

A JOURNEY THROUGH TWO LETTERS

The Origins Of Lodges Cumberland Kilwinning No.217 & Doric Kilwinning No.68 Port Glasgow

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Paper delivered at the Masonic Symposium, Kirkcaldy, 7th May 2005

During the summer of 1998 I visited Mother Kilwinning on various occasions to examine their archive to see if I could trace the Petition for a Charter and any other documents relevant to a long dormant Greenock Lodge which I was researching. During one visit I came across an old envelope with the most beautiful copper-plate writing on front with the information; "PETITIONS FOR CHARTERS FROM MASONS IN PORT GLASGOW 1746 AND 1759." On opening the envelope I found two letters. As a diversion I thought I would have a quick look at them and then return to my main task.

After a quick read I realised I had in my hands, not only the two original letters of petition written about 250 years ago but also;

- 1) confirmation of thoughts long held by some in my Province, that prior to the Chartering of the two Lodges existing today there had been an earlier Lodge in Port Glasgow;
- 2) proof that the early relationships between the Brethren who founded the two Lodges existing today were not harmonious and could be said to be split by class and economic distinction;
- 3) a brief insight into the social and economic fabric of the town of Port Glasgow at that time but more importantly,
- 4) proof for the doubters as to our operative to speculative origins, that there was indeed a direct link in the evolution from operative to speculative Masonry and that while some Lodges were by this time purely speculative, others were still operative with a few non-operative Members.

It is my intention to consider the two letters separately and in chronological order. I will read each in their entirety, do likewise with the information regarding the granting of the Charters, then pick out what I consider to be the most relevant items to expand on. Following this I will try to summarise the contents of all sources to give an overall picture. For the information of anyone who may read this paper at a later date, I have spelled words as they appear in the originals.

The early minutes of both Lodges are missing although, a few years ago, I did have access to some extracts of the first Bye-Laws of Doric Kilwinning drafted before the Petition for Charter, which I shall refer to later. Nor was I able to obtain access to the minute books of Mother Kilwinning. (The details of the granting of the respective Charters were eventually unearthed in a copy of Wylie's "History Of Mother Lodge Kilwinning" of 1878.)

The first letter was written on one side of a single sheet of paper, which, as was the custom of the time, folded in such a way as to be its own envelope and the name and address appeared on what was the reverse side. The remains of a wax seal was evident, but insufficient to identify any initial or emblem. The letter was addressed, "To Robert Molleson Esqr, Collector Excises at Air."

The letter read;

Worshipfull Master

We being infonned by our Brother Mr John Drummond officer of Excises that your Brotherly love extended so far as ever to procure a decree of Constitution from the Ancient Mother Lodge of Kilwinning in order that we your true Brethren may meet with authority. Wee therefore desire that with all expedition you may procure and send the same as promised and we shall make all due acknowledgements and discharge our duties as becometh in order to have all due regard paid us.

Whatever charges is due shalle be remitted to your order on demand by your faithfull

Brethren.

Port Glasgow

17th Jan 1746

John Hunter Mr.

James Weir SW.

James Maine JW.
 John Drummond F .C.
 Jas Fullerton F .C.
 Alex Walkers F .C.
 F. WalkerF.C.

Wylie's History records;

Kilwinning 4th February 1746

Which day a competent number of the Lodge convened took into their consideration a letter from several gentlemen at Port Glasgow to the following purpose;

The Brethren now assembled unanimously agree to grant to the above gentlemen the decret desired, the tenor whereof follows;

We, Alexander, Earl of Eglintoun, present Master of the Mother Lodge Kilwinning having taken into our consideration the request of several gentlemen Masons at Port Glasgow in the County of Renfrew praying for authority to be formed into a regular society: Being well advised of their moral character and of their inclination to promote the good of Masonry , we with the consent of our Deputies, Wardens and other officers do by this instrument constitute and erect them into a regular Lodge by the name of Cumberland Kilwinning and we grant them all power and privileges which now or in any time past have been legally enjoyed by any other Lodge of our creating. The same to be always holden of us and our successors in office upon the payment of one Mark Scots money at the anniversary meeting of the Mother Lodge in the month of December and upon the attendance of one of their members at the said meeting the same be required in absence of the Right Honourable and Right Worshipful Master.

Signed by Will. Nimmo, Secretary.

Brethren, the first question is, why was the letter addressed to Robert Molleson and who was Robert Molleson? Molleson does not appear on any records available to me as ever having been the Master of Mother Kilwinning, nor as far as I can find out did he hold any position of authority in that Lodge. He did however gain rapid elevation in the Craft. On 1st April 1735, he started the day as an existing Entered Apprentice

of Mother Kilwinning, was then Passed and Raised and appointed Senior Warden of Lodge Glasgow Kilwinning No.4, which was founded the same day, 1st April 1735. Molleson was one of five Brethren Passed and Raised that day. He was designated as "supervisor in Glasgow." He went on to become The Provincial Grand Master of The Western Provinces, which comprised Argyll, Clydesdale, Ayr, Dumbarton, Renfrew and Stirling. He held that office from 1747 the year after the granting of Cumberland Kilwinning's Charter and held the position until 1769, a period of 22 years. Some would argue that as the Right Worshipful Master of Mother Kilwinning was for many years also the Provincial Grand Master of Ayrshire, Molleson must have been Master of that Lodge, but that situation did not commence until 1807, 60 years after his appointment.

The answer to why it was addressed to Molleson lies in the Charter petition; "We being informed by our Brother, Mr John Drummond officer of Excises that your Brotherly love extended so far as ever to procure a decree of constitution". Here Brother Drummond using his professional (they were both in the Excise) as well as Masonic friendship has apparently contacted Molleson informally and paved the way to making the Charter a formality. That the Charter was expected to be a formality is, I think, shown in the words, "with all expedition you may procure and send the same as promised." An earlier dialogue between Drummond and Molleson has obviously culminated in a promise that on receipt of the petition a Charter would be issued. The application has then as a matter of course been sent to Molleson, the contact, rather than the Lodge Secretary.

Who was John Drummond? He was quite an active Freemason coming from a family which included amongst others Bro. Alexander Drummond, who was the first ever Provincial Grand Master and was Provincial Grand Master of of the Western Provinces immediately before Molleson. Alexander was also Master of Lodge Greenock Kilwinning. John, the eldest son of Bro. George Drummond (Six times Lord Provost of Edinburgh and also Grand Master Mason from 1752 to 1753), was a member of Lodge Greenock Kilwinning (now No. XII) and a member of Lodge Drummond Kilwinning From Greenock formed for the members of Greenock Kilwinning residing in Edinburgh. The petition goes on to say; "in order that we your true Brethren may meet with authority". This is no group of Brethren getting together

to form a Lodge: this is a declaration of existing Members to regularise an existing Lodge under the authority of a governing body and so gain acceptance and recognition in the Masonic world. I would also ask about the phrase "true Brethren". I think it refers to a statement of loyalty. The petition goes on; "in order to have all due regard paid us". This again indicates an existing Lodge seeking recognition. It concludes, "your faithfull Brethren".

They already exist!

So, Brethren, the Lodge we know today as Cumberland Kilwinning would appear to be a Lodge in Port Glasgow, existing before the request for a Charter. I would now refer to details recorded in the granting of the Charter; there is reference to "gentlemen" and "gentlemen Masons", I will pick up on that later. What I also found to be of interest was the fact while the Charter designates the name of the Lodge as Cumberland Kilwinning, nowhere on the petition does any mention of that or any name appear. Was it a name assigned by Mother Kilwinning, or did the existing Lodge operate under the name The Cumberland Lodge, this being passed on in the earlier dialogue between Drummond and Molleson, the "Kilwinning" being added as a matter of course to all Lodges when Mother Lodge granted a Charter? My final enigma refers to the Past Master board of Cumberland Kilwinning. The first Master is shown as John Hunter, 1747 and not 1746 when the Lodge was Chartered, with him shown on the petition as the Master. Was the Lodge formally Consecrated the following year? There are no further Masters shown until 1781, a gap of 34 years due to the minutes being missing.

Before leaving this letter for the time being, I would say this one, the earlier, was the easiest to read, being in a writing style akin to that in use today. It was written in a well educated hand and from comparison with signatures could well have been written by either John Hunter the Master, or by Drummond himself.

The second letter was a different story in more ways than one. Despite having been written some 13 years after the former, it was in an older copper-plate style where words finished with a flourish which contained more than one character, letter "F" and "S" looked the same, the copper-plate was a scrawl in places, spelling and grammar were not of today's style or standards. The letter, which was considerably longer than

the former, started off in a nice fine hand, either the scribe tired as he went along or more than one person was involved in the writing of the letter for, as it went on it became more difficult to read and interpret. Overall the author(s) appeared not to be as literate as the scribe of the first letter. This is perhaps not surprising in view of what was about to unfold! The letter was addressed "To The Ancient & Hon:ble Master & Wardens of the Lodge of Kilwinning 1759"

Port Glasgow Janry 23 1759

To the Honourable Master & Wardens of the Ancient Lodge of Kilwinning

We your humble petitioners having takin it into our consideration of the many unregular steps, that has been in entering off persons as Brethren, who was not worthy to receive that secret of Masonry. We therefore having taken it into our serious consideration have designed to enter into a body on purpose to put a stope to these abominations, so much hated by every honest hearted Mason, we therefore the Operatives of Port Glasgow with some others as projectors in this our design, suppose we are at a distance from our Regular Lodges and are settled here as residentors is at a stand what to do as there is a Lodge latley erected here which Lodge there is not one oprative mason in itt and as there meeting each month is so expensive along with there third Quarterly Accounts is so high that we who are for the most part tradesmen in generall cannot subsist in these meetings as some of us joint to other Charitable Corporations and would willingly do in this affair what lys in our power. Not to detriment ourselves therefor we your petitioners do humbly crave your aid and assistance by giving us a right from you to us so as we may become one of your children. We therefore hope you will lose no time in granting these our request which is the earnest desire of your petitioners who shall allwise pray for your Ancient and Noble Lodge that it may be kept alwise pure for a light to shine alaround and to the endless ages of posterity and your petitioners shall ever pray.

Alexander Mark

Jas Pollock

Thomas Lorimer

William Allan

James Gallagher (or Gillespie)

James Auld (or Ainslie)

(All signatures demonstrated a very low level of literacy; indeed the last two are barely legible and are open to interpretation.)

The petition was endorsed :- Charter granted on 24 Jan 1759

(There was no such endorsement on the petition from Cumberland Kilwinning)

Brethren, what was happening in Port Glasgow? Portions of the petition are open to more than one interpretation!

Wylie's History records;

Kilwinning 24th January 1759

Which day a petition having been granted by certain qualified Masons at Port Glasgow praying for a decret of Constitution from our ancient Mother Lodge of Kilwinning that they may meet with authority and erect themselves into a Regular Society the Brethem present unanimously upon paying the usual dues grant the desired petition. The tenor of the Charter follows:-

We, Claud Thomson Esq, Collector of Taxes Deputy Master of the Mother Lodge of Kilwinning (The Right Honourable Alexander, Earl of Eglinton being absent) having taken into consideration the request of certain operative Masons at Port Glasgow in the Shire of Renfrew praying our authority to be formed into a regular society: Being well assured of their moral character and of their inclination to promote the good of Masonry, we, with consent of our Wardens and other Brethren do constitute and erect them into a regular Lodge by the name of Dorick Port Glasgow Kilwinning Lodge for operatives and other Brethren who join therewith and we grant them all powers and privileges which now are or in any time past have been legally enjoyed by any other Lodge of our creating. The same to be always holden of our Worshipful Grand Master of the Mother Lodge of Kilwinning and his successors in office upon the yearly payment of one merk Scots money at the anniversary meeting of the Mother Lodge in December and upon the attendance of one of their members at said meeting if required.

Given at Kilwinning the 24th January 1759

The Dorick Brethren having paid a guinea into the box for the above Charter, the Deputy Master and Brethren of Kilwinning Lodge, having in consideration of their being an operative Lodge remitted them a guinea of the ordinary dues.

Let us examine the letter of petition; "... having taken it into our consideration of the many unregular steps, that has been in entering of persons as Brethren ..."; we cannot ascertain from the petition what the "unregular steps" were, nor who was taking them. Was it the new Cumberland Kilwinning, another Lodge, or a group of unqualified Masons acting without any authority? "...who was not worthy to receive that secret of Masonry ... "; why were they not worthy? Was it that they were not of sound moral character or in an operative sense they were not sufficiently skilled, or otherwise qualified, or indeed they were speculative with no operative skills or knowledge? "... having taken it into our serious consideration to enter into a body put a stope to these abominations ... "; here is a wish and intent to form a new Lodge to practice regular Masonry . " ... so much hated by every honest hearted Mason ..."; whatever was happening appears to have been sufficiently alien and abhorrent to the petitioners to warrant discussion and resultant opinion. "... the Operatives of Port Glasgow with some others as projectors in this design ..."; who were the "some others" who were with the operatives in wishing to form a new Lodge? If not operative they can only have been non-operative or speculative! So here we have a predominantly operative group wishing to form a Lodge which would also include speculatives. "... we are at a distance from our Regular Lodges and are settled here as residentors ..."; given the itinerant nature of the operative Mason in the 18th Century, this would appear to mean the petitioners, "at a distance from our regular Lodges", are not native to the area, but are incomers who have "... settled here as residentors ...". "... is at a stand ..."; this would indicate not just temporary "residentors", but here to stay. This appears to indicate the arrival of a work-force who have arrived from an area where Masonry was practiced in a "regular" manner, do not like what they have found in Port Glasgow and are of a mind to put matters to rights. Or should it read, "... is at a stand what to do ..." ; are they indicating things are unlikely to change and what can they do about it? "... there is a Lodge latley erected here ..."; what Lodge? Is it Cumberland Kilwinning which was Chartered 13 years previously, or does "latley" indicate a more recent Lodge, the one responsible for the "abominations"? In view of the next phrase, I consider it was Cumberland Kilwinning which was being referred to. "... there is not one oprative mason in it ..."; here is a telling statement: there is obviously an expectation in the minds of the petitioners that Lodges should comprise both operative and speculative Masons. Remember the statements in the granting of

the Charter to Cumberland Kilwinning--" ... gentlemen Masons ..." and " ... gentlemen at Port Glasgow ..." no indication of operatives there, unlike the Charter for Doric Kilwinning which we will come to later. "... there meeting each month is so expensive third Quarterly Accounts is so high that we cannot subsist in these meetings ..."; here the operatives cannot join with the speculatives for financial reasons. Were the fees always high and found that way by our operatives, or were they set artificially high to enable the "gentlemen" keep the working classes out? Was this one of the "abominations" referred to? "... we who are the most part tradesmen ..."; again this mix of operative and non-operative which the petitioners considered to be the norm. "... as some of us joind to other Charitable Corporations ..."; a sheer necessity then, as now, to look to your welfare. Did they join the other Charitable Corporations because Cumberland Kilwinning had priced them out, or were they already tied to others and could not afford them and Cumberland Kilwinning? The natural expectation at this period in history is that you would come under the umbrella of the appropriate Trade Guild or Corporation, in this instance for our petitioners, the Lodge! Again some as we have seen were not operative Masons. Did the Members of Cumberland Kilwinning consider they were not entitled to membership and the financial protection of the Lodge? "...willingly do in this affair what lyes in our power ..."; give us the authority and we will regularise the situation. "... not to detriment ourselves ...by giving us a right from you to us ..."; we don't want to put ourselves in the wrong by trying to regularise the situation without due authority, we are asking you for that authority.

I would now refer to the signatories of this petition. There is an enigma when comparing the names to the list of Past Masters of the Doric Lodge. Nowhere do any of the signatories appear as ever having been in the Chair of the Lodge after the granting of the Charter! Who were they? Remember the mixture of operative and non-operative; were the operatives set up as a front for a group wishing to start another Lodge but with the existence of a speculative Lodge thought they may not be successful? Look again at the period in Scottish history. The 1745 Rebellion was over, but there were still Jacobite groups hoping another would come along and the Young Pretender would assume the Throne of Scotland. There are many theories and much speculation even today about the relationship in Scotland and on the Continent, between individual Masons, Lodges and the Jacobite cause. Given the "gentlemanly"

composition and Loyalist based name of Cumberland Kilwinning, could Doric Kilwinning have been started as an organisation for Jacobite sympathisers? I mention this, not as a "red-herring", but as a possibility. When I joined the Craft over 30 years ago there were suggestions of Jacobite conspiracy and sympathy whenever Freemasonry in Port Glasgow was discussed. In his history of Greenock, the Rev. James Dow stated that in the years 1750 to 1760, as an aftermath of the 1745 Rebellion, so many Highland tradesmen arrived in this area, greatly swelling the population that more Gaelic than English was heard for a time, so Jacobite sympathies cannot be ruled out. This is I consider is also borne out in the name of the Lodge, "Doric." While nowadays most would associate it with Doric the order in architecture, do not forget, and I use a Dictionary definition here, Doric is also a name for the rustic Scots language. The "homeland" of the Doric dialect being the Aberdeen area, did this group of incomers come from the North East of Scotland? Let us look briefly at the Charter;

"... certain qualified Masons ..."and "... certain Operative Masons"; compare with Cumberland Kilwinning Charter, " gentlemen ". " ... for operatives and other Brethren who join therewith ..."; it was obviously the intention this be Chartered as an Operative Lodge, with the facility for non-operatives to be admitted; another proof of the evolution from Operative , through mixed, to purely speculative Lodges. The postscript to the granting of the Charter reads; "The Dorick Brethren having paid a guinea into the box for the above Charter ... in consideration of there being an operative Lodge remitted them a guinea of the ordinary dues ...". The name of the Lodge on the Charter was "Dorick Port Glasgow Kilwinning Lodge ". As with Cumberland Kilwinning, where did the name come from? It does not appear on the letter of petition! I will hazard an explanation shortly.

At the beginning of this paper I said there was belief of an earlier Lodge in Port Glasgow. Was this the Lodge which became Cumberland Kilwinning? Was it an even earlier Lodge, either operative or speculative responsible for the " abominations," giving rise to Cumberland Kilwinning calling themselves, "... we your true Brethren"? My belief is there was only one "earlier Lodge" in Port Glasgow, that which became Cumberland Kilwinning and had been a self constituted occasional Lodge operating without a Charter. There was also the possibility of an organisation, I hesitate to call it a Lodge, which was failing to regulate the operative trade as it should. This is only a

possibility and I consider it unlikely. At this period in time there were strict roles governing the operative Masons trade everywhere, with some local variations. What was the Lodge with “ ... not one operative mason ...”? I believe it was Cumberland Kilwinning, which was by design an exclusive gentlemen's Lodge for speculatives.

Assuming the complaints in the petition were directed at one Lodge only, “Cumberland Kilwinning”, the entire document could be interpreted as follows; Bearing in mind the “unregular steps”, “abominations” and “persons not worthy to receive that secret of Masonry”, it can be read that the gentlemen of Cumberland Kilwinning had set themselves up as an exclusive Lodge with fees pitched to keep the operatives out and, bearing in mind the local “Jacobite Tradition “, also to keep out Port Glasgow's version of the “Highland Host” and would only admit gentlemen speculative Masons, a practice considered by the operatives as admitting men with no operative knowledge who were therefore “not worthy”.

However, the petition from Doric Kilwinning can also be interpreted as being in two parts. The first referring to the operative organisation in town and the second to the complaint about being priced out by Cumberland Kilwinning. I mentioned at the beginning of the paper the extracts I obtained of the first minutes of Doric Kilwinning. This stated the oldest Lodge records were hand written Bye-Laws dated 17th December 1758 some 38 days before the petition was written on 23rd January 1759. Bearing in mind the “unregular steps”, “abominations” and “persons not worthy to receive that secret of masonry”, the first part of the petition can be put in a different context when comparing to the Bye-Laws of 17th December 1758.

The preface to the Bye-Laws reads;

“Which day it was unanimously agreed amongst the operative masons and the others for putting a stop unto all unregular entrie of masons as it has been a little unbecoming by drinking and balling (shouting?) and giving it to some that is not worthy to receive that secret.”

Part of Article VIII reads;

"That no member of this our lodge shall from this time forth allow himself to be consernt with any person who is a back dirk and doth not belong to a regular lodge but hold him to be a usurper." (The phrase "back dirk" caused me some confusion until a

couple of years ago when I read a Masonic research paper which referred to a "Back - Dirk" or as we would call it a back stabber or unworthy person.).

Part of Article XI reads;

"That no brother in this lodge shall be witness to any clandestine entrie within fifteen miles of this our lodge "

From this it appears the first part of the petition could be a complaint that operatives have been entered in an unbecoming manner accompanied by much drinking and shouting. Not with the dignity and ceremony becoming of the trade. Masons have been working with unworthy persons who do not belong to a regular lodge. (What we would call cowans?) No operative mason can be entered in any lodge within 15 miles of this lodge (Quite a common stipulation in all areas in these days although the distance would vary) and no Port Glasgow mason can attend such an entry. Thus we have entering with much drinking and noise, consorting with cowans and attending clandestine meetings. Were these the complaints raised in the first part of the petition? Who was supposed to regulate the operative mason trade in Port Glasgow? In the absence of any evidence to the contrary and in view of the second list of complaints in the petition, it is my opinion the Cumberland Kilwinning Lodge were responsible for regulating the operative mason trade but were neglecting their duties or, with evolution of working practices within society, employer/employee relationships had become more akin to what we recognize today but were alien to the incomers from a traditional rural area where the old charges and customs were still law!

Let us refer back to the original letters of petition. The letter from the Lodge known as Cumberland Kilwinning, was dated 17th January 1746 and the Charter was granted on 4th February 1746, a period of 19 days. This despite the fact Molleson had apparently already paved the way and the Charter issue was a formality .Given winter weather and transport difficulties on rough roads, such a delay is to be expected and 19 days seems reasonable including time to remit the required fee. Where does that leave us with the letter from the Lodge known as Doric Kilwinning? Their letter was dated 23rd January 1759 and the Charter was granted the following day 24th January 1759 without as far as we know, anyone having paved the way. Given January weather and the state of roads and modes of transport in the mid 1700's, I submit it would not have been possible for a carrier to travel from Port Glasgow to Kilwinning in one day! I

have referred to a One Inch Ordnance Survey Map and consider the distance cross-country in these days would have been at least 26 miles most of it hilly with streams and rivers to cross and following old tracks or drove roads. The coast road would be about 40 miles, and although maybe more passable, still a formidable journey in the 1700's.

To get travel problems into perspective let us go forward 119 years, to 1878 when my Mother Lodge, Firth of Clyde, Gourock. No.626 applied for their Charter. Part of their application read, I! The nearest Lodge to Gourock is held in Greenock, a distance of over three and a half miles the tramway car service is not at all suitable and in winter specially is unserviceable and in many cases be exposed to the most inclement weather. There were of course no tramcars in the mid 1700's, so progress on even more inferior rural roads would be almost impossible in some winter conditions. The History of Lodge St. John, Kilwinning, Largs, No.173, records that in 1826 The Grand Lodge of Scotland because of transport problems were going to split Ayrshire into two Provinces, East and West. As part of this reorganization, which never took place, they moved the Largs Lodge (along with the Lodge in Beith) to the newly formed Provincial Grand Lodge of Renfrewshire West, because travel in Ayrshire was so difficult and Provincial would have problems visiting them! Provincial Grand Lodge of Ayrshire at this time would have equated with Mother Kilwinning as this was after the return of MK0 to Grand Lodge. The distance from Kilwinning to Largs was 15 miles! The only problem was Grand Lodge failed to tell either Largs, Beith, Kilwinning or Renfrewshire West and eventually after a rather heated dialogue the situation was reversed. The petition for Doric Kilwinning appears to have been transported and considered in one day in mid-winter ? Most unlikely!

It is my belief the petition was only written after a group of representative Brethern had travelled earlier to Mother Kilwinning bearing a copy of their proposed Bye-laws dated 17th December 1758 before the granting of the Charter, expressed their complaints and concerns to her officers and put their case for the formation of a second and Operative Lodge in Port Glasgow to regulate the Operative trade. After agreeing the formation of the Lodge in principle, the petition would have been drafted, perhaps by someone from Mother Kilwinning, (there is no way any of the signatories were sufficiently literate to have written the letter) and signed by the

representatives. This would account for why the names on the petition do not appear on the Past Masters Board, none of the Office Bearers were present! It would also account for how the name of the Lodge appeared on the Charter when it did not do so on the petition. It was named during the discussions. It would also explain why the postscript to the granting of the Charter can give details of payment and remission of fees. The fee had been brought with them and paid right away, hence the immediate issue of the Charter when the petition was written. These Brethren had also framed Bye Laws in advance of the petition, essential today, but apparently not at this period in Masonic development. Why had they done so? Here we have a perfect example of stating a problem in the petition and providing the solution by way of the Bye-Laws in advance. To my mind, to be presented and discussed in person at Kilwinning.

Today the Brethren of Lodge Cumberland Kilwinning claim Doric Kilwinning is no more than a Lodge formed by breakaway Brethren who could not afford the fees and other expenses of Membership levied by the Cumberland Lodge, these including the expense of constructing their own Temple less than two years earlier in 1757. Given the reasons stated in Lodge Doric's petition it seems to me unlikely anyone would go to the lengths of fabricating such a story if the only complaint was that of cost. It is my contention the dissident members of the Cumberland Lodge, unhappy with the personal financial commitment, seeing the recently arrived Operative Brethren petitioning for a new Lodge jumped ship, joined the petitioners and then hijacked the Lodge after the Charter was granted hence the reason, despite the Petition and Charter for an Operative Lodge, it never worked as such. This would also account for the fact none of the Petitioners' names ever appeared on the Past Masters board.

Despite the seemingly non-Masonic relationship between both Lodges in their early stages, I am delighted to say that the Lodges are currently flourishing, each in their own Temple, less than a mile apart in the town of Port Glasgow. They are working together in close accord and with that love and harmony which should at all times characterise Freemasons, and do so in the Province of Renfrewshire West, under the authority of The Grand Lodge of Scotland. Gentlemen and Brethren, I hope that today you have enjoyed accompanying me on my journey through two letters.

ADDENDUM: (Details below were not included in the presentation at Kirkcaldy)

LODGE CUMBERLAND KILWINNING No.217

The Lodge known as Cumberland Kilwinning was Chartered by Mother Kilwinning on 4th February 1747. It would appear never to have received a Number from Kilwinning. The Lodge joined The Grand Lodge Of Scotland on 2nd February 1807 and was given the Number 277. In 1816 it was re-numbered 212, 216 in 1822 and finally 217 in 1826.

LODGE DORIC KILWINNING No.68

The Lodge known as Doric Kilwinning was Chartered by Mother Kilwinning on 24th January 1759 and was given the Number 63 by Kilwinning. It joined The Grand Lodge Of Scotland in 1808 and was accorded the Number 300. (There would appear to have been a period of confusion with numbering as various numbers were for a while duplicated. The number 300 was also assigned to Lodge Eden Operative in Strathmiglo, Fife, which Lodge was Chartered on 5th February 1810 and became dormant in 1843.) Doric Kilwinning was re-numbered 67 in 1816, 63 in 1822 and finally, 68 in 1826. She must be one of the few Lodges to have held the same Number from both Kilwinning and Grand Lodge; i.e, No.63.