, and on the Inquisition. Also his lodge is the only one known to have been active in the 1740s.

(A German writer in an unreliable history (4) mentions another, the Virtud Lodge, the membership of which was largely Portuguese, as having been denounced by a Dominican Friar, confessor to the French Ambassador. This was raided on 8 March 1743 and three members of the Lodge, "the aristocrats Damiao de Andrade and Manoel de Revelhos, and a baptised Mohammedan Christoph Diego, were forced to mount the scaffold on June 1st". There is no verification of this and the story is confused).

In 1741 Jean Coustos, clearly a redoubtable character, arrived in Lisbon. Born in Switzerland of Huguenot descent, the son of a surgeon, Coustos was naturalised English and by profession a gem-cutter. In Lon-



John Coustos, engraved portrait from a piece to the first edition, 1746, of his "suffering for . . . Freemasonry. . . ."

don he was a member of Lodge No. 75 (which met at the Rainbow Coffee House and is now the Britannic Lodge No. 33). He was a founder member of Lodge No. 98 which was constituted on 17 August 1732 and met at Prince Eugene's Coffee House. In 1736 Coustos went to Paris and was there Master for a time of a Lodge of some importance in Freemasonry, "a cosmopolitan and aristocratic Lodge (of 68 known members) with a fair leavening of continental nobility — knights, barons, counts, dukes, and princes — as well as financiers, businessmen, and artists. Even those who followed more plebeian trades (such as Coustos himself) . . . moved in the very highest circles. The members clearly played a pivotal role in the dissemination of Masonry to northern and eastern Europe".^{3b}

In 1741 Coustos was en-route for Brazil and in Lisbon to obtain the necessary licence to settle there. This was refused and instead he commenced business in the Largo dos Ourives de Ouro. Towards the end of the year, he founded a Freemason's Lodge, known as the French or Coustos Lodge, and was Master of it. About 25 names are known, mostly French with some English and perhaps one Portuguese, predominantly Catholic. There were no aristocrats: this was a Lodge of jewellery craftsmen and merchants. Meetings were held in members' homes and the ritual was in French. In the event the Lodge was active for barely one year.

The Lodge was denounced to the Inquisition on 6 October 1742 by an Attorney, Henrique Machado de Moura, who had made his own enquiries. In addition to Coustos, six others were then named as members. The record of the denunciation from the Archives of the Inquisition concludes: "This is what (Dr. Machado de Moura) has to denounce, and does so for the sake of his conscience, having this obligation, and not from any odium he has against the accused; and that he only wishes to harm Lambert Boulanger who caused him to be stabbed when he had appeared as Procurator against him, as also against the said Alexandre Jacques Mouton for the same reason".

There is nothing more in the record until 11 February 1743 when a further denunciation was made, apparently voluntarily, by a Frenchman, Cornelius Leruite. He had been asked to join the Lodge by Coustos at a banquet attended by the other members but had not taken it further. Asked by the Inquisitor "of what does this new religion or Society consist; to what they bind themselves; what ceremonies take place; what aim they seek; or what utility those who join derive", Leruite replied: "that the util-

ity which the associates of this Society derive from it is the helping of one another in any part of the Kingdom, recognising each other as members by signs they have for the purpose; and that the said Coustos told him that this Society was neither prejudicial to religion nor to one's neighbour; nor to the Republic or to Crowned heads".

The Interrogation

In addition to Coustos, three members of the Lodge were arrested by the Inquisition during March and April: there is nothing to indicate why only these were selected. Their names were: Alexandre Jacques Mouton, diamond-cutter, a French Roman Catholic, aged 39; Jean Thomas Bruslé, diamond trader and businessman, a French Roman Catholic, aged 44; and Jean Baptiste Richard, trader and goldsmith, a French Protestant, aged 27. Each of these suffered to an extent similar to that of Jean Coustos. Another member, Lambert Boulanger, made a voluntary statement. The relevant Inquisition papers in the *Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo* amount to more than 600 pages.^{3c}

Coustos was interrogated on March 21st, on the 26th, on the 30th, and again on April 1st. The proceedings opened with the formality that the prisoner "having petitioned an Audience, the Oath of the Holy Gospels was administered to him and upon which he laid his hand, under charge of which he was bidden to tell the truth and keep it secret, all of which he promised to obey. . . ." Asked for what reason he requested an Audience, "he said it was for the purpose of confessing offences pertaining to this Board."

Coustos described the procedures and ceremonies of the Lodge in careful and considerable detail. It seems that he had considered himself, as a foreigner, to be in no danger. He said to the Inquisitors that he had considered discontinuing further meetings but had been told the proscription against Freemasonry only applied to Portuguese "and by no means against those who were not nationals".

Why Coustos should have spoken so freely is not clear because, as he admitted, he was in breach of his Masonic oath of secrecy. He may of course have been under duress from the outset and certainly threatened; the circumstances of his incarceration were no doubt terrifying. In the event his free-speaking did no good: the Inquisitors professed themselves unable to believe that he was not holding back information and after the

preliminary examinations he was tortured and broken on the rack to reveal more.

Already however he had probably described everything he knew: the introduction and ceremony of initiation for new members; the oath of secrecy and the traditional penalty for breaching it; the signs and words used by Apprentices, Officers, and Masters for mutual recognition; the toasts and songs at the banquets following formal rituals; the collection of fines from Brethren who “swear by using the name of God, or of the Devil, or utter any bad word”, for distribution to the poor.

Coustos explained the arrangement of a Lodge room for meetings and described the furnishings and the significance of the various emblems and insignia. He gave verbatim the traditional history of Freemasonry which traces the origins of the Order and much of its symbolism to the building of Solomon’s Temple by the architect Hiram. “The signs of the Masters”, he said, “come from the time when Solomon built his sumptuous Temple, whereby for the better administration of the work and distinguishing between Officers and Apprentices labouring therein, he, Solomon, made the separation of the signs. . . .”

He referred to the Book of Constitutions and gave the name of a Frenchman, M. Balestri, “Purveyor to the Queen residing by the Corpo Santo, who has the said book although not belonging to the said Fraternity”. He gave the names of some Brethren in addition to those already known to the Inquisitors. He was questioned at length about Freemasonry and religion: he replied “that members of the said Society are permitted to follow any Religion they wish, and not only is this permitted but also in the Oath which they take upon joining they promise each one to follow their religion”; but that “in the Fraternity it is not permitted to speak of religious matters”.

He explained that “the Masters of the principal and almost all the Lodges of England appoint every year a Duke or other exalted person as Grand Master”, the rules of administration being found in a book which he believed originated “during the reign of Elizabeth I”. He revealed that “the King of England himself and his son the Prince of Wales are also Freemasons, the said King having been admitted when he was Prince . . . ; and that he , the declarant, saw the admission of the Prince of Wales”.

There were many questions and Coustos gave fortnight answers, but in the final sessions the Inquisitors made clear that they believed there must be more to Freemasonry than he had revealed. Various questions made clear their dissatisfaction: for example, “how was it possible that what he is saying be true when it is totally dissonant to reason that there be men prepared to submit themselves to such extra-ordinary penalties (in the oath of initiation) for such a ridiculous motive as he has suggested, unless there was some greater impulse which would attract their desire and make them submit to such severity?” But Coustos had nothing more to say: “. . . the only purpose (of the ceremonies, solemn Oaths, and Preparations) . . . is to maintain the secrecy which all the members should keep”. The penalties “. . . were introduced more for instilling respect and fear in those who newly join. . . .”

For the Masonic historian, what Coustos and the others described generally confirmed what is known of ritual and organisation in these early days from other sources. There are some differences, some of these perhaps deliberate as this Lodge like others experimented to find what suited it best.

Coustos was almost too articulate. The Inquisition could find nothing to condemn. In the whole of this meticulous examination, there does not seem to have been a single word objectionable to the interrogators. Coustos was a heretic but he had not attempted to convert Catholics to heresy. No blasphemy was disclosed in the ceremonies of Freemasonry. The members were loyal subjects of other countries and otherwise law-abiding residents of Portugal. However they were admitted members of an organisation which admitted most religious beliefs on equal terms and which was banned by Papal decree.

What happened after that is not wholly clear. It seems that Coustos and the others were incarcerated for a further year. He himself later described appalling tortures, involving repeated dislocations of joints, from which he only survived a further two years. Though these Freemasons were foreigners, subjects of powerful countries, the Inquisition was a law to itself, especially in Spain and Portugal.

Put to the Torture

The Archives of the Inquisition pick up the story almost a year later when — whether or not he had been believed before — there was a final

attempt to make sure. On 25 April 1744, in the Audience and Palace Chamber of the Holy Inquisition in Lisbon, Coustos was told “that he had many times been admonished by this Council that he should make final confession of his guilt . . . the which he, the prisoner, using unwise reflection, has so far not seen fit to do . . . it is presumed with sufficient reason that they (Freemasons) practised many other things than those the prisoner has confessed. ORDER that before any further report is made, the Prisoner, John Coustos, be put to torment. . . .”

The same day, in the Palace and Torture Chamber of the Holy Inquisition, “. . . being stripped of those clothes which might be an impediment in the applying of the said torture, he was laid on the Rack, and the binding commenced; and thereupon it was protested by me, the Notary that if he died under that torture, that any of his limbs should break, or he lose any of his senses, the blame would be his and not that of the Inquisitors and other Attendants who carried out the judgement of his case according to the merit of it; and being properly bound he was given all the torture to which he had been sentenced and which would occupy more than a quarter of an hour, all of which truly occurred . . . and the said Inquisitors and Deputies signed”.

Two months after this, on June 21, 1744, Coustos appeared in the church of St. Dominic at the first auto-da-fé in which Freemasons were amongst those punished. Apparently 22 men and 11 women featured in the proceedings, watched by the king, his children, all the Court, and the Papal Nuncio. Some of the accused were burnt at the stake. The King, Dom João V, actually spent the night in the Palace of the Inquisition. Mouton and Bruslé were sentenced to deportation but Coustos to four years in the galleys. He worked — with great difficulty because of his injuries — as a water-carrier to the prisons of Lisbon. Then — out of the dungeons of the Inquisition and in the open — he was claimed as a British subject through the intervention of the British Minister (the Duke of Newcastle is also mentioned as being concerned, perhaps as a Brother Freemason). Coustos was released at the end of October, sailed to Portsmouth on a Dutch ship, and finally reached London on December 15.

Coustos' own account

Custos' own narrative of the tortures he suffered was published in English and French editions in 1746, and “still constitutes a most impor-

tant record for the history of the Inquisition”. In one form or another there have been at least 27 subsequent editions. It is not for the tender-hearted. “I was conveyed to the torture room, where no light appeared but what two candles gave; and to prevent the dreadful cries and shocking screams of the unhappy victims from reaching the ears of the other prisoners, the doors were lined with a sort of quilt. The reader will suppose that I must be seized with horror, when at my entering this infernal place, I saw myself surrounded on a sudden by six wretches, who after preparing the tortures, stripped me naked all to my drawers; and stretching me on my back, they began to lay hold of every part of my body.

“First they put around my neck an iron collar which was fastened to the scaffold; they then fixed a ring to each foot; and this: being done they stretched my limbs with all their might. They next tied two ropes round each arm and two round each thigh; which ropes passed under the scaffold through holes made for that purpose; and were all drawn tight at the same time by four men on a signal. These ropes which were the size of one's little finger, pierced through the flesh quite to the bone, making the blood gush out at eight different places that were so bound. At my side stood a physician and a surgeon who often felt my temples to judge of the danger I might be in”.

His story continues: “They were so inhuman six weeks after, as to expose me to another kind of torture, more grievous if possible than the former. They made me stretch my arms in such a manner that the palms of my hands were turned outward; when by the help of a rope that fastened them together at the wrist, which they turned by an engine, they drew them nearer together behind, in such a manner that the back of each hand touched and stood exactly parallel one on the other; whereby both my shoulders were dislocated and a quantity of blood issued from my mouth. This torture was repeated thrice; after which I was again sent to my dungeon and put into the hands of physicians and surgeons who setting my bones put me to exquisite pain”.

His words are objective almost beyond credibility. “Two months after, being a little recovered, I was again conveyed to the torture room and there made to undergo another kind of punishment. The torturers turned twice round my body a thick iron chain, which crossed upon my stomach, terminated afterwards at my wrists. They next set my back against thick board, at each extremity whereof was a pulley through which

there ran a rope that caught the ends of the chains at my wrists. The tormentors then stretching these ropes by means of a roller, pressed or bruised my stomach in proportion as the ropes were drawn tighter. On this occasion my wrists and shoulders were put out of joint". This happened to him twice and altogether he says he was tortured nine times.⁵

Such were the appalling deterrents employed by Church — and by State also — to encourage proper behaviour and thought. Additionally, there was in 1743 in Portugal a Royal decree, confirming the Papal denunciation, outlawing Freemasonry, and providing death as the State penalty for membership. Church and State were at one in condemning the Craft.

Freemasonry and the Marques de Pombal

For the last years of the 'forties there is no other news of Portuguese Freemasonry: the Hereges Mercantes was in existence but there are no records of any meetings. In July 1750 the death of Dom João V — King for 44 years — brought great changes to the country, and not least to the status of Freemasonry. Dom João was succeeded by his son Dom José, who had the perception to appoint into his government Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, better known as the Marquês de Pombal and First Minister for most of the next 27 years.

Pombal, like others in the government, was well-travelled. As Livermore writes, his administration went far towards transforming Portugal from "an exhausted and impoverished land into a flourishing State". He saw this as requiring education, encouraging mercantilism and new industries and methods, weakening the Church and the powers of the nobility. In the aftermath of the Great Earthquake which struck Lisbon on All Saints Day, 1755, destroying also much of the Algarve and southern Portugal, revival and regeneration required exceptional energy and determination. In 1759 he was powerful enough to defy even the Jesuits, having the Society dissolved and surviving members expelled, after a ruthless campaign of remarkable brutality.

Pombal had been previously Ambassador in Vienna and before that at the Court of St. James's, London. It is not certain that he was a Freemason but this seems likely, and was believed at the time by both friends and enemies. One tradition has it that he was initiated in London on June 24, 1744, by Frederick, Prince of Wales; in Vienna he is known to have as-

sociated with Freemasons, perhaps visiting a Lodge called Aux Trois Canons.

Certainly throughout his Ministry there was an absence of persecution of Freemasons and a number of Lodges are known to have been active, attracting for the first time members of the upper classes and many from the military. These were not people concerned with political change, as was the case towards the end of the century, but rather, as Dr. Oliveira Marques observes, it was "religious and philosophical questions that principally concerned them . . . they questioned traditional Catholicism — or at least, the Catholicism of Rome. Protestantism made an impact, with its different approach to Christianity. And what also distinguished many of these Masons was the manner of their daily lives, in contrast to the great majority of the population. Extra-marital affairs were tolerated, fasting and abstinence rejected, there was social intercourse with protestants and foreigners from many places, forbidden books were read, new knowledge, philosophy and morality were accepted and professed — or at least discussed — by a significant proportion. Freemasonry was identified with what was known in eighteenth century Portugal by the word *libertinagem*, even though the great majority of Freemasons continued to be entirely traditional in their religious and moral practices".

This was a period of great expansionism for Freemasonry and for the development and reorganisation of Grand Lodges. Portugal was on the fringe of Europe but there were many Masonic visitors to the country, diplomats, sailors, merchants, and — not least — soldiers. In 1762, towards the end of the Seven Years War when Portugal joined with England and Prussia (against France, Russia, Austria, Spain and other States), the Count of Lippe was invited to reorganise the Portuguese army. Lippe was a distinguished officer, nominated by the British Government, who was first in Portugal for two years, returning again in 1767. He was a Freemason, who brought others with him, and he is credited with the foundation of Lodges in various parts of the country.

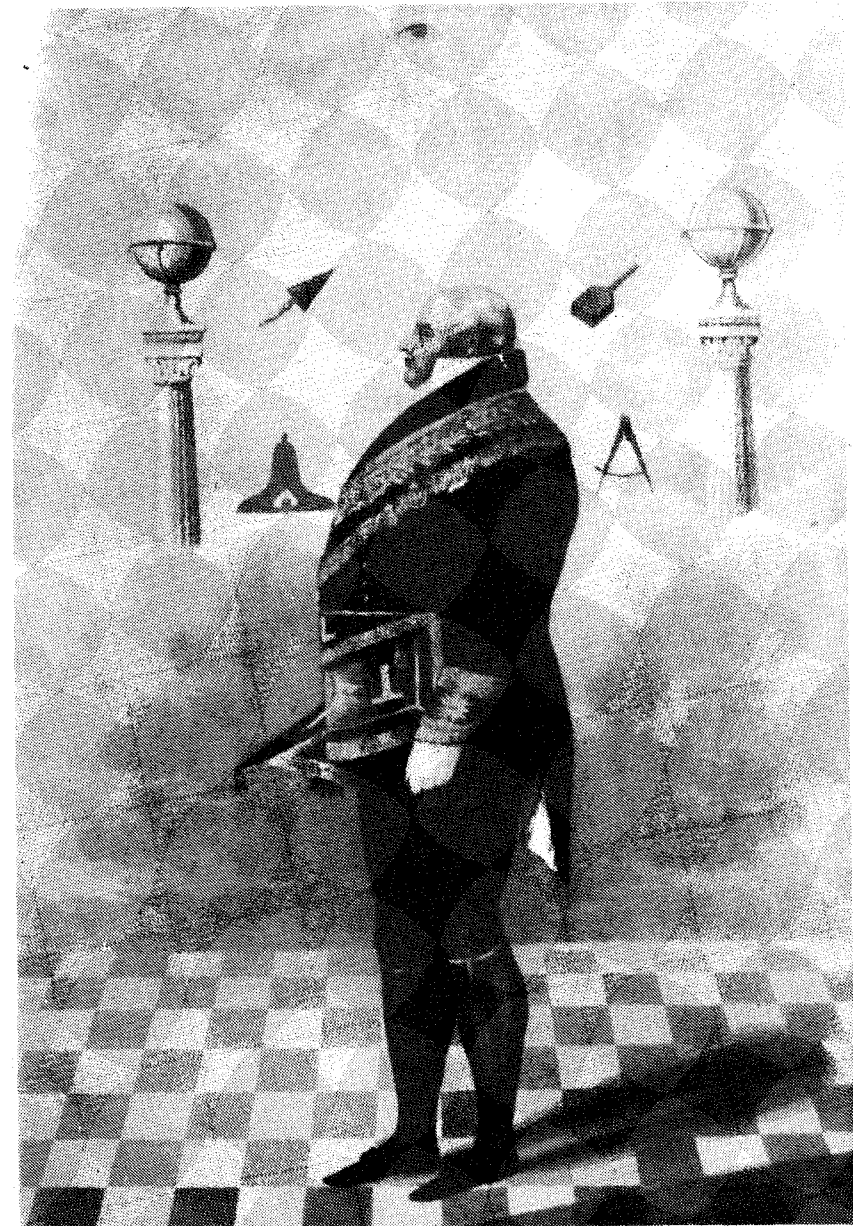
Most of these Lodges were amongst the military, relatively short-lived, and the records of them are sparse. Much of the information about them comes from depositions to the Inquisition years later (when Pombal was out of power). In Lisbon there was in 1763 a so-called *Loja Mista*, or Mixed Lodge, of which a dozen members are known, including the Dutch Ambassador. In Valença on the northern frontier there was a Lodge for about ten years, though only a few names are known from one period, all

military, Portuguese, English, Scots, French, and one German. In Coimbra similarly it is very probable that there was a Lodge which resurfaced with an academic and student membership sometime after 1773. In frontier towns there were almost certainly Lodges in Almeida, Elvas (or Olivença), and Estremoz. At the same time in Lisbon, a successor to the English Lodge Hereges Mercantes, but not affiliated to any Grand Lodge, continued for as many as 40 years. The creation of schools, colleges, and public libraries during Pombal's time is attributed to Freemasons.

Freemasonry made an impact also in Madeira with the founding of a Lodge about 1767. Madeira was an entrepot and frequent port of call, with a prosperous English community, to some extent independent of the mainland under a Captain-General and Governor. As elsewhere Freemasonry was nurtured by sailors and merchants and here also was a strong military force, whose commanders included Freemasons. Amongst the 18 members of the Lodge in 1770 were magistrates, doctors and landowners. For the first time, Portuguese Freemasons, probably with same reason, were accused of involving themselves. Some were imprisoned for a time, some fled, but no more happened although the Lodge formally ceased to exist.

Otherwise, on the mainland, there was toleration as long as Pombal was in power. Significantly in August 1774 new Rules (Regulamento) for the Inquisition made no mention of Freemasonry amongst crimes to be denounced to the Holy Office. Indeed the Inquisition was then effectively under the control of the State. Of interest from the period are the number of indications of Masonry, especially compasses and squares, in paintings, tiles, and sculptures; a notable example is in the ceiling of the Sala da Concordia in the Palace of the Marquês de Pombal in Oeiras.

Livermore writes that Pombal's power "depended on the peculiar passivity of an idle king", and certainly it ended with the accession of the king's melancholic daughter, Maria. On the day after the death of Dom José on 24 February 1777, Pombal is said to have arrived at the Ante-chamber to be greeted by Cardinal Cunha with the words: "Your Excellency has no longer anything to do here". The Church "party" was once more ascendant, though much of Pombal's work on the modernisation of the country continued. However his many enemies amongst the nobility and the clergy found reasons to disgrace him, and with his downfall came a fresh period of repression for Freemasonry.



HRH Augustus Frederick Duke of Sussex, Grand Master United Grand Lodge of England, 1813 - 1843.

It is indicative of the passions of the time that from a pulpit in Vienna a Barnabite priest is reported as saying when Pombal died: "The notorious and sacrilegious Pombal is dead at last. And now . . . he can enjoy himself to his heart's content in the infernal regions, with his worthy brothers Luther, Calvin, and other blackguards", an obituary which evidently caused the Emperor Joseph to remark: "Really a lucky man, this Pombal, that even his most deadly enemies wish him, post mortem, such excellent company".⁴

Repression Once More

Freemasons in Portugal were not so fortunate and were once again persecuted, but almost randomly, as if to make an occasional example. The name given to the next few years is "Viradeira" deriving from a country dance and implying a turnaround. Many Masons found it prudent to leave the country and an unknown number were imprisoned, at least for a time.

With the support of the new Queen, Maria I, the Inquisition moved in July 1777 against the Lodges in Valença and in Coimbra. Interrogations by the Inquisitors are recorded, notably of a German non-commissioned officer Michael Kinselach, who gave information about Lodges during the previous 20 years but appears to have concealed much of what he knew. There was an auto-da-fé in October but this was one of the last to be held in Portugal; in Coimbra there was one in 1781.

Generally records are poor for the period and the story confused. A Lodge began in Lisbon, so-called the Sixth, which lasted until 1792 and had at least 44 members from many walks of life. Many of its meetings places are known and one text from its records is especially interesting. This is the oldest Masonic text in Portuguese. It was an oration to new members and emphasised "the non-political and non-sectarian nature of Masonry; insisting on equality between all Masons . . .; on an honourable, virtuous way of life; on acceptance of the authority of the legitimate civil power; on fraternal solidarity; and on discretion in the keeping of confidences and secrets".

In Madeira the Funchal Lodge revived — or there was another — and as the Loja de S. Luis this was recognised by one of the two Grande Loges de France. This is distinctive because there is no evidence from this period that any other Portuguese Lodges were interested in formal associations

with foreign Freemasons. By 1790 there was at least one other Lodge in Funchal, drawing membership from all the professions; and also an English Lodge. On the mainland, Masonry attracted the interest of the nobility and of intellectuals: it was said that the Crown Prince was "the Protector" of Freemasonry but, although this is possible, there is no evidence of it, and in any case he died in 1788. There were other Lodges in Porto and Coimbra; and in the Cabo Verde Islands of Santiago and S. Miguel, there were groups of Masons, if not Lodges, but there are no details.

The French Revolution and the 1790s

Sparks from the French Revolution lit fires in many places and not least in monarchist, autocratic Portugal. With the fall of the Bastille in July 1789, exiles from France began to enter Portugal, some of them Freemasons. For example, the Duke of Luxembourg, of the highest nobility, Field-Marshal, and also for 12 years the Administrator-General of the Grande Oriente de France, found it necessary to take refuge in 1791. Some of these Masons were in a sense agitators whilst nominally monarchists: the very fact that they brought new thinking into the country was potentially dangerous. They were identified also with "libertinagem", a word implying freethinking rather than a dissolute way of life. Increasingly therefore the opposition to Freemasons was political, not religious. It was led not so much by the Inquisition or the Church as by the State Police, of which the Intendant-General was Diogo Inácio de Pina Manique, a celebrated official and functionary who had begun service under Pombal.

A fresh repression of Freemasons began in the summer of 1791. The Inquisition, its powers reinforced by the State, issued an Edict on 14 February 1792, read out in every church, which remedied the omissions of that of 1774. Freemasonry was again denounced and identified with heresy. The torture chambers might be closed but the battle for souls continued.

The most severe effect of this seems to have been in Madeira where "everyone knew everyone else and Catholicism was strong". There was an "avalanche of denunciations and confessions". For months the Inquisitors took evidence although there is no record of any arrests. The numbers were indeed large — more than 200 Freemasons are known, many in leading positions — so that the whole community was involved