

SCOTTISH FREEMASONRY IN NEW ZEALAND

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Since the formation of the first Freemason Lodge under the Grand Lodge of Scotland, Lodge Otago Kilwinning No. 417 in 1861, there have been 57 Scottish Lodges in New Zealand. In 2023, there are only ten. The purpose of my research, which has resulted in this paper, is to understand what has happened to all those Lodges and where they are today.

For the sake of clarity, where I refer to a lodge, District or Province, unless otherwise indicated, they are Scottish. Lodges holding of other constitutions will be referred to as NZC for Grand Lodge of New Zealand, IC for Grand Lodge of Ireland and EC for United Grand Lodge of England. For the sake of brevity, Grand Lodge of New Zealand will be referred to as GLNZ and Grand Lodge of Scotland as GLoS.

Wherever possible, I have consulted the original minutes of lodges. Where those were not available, inaccessible or lost, I have relied upon various lodge histories. Other principal sources included 'New Zealand Craftsman' magazine (which, in the early days, often published official correspondence and notices in full), the Norman B Spencer prize-winning 'The Formation of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand' by Dr M Kearsley, 'History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand 1890-1970' by FG Northern and 'Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand' by RH Montgomery.

I also had the opportunity to talk with several senior members of the craft, especially regarding events since 2000. They included Bro J More, Bro RJ Russell, Bro AJ Ford and Bro MA Gilkinson, District Grand Masters past and present, and MW Bro M Winger, Past GM, NZC.

It is important from the start to appreciate Scottish Freemasonry is different in many ways to other constitutions. Firstly, everyone is 'Brother', even the MW Grand Master Mason. Honorifics such as Right Worshipful are associated with the role or position, not the individual. Secondly, Scottish lodges are Private Lodges and, as such, retain control at the lodge level over their assets, processes, ritual and regalia, which is why the individual lodges sometimes do things differently. Even the signs can be different which can be very confusing to a brother from a different constitution.

Introduction

We can identify five periods of masonic activity in New Zealand, which I propose to examine in turn.

From 1842 (when the first Lodge, Ara No. 348 IC was established) to 1889 before the formation of GLNZ.

From 1889 to 1892 with the creation of the Masonic Union movement which led to the formation of GLNZ.

From 1892 to 1913, while lodges continued to transfer to the GLNZ and until GLNZ and GLoS reached agreement on recognition.

From 1913 until 1970 which might be referred to as the 'Golden Age' of Freemasonry in New Zealand (and in many other countries).

From 1970 to the present day when Freemasonry has struggled to maintain itself as a viable organisation.

Background

In 1840, the population of the New Zealand was c.82,000 of which 80,000 were Maori. After the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi on 6th February 1840, there was an influx of immigrants and by 1890, the population had grown to 667, 031.

The availability of cheap land and the gold rushes in Otago and Westland were major factors attracting immigrants who brought their own cultures with them, including Freemasonry. The population was scattered over an area greater than the United Kingdom and travel was difficult. This isolation led to the development of a strong sense of self-reliance amongst the settlers which, led to New Zealand society being strongly egalitarian. Keith Sinclair, New Zealand's most prominent historian, stated:

‘it must be more nearly classless, however, than any other society in the world. Some people are richer than others, but wealth carries no great prestige and no prerogative of leadership’.¹

1842 to 1890

The first reference to Scottish Freemasonry in New Zealand comes from 1840 when GLoS granted Philip Cumine Lloyd a commission to ‘institute Lodges in that quarter of the globe’. No mention is found of Lloyd visiting New Zealand and there is no record of any requests for charters.²

The first Masonic lodge was Lodge Ara No. 348 IC formed in 1842 in Auckland. Later in 1842, the New Zealand Pacific Lodge No. 758 EC was constituted in Wellington.

The first lodge formed under the GLoS was Lodge Otago Kilwinning No. 417 in Dunedin whose warrant is dated 4 November 1861. The next was St Andrew Lodge No. 418 in Auckland whose warrant is dated 2 December 1861.

By 1890, a total of 54 Scottish lodges had been formed. The greatest concentration was in Otago, with 14 lodges.

The Provincial Grand Lodge for New Zealand was formed in March 1865 and Bro. Vincent Pyke became Provincial Grand Master in April 1865.³

In 1877, the Province of New Zealand was split into two; New Zealand North and New Zealand South with the first Provincial Grand Master for New Zealand North, Sir Frederick Whittaker, being installed in November 1877.⁴ In 1882, the Canterbury Province was erected.

At the beginning of 1890, 49 Lodges remained, and these were divided into three Districts (the terminology changing from ‘Province’ to ‘District’ in 1888):

District Grand Lodge of New Zealand North	17 Lodges
District Grand Lodge of Canterbury	9 Lodges
District Grand Lodge of New Zealand South	23 Lodges

In the same period, five Lodges had ceased working. These were:

Lodge St Clair No. 450 which closed in 1869 after only five years. Little is known about the Lodge or why it ceased.

¹ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 276

² RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand* (Dunedin; Research Lodge of Otago No 161, Dunedin, 1998), p. 2

³ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 4

⁴ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 5

Lodge Southern Kilwinning No. 447 and Lodge St John No. 464 both closed in 1870 when the Imperial troops and Colonial Defence Force in their areas were removed.

Thistle Lodge of Westport No. 483 and St Andrew Lodge No. 528, both on the West Coast, were initially successful during the gold rush period but rapidly declined thereafter.⁵

During the same period, English and Irish lodges were also being consecrated and in 1890 there were a total of 149 Masonic lodges in New Zealand.

Towards a Grand Lodge of New Zealand

In 1876, the civil government in New Zealand had individual Provincial Councils in each area, which effectively operated independently, formed to meet the demands for local autonomy. These were not overly successful and, in 1876, were abolished in favour of a central government.

The first recorded proposal for the formation of a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand came in 1876. By then, there were nine District and Provincial Grand Lodges; five under UGLE, one for the Grand Lodge of Ireland and, as mentioned previously, three for GLoS and the suggestion for a United Grand Lodge may have been derived from the changes in the civil government.

The move was led by two Scottish freemasons, Bro V Pyke, Past PGM, and Bro ET Gillon, PM, Waterloo Lodge No 463, the former being a member of Parliament and the latter a journalist. They called a meeting in Wellington on 7 July 1876 to consider the formation and invited Scottish Lodges to send representatives to a subsequent meeting on 4 September 1876. There were a variety of opinions and it was decided not to take the suggestion further at that time.⁶

The lodges had mixed reactions.

The Minutes of Sir Walter Scott Lodge No. 533 noted on 9 August 1876 the RWM had received a letter from Bro Pyke proposing a United Grand Lodge. The Minutes record that the Lodge was not in favour of the proposal.⁷

The Minutes of Lodge St Andrew No. 418 at their meeting on 15 September 1876, passed a resolution in favour of a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand.⁸

Over the following decade, interest in the concept grew, particularly as there was growing dissatisfaction with the performance of the various District and Provincial Grand Lodges.⁹

By the late 1880's the concept of a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand was being quite widely discussed amongst the Masonic community.

It is uncertain how those discussing the concept rationalised the discussion in the context of their Masonic obligations. The Obligation of the First Degree as set out in 'The Scottish

⁵ G Barclay, *The Extinct Lodges of New Zealand*. (Wellington, Blundell Bros. Ltd., 1935), pp. 41-48

⁶ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand 1890-1970*, (Wellington, Grand Lodge of New Zealand, 1971), pp. 8-9

⁷ A Burns, *History of Lodge Sir Walter Scott* (Auckland, Observer Printing, 1951), p. 13

⁸ TJ Fleming, *A Short History of the St Andrew's Lodge No. 8* (Auckland, The St Andrew's Lodge No. 8, 1950), p. 8

⁹ *NZ Freemason*, (Wellington, 1881), Vol III, No 6, p. 12

Workings of Craft Masonry' published 1886, we find the Obligation did then (and still does today) include a phrase:

'I will faithfully guard and maintain the Landmarks of the Order and uphold the laws and constitution of the Grand Lodge of Scotland',¹⁰

And, as part of the ceremony of installing a Master in a Scottish Lodge, the incoming Master declared (and still declare today):

'I swear continued allegiance to the Grand Lodge of Scotland'.

1889 to 1892

The arguments advanced for the formation of GLNZ are well documented in several publications including those by Dr M Kearsley and F G Northern.

Essentially:

The current structure was seen as inefficient and a central structure would work better for the lodges.

The development of Freemasonry in New Zealand would be better enabled.

Unhealthy competition between lodges for candidates would cease.

The quality of candidates could be improved and the situation of a candidate being blackballed in one lodge only to join an adjacent lodge would be avoided.

Benevolent funds would be better managed and locally applied.

A major contributory factor was that Provincial and District Grand Lodges had not been responsive to the needs of the lodges, with numerous complaints. And GLoS was itself under fire for both a lack of accountability and a lack of responsiveness to correspondence.

In this period, the new Grand Lodges in Australia were being formed, and it seems there was a strong element of 'me too', especially as a new Grand Lodge would mean opportunities for brethren to secure a significantly higher rank than they may have otherwise been granted.

In addition, the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland were ruled by the upper classes. New Zealand society had become egalitarian and there was an element of resentment towards those rulers of the craft. This was especially true of the Scottish freemasons, many of whom had left Scotland to get away from the 'Lairds' who ruled over them.

The leading proponent for GLNZ was Bro ET Gillon, PM, Waterloo Lodge No. 463. Bro Gillon was a journalist, whose obituaries stated he was a 'trenchant journalist' with a vigorous style which 'called down upon himself considerable opposition'.¹¹ He was known to 'employ the "sledgehammer" style of composition'.¹²

And one of the most vigorous supporters was WBro TG De Renzy, the owner and Editor of the 'New Zealand Craftsman' magazine in Dunedin. WBro De Renzy was a Past Master of Lodge Otago No 844 EC. WBro De Renzy seemed to let his enthusiasm overtake good practice and he was later in trouble for publishing a letter to GLNZ before he had sent it to them.

A significant number of politicians were also supportive, the majority of which were from the Liberal Party whose policies reinforced an established pattern of state involvement in the economy and regulation of society. The Party believed in self-reliance and were very nationalistic.

¹⁰ *The Scottish Workings of Craft Masonry*, (London: A Lewis, 1884), p. 39

¹¹ *Colonist*, Nelson, 20 April 1896, p. 2

¹² *Star*, Christchurch, 20 April 1896, p. 3

The first step was a meeting of Past Masters of all constitutions in Wellington ‘to consider the advisability of taking steps to form a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand’, called by Bro. ET Gillon. Present were 19 brethren, of whom seven were from Scottish lodges and all were largely from the lodges meeting in or close to Wellington. hardly representative of the over 140 lodges in New Zealand. The meeting, chaired by Bro. ET Gillon, opened with an address which included the statement:

‘..will be proud of its brilliant triple ancestry, and ever feel its responsibility not to do anything unworthy of its honourable position’¹³

Described as a ‘large and representative meeting’, somewhat stretching the concept of literary license, a series of resolutions were passed, summarised as:

It is desirable a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand should be formed.

To promote that, a Masonic Union be formed..

That copies of the resolutions be forwarded to every lodge, seeking their support.

That, if a majority of lodges agree, to hold a Masonic Convention of representatives of lodges, to constitute the New Zealand United Grand Lodge, adopt a constitution, and elect a Grand Master.

The proposers and seconders of the proposals were all from the five lodges based in Wellington.

The Masonic Union was formed with a Central Executive in Wellington, the Chairman being Bro E T Gillon, with branches to be established at Christchurch, Dunedin, Auckland, Oamaru and Invercargill.¹⁴

The first branch of the Masonic Union was established in Christchurch. The meeting resolved in favour of forming a United Grand Lodge by 50 to 14. Over half of the 140 present abstained.

Next was Dunedin where on 29 March 1889, it was resolved by 134 to 24 to form a branch of the Masonic Union.

In Auckland on 10 April 1889, similar resolutions were passed by 75 to 17. A substantial number of those present abstained.

The records of the discussions in different Scottish lodges make interesting reading, reflecting, as they do, the variety of opinions held by lodges.

Bro ET Gillon’s lodge, Lodge Waterloo No 463, met on 13 March 1889 and, unsurprisingly, adopted the full resolutions.

In nearby Te Aroha, Te Aroha Lodge No 697 convened a special meeting on 28 March 1889 to discuss the proposal and voted to support the establishment of a United Grand Lodge ‘with the assent of the majority of Lodges now working’.

St Andrew’s Lodge No. 418 in Auckland passed unanimously a motion supporting the proposed Grand Lodge at their meeting on 26 April 1889.

The minutes of Hawera Lodge No 652 disclose there were several discussions over several months. In June 1889, the minutes record ‘further discussions as this change of allegiance was very controversial’.

¹³ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 10

¹⁴ Research Lodge of Wellington No. 194, *Historical Records Series No. 1: The Declaration of Union and The Basis of Union* (Wellington, Lodge, 1959), p. 5

St Andrew Kilwinning Lodge No 481 in Wanganui at the meeting in April 1889 passed unanimously a proposal that the time was advisable that a United Grand Lodge of NZ be formed.

Lodge St John No 461 at their meeting in March 1889, resolved unanimously “That in the opinion of this Lodge it is desirable that a United GLNZ be formed, the three Grand Lodges to be as equally represented on it as possible.”

Lodge St Andrew No 432, in Dunedin, passed a resolution unanimously ‘That it does not at present see its way to move in the direction of a United Grand Lodge, but will adhere to the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and regrets the matter has been gone about in so un-Masonic and precipitate way.’

It was reported that, by 15 May 1889, 36 Lodges had passed resolutions in favour of the proposal, of which 14 were Scottish. This must have been bitterly disappointing to the members of the Masonic Union as it was a long way from a majority of the 149 Lodges in New Zealand.

It is interesting there was debate about the status of Lodges which did not join any new Grand Lodge. There was considerable reference to ‘Masonic Jurisprudence’ by CJ Paton who was quoted as saying:

‘The Grand Lodge thus formed at once assumes the all the prerogatives of a Grand Lodge, and acquires exclusive Masonic jurisdiction over the territory No Lodge can continue to exist, or be subsequently established in the territory, except under its authority; and all other Grand Lodges are precluded from exercising any Masonic authority within the said territory.’¹⁵

It seems the Masonic Union believed that, as soon as GLNZ was established, all dissenting Lodges would have to join and the English, Irish and Scottish Grand Lodges would no longer have any authority.

The next step was a circular from the Masonic Union on 29 July 1889 calling for a convention of delegates to take steps towards forming a Grand Lodge and drafting a Constitution. The Central Executive even went so far as to draft a resolution for Lodges to consider:

That in the opinion of this Lodge it is desirable in the interests of freemasonry that a United Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand should be constituted with the assent of a majority of the Lodges now working in the Colony under the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland respectively; That this Lodge hereby gives its hearty support to the furtherance of the object and pledges itself that when a convention shall be summoned by the New Zealand Masonic Union for the purpose of constituting such United Grand lodge it will appoint a delegate with full authority to tender allegiance of this Lodge to the United Grand Lodge of New Zealand and to vote for the election of the first Grand Master.¹⁶

The convention held on 11 and 12 September 1889 was attended by representatives of 72 Lodges of which 26 were Scottish. The Union must have been disappointed as less than half of the Lodges in New Zealand were represented. Those representatives signed a ‘Declaration of Union’ to form and constitute a Grand Lodge under the style of “THE GRAND LODGE OF NEW ZEALAND” after the ninth day of November, 1889.

The Masonic Union had set themselves a very short timeframe, just over three months, in which to obtain the assent of the majority of lodges.

¹⁵ *Manawatu Times*, Vol 1, Issue 7, 25 May 1889, p. 2

¹⁶ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 10

At the convention, another decision was made – to invite the Governor General, the Earl of Onslow and a Past Grand Warden of UGLE to be the first Grand Master. It seems the Union felt that having the Governor-General as the Grand Master would not only add lustre to the new Grand Lodge but would also assist in persuading lodges to join and in obtaining recognition from UGLE.

The Earl of Onslow, in his reply, advised he was unable to provide UGLE with evidence of practical unanimity as had been achieved in Australia. He further stated that, if he were to accept the position, he could not hope that all the Lodges would join the new Grand Lodge and expressed the hope that in twelve months, or possibly, more, the views of the promoters were shared by a considerably larger majority of the Masonic Community, at which time he would be prepared to be of service.¹⁷



The Earl of Onslow

This was not what the Masonic Union wanted to hear and, interestingly, felt that a delay of twelve months or more might mean extinction of their hopes. They consulted RW Bro Sir H Atkinson, DGM, Wellington District EC, who indicated support but stated he felt the time was not yet ripe and counselled a postponement.¹⁸

A suggestion was made that a conference of Provincial and District Grand Masters might achieve the desired result and the Masonic Union agreed to defer the formation of GLNZ for three months to allow the conference to take place in Dunedin on 24 January 1890. The conference passed the following resolution:

That this conference of Provincial and District Grand Masters commend the action of the Masonic Union in postponing their proceedings and consider that in the best interests of

¹⁷ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, pp. 24-25

¹⁸ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 25

Freemasonry and with the view of preserving harmony in the craft it is not desirable to form a Grand lodge of New Zealand at present so that time may be allowed for a better understanding between the various Lodges of the several constitutions and a greater unanimity arrived at upon such a vital question to Freemasonry in New Zealand.

The views of those Provincial and District Grand Masters were almost equally for and against forming a new Grand Lodge and, in retrospect, appears to represent a reasoned approach, which may have been successful. This was, however, not the result the Masonic Union wanted or could accept.

Instead of attending the conference in his capacity as Depute DGM, Bro ET Gillon spoke at a public meeting called by WBro TG De Renzy. Bro ET Gillon made a lengthy and impassioned speech as reported in 'New Zealand Craftsman' and it would be fair to say the language was unsurprisingly passionate:

"greatest unanimity prevailed at the conference"
"total absence of the slightest feeling of local jealousy"
"they could not abandon all they had done"
"present agitation which, he regretted, developed a certain amount of personal animosity"
"The movers had been taunted with disloyalty. Never was that taunt less deserved"
"Every step so far had been taken in strict accordance with masonic law and precedent"
"if martyrs were required they would not shrink"¹⁹

Fiery indeed and unsurprising some of the audience responded in like manner. A Bro AH Burton commented:

"When the time came the true supporters of freemasonry would be enabled to rescue the malcontents in a kindly spirit and thus heap coals of fire on their heads" (applause)²⁰

The Executive Committee of the Masonic Union decided on 3 February 1890 they would proceed with the formation of GLNZ in March 1890. There was continued correspondence with the Earl of Onslow asking if 100 Lodges would be sufficient for him to accept the office of Grand Master to which he replied, after consulting with London, that 120 Lodges would be required and recognition by UGLE assured.²¹

On 17 March 1890, Bro ET Gillon sent the Earl of Onslow a telegram as follows:

"His Excellency The Earl of Orslow, Auckland.
Received your Excellency's decision with deep sorrow. It destroys last hope of establishing Grand Lodge without friction, violent disruption and bitter struggle. Had your Excellency accepted voice of two-thirds of Craft there would have been no rupture or scandal. We feel we have now done all within our power to secure unanimity. Your Excellency's conditions are unfortunately impossible. It would be useless going to Lodges with hope of getting 120 to commence with. If started with 100 the larger number would however have been speedily obtained. By Masonic Law no Grand Lodge can claim or obtain recognition from another until fully constituted, its Grand Master installed and sovereign territorial jurisdiction assumed. Accepting your Excellency's reply as final our only course is to immediately carry out the alternative resolution unanimously passed by Convention to provide for contingency of your Excellency's refusal. This is to constitute Grand Lodge forthwith under Bro. Henry Thomson, Dist. G.M., Canterbury, as first Grand Master. We again express our deep regret that your Excellency is unable to afford us that assistance which would, we are convinced, have removed all difficulties and led to the early attainment of complete unanimity in the Craft. E. T. Gillon."

¹⁹ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 2, 1 Feb 1890. Supplement re Grand Lodge Question, pp. 3-6

²⁰ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 2, 1 Feb 1890. Supplement re Grand Lodge Question, pp. 3-6

²¹ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 26

This telegram is significant as the content makes clear that the Masonic Union believed that, once the new Grand Lodge was formed and recognised, all the dissenting lodges would be required to join as that new Grand Lodge would be sovereign over all lodges in New Zealand.

This belief explains why the Union were so concerned about circulars sent out by the Scottish District Grand Masters to their lodges advising that GLoS rules allowed a lodge to retain its warrant provided a minimum of three members wished to do so, even if the majority of the lodge members chose to change allegiance.

At the Quarterly Communication Meeting of the District Grand Lodge of New Zealand South, a letter from GLoS was read:

‘Grand Lodge will NOT recognise any new Grand Lodge as long as there are members willing to work the Scottish holding Lodges at present existing. It will also uphold the District Grand Master’s actions to preserve the interests of Scottish Freemasonry.’²²

Bro Sir Frederick Whittaker, DGM, New Zealand North, issued circulars on 19 May 1890 and on 24 July 1890 to the Lodges in the District of New Zealand outlining and summarizing the information he had been given from GLoS. The contents of the second circular were summarised in ‘New Zealand Craftsman’ of 16 August 1890:

In the case of a number of the members of any Lodge, whose charter has been taken from the Lodge-room against their wish and sanction, and for the purpose of preventing such members from assembling under the authority of the Grand lodge of Scotland, the Right Worshipful District Grand Master has the approval and sanction of the Grand Lodge to issue a dispensation pending the return of the original charter or until the receipt of a duplicate of the charter from the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The members of a Lodge assembling under a dispensation (as referred to in the last paragraph) are in order in electing a Right Worshipful Master and Officers, who will hold office till the date of the next annual election, in the case where the Master and officers secede and accept a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of New Zealand.

Lodges accepting a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, and refusing to return to the District Grand Lodges their charters issued from the Grand Lodge of Scotland, will not be recognised as legally constituted Lodges, nor will the Grand Lodge of Scotland recognise any Grand Lodge retaining the original charters of such Lodges.²³

Sir Frederic Whittaker died and the new District Grand Master was Bro The Hon William McCullough. In J Hume’s ‘Historical Review 1877 to 1927 District Grand Lodge, NZ North’, he comments:

He favoured the idea of instituting a GLNZ; only, however, if recognition could be obtained in a constitutional manner from the three other Grand Lodges in Britain, which was undoubtedly the first intention. When, however, it came to throwing down the gauntlet to the Mother Constitutions, and forcing the issue in an unconstitutional manner, even if the new Lodges were deemed clandestine, he parted company, expressing his opinion emphatically that such procedure was wrong in practice and principle, this opinion being endorsed by Bro Wm Anderson Sub DGM who considered that members under the Mother constitutions were violating their obligations by throwing over their allegiance in favour of another self-constituted body until it was constitutionally formed according to Masonic procedure.²⁴

²² *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 5, 1 May 1890, p. 155

²³ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 8, 16 August 1890, pp. 271-2

²⁴ J Hume, *Historical Review 1877 to 1927 DGL NINZ Jubilee Year* (Auckland: District, 1927), p. 11



Bro. William McCullough

Bro J Gore, DGM, New Zealand South, was an implacable opponent of the formation of GLNZ, believing it at least 20 years premature. He ensured GLoS was kept informed, sought their advice, and circulated such advice to the Lodges. Bro J Gore ensured the Lodges in his District understood only a minimum of three members were required if a Lodge wished to continue working under GLoS.

Certainly, some Lodges were reconsidering. St Andrew Kilwinning No. 481, in January 1890, having ascertained no lodge had the power to surrender its charter whilst three members chose to retain same, resolved to withdraw from the Masonic Union, holding itself free to consider any future proposal.²⁵

The Minutes of Lodge Montrose show that, although they had signed the Declaration of Union, after some discussion, the lodge decided to remain under GLoS.

In summary:

District of New Zealand North:	14 out of 18 Scottish Lodges joined GLNZ
Canterbury:	4 out of 9 Scottish Lodges joined GLNZ
District of New Zealand South:	6 out of 23 Scottish Lodges joined GLNZ

That a larger proportion of lodges in the District of New Zealand North joined GLNZ may be attributed to the failings of the District in attending to the needs of the lodges in the District. There were many complaints about a lack of assistance, very limited visits by District Office-bearers and little recognition of long-serving and loyal brethren. Much may be attributed to Sir Frederick Whittaker, DGM, now being 80 and unwell. Belatedly, the District tried to address these issues but it was a case of 'too little, too late'.

The Executive Committee decided to continue with the formation of GLNZ and the formal constitution took place in Christchurch on 29 April 1890 when RWBro H Thomson, DGM, Canterbury EC was elected Grand Master. Bro ET Gillon was Acting Grand Master and installed RW Bro H Thomson. His address on the occasion displayed the style which may have been expected:

"no thoughtful Brother could fail to note the evils inseparable from the concurrent jurisdiction of three Constitutions each administered from the other side of the world and acting without consultation with each other."²⁶

In the intervening months, the Masonic Union was very active encouraging the Lodges to vote favourably on joining the new Grand Lodge as soon as it was constituted.

²⁵ IB Fleming, *Resume of The St Andrew Kilwinning Lodge No. 70*, (Wanganui: Lodge St Andrew Kilwinning, Centennial Programme, 1968), p. 12

²⁶ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 35



Bro. Henry Thompson, First GM, GLNZ.

Bro J Gore, DGM, New Zealand South, worked closely with RW Bro T S Graham, DGM Otago Southland EC, and, on the day after GLNZ was constituted, they wrote a joint letter notifying the Masters of the Lodges under their direction that GLNZ was an unrecognized Masonic body, that any members of it must be refused entry into any Lodge, and members to be cautioned not to hold any Masonic Communication with members of it until GLNZ was recognised by GLoS. The letter subsequently appeared in 'New Zealand Craftsman'.²⁷

The responses from the Editor and others were of astounded shock and indignation as if they could not believe they could be denied entry into an English or Scottish Lodge and the vitriol flowed in copious amounts. And that was nothing compared to the righteous indignation expressed by those District officers who found themselves summarily dismissed.

It seems as those freemasons who supported GLNZ had not even thought about the consequences of their actions and failed to realise they were part of an unrecognized and therefore irregular Grand Lodge and that would continue until such time as they were recognised.

There is no doubt emotions were running high and the content of the Masonic press during 1890 and 1891 was full of the fulminations of the promoters and members of GLNZ.

An appreciation of the depth of the feelings and the consequent behaviour of the brethren, can be seen by examining the history of the Scottish Lodges in Auckland, St Andrew Lodge No. 418 and Ponsonby No 708, both of which were bitterly divided.

A report in 'New Zealand Craftsman' informs readers St Andrew Lodge No 418 met on 26 May 1890 with 75 present, of whom 35 were members, including Bro Page, RWM, and, after raising two Fellowcrafts, a resolution was proposed the Lodge should forthwith work under the Grand Lodge of New Zealand. The resolution was reported as being passed unanimously.²⁸

At the meeting on 28 July Lodge 1890, the Lodge had received a letter from the Hall Committee informing them they could not use the hall on the usual 4th Monday of the month but had to select a night when the hall was not in use by another lodge.

²⁷ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 6, 16 June 1890, p. 193

²⁸ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 6, 16 June 1890, p. 5

“It appears that a number of the members who were in arrears with their subscriptions and disqualified from speaking or voting in the Lodge had been got together and in conjunction with such financial members who may have joined the movement had decided to attempt to carry on the Lodge under the S.C. and claim the very considerable property of the Lodge including its share in Freemasons Hall.”²⁹

They decided to petition GLoS to reverse the action of the DGM in allowing some brethren of the Lodge to continue to work as St Andrew Lodge No 418 SC, accusing those brethren of being un-financial or otherwise unqualified as members. That petition was then printed in full in *New Zealand Craftsman*, including the names of the supposedly unqualified brethren.³⁰

It would appear there was no law of libel at that time.

It would hardly seem as the situation could get worse with the Lodge split and arguing over the rights to the Lodge assets, but it did. On 25 August 1890, the meeting discussed the fact they had been forced to use the lower hall as the Hall Committee had allowed the spurious Lodge St Andrew to use the Lodge Room. It was decided that, although an entry could be forced it was decided to take milder measures. It seems legal advice had been taken and The Chairman of the Hall Committee Dr Dawson had indicated a willingness to accommodate the Lodge, just not on the same night. The Lodge resolved to change the meeting date under protest.³¹

The author stated:

“I learn from old members of the Lodge who were present at this meeting that the Police were in attendance to prevent a possible breach of the Peace. The Lodge was shut out of its regular Lodge Room, and its regalia and Lodge furniture and jewels were in the cupboards from which they were also locked out. But amongst the members present was Bro D Hyauiason, an expert Locksmith. While the Police watched in front of the Hall, this Brother picked the locks that barred his entrance to the Lodge Room and cupboards and secured the regalia and fittings necessary for the holding of the meeting. In view of this, the spirit of forbearance shown at the meeting is remarkable. After the meeting they faithfully returned the regalia and fittings to their accustomed places. But the Lodge or what must now be called the NZC portion of it retained the old Charter and the Minute Books and other records.”³²

The perspective of St Andrew Lodge No 418 is, unsurprisingly, different. After the meeting on 28 July, a special meeting was held on 3 July 1890, over which Bro McCullough, Deputy DGM presided. Bro McCullough stated 14 members of the Lodge were opposed to the brethren having accepted a dispensation to work under GLNZ. Those 14 members then submitted a petition to the RW DGM, Sir Frederick Whittaker for a dispensation to continue to meet and work as St Andrew lodge No. 418 SC. It is further stated those members who had changed allegiance had taken with them the warrant, minute book, attendance book, cash book, ledger, seal of the Lodge, set of by-laws, two sets of regalia, jewels plus the cash in the bank and other goods and property belonging to St Andrew Lodge No. 418.

Bro McCullough appealed to Bro Page, the former RWM of St Andrew Lodge No. 418, for the return of the Warrant but the request was denied. A dispensation was issued and the lodge met with Bro Rev Gould as RWM.

It seems the Charter was retained by Bro Hyauiason for many years, concealed in his office. Some thirty years later he met Bro Cox, a PM of St Andrew Lodge No. 418 and handed him the Charter.

²⁹ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 6, 16 June 1890, p. 10

³⁰ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 8, 16 August 1890, pp. 273-4

³¹ TJ Fleming, *A Short History of the St Andrew's Lodge No. 8*, p. 10

³² J Fleming, *A Short History of the St Andrew's Lodge No. 8*, p. 11

Turning to Lodge Ponsonby No 708, it seems the Lodge was divided effectively in half between those who supported GLNZ and those that wished to remain under GLoS. The viewpoint of the loyalist was that having taken an obligation to support their Constitution, they were bound thereby, and if anyone wished to join GLNZ they could do so by resigning from his Mother Lodge; but that the property of the Lodge belonged to those who had remained loyal. On the other hand, it was contended that the Lodge property belonged to the contributing members, who, by a majority, retained it when they transferred their allegiance.³³

The Notice paper for June 1890 meeting contained the following: 'To consider Bro Fowld's motion re Grand Lodge of New Zealand'. It is assumed the motion was to transfer allegiance to GLNZ. The motion was not discussed in June or July as the RWM was absent and the motion no longer appeared on the notice paper.

In the afternoon of 5 August, the RWM was busy garnering support for the motion and interviewed the WJW, Bro M J Bennett stating he would be taking the vote on the motion. The RWM was advised by Bro Bennett he could not do so as the motion did not appear on the notice paper. The WJW and the IPM both advised the RWM he could not proceed with the vote for the same reason. That evening, having completed the raising of four Fellowcrafts, the RWM announced the vote would be taken. The three dissenters objected but to no avail and the vote was taken with a majority of one vote in favour. An objection was made in respect of one member voting in favour not being qualified as his dues were in arrears but the RWM disallowed the objection without the ledger being checked.³⁴

Undoubtedly the refectory was uncomfortable with the Lodge divided in half. After refectory, those who wished to join GLNZ uplifted all the books and the Charter of the Lodge so as to prevent the loyalists from continuing to work. They had also arranged with a carter to come to the Lodger the following morning and remove the furniture to a hall in Jervois Road which they had arranged in advance.

It so happened one of the loyalists, Bro Cleal, was a carter and heard from the carter booked for the following day about the planned removal of the furniture. Apparently, the carter who was booked was surprised the carter who was a member of the Lodge was not doing the work. Bro Cleal roused other loyalist members of the Lodge included the WJW who held the key to the Lodge building. They removed all the furniture and stored it at their homes. Early the next morning they met with the owner of the hall and secured its continued use by Lodge Ponsonby No 708 by payment of a deposit. It is said that when the other group arrived to collect the furniture and found it was no longer there, a few uncomplimentary remarks were exchanged.³⁵

The Treasurer, who was aligned with those wishing to change allegiance to GLNZ, was ready to enter the bank when it opened and promptly withdrew all the Lodge funds and then repudiated payment of outstanding accounts, stating they were the liability of Lodge Ponsonby No 708.³⁶

That, as a result, there was bitter animosity between Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC and The Ponsonby Lodge No 54 NZC is hardly unexpected. One does wonder if the poor carter, who arrived at 7.00am to find no work to be done, got paid.

³³ J Hume, *A Brief History of Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC*, (Auckland: Lodge, 1934), p. 12-13

³⁴ J Hume, *A Brief History of Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC*, pp. 13-14

³⁵ J Hume, *A Brief History of Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC*, pp. 14-15

³⁶ J Hume, *A Brief History of Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC*, p. 15

A striking blow to the hopes of GLNZ must have come in July 1890 when UGLE considered an application received 1 May 1890 from ‘a body styling itself “The Grand Lodge of New Zealand” for recognition as the sole Masonic jurisdiction in that colony’. The discussion which followed referred to the Grand Lodges of South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales and how the Grand Lodge had recognised there was divergence of opinion amongst the Lodges and so withheld recognition until there was unanimity on the subject. The discussion also referenced that only about half the Lodges had agreed to join GLNZ, that some Lodges had petitioned UGLE to remain under them and GLoS had already declined recognition. Recognition was, unsurprisingly, declined.³⁷

The same meeting considered the application from a body styling itself “The Grand Lodge of Tasmania”. It was noted all Lodges had decided to join the new Grand Lodge and recognition was granted.³⁸

The first roll of Lodges of GLNZ, as appended to the Report of the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge held at Oamaru on 15 January 1892, listed 74 Lodges. One Lodge was omitted and six were new so 69 existing Lodges had joined at that time.³⁹

It must have been very disappointing to the founders of GLNZ that, nearly two years after the formation of their Grand Lodge, only 69 out of the 149 Lodges then working in New Zealand had joined, less than half. Of those 69, 24 were Scottish, again less than half of the 49 Scottish Lodges then working.

1892 to 1913

The next decade saw considerable changes in the Masonic landscape of New Zealand.

One of the effects of the change in allegiance of some Lodges was that they could not visit Lodges where they had previously been welcome and they could not receive visitors who they had also previously welcomed. This was significant for the smaller country Lodges who had barely enough members to open and depended on visitors to fill the offices and deliver the charges.

At the same time, other lodges ignored the rulings from above. In Gisborne the three lodges, Lodge Montrose No 722, Lodge Turanganui No 1480 EC and Lodge Abercorn No 472 IC shared a lodge room and had many members in common. When Lodge Abercorn transferred allegiance to GLNZ, the lodges continued to meet and visit without change and visits of Lodge Abercorn, now No 76 NZC, were noted in the minutes of Lodge Montrose No. 722.

There was considerable pressure for the recognition of GLNZ, with some lodges making it very clear to their DGMs that recognition was very desirable so they could once again visit their friends in Lodges which had changed allegiance.

After representations were made to the Prince of Wales, then Grand Master of UGLE, recognition was granted by UGLE on 17 June 1898. Recognition from Grand Lodge of Ireland followed on 10 October and from Grand Lodge of Scotland on 2 March 1899.

GLNZ was continuing to charter new lodges and by the end of 1905 had issued 144 warrants. Some of those were to lodges who decided to join GLNZ after the initial rush but most were to

³⁷ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 9, 16 September 1890, pp. 356-7

³⁸ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 9, 16 September 1890, p. 357

³⁹ Research Lodge of Wellington No. 194, *Historical Records Series No. 2: The Roll of Lodges*, (Wellington: Lodge, 1959) p. 13

new lodges and, by that time, lodges holding of GLNZ were in the definite majority although 53 lodges were still working under their original Grand Lodges.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland had, before and after it recognised GLNZ, retained to itself the right to open new Lodges. Accordingly, on 4 August 1892, charters were issued for two new Lodges. These were Lodge St John's No 785 at Eltham, Taranaki and Lodge Hinemoa No 786 at Midhurst, Taranaki.

Then, in 1900, came an event that proved to be explosive in respect of the relationship between GLoS and GLNZ. In 1900, Bro W McCullough, RW DGM, issued a dispensation for a new Scottish Lodge to be formed in Opunake in Taranaki. Lodge Mahara No 925 was subsequently issued a Charter by GLoS on 1 May 1902, after GLNZ had been recognised by GLoS.

At the same time, it had been intimated the RW DGM, District Grand Lodge of New Zealand South, was contemplating issuing dispensations for a new Lodge to be opened in Caversham, Dunedin. A detailed discussion of the events that followed can be found in 'Lodge Mahara No 925 SC' by R M Hunt.⁴⁰

It seems the RW DGM had been in correspondence with GLoS and the Grand Secretary had written on 1 March 1900 to confirm the terms of recognition of GLNZ, as follows:

'With reference to your enquiry as to the terms of recognition of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, I beg to say that our Grand Lodge, in agreeing to recognition, reserved the rights of our District Grand Lodges in your colony, and the rights also of daughter Lodges under the Scottish Constitution.

In the rights of the District Grand lodge under Rule 150 of Grand lodge Constitution and Laws, Provincial or District Grand Masters abroad may erect new lodges by dispensation. In recognizing the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, that right was not relinquished.'

That letter was circulated to every Scottish Lodge in New Zealand with instructions it was to be read in open Lodge and be inserted in the minute book.

GLNZ was outraged and injured innocence. The Grand Secretary, MW Bro Malcolm Niccol, wrote to GLoS on 25 September 1900. In that letter, he quotes the letter of recognition received from GLoS the previous year:

'It is a great pleasure to me to intimate to you that Grand Lodge has resolved to recognise the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, and to open fraternal relations with it, under the declaration and reservation that the Grand Lodge of Scotland retains its jurisdiction unimpaired over its Lodges in New Zealand who may choose to continue their allegiance to it; and also the rights and jurisdiction of the three Scottish District Grand Lodges in New Zealand over such Lodges and Scottish interests be preserved.'

⁴⁰ RM Hunt, *Lodge Mahara No 925 SC*, (New Plymouth: Research Lodge Taranaki Province No 323, 1984)



Bro. Malcolm Niccol

MW Bro Malcolm Niccol continues:

‘This practically places your Grand Lodge on the same footing as regards our terms of recognition as the Grand Lodges of England and Ireland....’

‘... but your jurisdiction in New Zealand is strictly limited by your own Act, to lodges *in existence in the colony on 2nd March, 1899*, the date of your letter announcing recognition.

The terms of recognition became the basis of a major dispute between the two Grand Lodges. It is clear GLNZ did not understand or appreciate that the Grand Lodge of Scotland is independent of the Grand lodges of England and Ireland, and the terms of recognition offered by GLoS were separate from and independent of any agreement that may have been made with the Grand Lodges of England and Ireland; and did, in their view, permit them to continue to warrant Lodges. GLoS were concurrently doing exactly that in Western Australia, where the Grand Lodge of Western Australia had been constituted on 11 October 1899.

Matters can only be said to have gone downhill from there. Briefly;

GLNZ sent a circular to all their Lodges on 5 December 1900 in which they declared the Scotch Lodge at Opunake is not to be recognised and the members are clandestine and irregular Masons. The circular also prohibited any GLNZ Lodge from receiving as a visitor Bro W McCullough RW DGM, Bro W Carron, RW DGSec and any member of Hinemoa Lodge No.786 SC.

GLNZ wrote to GLoS on 23 May 1901, seeking to resolve the issues

GLoS responded on 1 August 1901 informing GLNZ that unless they withdrew the 3rd, 4th and 5th paragraphs of their circular, there would be no progress.

GLNZ replied to GLoS on 19 October 1901, still protesting the actions of Bro W McCullough, RW DGM and the opening of Lodge Mahara but accepting the requirement to remove the offending passages of the circular and to recognise Lodge Mahara No 925 SC as a regular Lodge as pre-conditions to re-open discussions on the terms of recognition.

It is very evident tempers were getting frayed. The situation was undoubtedly aggravated when it was reported to GLNZ on 27 June 1902 that the RW DGM Canterbury SC was proposing to open a new Lodge to be called Ophir Lodge.

GLNZ quite reasonably requested the proposed Ophir Lodge not be opened until the terms of recognition had been finalized, and GLoS apparently assented to this request. GLNZ continued to press for the terms of recognition to be identical to those extended by the Grand Lodge of

England, continuing to fail to recognise the two Grand Lodges were separate and distinct with their own, sometimes quite different, ways of working.

Eventually, on 8 September 1904, GLNZ received a reply from GLoS enclosing a proposed set of Articles of Recognition. Those proposed Articles specifically included Lodge Mahara and the proposed Lodge Ophir. The articles also specifically provided that the Charters of dormant Lodges could be revived at any time. Those proposed Articles were further discussed and, although the references to Lodge Mahara and Lodge Ophir were removed, the reference to dormant Lodges remained. The final agreement was approved, after much correspondence, in 1913.

Bro R H Montgomery in 'Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand' makes a number of interesting observations on the events and the revised Articles of Recognition:

'Where a new Grand Lodge was erected and did not obtain exclusive jurisdiction, Scotland recognised its legitimacy and was in fraternal harmony but considered that both jurisdictions could own new lodges.'⁴¹

'...this statement is to cover the embarrassment of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand in finding, as many have done before and since, that England and Scotland are not the same people with a different accent. The Grand Lodge of New Zealand, because of the desire to have Lord Onslow as Grand Master, had concentrated on obtaining English recognition. Did it occur to them that Scottish recognition was different?'⁴²

'The matter of dormancy has to be looked at rather differently than from today. Edinburgh has no time limit for a Lodge to be in formal dormancy – one in Scotland has recently been revived after a sleep of over a hundred years.'⁴³

'"Concern" is a very mild word for the attitude of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand then towards dormant Scottish Charters. "Paranoia" would have been closer.'⁴⁴

While this was all taking place, GLNZ issued a 'second time of asking' in 1904, promising Lodges could retain their own ritual. The result was less than satisfactory from the GLNZ perspective. Very few Lodges made the change and the only Scottish Lodge affected was Lodge Otago Kilwinning No 417 which, in 1905, split to form Lodge Otago Kilwinning Lodge No 143 NZC.

As with St Andrew Lodge No 418 and Lodge Ponsonby No 708, the split was not harmonious. The Lodge history records there was much bitterness existing at the time as shown in the Attendance Book, where the pages for the meeting on 10 August have been heavily criss-crossed and the following note appears in two places:

'The minutes and resolutions passed at this meeting have been called and recalled by Grand Lodge. W Begg, RWM, 1/2/1906'⁴⁵

In summary, the situation of the Scottish Lodges in New Zealand was then:

Of the 49 Lodges working, 22 joined GLNZ immediately and another 14 joined GLNZ between 1892 and 1905

One Lodge, Thistle No 647, joined GLNZ but subsequently merged with an EC Lodge and was not granted a warrant by GLNZ

Three lodges had split

A further three Lodges had been consecrated

⁴¹ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, (Dunedin: The Research Lodge of Otago No 161, 1998), p. 16.

⁴² RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 16

⁴³ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 18

⁴⁴ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 18

⁴⁵ GL Austin, *The Centennial History of Lodge Otago Kilwinning No 417 SC*, (Dunedin: Lodge, 1962), p. 78

One Lodge, Cromwell Kilwinning No 535, was in recess but was reconstituted in 1894 and immediately joined GLNZ as No 98 NZC

Two Lodges closed

That left 12 Lodges still working and holding of GLoS. One, Lodge Taeri No 620, transferred to GLNZ as Lodge Roslyn No 250 in 1920.

It would have been hoped that by this time, the differences of the past having been set aside and new terms of recognition in place, there would have been a new era for Freemasonry with all four Constitutions working in harmony for the betterment of the craft. Sadly, that was not to be entirely the case.

1913 to 1970

The period from 1913 to 1970 really was the golden age of Freemasonry in New Zealand as it was in many other countries. Driven by many factors, of which one of the most important was a desire of returning servicemen to retain the camaraderie they had previously enjoyed, Freemasonry grew significantly. GLNZ membership peaked in the 1960's with over 40,000 members.

Lodges were large, many having over 100 members, and their social events were widely attended.

It is in this period we truly see the spirit of Freemasonry at work in New Zealand, with significant community projects involving the lodges of all four constitutions. In almost every part of New Zealand, lodges would work together to construct and operate Masonic Retirement Villages, not just for members but also open to the community.

One of the largest of these was the Roskill Masonic Village in Auckland. Not only did they fund the construction, lodges continued to support the village with maintenance and gardening. Lodge members would volunteer to help with many of the tasks associated with running the village, even down to making marmalade for the residents every year. The Masters of the lodges in the area were rostered to deliver the readings for the service in the Chapel every Sunday.

Regrettably, the increasing management requirements became too much for a voluntary organisation to maintain and the village was sold to a professional village service provider. The proceeds were used to establish what is now the Freemasons Foundation, a major charitable organisation in which all four constitutions continue to be involved.

In this period, GLNZ continued to grow, issuing warrants for new lodges until more than 400 lodges were working in New Zealand.

There was no change in the number of Scottish lodges in this period, apart from the transfer of allegiance of Lodge Taeri No 620 in 1920. No new Scottish lodges were warranted as the terms of the agreement for recognition between the two Grand Lodges did not permit that to happen. The existing Scottish lodges, as did all lodges, thrived and prospered in this period.

The relationship between the lodges holding of different Grand Lodges was, in this period, positive. Inter-constitution visiting was, where possible, common and the relationships between Lodges positive and healthy. Small actions such as the return of the original warrant to St Andrew Lodge No 418 and the return of the original Right Worshipful Master's collar jewel to Lodge Ponsonby No 708 went a long way towards setting aside the ill will and bitterness of the past and developing mutual respect between Lodges of all constitutions.

The good will was exemplified in a number of ways:

- For many years in Auckland, the presenting officers at the installations of GLNZ Lodges were drawn from Scottish and English Lodges.
- English, Irish and Scottish Lodges would invariably invite representatives of the other Grand Lodges, including GLNZ, to attend their installations and deliver specific charges. GLNZ Lodges often reciprocated.
- Representatives of other constitutions would often be invited to present the working tools at an installation

1970 to 2024

From 1970 to the present day, a significant decline in Freemasonry has been observed worldwide. For example, from 2007 to 2023, GLNZ membership dropped from 14,000 to just under 5,000, or around 65%. In the same period, the membership of Scottish lodges in New Zealand dropped 40% and the other constitutions report similar decreases.

There have been many books and papers written on the reasons for this significant decline. D West, in 'Managing the Future of Freemasonry', examines the decline in terms of the changes in society which have occurred and makes a strong case for freemasonry being one of the last repositories of social capital and therefore necessary for the wellbeing of our society.⁴⁶

The four constitutions continued to work together with the Freemasons Foundation and in other charitable activities including the KidzFirst Charity (supporting the children's hospital in South Auckland) and the Teddies for Loving Care Appeal, both of which are supported by Scottish lodges.

Sadly there have been a few incidents which have disturbed the relationship between GLNZ and the remaining Scottish lodges.

Over the decades there were continuing efforts from GLNZ to convince the remaining Scottish lodges they should join GLNZ even though they had been clearly told on several occasions there was no interest in doing so. That was particularly evident as GLNZ approached its Centenary in 1990 when there was a further, unsuccessful, push for the remaining English, Irish and Scottish Lodges to transfer their allegiance.

About that time, the District Grand Lodge of North Island New Zealand was approached by GLNZ in respect of Lodge Hinemoa No. 786, consecrated in 1892 in Midhurst, a small country town in Taranaki. The Lodge had moved 5km from Midhurst to a neighboring town, Stratford, in 1911. GLNZ, some 80 years later, decided that, because the Lodge had moved, it was a 'new' Lodge in terms of the recognition agreement and therefore illegal in some manner. This even though the move had taken place before the agreement was made in 1913.

In 1984, RW Bro Clarrie Brown, Provincial Grand Master, Taranaki District, GLNZ in his Foreword to R M Hunt's "Lodge Mahara No 925 SC" stated:

'This unwillingness of the Home Grand Lodges to let the G.L. of N.Z. get on with the running of Freemasonry in this part of the world is still evident in the unilateral actions of the Grand Lodge of England in reducing the number of Districts and shifting the domicile of a Lodge in direct contravention of the articles of recognition.'⁴⁷

⁴⁶ D West, *Managing the Future of Freemasonry, A Book of Optimism*, (Kenya: Hamilton House Publishing, 2015)

⁴⁷ RM Hunt, *Lodge Mahara No 925 SC*, (New Plymouth: Research Lodge Taranaki Province No 323, 1984)

Those comments were made in 1984 implying there is still resentment that Scottish, English and Irish lodges are still working as such, even though the articles of recognition in each case clearly reserved the right to do so.

Then in 1993 came another event which gave rise to a major upset in the relationship with GLNZ. That event was the move of the Cargill Kilwinning Lodge No 632 from Port Chalmers to Christchurch.

The DGM for the District of New Zealand South, Bro Max Finney, approached the GLNZ Provincial Grand Master for Canterbury about the proposed move and was advised that, in the view of the Provincial Grand Master, the proposed move would add to the masonic landscape of Christchurch. However, the GLNZ were not at all happy. They protested the move amounted to the creation of a 'new' Lodge. GLNZ instructed their Lodges in the area that visitors from Cargill Kilwinning Lodge were not to be received and their members were not to visit Cargill Kilwinning. In fact they declared Lodge Cargill Kilwinning No 632 'irregular'.⁴⁸

In 2002, GLNZ offered to withdraw their sanctions if the DGMs of both the Scottish Districts gave an undertaking that no such move would happen again. The offer was forwarded to GLoS with the comment that such agreement effectively changed the terms of recognition and would restrict the working of Scottish Lodges.⁴⁹

The response from GLoS in October 2002 reiterated the right of Scottish Lodges to work solely by the Laws of GLoS, that GLoS may be entitled to consider the 1913 Agreement had lapsed as GLNZ had resiled from it, and if the Agreement had lapsed, the GLoS again had the right to open new Lodges in New Zealand.

The DGM's of both the Scottish Districts, in 2003, wrote to all members of the Scottish Craft outlining the situation and concluded their letter with the comment:

'We would again remind brethren of the unfailing hospitality and respect with which we are received by brethren, Lodges and districts of the New Zealand Constitution. We must ensure these courtesies are acknowledged and reciprocated.

But we must also admit to grave forebodings about the relationship between our respective grand lodges.'⁵⁰

The actions of GLNZ nearly destroyed Lodge Cargill Kilwinning but fortunately good sense prevailed in the end and the Lodge now has a permanent meeting place and is going from strength to strength.

In this period, the number of Scottish lodges has further reduced with Lodge St Andrew No. 432 closing due to falling membership. That leaves four lodges in the North Island and six in the South Island.

And the Future?

There is no doubt some of those lodges will struggle over the next few years. The two lodges in Auckland and one in Christchurch are attracting candidates and appear to be secure for the future. There are three lodges in smaller country towns and there is no doubt they find it difficult to attract candidates and these lodges will require the assistance of the District if they are to survive. One lodge in Dunedin has managed to attract a number of members from the

⁴⁸ RH Montgomery & RM Russell, *Relationships with Grand Lodge of New Zealand*, (Auckland & Dunedin: SC Districts of New Zealand North & South, 2003), p. 2

⁴⁹ RH Montgomery & RM Russell, *Relationships with Grand Lodge of New Zealand*, p. 4

⁵⁰ RH Montgomery & RM Russell, *Relationships with Grand Lodge of New Zealand*, p. 4

North Island and is relocating to Wellington where a great deal of interest is being shown. The three remaining lodges in Dunedin will be challenged as the city is not growing and a substantial proportion of the community are university students.

All the Scottish lodges are very aware that, if a lodge closes, it cannot be replaced by another Scottish lodge; as the recognition agreement between GLoS and GLNZ does not permit the GLoS to open a new lodge.

The knowledge of this makes members of the Scottish Craft very aware that they cannot permit a lodge to think about dying, and every lodge must strive to maintain itself. If nothing else, the renowned determination and stubbornness of the Scots will see them survive.

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Appendix I: Schedule of Scottish Lodges

No.	Name	Warranted	Original Meeting Place	Current
417	Otago Kilwinning	4 Nov 1861	Dunedin	
417	Otago Kilwinning			1905 split, GLNZ No. 143 (closed)
418	St Andrew's	2 Dec 1861	Auckland	
418	St Andrew's			1890 split, GLNZ No.8 (closed)
432	St Andrew	2 May 1865	Dunedin	Closed 1995
447	Southern Kilwinning	6 Nov 1865	New Plymouth	Dormant 1869
450	St Clair	7 Aug 1865	Dunedin	Dormant 1869
460	Clutha	5 Nov 1866	Balclutha, Otago	1890 GLNZ No. 14 (closed 2009)
461	St John	5 Nov 1866	Milton, Otago	
463	Waterloo	30 Nov 1866	Wellington	1890 GLNZ No. 14 (closed 2005)
464	St John	30 Nov 1866	Otahuhu	Extinct 1870
467	Westland Kilwinning	4 Feb 1867	Hokitika, Westland	1894 GLNZ No. 88 (closed 1990)
470	Dunstan	5 Aug 1867	Clyde, Otago	1895 GLNZ No. 103
477	Celtic	4 Nov 1867	Dunedin	
481	St Andrew's Kilwinning	3 Feb 1868	Wanganui	1894 GLNZ No. 79
483	Thistle Lodge of Westport	4 May 1868	Westport	Extinct 1878
487	Charleston Kilwinning	2 Nov 1868	Charleston	Dormant 1897
528	St Andrew	4 Nov 1872	Greymouth	Dormant 1881
533	Sir Walter Scott	3 Feb 1873	Thames	1890 GLNZ No. 15 (closed 2023)
534	Caledonian	3 Feb 1873	Timaru	1890 GLNZ No. 16
535	Cromwell Kilwinning	3 Feb 1873	Cromwell, Otago	1894 GLNZ No. 98
536	Patea Kilwinning	3 Feb 1873	Patea, Taranaki	1890 GLNZ No. 18
537	Oamaru Kilwinning	3 Feb 1873	Oamaru	1894 GLNZ No. 82
576	St Augustine	3 Feb 1873	Waimate, Canterbury	1895 GLNZ No. 99
585	Canterbury Kilwinning	8 May 1876	Lyttleton, Canterbury	1890 GLNZ No. 23
586	Manukau	8 May 1876	Onehunga, Auckland	1890 GLNZ No. 24
604	Robert Burns	7 May 1877	Christchurch	1905 GLNZ No. 139 (closed 2004)
610	St John's	5 Nov 1877	Invercargill	1894 GLNZ No. 94
619	Southern Star	6 May 1878	Geraldine, Canterbury	1890 GLNZ No. 27 (closed 2004)
620	Taieri	6 May 1878	Outram, Otago	1920 GLNZ No. 250
627	Thistle	5 Aug 1878	Ashburton, Canterbury	1898 GLNZ No. 113
632	Cargill Kilwinning	6 Feb 1879	Dunedin	Now in Christchurch

637	Arrow Kilwinning	1 May 1879	Arrowtown, Otago	1893 GLNZ No. 86
639	St Andrew	1 May 1879	Wellington	1890 GLNZ No. 32
659	St Thomas Kilwinning	5 Nov 1981	Kaitangata, Westland	1892 GLNZ No. 83 (closed 1999)
647	Thistle	6 Nov 1879	Masterton	Merged 1890 with 1430 EC
652	Hawera	5 Feb 1880	Hawera	1890 GLNZ No. 34 (closed 2000)
656	St Clair Kilwinning	4 Feb 1881	Teddington, Canterbury	Dormant 1890
662	St John Kilwinning	4 Aug 1881	Dunedin	Now in Wellington
663	Wairau	3 Nov 1881	Blenheim	1890 GLNZ No. 42
675	The Crown	3 May 1882	Sydenham, Christchurch	1904 GLNZ No. 138
690	Manawatu Kilwinning	2 Aug 1883	Palmerston North	1890 GLNZ No. 47
692	Robert Burns	2 Feb 1884	Reefton, Westland	1890 GLNZ No. 50
693	Methven	2 Feb 1884	Methven, Canterbury	1890 GLNZ No. 51
695	Harvey	1 May 1884	Gore	1890 GLNZ No. 49 (closed 2008)
696	Peninsula Kilwinning	1 May 1884	Portobello, Otago	
697	Te Aroha	1 May 1884	Te Aroha, Waikato	1890 GLNZ No. 52
708	Ponsonby	5 Feb 1985	Auckland	
708	Ponsonby			1890 split, GLNZ No.54
709	Wairoa	5 Feb 1985	Wairoa South	1890 GLNZ No. 55
717	Star in the Far South	6 Aug 1885	Papakura, Auckland	1890 GLNZ No. 56
722	Montrose	30 Nov 1985	Gisborne	
725	Whitianga	4 Feb 1886	Mercury Bay	Dormant 1899
727	Foxton Kilwinning	4 Feb 1886	Foxton	Dormant 1891
743	Taringatura	3 Feb 1887	Lumsden, Southland	1895 GLNZ No.100
767	St Andrew	1 Aug 1889	Kumara, Westland	1890 GLNZ No. 65 (closed)
UD	Ngapara		Ngapara, Otago	1890 GLNZ No. 68
785	St John's	4 Aug 1892	Eltham	1894 GLNZ No 94 (closed 2004)
786	Hinemoa	4 Aug 1892	Midhurst	Now at Stratford
925	Mahara	1 May 1902	Opunake	Extinct 1903