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DUBLIN FREEMASONS 1770-1830

BY

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Thesis summary

This thesis has quantified membership of the freemasons in Dublin from 1770 to 1830. In investigating the social profile of members of the brotherhood during this period this research has shown that approximately 20 per cent of Dublin masons who were registered to lodges during the 1790s and 1820s were granted the freedom of the city of the city. Freemen, who during this period were almost exclusively Protestant, were entitled to vote, and the voting record of these Dublin freemasons at the 1806 and 1820 elections has been examined in order to ascertain the political persuasions of these masons. The list of freeholders (who were almost exclusively Catholic) in the poll books of these two elections was also compared with the freemason register in order to ascertain how many masons were entitled to vote as freeholders at those two elections. This research indicates that masons who joined the brotherhood during the 1790s tended to be more liberal than their brethren who joined during the 1820s. However, there were both radicals and conservatives registered to lodges in this period, suggesting that Dublin freemasonry attracted members from across the spectrum of political persuasion.

The freemason membership register has been compared with the list of the members of the Dublin city assembly in order to ascertain how many Dublin masons were involved in the governance of the city. This work shows that there was a significant presence of masons on the lower house (i.e. as guild representatives, sheriffs and sheriffs' peers), but in the upper house (i.e. the aldermen and lord mayor) their presence is not as large.

A comparison of the Dublin freemason register with the list of the first subscribers to the Dublin chamber of commerce in 1783 shows that some 7 per cent were freemasons. This is significant as this body was considered to be on the side of reformers. In addition to the poll books from the 1806 and 1820 elections, newspaper sources have been examined in order to build a profile of the masons during this period. Reports show some Dublin masons were in favour of Catholic relief during the early nineteenth century. Also, reports in the *Freeman's Journal* highlight the public nature of some masonic activities, such as parades, and theatre evenings.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines freemasons registered to Dublin lodges between 1770 and 1830, and the number therein who were freeholders, freemen of the city, and those who were elected as members of the Dublin city assembly during this time. By examining voting records of these freemasons, in addition to other sources such as newspapers, it will examine the views of these freemasons regarding the issues of Catholic relief and emancipation. The 1790s has been seen as a traumatic period for freemasonry in general, as subversive organisations infiltrated lodge meetings. Regular lodge meetings were disrupted by the rebellion in 1798 as well as government clampdowns on meetings of secret societies.[1] As will be demonstrated, membership figures for this period amongst Dublin lodges show significant increases during the 1790s. By 1813, a turning point is considered to have been reached; after period of rapid growth and intensity of various political causes by several masons and their lodges, there follows a period of decline. In 1823 the brotherhood was again forced to stop meetings as a result of the unlawful societies act.[2] In addition freemasonry was denounced by papal bulls in 1738 and 1751, and by further pronouncements in 1821 and 1825, 1829 and 1830.[3]

The figures of Dublin membership dropped off considerably from about 1810, and by 1830, the annual intake of members had fallen below the 1770 level. This raises a number of questions which this thesis will address. Firstly, how did the political persuasions of freemasons change over this forty year period? Were those joining in the 1790s liberal or conservative on the Catholic question, and if so, did this change by the end of the

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[1] 1800 Habeas corpus suspension act (40 Geo. III, c. 18) (continued by 41 Geo. III, c. 15).
[2] 1823 Unlawful oaths act (4 Geo. IV, c. 87)
[3] Clement XII, *In eminenti* (28 Apr. 1738), Benedict XIV, *Providas romanorum* (18 May 1751), Pius VII, *Ecclesiam* (13 Sep. 1821), Leo XII, *Quo graviora* (13 Mar. 1825), Pius VIII, *Traditi humilitati* (21 May 1829), and Pius VIII, *Litteris altero* (25 Mar. 1830).

period? And, at lodge level, to what extent were those joining lodges committed freemasons?

To address these issues this thesis will focus on those freemasons who were 'free of the city' and those who were freeholders, and thus eligible to vote. Voting patterns amongst these freemasons at the elections of 1806 and 1806 will be examined. Particularly in the case of 1820, voting patterns taken from these elections will allow conclusions to be drawn as to the political tendencies of the freemasons under study. As will be shown, successive Grand Masters in this period showed liberal tendencies as regards the issue of Catholic relief; one of the aims of this research is to ascertain to what extent, if any, this was replicated amongst the rank and file members.

In addition, it will be ascertained how many Dublin freemasons were involved in the governance of the city, as guild representatives, sheriffs, aldermen and lord mayors. The voting record of this group of assembly members in order to ascertain what, if any, difference existed between their voting patterns and the voting patterns of their brethren generally.

To date freemason history has been a somewhat neglected topic amongst academic historians. This thesis will be the first to look at Dublin freemasons in the nineteenth century. To date, the majority of freemason history has been written by the masons themselves, and in the case of the two volume *History of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland*,[4] written about the body overall over a long period of time, rather than examining masonry in particular areas, such as Dublin. Lodge 200, the 'lodge of research', publishes the *Transactions of the Lodge of Research* which contains articles written by freemasons themselves. Its English counterpart is *Ars Quatuor Coronaturum*. Works in these journals generally focus on the origins of the

[4] John Herron Lepper and Philip Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland Vol. I* (Dublin lodge of research, 1925), and R.E. Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland Vol. II* (Dublin lodge of research, 1957).

society and that of individual lodges and masonic families. They do not, however, have any detailed studies of Dublin masonry. The merit of these articles has been questioned;[5] some simply talk about local history, which do not seem to incorporate original research.

As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, masonic primary sources for this period of their history are somewhat limited, so any judgements must take this into account. The three sources which do exist are the some minute books, membership registries and masonic constitutions. For the period, minute books exits in the cases of lodges 2, 4, 6, 55, 60, 153, 189, 207, 245, 489 and 620. However, their record is broken in places, and as will be shown, there were a total of fifty-two Dublin lodges in operation at one time or another in this period. As records, they are, by and large, quite limited, dealing for the most part with administrative issues, such as the initiation of new members. In terms of the history of individual lodges, Philip Crossle's *Irish masonic records*[6] is a useful companion for anyone looking at freemason lodge history. The venue is mentioned for most lodges, as is the record of individual warrants. The membership registries are divided into series 1 and series 2. Series one has three volumes, vol. 1 (lodges 2-469), vol. 2 (lodges 470-620) and vol. 3 (lodges 621-804). The second series has five volumes, vol. 1 (Grand Master's lodge and lodges 1-200), vol. 2 (lodges 201-386), vol. 3 (lodges 387-590), vol. 4 (lodges 591-799) and volume 5 (lodges 799-1020). Each registry is divided into five columns; (i) Christian name and surname; (ii) date admitted to membership; (iii) date, if made master; (iv) date, if made warden and (v) general remarks, which contain comments such as 'left', 'dead' or 'excluded'. Clearly membership registries are vital to research such as this, but many discrepancies (discussed in

[5]Petri Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster 1733-1813' (PhD thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1999), p. 11, idem *Freemasonry in Ulster 1733-1813: A social and political history of the masonic brotherhood in the north of Ireland* (Dublin, 2007), appeared too late to be cited in this thesis.
[6] Philip Crossle, *Irish masonic records* (Dublin, 1973).

chapter one) exist. In addition, they contain very little which might indicate the social status of members (hence the need to cross reference with other, non-masonic primary sources). Masonic constitutions (discussed further in chapter one) outline the ideals and official nature of the organisation. Whether these were always followed when new members were admitted, however, is debateable (especially considering the membership of United Irishmen in the 1790s).

Alexander Seton, the deputy Grand Lodge Secretary, in 1806 introduced a new system of issuing warrants to subordinate lodges, whereby warrants which had elapsed were granted to new lodges. In most cases, the Grand Lodge register states where and when lodge meetings took place, but not in all cases. Throughout the period under study various lodges ceased to function and had their warrants returned to Grand Lodge. These warrants, in many cases, could be and were re-issued to new lodges all over the country. For example, the warrant of lodge 55 was issued five times; after the first lodge ceased to exist, the second lodge to take up the warrant, a Dublin lodge is classified 55 (A), the third 55 (B), the fourth 55 (C), and the fifth 55 (D).

In addition, during the second half of the eighteenth century a system was devised whereby each Dublin civilian lodge (i.e. every lodge apart from lodge number 62, of the Dublin militia) bore a local number in addition to that by which it was known on the register of the Grand Lodge. Essentially, what this meant was that lodges were assigned a 'local number' which indicated their place and precedence amongst subordinate lodges. For example, lodge number 64 (warranted 1 February 1737) should normally follow lodge 54 (warranted 2 August 1736). However, if a lodge lapsed (i.e. did not provide returns to the Grand Lodge) for over twelve months, the warrant was not necessarily cancelled, but would lose its place and precedence amongst subordinate lodges. In masonic literature (such as minute books) Dublin lodges were sometimes referred to by both their local number and Grand

Lodge number, for example lodge 584 had local number 26; it might be referred to as lodge 26/584, warrant number only (e.g. 584) or local number only (e.g. 26). This practice appears to have died out around 1802, and therefore for the purposes of this study I will refer to Dublin lodges by their Grand Lodge number only.

What complicates matters further for those looking at lodge data is the fact that in 1817 Grand Lodge issued a new form of warrants, 'worded rather more strictly than the original version',[7] and in order to encourage lodges to take out these new warrants, Grand Lodge offered the inducement of a higher number, and hence a higher precedence amongst subordinate lodges. As regards this research, five lodges under study merged with other lodges under the warrant number of the latter. In 1817 lodges 324, 489, 998, 402 and 155 merged with lodges 9 (C), 50 (C), 55 (A), 75 (A) and 100 respectively. In order not to unnecessarily complicate my statistics, I will in the first instance refer to the lodge in which the member is registered as per the membership register.

Chapter one will outline the origins of freemasonry in Ireland down to 1830 and place chapters 2-4 within an overall historical context. It will trace the growth in membership of the Dublin masons from 1790, as well as the number of lodges active in the city at this time.

Chapter two will look at the constituency of freemasons in Dublin. It will look at the number of freemasons overall and compare that with general population data to ascertain the size of the brotherhood in general terms. Comparing the freemason membership during the 1790s and 1820s with the roll of freemen of the city in this period, it will examine how many of the freemasons joining Dublin lodges in these two decades were free of the city and thus eligible to vote in elections. It will also look

[7] Crossle, *Irish masonic records*, p. 5.

at the extent to which members of the same guild, namely the merchants, tended to congregate in certain lodges.

Chapter three will look at the role freemasons played in the governance of the city, namely as guild representatives, sheriffs, aldermen and lord mayors from 1790 to 1830, by cross referencing the names of freemasons with those in Wilson's *Dublin directory* for the years 1790 to 1830. In addition, the list of freemasons will be compared with the first list of subscribers to the Dublin chamber of commerce (a body considered liberal in its sentiments).

Finally, chapter four will examine the voting records of

(i) the freemasons who joined Dublin lodges during the 1790s, who were freemen of the city and voted in the 1806 election,

(ii) the freemasons who joined Dublin lodges during the 1820s, who were freemen of the city and voted in the 1820 election,

(iii) the freemasons who were guild representatives on the city commons in both the 1806 and 1820 election,

(iv) the freemasons from (i) who also voted in the 1820 election, and

(v) freemasons who were freeholders and voted in 1806 and 1820.

From this analysis, it will be ascertained the extent to which voting patterns changed over time, and conclusions will be arrived at regarding whether the politics of those freemasons looked at could be termed liberal or conservative, or whether they changed over time.

CHAPTER 1- FREEMASONRY IN IRELAND TO 1830

1.1 Origins of speculative freemasonry

'Freemasonry' is traditionally accepted as having its origins in the medieval stone workers guild. This body of men are commonly referred to as 'operative' freemasons, i.e. men who were members of the masons' guild for the purposes of construction trade regulation, a trade union of sorts. 'Speculative' freemasonry is the term used for freemasons in the later period when men, who were not operative masons, began meeting for the purposes of spiritual and intellectual advancement. This development of the medieval stonemasons' guild included the development of practical rituals of admission, which were required to guard the craftsmen's trade secrets, into a philosophical pursuit for inner enlightenment.[8] This change from 'operative' to 'speculative' freemasonry can be attributed to a number of factors, among which were the intellectual climate of the late Renaissance, the traditional exclusiveness of trade associations such as the lodges of operative masons, and the neo-Platonist world view, which sought to explain the universe through symbols. Non-masons were accepted into these societies which culminated in the founding of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. David Stevenson argues that 'organisation in lodges

[8] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p. 11.

seems to have derived from Scotland...where freemasonry grew out of genuine practices of working stonemasons...in England; it was at least imported from Scotland, with lodges being from the first created by gentlemen and for gentlemen'.[9] Likewise, Peter Clark argues that 'possible linkages to medieval masonic guilds is flimsy...but whatever the background, there can be no question that after 1717 the London Grand Lodge performed a key role in promoting and advancing English freemasonry, setting a pattern quickly copied in Ireland and Scotland through the establishment of their own Grand Lodges'.[10] According to Petri Mirala, the ingredients for freemasonry were in place by 1600. He attributes this to the 'neo-Platonist intellectual climate of the late Renaissance...this quest for spiritual perfection often took place in small groups... (and) this general tendency was combined with the traditional exclusiveness of trade associations such as the lodges of 'operative' masons...adherents to the neo-Platonist world-view also explained the universe through elaborate systems of symbols, often supposed to derive from ancient Egypt- another feature inherited by later freemasonry'.[11]

In recent years popular writers have been eager to link the Freemasons with the earliest recorded events in history.[12] These works are largely speculation; modern freemasonry is traditionally accepted to have evolved and developed from private clubs (usually taverns) where men could socialise. Whatever its exact origins, Stevenson argues that 'from the early eighteenth century the English began to innovate and adapt the movement...values which were to be associated with the Enlightenment were incorporated into the movement; as the age

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[9] David Stevenson, *The origins of freemasonry: Scotland's century 1590-1710* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 6.
[10] Peter Clark, *British clubs and societies 1580-1800: The origins of an associational world* (Oxford, 2000), p. 311.
[11] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p. 11.
[12] Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, *The temple and the lodge: Inside freemasonry* (London, 1998), Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas, *The Hiram Key: Pharaohs, freemasons and the discovery of the secret scrolls of Jesus* (London, 1996), Robert Lomas, *The secrets of freemasonry: Revealing the suppressed tradition* (London, 1996).

of reason dawned, freemasonry was adapted to fit a new climate'.[13]

1.2 Foundation of the Grand Lodge of Ireland

The history of the origins of freemasonry in Ireland has been written only by Irish freemasons themselves. John Herron Lepper, Philip Crossle and R.E. Parkinson wrote the two volume *History of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland*, which remains the tour de force of Irish freemason history. They point to references to operative freemasonry in the early 1600s, as well as reference to a lodge of freemasons in Trinity College in 1688. By their own admission, however, there is no evidence that references to freemasons in the early seventeenth century proves that these masons were anything other than craftsmen whose interest was to earn a day's wage. As all official records of the Grand Lodge of Ireland before 1760 have been lost, it is impossible to say when precisely the Grand Lodge of Ireland came into existence. In 1725, the *Dublin Weekly Journal* newspaper reported the meeting of over 100 freemasons to elect a 'new' Grand Master.[14] This implies that speculative freemasonry existed in Ireland at least by this year. Also, the publication of James Anderson's *Constitutions of the Freemasons*[15] in 1723 would have been an encouragement to Irish masons to organize themselves in a similar body. Anderson was invited in 1721 by the newly-formed Grand Lodge of England to 'digest the old Gothic constitutions in a new and better method', essentially, to write the rules and regulations for the new organisation.[16] As Clark notes, in addition to 'tracing the historic cradle of freemasonry back to Jerusalem, Anderson wove together old Scottish customs, the lore of the operative old charge, and recent

[13] David Stevenson, *Origins of freemasonry*, p. 6.
[14] *Dublin Weekly Journal*, 26 June 1725.
[15] James Anderson, *The constitutions of the Freemasons* (London, 1723).
[16] Robert L. D. Cooper, *Cracking the freemason's code* (London, 2006), p. 125.

English innovations to create an intellectual and ritual framework for speculative freemasonry, one which positioned it on the cultural centre-stage of an intellectual world increasingly fascinated by early civilizations'.[17] In 1725, an advert appeared in the *Dublin Weekly Journal* for Anderson's *Constitutions* for sale in a bookshop 'opposite the Watch House the north side of College Green'.[18] Lepper and Crossle argue that as this shop was situated near the houses of parliament, the bookshop attracted the notice of fashionable Dublin. At the very least, it shows that a readership for speculative freemasonry existed in Dublin at this time. Lepper and Crossle state that Anderson's *Constitutions* were accepted at once as the authority in Ireland, and that produced a similar structure in existence in Ireland as in England at this time. In addition, 'when we find the Irish Grand Lodge regulations came to be printed, we find them following Anderson's *Constitutions* step by step...it seems improbable that these laws would have been borrowed unless the institution that begat them had also been borrowed'.[19]

Throughout the eighteenth century, the Grand Lodge remained a concept rather than a physical place. Meetings were held on rented premises. At the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth, meetings were held in Tailors' Hall, Back Lane.[20] From its foundation the Grand Lodge sought to re-organize existing lodges and exercised control over subordinate lodges by issuing warrants, in addition to rules and regulations which were binding on them. Warrants reveal the names of masters and senior wardens of lodges, and officially at least lodges could only meet in a stated place and not elsewhere without the approval of the Grand Lodge. Lodges were required to register with the Grand Lodge in Dublin all new members of the

[17] Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 333.
[18] *Dublin Weekly Journal*, 26 June 1725.
[19] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 52.
[20] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 84, op. cit., p. 375.

order, and send in the names of the officers twice a year.[21] However, whilst this was the rule, it was not always observed in practice.

Growth of freemasonry was steady throughout the mid eighteenth century. Lepper and Crossle refer to *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* of 18 December 1731 which included a report of 'a Latin play, acted by...two or three lodges of freemasons'.[22] According to Lepper and Crossle, 'lodges in Dublin were so plentiful that two or three had the same night of meeting'.[23]

The Grand Lodge encountered difficulties in maintaining control over lodges situated at a distance from the capital; 'a lodge might take out a warrant and never have the least communication with Dublin thereafter, continuing to work quite regularly without giving signs of life to the governing body'.[24] Throughout the century records of such lodges were poorly kept, and as a result members were often only registered en masse, if at all. The earliest roll of membership dates from the year 1761, and Lepper and Crossle admit that 'in it many gaps are patent of lodges whose original habitants had been forgotten or which dropped out of existence'.[25] Although regulations were later introduced, many lodges lay dormant for a considerable period of time before being removed in sporadic clean ups of warrants by the Grand Lodge. Lepper and Crossle point out that 'there cannot be the least doubt that the Grand Lodge, at this period, had a very loose grip on the subordinate lodges...the records of the Grand Lodge had been kept in a very haphazard manner, when successive Grand Secretaries had to apply by advertisement for tidings of the whereabouts of some of the warrants'.[26]

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[21] C.G. Horton, 'The records of the freemasons of Ireland', in *Familia- Ulster Geneological Review*, ii, no. 2 (1986), pp 65-70.
[22] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 94.
[23] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 94.
[24] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 113.
[25] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 113.
[26] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 114.

As will be demonstrated in later chapters this creates difficulties when trying to ascertain a profile of lodges and lodge members. Given the lack of coordination in registering new members it is entirely possible that individuals may have joined and not been officially registered with the Grand Lodge. A Grand Lodge committee in 1801 reported that there was a great need to get in contact with lodges, of which there were 907 on the roll, 'many of which were extinct, many in arrears, many had not been heard of in years'.[27]

In November 1801 the first wholesale cancellation of warrants appears,[28] and 169 lodges were declared vacant. This represented a break with tradition as far as freemason record keeping was concerned: hitherto a warrant had seldom been cancelled but on direct proof of misconduct or the extinction of the lodge, but henceforth failure to communicate with the Grand Lodge was to be cause for erasure.[29] In September 1815, the Grand Lodge issued warrant number 1020, which is the highest number ever to be issued in Ireland,[30] but according to R.E. Parkinson, 'it would be a great error to imagine that then or at any other time during the previous century there was anything approaching such a large number of active lodges on the register'.[31] There were, however, at this stage a larger number of active lodges in Ireland than the United Grand Lodge of England.[32]

1.3 Membership profiles of Freemason lodges

In ascertaining what type of people chose to join masonic lodges it is quite proper to examine freemason constitutions to be aware of the official requirements for membership. However, as will be

[27] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I,* p. 305.
[28] Crossle, *Irish masonic records.*
[29] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I,* p. 305.
[30] Crossle, *Irish masonic records.*
[31] Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. II,* p.16.
[32] Ibid.

shown further on in this chapter, in the period under examination there were over 6,000 registrations in the freemason membership register over a sixty year period from 1770 to 1830. Given the size of the body of people in question, and the evidence quoted above concerning communication between the Grand Lodge and subordinate lodges, it is therefore open to question as to whether or not the constitutional requirements for membership were always adhered to. It is likely that the requirements set out in the *Constitutions* were aspirational. Officially, the successful candidate for membership of a lodge was a man with 'real worth and personal merit...no man should take an apprentice that is not the son of honest parents; a perfect youth, without maim or defect in his body, and capable of learning the mysteries of the art...that when of age and expert, he may become an entered apprentice, or freemason of the lowest degree, and upon his improvements, a fellow-craft and master mason, capable to undertake the lord's work'.[33] The constitution of 1804 further lays out that

> masons ought to be moral men, as above charged, consequently good husbands, good parents, good sons, and good neighbours; not straying too long from home, and avoiding all excess; yet wise men too, for reasons known to them... in his leisure hours he is required to study the arts and sciences with a diligent mind, that he may not only perform his duty to his great Creator, but also to his neighbour and to himself... No man can be made a regular freemason but such as is free from bondage, of mature age, upright in body and limb, and endued with the necessary senses of a man.[34]

The constitution makes reference to those who are not suitable to join the fraternity; 'those aimed at the miserable wretches of low life some of whom can neither read nor write; and when, by the assistance of masonry, they are admitted into the company of their betters, they...often act beyond their capacities, and under pretence of searching for knowledge, they fall into scenes of

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[33] *The laws and constitutions of the Grand Lodge...to which is appended the masonic ritualist, the antient charges, and prayers to be used in lodges* (Dublin, 1804), p.19.
[34] *Laws and constitutions of the Grand Lodge*, p. 13.

gluttony and drunkenness...(our) constitutions and principles are quite opposed to such base proceedings'.[35]

Reference is made to 'those of some education and an honest character, but in low circumstances...let them first consider their income and families, and know that freemasonry requires ability, attendance, good appearance, to maintain and support its ancient and honourable grandeur...no visitor, however skilled in masonry, shall be admitted into a lodge unless he is personally known to, or well vouched and recommended by one of the lodge personnel'.[36] In keeping with the ethos of charity, new members were (constitutionally) expected to make a donation towards causes which the lodge saw fit for charity. Upon entering the lodge, new members were encouraged to 'deposit something for the relief of the indigent and decayed brethren as the candidate will see fit to bestow, over and above the small allowance that may be stated in the by-laws of that particular lodge'.[37]

According to the constitution of 1804, 'masons ought to be moral men; good husbands, good parents, good sons and good neighbours; straying not too long from home, and avoiding all excess; yet wise men too, for reasons known to them...he is to avoid all manner of intemperance or excess, which might obstruct him in the performance of his laudable profession, or lead him to any crimes which would reflect dishonour upon the ancient fraternity'.[38] The brotherhood 'is founded on so solid a basis that it will never admit blasphemy, lewdness, evil-plotting, or controversy...to the utmost of our capacity, to love and to serve each other as brethren of the same household.[39] Again it must be appreciated that the lofty ideals expressed in the constitutions did not necessarily translate into reality in this period. As will be

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[35] *Laws and constitutions of the Grand Lodge*, p. 14.
[36] ibid
[37] *Laws and constitutions of the Grand Lodge*, p. 38.
[38] *Laws and constitutions of the Grand Lodge*, p. 22.
[39] *Laws and constitutions of the Grand Lodge*, p. 11.

evident in the following chapters, the record keeping of lodges was sometimes poor. This begs the question as to whether or not laws as set out in Grand Lodge regulations were always upheld. Also, as the following chapters will highlight, men often became members of lodges for reasons not as lofty as to make good men better.

The lodge would typically meet once a month in a tavern. New members were usually proposed at one meeting and a ballot was taken at the next. The granting of membership was either by unanimous or majority voting. The candidate was then initiated. There were three degrees of craft; apprentice, fellow craft and master mason. Once elected and initiated, the member was obliged to abide by the freemason constitution as well as the individual by-laws of the lodge, which usually included rules prohibiting drunkenness or swearing. Theoretically, masons were men concerned with social improvement. Themes of masonic literature were improvement and enlightenment, with a stress on merit as the measure of men, education and the pleasures associated with fraternal association.[40] According to Lepper and Crossle (who were both freemasons, and therefore unlikely to be completely impartial), 'in the early years freemasonry was attracting some of the best and most stable elements in society...a society that attracts the best will always have charms for the unworthy'.[41] According to a freemason petition to parliament in 1823, the freemasons 'have from time immemorial existed as a charitable, benevolent and peaceful institution, disclaiming all religious and political differences, and by their fundamental principles they are prohibited from even the consideration of these subjects'.[42]

Peter Clark argues that the role of freemasonry throughout the eighteenth century was seen to be that of 'fostering social

[40] Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 328.
[41] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 91.
[42] Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. II*, p. 50.

harmony, serving to unite different social, as well as political and religious groups...the masonic order was especially successful in turning ideology into practice'.[43] Freemasonry was the biggest association in the British world, in part because 'the lodge offered the same attractions and opportunities for members as other voluntary organisations...conviviality, entertainment, processions, fashionable patronage and employment'.[44] According to Clark, freemasonry 'offered members the opportunity for social advancement...through social mixing at lodge meetings...freemasonry provided regular and amicable contact with members of higher and more fashionable groupings'.[45]

Patrick Fagan argues that one of attraction of the lodge was that it provided 'a modus operandi for people to meet with others of their own class'.[46] He argues that throughout the eighteenth century membership of the freemasons held with it 'overtones of elitism...membership was attractive to social climbers and the upwardly mobile generally'.[47] Fagan argues that 'the great majority of freemasons in Dublin in the eighteenth century were people in trade, such as merchants, shopkeepers and publicans, together with artisans and small manufacturers...really respectable people, such as physicians and the clergy shunned the brotherhood, although there were a few lodges catering for the professional and upper classes.[48] He arrives at these conclusions based on a comparison between the membership registers of the freemasons and Catholic qualification rolls. He argues that it is safe to conclude that something in the region of 20 per cent of persons on Wall's list were freemasons...(which was) quite high when only 5 per cent of the adult male population of Dublin were

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[43] Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 319.
[44] Clark, *British clubs and societies,* p. 325.
[45] Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 328.
[46] Patrick Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country: The papist constituency in eighteenth-century Dublin* (Dublin, 1998), p. 126.
[47] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country,* p. 126.
[48] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p.149.

freemasons.[49] His research related to the occupations of members is not based on an examination of the freedom rolls of the city of Dublin, which would enhance the validity of any conclusions about membership of the brotherhood.

1.4 Activities

Freemasonry has been labelled a 'secret' society',[50] but this label is misleading. Whilst the proceedings of lodge meetings were intended to be private, freemasonry during this period was in the public domain. As shown from newspaper evidence during this period, processions (until their gradual extinction during the early nineteenth century), theatre evenings, operas and sermons for the purpose of fundraising brought the organisation into the public sphere. Freemasons did not restrict their activity to the lodge room. Indeed, according to Lepper and Crossle, 'for many years after it was formed, the main income of the Grand Lodge was derived from theatrical performances given at stated intervals, the sale of tickets providing funds for necessary purposes, which could not be supplied by lodge dues.[51]

In addition to ordinary lodge meetings, there were special occasions in the masonic calendar. The highlights of the masonic year were the bi-annual public processions on the two St John's Days of 24 June and 27 December. This was usually celebrated with a procession to a church, followed by eating and drinking. They 'tended to be bigger and better than those of other associations...Grand Lodge processions were often spectacular events...masons processed on streets in large numbers not only on masonic events, but also on church and civic occasions, notably on the foundation of the opening of bridges, major buildings and

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[49] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p.138.
[50] Terence de Vere White, 'The freemasons', in T.D. Williams (ed.), *Secret societies in Ireland* (Dublin, 1975), pp 46-57.
[51] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 104.

other public works'.[52] An advertisement for freemason activities on St John's Day in 1816 in Dublin appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* on 24 January of that year:

> The grand masonic festival of St John will be celebrated at the Rotunda, on a scale of such extent as to embrace as great a portion of the fraternity as may be disposed to join in on so fraternal and social an occasion. The preparations contemplate the largest attendance yet known on the former celebration day in this city. The calculation is made on the extension of brotherly love throughout the empire, in a degree hitherto without example, a circumstance that cannot fail to display itself when such an opportunity as a general association of the body affords, presents itself. His Grace the grand duke of Leinster, Grand Master of the order, under whose zealous regard for the prosperity of the craft, and liberal and expanded mind, freemasonry is flourishing, will preside at the dinner, assisted by the deputy grand master, the Hon A.H. Hutchinson, whose unremitting attention and attachment to masonic principals, have been productive of so great benefits; the officers of the grand lodge, the Grand Master's Lodge, and the respective lodges of Dublin, and its vicinity, will also appear in full paraphernalia. The whole exhibition, from what may be anticipated of a numerous assemblage, will be such as to gratify every lover of that humanity, benevolence, and loyalty on which freemasonry is founded, and every member of this most ancient and honourable order especially. All the musical talents belonging to the freemason order, and it includes everything of that description that the public value will be added to this scene of festivity and fraternal enjoyment. It will be the most attracting circumstance, as a social celebration, that has been in Dublin for many years.[53]

Masons clearly went to considerable effort to celebrate St John's Day. As Mirala notes, the grandeur attached to the celebrations were designed to have an impact on both the masons and the public, and not just for the enjoyment of the masons themselves.[54]

Freemasons actively engaged the community in terms of fundraising for masonic causes, such as the building of a freemasons hall, for masons who had hit hard times or for the Masonic Female Orphan School. These fundraising activities took the form of theatre evenings, operas and sermons. According to the *Freeman's Journal* of 3 February 1816, a resolution passed on 26 July 1815 at a general meeting of freemasons at the Rotunda stated that 'it was resolved on the motion of his Grace the duke of Leinster, that it is highly necessary for the various purposes of the order, that a freemason's hall should be procured'. A meeting

[52] Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 326.
[53] *Freeman's Journal*, 24 Jan. 1816.
[54] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p.104.

of the body was called at the same venue on 13 February 1816 'to consider the most effectual mode of carrying into effect an object so essential to the best interests of freemasonry'.[55] On 28 June 1816 an advertisement appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* for a 'benefit play, the comedy of "Man and Wife"', at the Theatre Royal under the patronage of the duke of Leinster, 'in aid of the funds for creating or otherwise providing a freemason hall...(and) at the end of the play...grand masonic entertainment (will be provided).[56]

Advertisements also appeared for the benefit of distressed masons. On Thursday 26 March 1818 it was advertised in the *Freeman's Journal* that 'his Majesty's servants will perform the much admired opera of Guy Mannering....and a masonic musical festival, consisting of songs, glees by Mr Horn and several of the freemason brethren and 'under the patronage of His Grace the duke of Leinster, Grand Master of freemasons in Ireland, for the benefit of distressed free and accepted masons'.[57] On 2 July 1819 an advertisement appeared in which 'the public is most respectfully informed that for the humane and laudable purpose of aiding the funds for the relief of distressed freemasons, this evening his majesty's servants will perform the very popular opera of "The Haunted Tower"'.[58]

Numerous articles appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* appealing for funds for the masonic female orphan school. On 11 November 1815 an advertisement for a 'freemason charity sermon' appears, and

> on this very interesting and impressive occasion, the duke of Leinster directs the different freemason lodges of Dublin and its vicinity will assemble at the Royal Exchange in full clothing, to go from there thence in procession to the cathedral...with respect to the institution thus brought forward in the light of supplication to the public benevolence it is scarcely necessary to say more to engage charity and humanity warmly in its behalf than that it is a resource and refuge for infant indigence and

[55] *Freeman's Journal*, 3 Feb. 1816.
[56] *Freeman's Journal*, 28 June 1816.
[57] *Freeman's Journal*, 26 Mar. 1818.
[58] *Freeman's Journal*, 2 July 1819.

> misery- that it redeems from the vices and misfortunes incidental to such a condition, a number of helpless little creatures of that sex which peculiarly claims commiseration and sympathy- that it bestows on them every benefit that can be derived from religious and moral instruction, and finally, prepares them for such pursuits in life as to render them useful members of the community; and it is to be added to the credit of the system on which this orphan establishment is conducted that there has been no instance of any of the numerous girls it has given trades and avocations evincing even the slightest tendency towards immoral or vicious habits. To assist this work of charity, the gentlemen of the choir will perform an anthem appropriate to the subject after the sermon...benefactions and subscriptions will be very thankfully received by the Grand Officers.[59]

As membership figures will show, the brotherhood in Dublin went into decline in terms of membership around 1810, and during the 1820s funds are said to have been 'depleted'.[60] This is reflected in an advertisement appeared in 1820 which referred to its 'almost exhausted funds'[61] and in which it is hoped 'that public charity will warmly second the efforts which masonic benevolence will feel it necessary to make...for the twenty-two female orphan children taken from the most destitute and helpless condition of life'. Another advertisement appears for a 'freemason charity sermon on Sunday 18 November 1821, at St Thomas's Church, by the Rev James Kennedy for the female orphan school...their graces the duke and duchess of Leinster have been pleased to signify their intention of being present on the occasion, when his Grace and the different lodges in the city and its vicinity, in full masonic costume, will escort the children into church, in the usual form of procession.'[62]

It is interesting to compare the above accounts of freemason activities with that provided by Watty Cox, the editor of the *Northern Star* newspaper. Whilst the above advertisement and reports refer to the freemasons as being 'an ancient and honourable order' and 'the whole exhibition, from what may be anticipated of a numerous assemblage, will be such as to gratify every lover of that humanity, benevolence, and loyalty on which

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[59] *Freeman's Journal*, 11 Nov. 1815.
[60] Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. II*, p. 53.
[61] *Freeman's Journal*, 7 Dec. 1820.
[62] *Freeman's Journal*, 10 Nov. 1821.

freemasonry is founded',[63] Cox refers to the charity sermon of November 1815 (quoted above) as 'the ridiculous parade of a set of persons calling themselves freemasons...one of the most ridiculous and ragged rabbles ever exposed to public ridicule'.[64] He describes how a 'military band, at a signal given, struck up "God save the King", which was a notice to brethren in adjacent whiskey shops, that the procession was commencing, and in a few minutes, more than a hundred, in a state of intoxication, rolled from their respective tippling stations, into the Exchange.[65] In addition, 'more than four hundred brothers, not classified, followed, and they would have been mistaken for a crowd of beggar men who had put on their worst garments, to show they were not making anything of the bad times that public misfortune allow to other people, who depend on the casual benevolence that yielding to fear or charity, relieve those who love working as, it is said, the devil loves holy water.[66]

1.5 Freemasonry and politics

As previously outlined, the freemason model was versatile and was open to interpretation. As David Stevenson argues 'freemasonry diversified in the most bewildering way...It could provide an institutional framework for almost any religious or political belief...It is as if the lodge system, combined with secrecy, ideals of loyalty and secret modes of recognition, had created an ideal organisational framework, into which members could put their own values and which they could adapt for their

[63] *Freeman's Journal*, 24 Jan. 1816.
[64] Watty Cox, 'A parade of a set of people calling themselves freemasons', in *Irish Magazine and Monthly Asylum for Neglected Bibliography*, vol. 8 (Dec. 1815), p 575, reprinted in Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, pp 155-158.
[65] Watty Cox, 'A parade of a set of people calling themselves freemasons', in *Irish Magazine and Monthly Asylum for Neglected Bibliography*, vol. 8 (Dec. 1815), p 575, reprinted in Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 156.
[66] Watty Cox, 'A parade of a set of people calling themselves freemasons', in *Irish Magazine and Monthly Asylum for Neglected Bibliography*, vol. 8 (Dec. 1815), p 575, reprinted in Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 157.

own uses.[67] According to Mirala, 'outward forms of other organisations were definitely influenced by, or even based on, those practiced in masonic lodges'.[68]

Freemasonry has been linked to both radical thinking and loyalism in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Patrick Fagan and A.T.Q. Stewart have argued that the freemason lodge was a framework within which Catholics and Protestants could co-operate in the eighteenth century. Stewart argues that such co-operation was the catalyst for change from the 1780s.[69] Nancy J. Curtin also argues that as a carrier of enlightened ideals, the masonic society was open to radical and republican ideologies.[70] She refers to a report in the *Freeman's Journal* in December 1792 that said 'delegates from twenty-five lodges had assembled in Armagh in order to express their loyalty to the government and their satisfaction with the established order'.[71] However, she argues that 'such displays of subservience to the administration provoked reform-minded lodges into passing counter-resolutions, asserting the necessity for a reform of parliament and Catholic emancipation'.[72] She refers to 'an important assembly in Tyrone representing 1,432 masons, seeking to correct the impression that masons complacently accepted the existing order'.[73]

Fagan argues that as lodges were secret and oath-bound, it 'rendered them easy prey for organisations wishing to use them as fronts for illegal, anti-government activities...there is the probability that from the 1750s onwards lodges were used as meeting places by Catholics to discuss grievances and formulate plans of action',[74] and that there is 'convincing evidence' that

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[67] Stevenson, *The origins of freemasonry*, p. 7.
[68] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p. 284.
[69] A.T.Q. Stewart, *A deeper silence: The hidden roots of the United Irish movement* (London, 1993), p. 163.
[70] Nancy J. Curtin, *The United Irishmen: Popular politics in Ulster and Dublin 1791-1798* (Oxford, 1998), p. 56.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 130.

some Dublin lodges were fronts for the United Irishmen.[75] Crossle's *Irish masonic records* indicate there were up to thirty-three active lodges in Dublin in the late 1790s, and twelve of these can be linked to the United Irishmen and their causes. Jim Smyth argues that 'membership of the freemasons gave United Irish agents access to another ready-made network, and enabled them to call upon their masonic brother's hospitality as they travelled the country',[76] and that 'masonry was sensitive to local conditions and was therefore most radical, and later most disaffected, where radicalism and disaffection was strongest- in mid and east Ulster, and in Dublin'.[77] He continues that 'by 1796 government intelligence indicated that every United Irishman in Belfast was also a freemason, and suspects were subsequently arrested during military swoops on lodge meetings...a similar but less discernable pattern existed in Dublin'.[78]

To date Fagan is the only historian to study the Dublin freemason scene in terms of involvement with other societies. Fagan argues that a comparison of the freemason register and R.B. McDowell's list of United Irishmen reveals a 'significant number' of names common to both societies.[79] Lepper and Crossle acknowledge 'in many cases the United Irishmen proceeded to conceal their gatherings under the cloak of pretence of meeting as a lodge of freemasons.'[80] Fagan argues that two Dublin lodges, the medical and barristers lodges, were fronts for the United Irishmen. He concludes that the medical lodge 'was intended as a medical corps for the United Irishmen in the event of hostilities...fourteen of its seventeen members were surgeons',[81] although there remains no conclusive evidence to prove that this

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[75] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 150.
[76] Jim Smyth, 'Freemasonry and the United Irishmen' in David Dickson, Daire Keogh and Kevin Whelan (eds), *The United Irishmen: Republicanism, radicalism and rebellion* (Dublin, 1993), p. 172.
[77] Smyth, 'Freemasonry and the United Irishmen' in Dickson *et al*, *The United Irishmen*, p. 168.
[78] Smyth, 'Freemasonry and the United Irishmen' in Dickson *et al*, *The United Irishmen*, p. 173.
[79] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 141.
[80] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 296.
[81] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 142.

was the case. Lodge 620, known as 'The First Volunteer Lodge of Ireland', was established in 1783 and was the 'Corps of Independent Dublin Volunteers', and 'some of the members, caught by the stirring spirit of the times, joined the United Irishmen'.[82] During the rebellion of 1798 freemason lodges were to cease meeting by order of the Grand Lodge, and 'it is noteworthy that there are no minutes of meetings of the lodge from 14 May to 12 November of that year, these being the months during which the rebellion was actively in operation'.[83]

Larry Conlon has argued that 'in many instances, freemasonry was the catalyst for the spread of revolutionary ideals...freemasonry was at the heart of the spread of radical thought'.[84] Indeed, even Lepper and Crossle acknowledge that the society may have been infiltrated by organisations with anti-government agendas in the 1790s: 'in the disturbed state of the country that existed from the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 until 1803, it is only to be expected that we should find the masonic order including men of most diverse theories in regard to civil government; but it does not surprise and shock us to find a certain party designing to make use of the masonic lodges as a means of concealing the plots in which it was engaged'.[85]

Petri Mirala has studied extensively the association between the freemasons and subversive groups in Ulster. He argues that 'the masonic ideology was open to many interpretations and the brotherhood was not immune to the political, sectarian or class divisions of the Ulster society'.[86] However, he points out that 'evidence at the local level is still far too incomplete for a definitive picture...the front aspect of masonic lodges may have

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[82] William Geoghegan, *The annals of the First Volunteer Masonic lodge of Ireland* (Dublin, 1910), p. 24.
[83] Geoghegan, *The annals of the First Volunteer Masonic lodge of Ireland*, p. 26.
[84] Larry Conlon, 'Dissention, radicalism and republicanism in Monaghan and the role of freemasonry up to and during the 1798 rebellion', in *Clogher Record*, xvi, no. 3 (1999), p. 110.
[85] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 296.
[86] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p. 2.

been exaggerated...different lodges did have different political profiles, and identifying lodges with definite United Irish links is difficult.' Mirala and Kevin Haddick-Flynn also linked freemasonry to loyalism. Haddick-Flynn linked freemasonry to the Boyne Society, an early prelude to the Orange Order, and from this argued that the Boyne Society encouraged the development of Orange masonry.[87] Mirala argues that from the 1790s, loyalists were more successful than the United Irishmen in using masonry for political ends,[88] and 'in the interim of the disbanding of the Volunteers and the raising of the yeomanry, the masonic style brotherhood was most efficient form of organisation available to the early Orangemen...they were well acquainted with freemasonry...It seems clear that there was an important masonic contribution to the loyalist mobilisation of 1795-6'.[89] Mirala has argued that a 'conservative faction dominated county Armagh freemasonry from the early 1790s onwards, and conservatives were not altogether without influence in other parts of Ulster'.[90] He argues that 'in the intensified loyalist mobilisation of 1795-6, freemasonry came to play a role...(in addition to being in Armagh) political and sectarian divisions extended into neighbouring parts of Tyrone'.[91] He further states that in Aughnacloy, County Tyrone in August 1795 'loyalist freemasonry came out in the open...a highly unusual meeting was held between one of the "regular" masonic lodges of the town, and a body of men called "clandestine" or "unwarranted masons"...(who) joined together in order to suppress the "parcel of fanatics who called themselves Defenders", who, they claimed, had lately spread to the neighbourhood.'[92] Mirala notes that

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[87] Kevin Haddick-Flynn, *Orangeism: The making of a tradition* (Dublin, 1999), p.93.
[88] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p. 30.
[89] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p. 30.
[90] Petri Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Raymond Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland, 1750-1950* (Dublin, 2004), p. 27.
[91] Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland*, p. 28.
[92] Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland*, p.30.

'interpreting the role of freemasonry in the birth of Orangeism is a difficult task.'[93] However, there is evidence that 'at least some, if not all them (members of the armed Protestant societies which existed by 1795) regarded themselves as freemasons (without being affiliated to the Grand Lodge)'.[94] He acknowledges that 'although there is no record of whole "regular" masonic lodges having joined the Orange Order, many individual freemasons did become Orangemen.'[95]

Lisa Meaney has studied freemasonry in Munster 1726-1829. In terms of politics, she argues that although it was involved in political events in the 1760s and 1790s, freemasonry in Munster was politically cohesive and remained loyal to the government. This runs contradictory to the findings of Mirala in Ulster, where freemasonry was much more polarised. Meaney argues that although the link between masonry and the Volunteers has encouraged historians to argue that masonry became radical in the 1790s, and indeed membership of did slump during the 1770s and 1780s, 'the United Irish movement and radical politics had no influence upon Munster masonry...the language used in the minute books...clearly indicated a distaste for reform politics, radicalism and the 1798 rebellion...Catholic members were also loyalist in the 1790s'.[96]

Larry Conlon has studied freemasonry in terms of its presence in Meath and Westmeath and its role in politics of the 1790s.[97] The main focus of these works is on freemasonry and the United Irishmen; Conlon did not study social aspects of the order,

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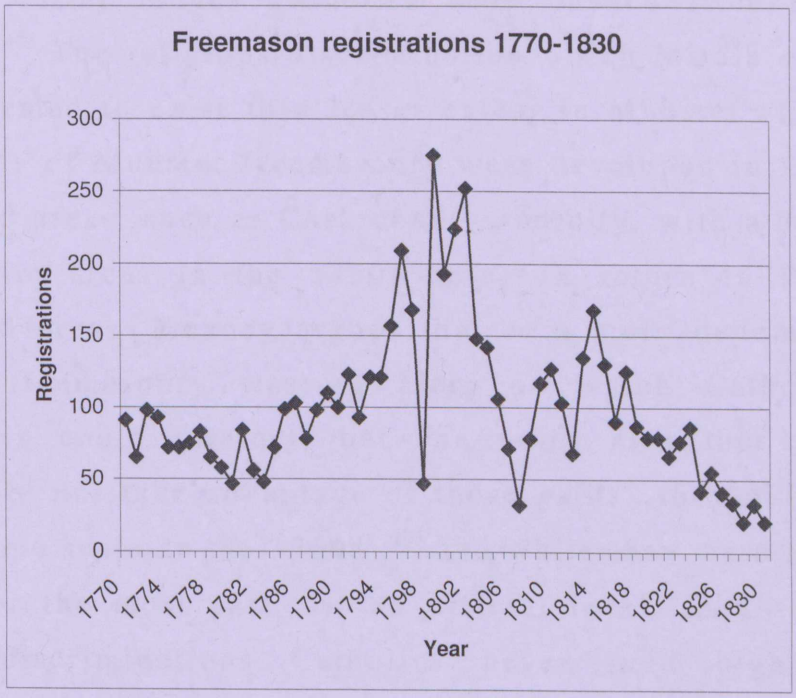
[93] Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland*, p.34.
[94] Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland*, p.33.
[95] Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland*, p.35.
[96] Lisa Meaney, 'Freemasonry in Munster 1726-1829' (M.A. thesis, University of Limerick, 2005), p. 28.
[97] Larry Conlon, 'The influence of freemasonry in Meath and Westmeath in the eighteenth century', in *Riocht na Mide*, ix, no. 3 (1997), pp 128-153, and 'Dissension, radicalism and republicanism in Monaghan and the role of freemasonry up to and during the 1798 rebellion', in *Clogher Record*, xvi, no. 3 (1999), pp 86-111.

nor does he investigate the religious breakdown of membership. He does note that the number of lodges in Meath and Westmeath declined after the turbulent period of the 1790s, which coincided with a decreased number of Roman Catholics joining.[98]

Examination of the membership register of Dublin lodges between the years 1770 and 1830 (figure 1.1)[99] shows there was a sharp increase in registrations in the 1790s but a drop off after 1800, especially after 1817. This could be explained by the infiltration of the brotherhood by subversive organisations, but it must also be borne in mind that freemasons were less than conscientious in terms of record keeping, so a sharp intake did not necessarily imply take over by any political group.

Figure 1.1 Registrations in Dublin freemason lodges 1770-1830



Source: Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

[98] Larry Conlon, 'The influence of freemasonry in Meath and Westmeath in the eighteenth century', in *Riocht na Mide*, ix, no. 3 (1997), p. 150.
[99] Grand Lodge register, series 1 vols 1-3, and series 2 vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

1.6 Freemasonry and religion

Lepper and Crossle suggested that masonry attracted only the upper class as members.[100] However, work carried out by Mirala and Fagan suggest that membership patterns changed over time. Previous assertions about the religious make-up of the society have also been revised. Lepper and Crossle argue that 'at the period Lord Donoughmore was elected Grand Master in 1789, the majority of freemasons in Ireland were Catholic,'[101] but Fagan disputes this claim, arguing that whilst Catholic participation reached its peak in the 1760s, they were never in the majority during the eighteenth century.[102]

Although freemasonry was multi-denominational, Mirala argues that religion was often a barrier to membership, and that in some Ulster lodges Catholics were banned from becoming members.[103] The religious discrimination which Mirala studied in Ulster seemed to exist to a lesser extent in Munster also.[104] The early roots of Munster freemasonry were developed in Protestant dominated areas, such as Cork county and city, with a brief shift to Catholic areas in the 1750s before a return to Protestant dominated areas. Meaney argues that as a multi-denominational society, freemasonry was an arena in which Catholics and Protestants could interact, but she notes also that 'Catholic masons did not take advantage of these gains...they did not join on the same scale as the 1750s',[105] and while they were treated as equals for the most part, 'at an official level, they still faced certain discriminations...Catholics never held high official positions within the masonic society'.[106] Fagan has studied the religious breakdown of membership in Dublin in the eighteenth

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[100] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, pp 88-90.
[101] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 423.
[102] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 131.
[103] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', pp 76-86.
[104] Meaney, 'Freemasonry in Munster', p. 226.
[105] Meaney, 'Freemasonry in Munster', p. 230.
[106] ibid

century. He identifies 5,300 Dublin freemasons as being Catholic in the period 1758-99.[107] He does this by comparing lists of freemason membership with Catholic qualification rolls,[108] but also uses the rather impressionistic technique of counting 'Catholic sounding' names as those of Catholics. While this research is useful, by the very nature of this technique figures quoted by Fagan may be not fully accurate. He concludes that during the eighteenth century, Dublin lodges tended to be exclusively Catholic or exclusively Protestant.[109] He argues that Catholic membership in Dublin peaked in the 1750s/60s, and although Catholic involvement was sizeable, they were never in the majority.[110] However, as I will argue later, there is a lack of minute books which exist for Dublin lodges in this period, which would strengthen any claims about individual lodges. Fagan also notes the effect that the various papal bulls denouncing oath bound societies had on freemasonry. Whilst Clement XII's *In Eminenti* in 1738 was 'virtually ignored in Ireland in common with the catholic states of Europe', Pope Benedict XIV's *Providas Romanorum* in 1751 appears to have had more of an impact, as Fagan notes that between 1783 and 1818, there were only two new lodges established in Dublin (both of which Fagan concludes were fronts for the United Irishmen).[111] Mirala likewise notes that the papal denunciations of the eighteenth century finally began to be generally observed in Ireland after 1800.[112] Freemasonry was further denounced by papal pronunciations in 1821 and 1825, 1829 and 1830.[113]

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[107] Meaney, 'Freemasonry in Munster', p. 231.
[108] Maureen Wall, 'The Catholic merchants, manufacturers and traders of Dublin 1778-1782', in *Reportorium Novum* ii, no. 2 (1960), pp 299-323.
[109] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p.149.
[110] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 149.
[111] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p.129.
[112] Petri Mirala, 'Orangemen and freemasons- Masonic influence on the organisation, ideology, symbols and rituals of the early Orange Order in Ireland, 1795-1836' (M.A. thesis, University of Helsinki, 1993), p. 53.
[113] Clement XII, *In eminenti* (28 Apr. 1738), Benedict XIV, *Providas romanorum* (18 May 1751), Pius VII, *Ecclesiam* (13 Sep. 1821), Leo XII, *Quo graviora* (13 Mar. 1825), Pius VIII, *Traditi humilitati* (21 May 1829), and Pius VIII, *Litteris altero* (25 Mar. 1830).

1.7 Internal politics: The Grand Lodge split

In 1806 the Grand Lodge of Ireland split into two separate bodies, both claiming to be the legitimate Grand Lodge. In 1808, one of the factions withdrew and with the support of more than three hundred Ulster lodges, set up a rival lodge in Dungannon. This Grand Lodge of Ulster survived for five years, but eventually most lodges re-affiliated with Dublin. During the split, Lepper and Crossle note that '(the rival lodge) had quite a respectable following, in every sense, in Dublin itself and some of the oldest metropolitan Lodges were divided in allegiance.'[114]

The Ulster faction was championed by Alexander Seton, who had previously held the post of deputy grand secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland. His argument was based on general dissatisfaction at the way which the Grand Lodge was disposing of money it collected from the order. His faction was also dissatisfied with perceived Grand Lodge encroachment on the ability of subordinate lodges to issue higher degrees, for which they now had to send fees to the Grand Lodge, whereas previously lodges could spend this money as they pleased. In addition, the Seton faction was dissatisfied at the appointment of a salaried deputy grand treasurer to collect arrears. Seton accused the Grand Master, Lord Donoughmore (who had by this stage been in the chair for twenty years) of being negligent, and the organisation at large of being a corrupt body, intent on providing jobs for favourites, expanding its own power and persecuting opponents.[115] The Grand Lode had begun offering rewards for the discovery of writers of pamphlets critical of the society, a move which Seton denounced. Terence de Vere White explained it away as an 'internal feud, not political in nature',[116] while the masonic historians Lepper and Crossle have placed the blame squarely on

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[114] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 355.
[115] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p. 273.
[116] Terence de Vere White, 'The freemasons' in T.D. Williams (ed.), *Secret societies in Ireland* (Dublin, 1975), p. 51.

Alexander Seton, who they claim 'engineered the secession movement for his own ends and aggrandizement.'[117] Mirala has studied the split in terms of possible political motives, and concluded that 'while the contemporary events on the political scene are not a sufficient explanation for the split on their own, they serve to show that the specifically masonic grievances of the "country" faction tended to become more acute at times of political tension'.[118]

1.8 Freemasonry after the union

Other than the work carried out by Mirala and Meaney, there has been little research carried out concerning freemasonry after the Union with Britain. Fagan notes that during the 1790s, 'many lodges were holding their meetings in the run down, overcrowded Liberties area, and there was not a single lodge meeting in the wealthy, largely Protestant eastern half of the city'.[119] Socially, the most obvious consequence of the events of the 1790s was the prohibition and gradual extinction of processions on St John's days.[120] The public exhibition of masonic regalia was prohibited from this time also.

According to Lepper and Crossle, the 'country generally was in such an impoverished condition that the Grand Lodge of Ireland would have had quite enough troubles to cope with even if it had been freed from insubordination and threatened secession. We find the times mirrored in the inability of lodges to pay their dues.'[121] They also note that whereas in the eighteenth century the Grand Lodge was prepared 'to let well alone, not to erase a lodge merely because it gave no signs of life for years, and to restore it to official favour if it gave such signs of life and

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[117] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 314.
[118] Mirala, 'Freemasonry in Ulster', p. 278.
[119] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 132.
[120] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 299.
[121] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 407.

paid a reasonable sum instead of arrears',[122] from the beginning of the nineteenth century, dealings between the Grand Lodge and subordinate lodges became much more rigorous, and it was agreed 'on 7 September 1809 that any lodge which had not communicated with the Grand Lodge in seven years should be erased after six months' notice. This was amplified in 1811 by the resolution that all lodges in arrears for more than four years should be suspended, and all seven years in arrears cancelled'.[123]

In 1813 the duke of Leinster became Grand Master, and his era saw 'freemasonry in Ireland pass from the necessarily flexible organisation of the eighteenth century to the closely knit body of today'.[124] In keeping with the policy of tighter control over subordinate lodges, 'on 4 July 1822 another drastic cancellation of warrants for non-payment of dues took place, no less than forty-eight being erased...politically, the country was in a very disturbed state, and this may account in part for so many lodges going out of existence'.[125]

The habeas corpus suspension and unlawful oaths acts[126] of 1822 and 1823 appear to have affected Irish freemasonry deeply. On 11 July 1823, Brother James Hunter of lodge 930 (a Dublin lodge), was found guilty of 'not abstaining from every topic of political discussion in his lodge...and was ordered to be reprimanded by the Deputy Grand Master from the throne.'[127] Parkinson interprets this as '(the determination) of the rulers of the craft to allow no political discussion in the Lodges'.[128]

On 1 August 1823, the Grand Lodge, in light of the fact that 'Freemasons have invariably professed unbounded allegiance to their sovereign, fidelity to the government, and obedience to the

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[122] Ibid.
[123] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 408.
[124] Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. II*, p. 15.
[125] Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. II*, p. 44.
[126] 1822 Habeas corpus suspension act (3 Geo. IV, c. 2), and 1823 Unlawful oaths act (4 Geo. IV, c. 87).
[127] Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. II*, p. 49.
[128] Ibid.

laws...ordered and directed that after the expiration of fourteen days from the passing of the said act, that is to say after the first day of August, 1823, all lodges and assemblies of freemasons in Ireland shall cease to meet as freemasons, until again called together by the authority of the Grand Master'[129] as a result of the acts of parliament which prohibited the assembly of secret societies. The ban was lifted in 1825 and in a circular on 7 April 'with the warmest feelings of congratulation the Grand Lodge address their respected brethren of the most ancient and honourable society of free and accepted masons of Ireland. The legislature having recently been most graciously pleased to recognize societies instituted without religious distinction and for the advancement of science and public or private charity, no doubt remains that masonic meetings, conducted in strict conformity with the rules and principals of the order, will be protected'.[130] However, the state of the brotherhood was noted: 'Masters of lodges are to take notice that they are not authorized to summon other lodges to attend them on St John's Days. The Grand Lodge will not allow any other notice to be sent than an invitation, which will be optional to the parties to attend or not.[131] According to Parkinson, this 'draws attention to the depleted state of the Grand Lodge funds. For the next twenty years to come the order was in a very impoverished condition and in a state of continuous decline.'[132]

Examination of the membership register of Dublin lodges in supports the claim that freemasonry contracted after 1800.[133] It can be seen in figure 1.2 that registration of new members in Dublin lodges fell markedly from its high point in 1803.

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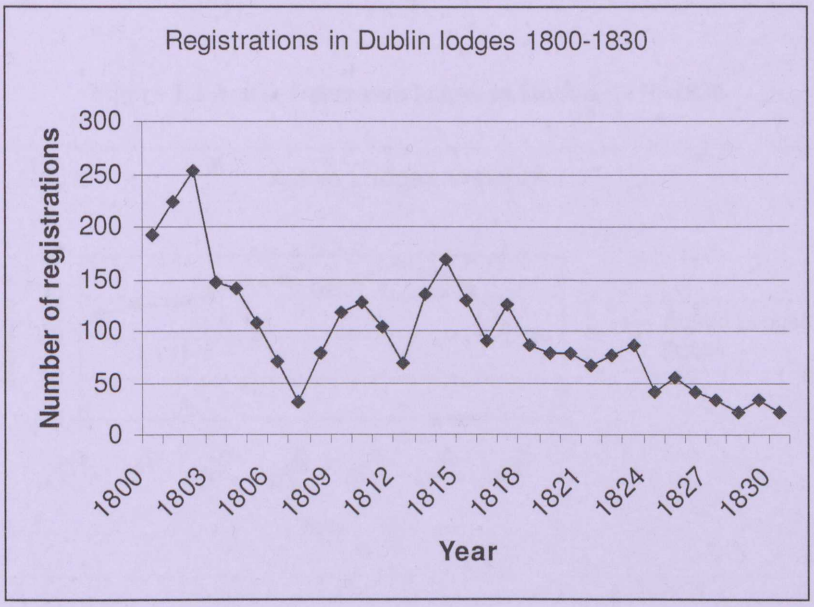
[129] *Freeman's Journal*, 6 Aug. 1823.
[130] Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. II*, p. 53.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Grand Lodge Register series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

Figure 1.2 Registrations in Dublin freemason lodges, 1800-1830



Source: Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

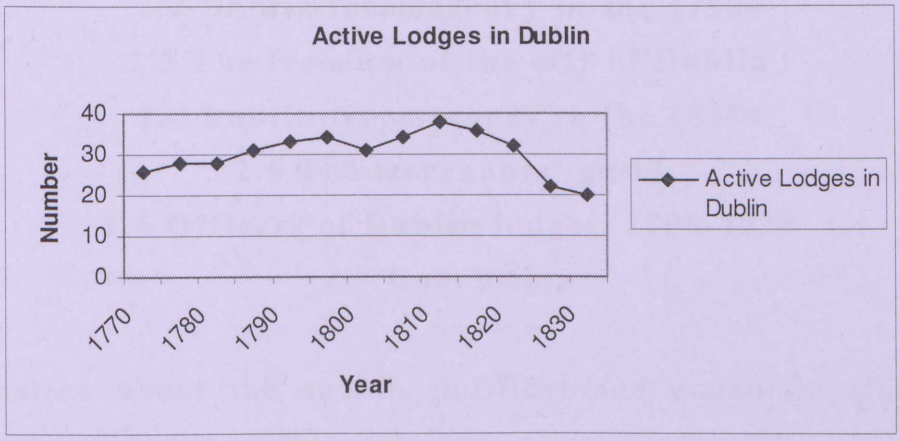
Parkinson notes that 'the records for the early part of 1830 show that the order was feeling the effect of the disturbed times...numerous warrants were surrendered, others were placed in the keeping of the Grand Lodge as security against cancellation...the Grand Lodge did all in its power to help the lodges that were weak in members or in funds, but economic and social conditions continued to be depressed for thirty years to come, and the masonic order suffered with the country as a whole'.[134]

Using the data collected from the Grand Lodge register in conjunction with Crossle's *Irish masonic records* it has been ascertained that the number of active lodges in Dublin similarly declined as the nineteenth century progressed. Once again it is important to stress possible inaccuracies in the masonic records, which tended to be updated sporadically, and lodges which are recorded as closed may in fact have been dormant for some time.

[134] Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. II*, p. 77.

Nevertheless, figure 1.3 demonstrates the general trend of decreasing activity in Dublin lodges after 1800.

Figure 1.3 Active freemason lodges in Dublin, 1770-1830



Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Crossle, *Irish masonic records* (Dublin, 1973).

CHAPTER 2- THE FREEMASON CONSTITUENCY IN DUBLIN 1790-1830

2.1 Freemasonry 1790-1830
2.2 Dublin freemasonry in the 1790s
2.3 The freedom of the city of Dublin
2.4 Dublin freemasonry in the 1820s
2.5 The merchants' guild
2.6 Officers of Dublin lodges, 1790-1830
2.7 Conclusion

Information about the social, political and economic status of freemasons in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in masonic sources, such as the Grand Lodge register and minute books, is limited largely to names of members. As stated in chapter one, these records cannot be assumed to be completely accurate. Therefore, in order to gain an insight into the state of freemasonry in Dublin in this period it is necessary to consult non-masonic primary sources. From an examination of the conditions necessary in order for a candidate to be admitted to a freemason lodge, as set out in the freemason constitutions, it seems that those who qualified for freedom of the city were likely to be of the same or similar social group to those who met the requirements to join the brotherhood. In *Catholics in a protestant country* Patrick Fagan consults a list of 1,250 catholic merchants, manufacturers, tradesmen and traders compiled by Maureen Wall from the Catholic qualification rolls for the period 1778-82 in order to ascertain the degree of Catholic involvement in the brotherhood.[135] In 1778 the Irish parliament passed an 'Act for the relief of his majesty's subjects in this kingdom professing the Popish religion'.[136] This permitted Catholics to take leases up to 999 years or for five lives. Catholics who owned estates or who

[135] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p.138.
[136] Catholic relief act (17 and 18 Geo. III, c. 49).

should become entitled to inherit estates were to have the same control over them as that enjoyed by Protestants. This was of benefit only to those Catholics who took the test oath provided in 1774. In Dublin the oath was to be taken in one of the four courts or at the quarter sessions in Kilmainham. The names of those who took the oath were entered on rolls in the various courts and were, once a year, sent to the rolls office in Dublin.[137] Fagan also comes to conclusions about Catholic involvement with the brotherhood based on whether or not the names of freemasons sounded Catholic or not. A comparison has been made of the names of freemasons in the periods 1790-9 and 1820-9 with the registers of the freedom of the city of Dublin in order to shed some light on the religious, political and social background of members in those periods. In choosing the 1790s it will be useful to compare these results with Fagan's analysis of Catholic involvement in freemasonry during this period. Researching the 1820s will demonstrate the extent to which the membership profile of the masons had changed in the post-Union period, in which there is perceived to be a decrease in both the volume and respectability of membership.

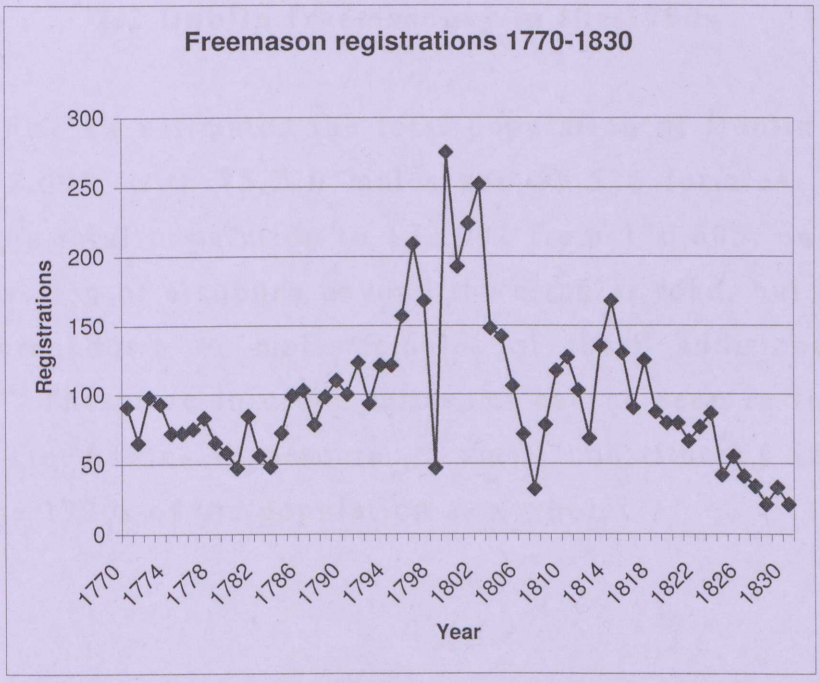
2.1 Freemasonry 1790-1830

As figure 2.1 illustrates, the numbers of freemasons admitted to Dublin lodges increased until the mid 1790s, when a significant increase was recorded (which Fagan attributes to involvement with the United Irishmen),[138] followed by a decline after the Union in 1801. It can be seen from figure 2.2 that the number of active lodges decreased after the turn of the century. There was also a perceived drop off in respectability of the organisation

[137] Maureen Wall, 'The quest for equality, 1745-1778' in Gerard O' Brien (ed.), *Catholic Ireland in the eighteenth century: Collected essays of Maureen Wall* (Dublin, 1989), pp 115-133.
[138] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 150.

after 1801;[139] if this was the case one might expect to see a proportionate decline in freemasons who were free citizens of Dublin, given the degree of privilege associated with freedom of the city. When compiling statistics such as these it must be borne in mind that the freemason registers indicate some movement of members between different lodges. It has been ascertained that between 1770 and 1830 there were a total of 6,016 registrations of freemasons in Dublin lodges. Included in this are 644 freemasons who, the registers indicate, were previously members of another Irish, or in some cases English, lodge.

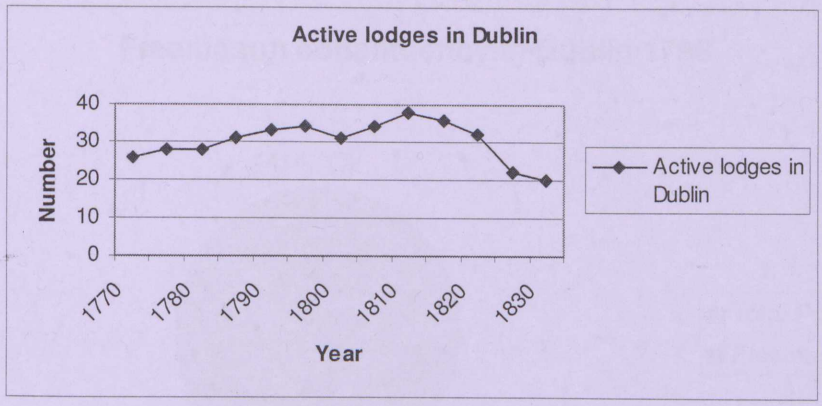
Figure 2.1 Registrations in Dublin freemason lodges, 1770-1830



Source: Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

[139] Watty Cox, 'A parade of a set of people calling themselves freemasons', in *Irish Magazine and Monthly Asylum for Neglected Bibliography*, viii (December 1815), p 575, reprinted in Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 157.

Figure 2.2 Active freemason lodges in Dublin, 1770-1830



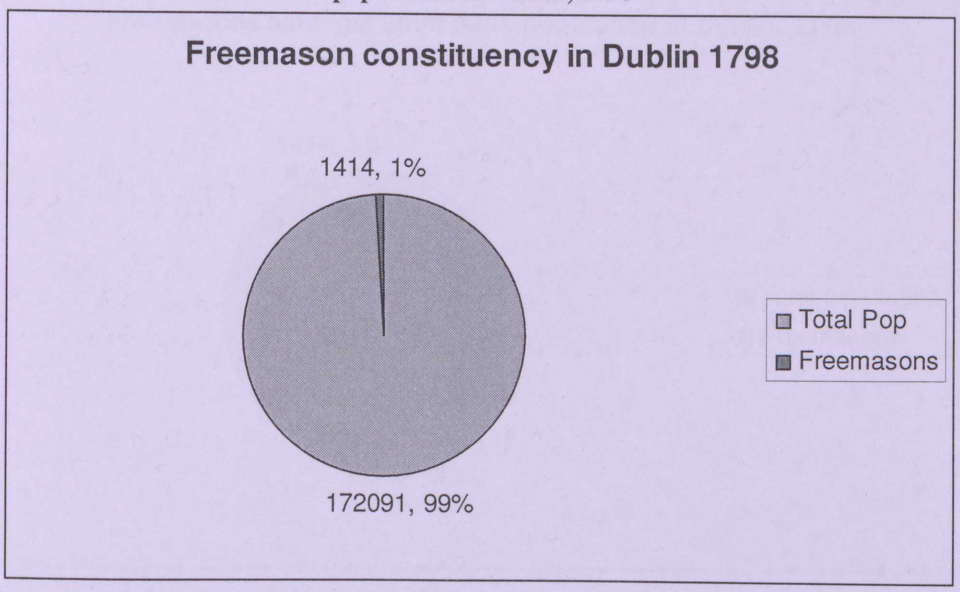
Source: Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Philip Crossle, *Irish masonic records* (Dublin, 1973).

2.2 Dublin freemasonry in the 1790s

James Whitelaw estimated the total population of Dublin in 1798 to be 172,091, with 75,279 males and 95,526 females (he later revised the total population to 172,091 from 170,805, on account of an omission of a suburb beyond the circular road, but does not give a breakdown of males/females of these additional 1,286 people).[140] Therefore in crude terms, as can be seen in figure 2.3 that the freemasons represented a small constituency in Dublin during the 1790s of the population as a whole:

[140] James Whitelaw, *An essay on the population of Dublin* (Dublin, 1805), p. 14.

Figure 2.3 Number of freemasons registered in Dublin lodges as a proportion of the entire population of Dublin, 1798

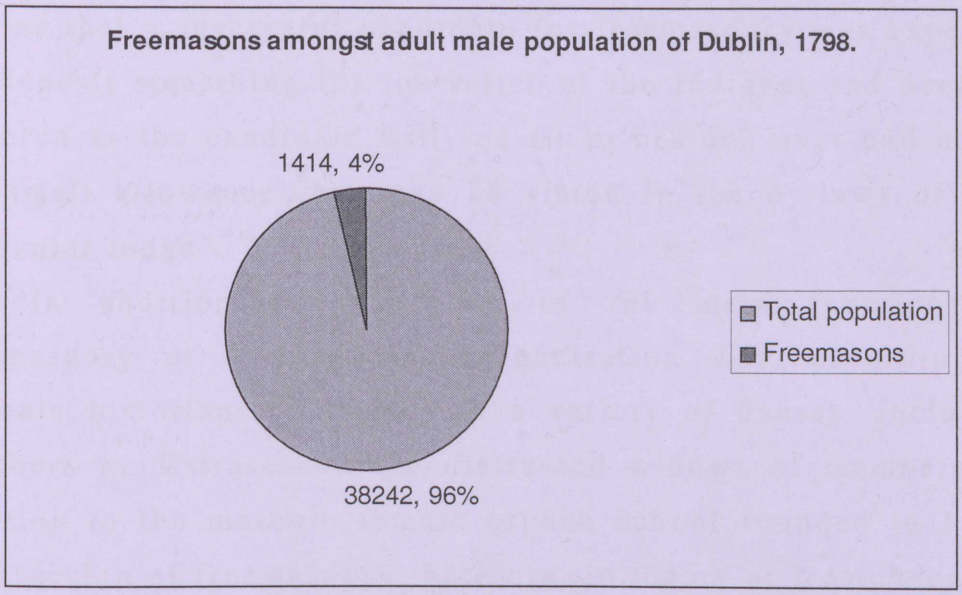


Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and James Whitelaw, *An essay on the population of Dublin* (Dublin, 1805).

.It has been generally estimated that one in 4.5 of the population at that time was an adult male.[141] This gives an approximate figure of 38,242 as the total adult male population of Dublin in 1798. Examination of the freemason membership register has revealed that there were 1,414 registrations to Dublin lodges from 1790-9. Therefore, freemasons represented approximately 4 per cent of the adult male population of Dublin during the 1790s:

[141] Jacqueline Hill, *From patriots to unionists: Dublin civic politics and Irish Protestant patriotism, 1660-1840* (Oxford, 1997), p. 29.

Figure 2.4 Freemasons amongst adult male population of Dublin, 1798



Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and James Whitelaw, *An essay on the population of Dublin* (Dublin, 1805), and Jacqueline Hill, *From patriots to unionists: Dublin civic politics and Irish protestant patriotism* (Oxford, 1997), p. 29.

2.3 The freedom of the city of Dublin

This research indicates that from 1790 to 1829, 4,800 men obtained freedom of the city of Dublin. The status of freeman brought with it various privileges, including a municipal and parliamentary vote, and exemption from various tolls which the non-free were subject to.[142] Under the penal laws, Catholics were excluded from the privilege; therefore names on the register at least up until 1793 are exclusively Protestant. The register up to 1830 has been examined, and in this time there were very few names which may be considered Catholic-sounding, suggesting that the exclusion of Catholics to free status continued after the penal laws were repealed. It cannot be assumed that everyone who was entitled to freedom applied or received it. Free citizens were subjected to some taxes the non-free were not, and freedom

[142] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 30.

required a certain degree of affluence.[143] Freemason constitutions outline that a successful candidate for freemasonry was expected to 'deposit something for the relief of the indigent and decayed brethren as the candidate will see fit to bestow, over and above the small allowance that may be stated in the by-laws of that particular lodge'.[144]

In addition to this, one of the main functions of freemasonry as a benevolent organisation was, according to masonic historians,[145] charity to a variety of causes, including members in distress and the distressed widows of members, in addition to the masonic female orphan school founded in 1802. Membership of freemasonry therefore, in theory at least, required the ability of members to contribute towards these and other such benevolent activities. It is therefore unlikely that many prospective freemen who were freemasons were put off applying for freedom of the city based on the financial commitment involved. Hence, this comparison in the late eighteenth century will complement the work already carried out by Fagan with regard to Catholic participation. Nevertheless, one must always question whether or not lodges always observed constitutional requirements when admitting new members. As will be demonstrated in later chapters, this was not necessarily the case.

Of the 1,414 freemason registrations in Dublin lodges between 1790 and 1799, 298 appear to be those of free citizens of the city of Dublin. In comparing lists of freemasons and freemen, some practical considerations must be borne in mind. Corresponding names on each the registers are not likely to be that of the same person if separated by a gap of many decades. Also, some names are so common amongst both freemasons and freemen as to render them devoid of use for this exercise. This

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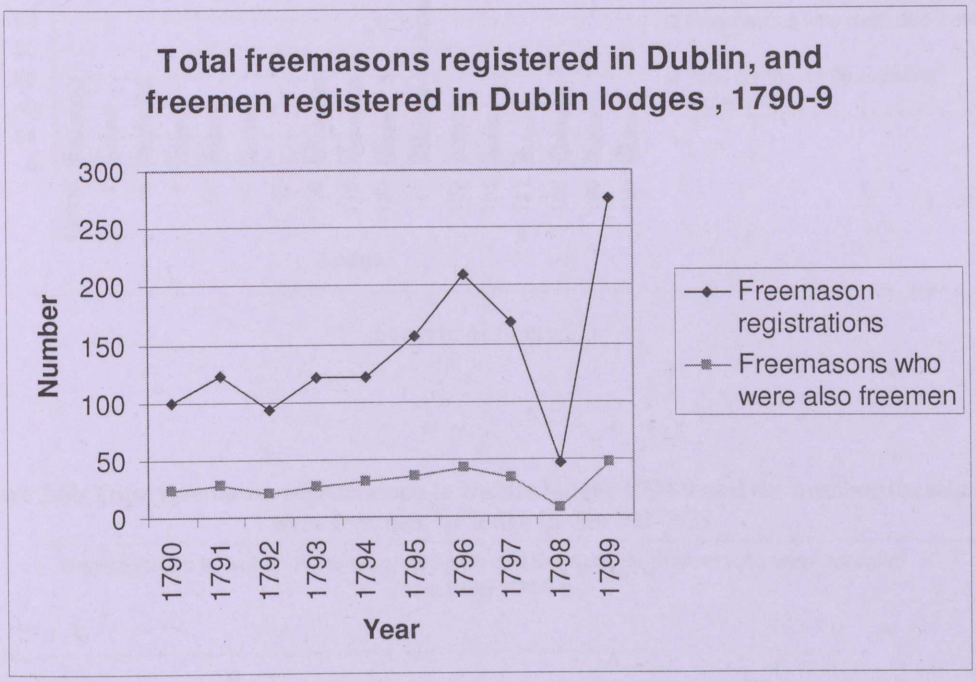
[143] ibid
[144] *Laws and constitutions of the Grand Lodge*, p. 38.
[145] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*

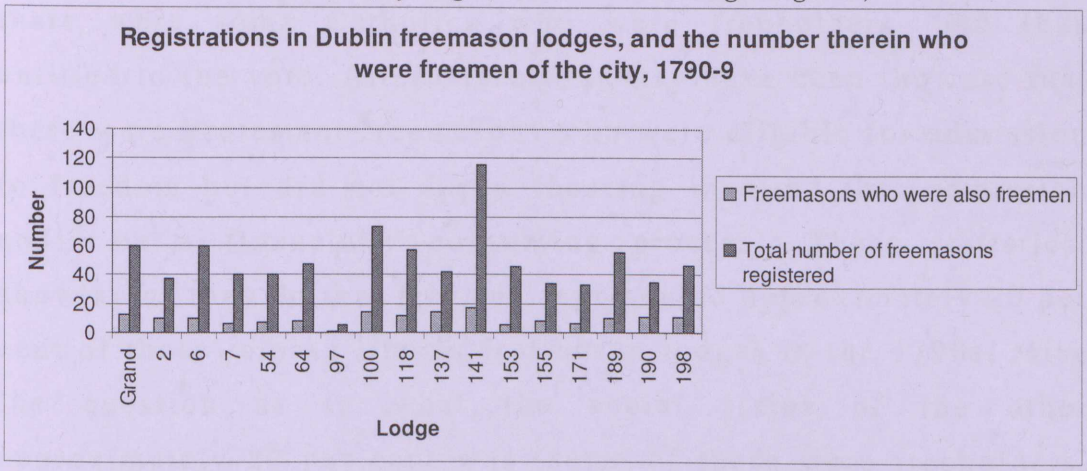
was the case on only a few occasions, and its impact on these statistics is practically irrelevant.

Figure 2.5 Total freemason registrations in Dublin lodges 1790-9, and the number therein who were freemen



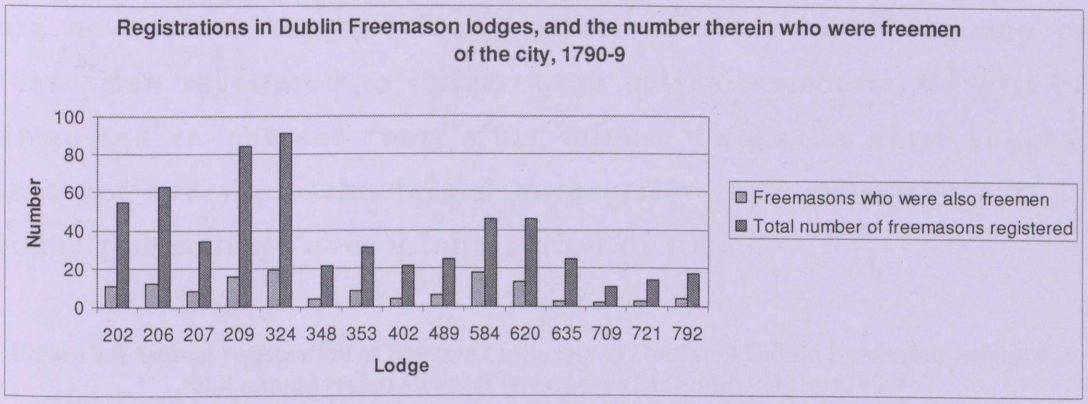
Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

Figure 2.6a Total freemason registrations in Dublin lodges 1790-9 and the number therein who were freemen, by lodge (Grand Master's Lodge-lodge 198)



Source: as figure 2.5.

Figure 2.6b Total freemason registrations to Dublin lodges 1790-9 and the number therein who were freemen, by lodge (lodge 202-792)



Source: as figure 2.5.

From this breakdown of those of freemen status in individual lodges it can be seen that the proportion of free to non free remained relatively constant throughout the period. Fagan has argued that Catholics were never the majority in the eighteenth century.[146] It can be seen in figures 2.6a and b that there were certainly more non-free than free citizens in Dublin lodges in this period, and taking it that almost all freemen were Protestants during the 1790s, it appears that the majority in

[146] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 150.

lodges were not freemen. However, it may have been the case that there were some Catholics who were freeholders, and thus entitled to the vote. Alternatively, it may have been the case that there were Protestant freemasons who were eligible for admission to freedom but did not apply (bearing in mind that admission could be a financially consuming process). These statistics, showing as they do that freemen represented approximately 20 per cent of those joining Dublin freemason lodges in the 1790s, raise the question as to what the social status of the other approximately 80 per cent was (some of these were freeholders, discussed in chapter three). Unfortunately, as discussed in chapter one, freemason primary sources do not exist to fill all such gaps in research. In addition, it must always be borne in mind that when looking at membership figures for lodges, there are no sources (by and large) which indicate how long any of these men registered to lodges were active members. As will be discussed in chapter four, what minute books do exist suggest that not everyone who joined necessarily took an active part in lodge proceedings over a long period of time.

Figure 2.7 Annual registration of freemen of the city of Dublin in Dublin freemason lodges, and total annual registrations of freemasons to Dublin lodges, 1790-9

Year	Freemason freemen	Total number of freemasons registered
1790	24	100
1791	28	123
1792	20	93
1793	28	121
1794	32	121
1795	35	157
1796	43	209
1797	34	168
1798	7	47
1799	47	275
Total	**298**	**1414**

Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

Figure 2. 8 Dublin freemasons registered 1790-9 who were freemen of the city, by guild

Source: as figure 2.7.

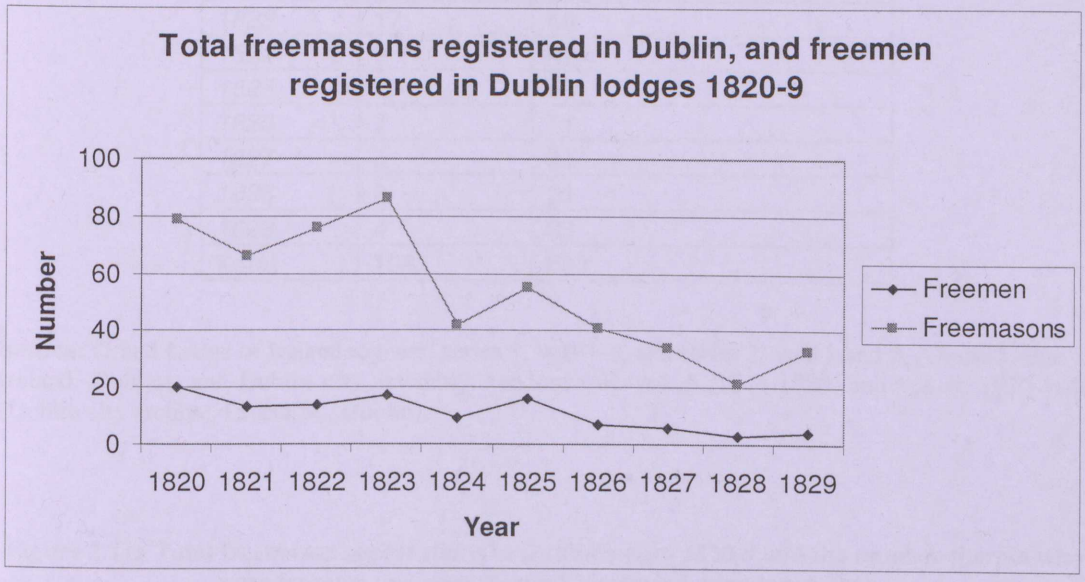
Other than that of merchant, no one guild dominated in terms of the occupation of freemasons in Dublin between 1790 and 1799. Other than the merchants, given the small numbers in question it is hard to establish whether or not freemen of the same guild tended to be of the same lodge. The guild of merchants will be examined further on in this chapter.

2.4 Dublin freemasonry in the 1820s

Similar to the statistics from 1790-9, it can be seen in figures 2.9 and 2.10 below that the proportion of non-free freemasons to those who had acquired the freedom of the city remained constant through the 1820s. The decline in membership after 1800 was quite pronounced and the number of free citizens admitted to lodges in Dublin during this time stayed in proportion to that. Whilst previously there has been considered to be a decline in the 'respectability' of the organisation, this research shows that although membership did indeed decrease markedly from the

levels experienced during the 1790s, representation of free citizens of Dublin amongst members registered during the 1820s was proportionate to that of the 1790s.

Figure 2.9 Total freemason registrations in Dublin lodges 1820-9 and the number therein who were freemen



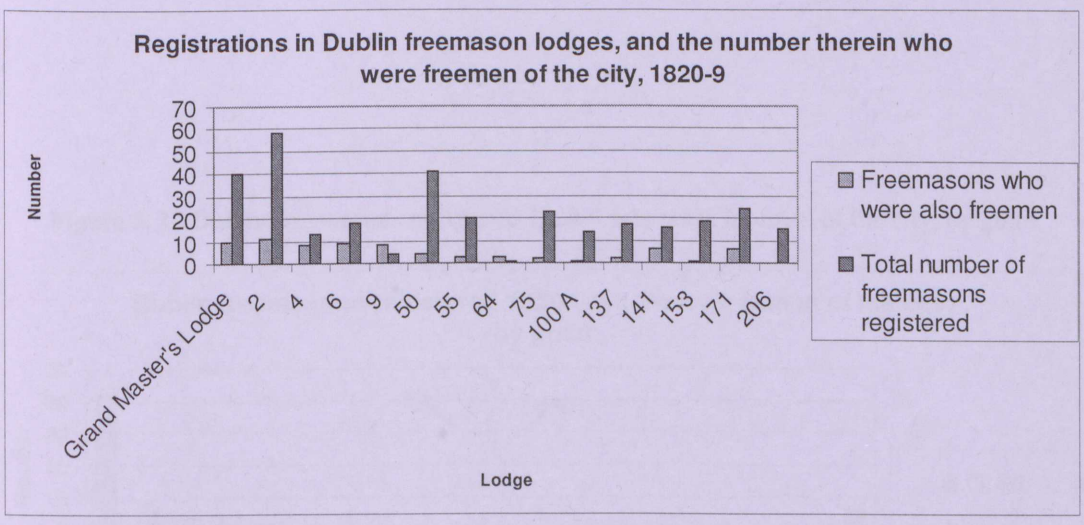
Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

Figure 2.10 Annual registrations of freemen of the city of Dublin in Dublin freemason lodges, and total annual registrations of freemasons in Dublin lodges, 1820-9

Year	Freemason freemen	Total number freemasons registered
1820	20	79
1821	13	66
1822	14	76
1823	17	86
1824	9	42
1825	16	55
1826	7	41
1827	6	34
1828	3	21
1829	4	33
Total	**108**	**533**

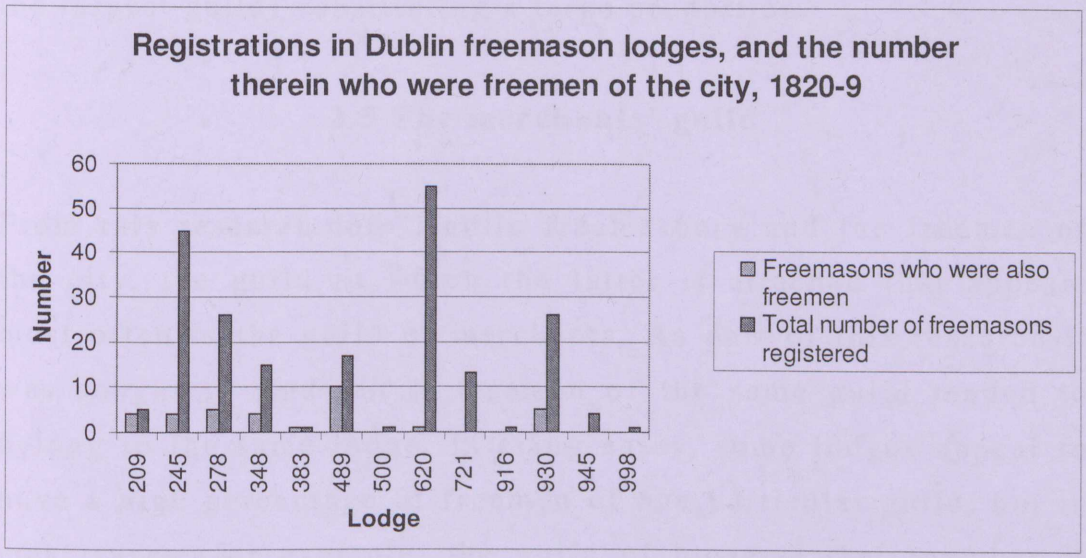
Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

Figure 2.11a Total freemason registrations in Dublin lodges 1820-9 and the number therein who were freemen, by lodge (Grand Master's Lodge-lodge 206)



Source: as figure 2.10.

Figure 2.11b Total freemason registrations in Dublin lodges 1820-29 and the number therein who were freemen, by lodge (lodge 209-998)



Source: as figure 2.10.

Figure 2. 12 Dublin freemasons registered 1820-9 who were freemen of the city, by guild

Source: as figure 2.10.

As in the 1790s, the guilds were evenly represented in Dublin lodges in the 1820s, with only that of the merchants (who were the largest guild) constituting a large proportion.

2.5 The merchants' guild

From this research into Dublin freemasonry and the freemen of the city, the guild to which the latter is attached that appears most often is the guild of merchants. As part of this research it was sought to find out if freemen of the same guild tended to belong to the same lodge. In many cases, some lodges appear to have a high percentage of freemen of one particular guild, but in most cases (for example, the guild of hosiers) their number is small as to render any assumption about their domination of a lodge irrelevant. The merchants' guild had thirty-two representatives on the city commons- far more than any other guild. As previously demonstrated, the freemen of the city who belonged to the merchant guild were the most numerous in Dublin freemason lodges in the two decades under examination. It is therefore the merchant guild which has been examined to establish if freemen of the same guild tended to belong to the same lodge.

The guild of merchants was the oldest of all Dublin's guilds, and was first in order of precedence in the Dublin city assembly.[147] Merchants accounted for 28 per cent of all freemen in freemason lodges the 1790s, and 27 per cent of all freemen in freemason lodges in the 1820s. This in itself highlights the general trend which was that although numbers of free citizens in Dublin lodges had dropped towards the end of the 1820s, they were still attracting similar numbers in proportion to their membership as a total. In terms of the numbers admitted to freedom of the city, the merchant guild represented 21 per cent of

[147] Mary Clark and Raymond Refaussé (eds), *Directory of historic Dublin guilds* (Dublin, 1993), p. 23.

these between the years 1790 and 1830. Therefore, it can be said that Dublin freemason lodges were attracting a slightly higher proportion of merchants than were being admitted to freedom generally.

Of the forty-one Dublin lodges which contained freemen, merchants were members in twenty-eight. Of this twenty-eight, merchants constituted the majority in twelve lodges. In the case of the Grand Lodge, merchants were ten of the thirteen freemen in the lodge in the 1790s, and by the 1820s, their majority had increased, being seven of the ten freemen during that decade. Of course, these figures give only an outline of the pattern of guilds in lodges. More research on a lodge-by-lodge basis, as well as a more in depth analysis of membership over time is required before one would be able to say with certainty whether freemen of a particular guild tended to belong to certain lodges. As will be highlighted in chapter four, it appears from what limited minute book evidence exists that although individual lodges may have a large number of members registered to it, in practice many of these may have stopped attending meetings after a short space of time. However, on this evidence relating to the largest guild, the merchants, guild members may well have had a tendency to congregate in certain lodges. After all, one of the attractions of freemasonry was fraternity amongst one's own class.

Figure 2.13 Merchant guild freemen amongst Dublin freemasons, 1790-9

Merchant guild freemen amongst Dublin freemasons, 1790-9			
Lodge	**Freemen**	**Total freemasons**	**Merchants**
Grand Master's Lodge	13	60	10
2	10	38	3
6	10	60	5
7	6	40	0
54	7	40	1
64	9	48	0
97	1	5	0
100	14	74	6
118	12	57	1
137	14	42	2
141	17	116	6
153	5	46	1
155	9	34	0
171	6	33	2
189	10	56	3
190	11	35	6
198	11	47	9
202	10	55	6
206	12	63	3
207	8	34	2
209	17	84	2
324	19	91	0
348	4	21	1
353	8	31	0
402	4	21	0
489	6	25	0
584	19	46	6
620	14	46	5
635	3	25	1
709	2	10	0
721	3	14	0
792	4	17	1
Total	**298**	**1414**	**82**

Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

Figure 2.14 Merchant guild freemen amongst Dublin freemasons, 1820-9

Merchant guild freemen amongst Dublin freemasons, 1820-9			
	Freemen	Total freemasons	Merchants
Grand Master's Lodge	10	40	7
620	11	58	5
2	8	13	4
50 (B)	9	18	2
55 (A)	8	4	2
75 (A)	4	41	2
6	3	20	1
9	3	1	1
100 (A)	2	23	1
206	1	14	1
278 (A)	2	17	1
489	6	16	1
721	1	19	1
4	6	24	0
64	0	15	0
137	4	5	0
141	4	45	0
153	5	26	0
171	4	15	0
209	1	1	0
245 (A)	10	17	0
348	0	1	0
383 (A)	1	55	0
500 (A)	0	13	0
916	0	1	0
930	5	26	0
945	0	4	0
998	0	1	0
Total	**108**	**533**	**29**

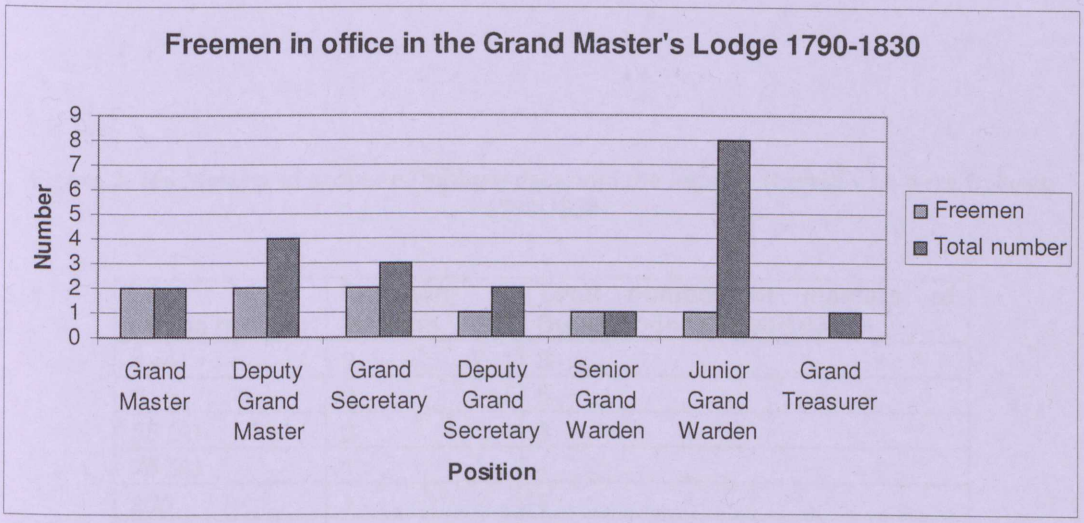
Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

2.6 Officers of Dublin Lodges, 1790-1830

The Grand Master's Lodge was headed by the Grand Master. Practically speaking, the Grand Master's Lodge was seen as above the other Dublin lodges in terms of status, but was in effect, another lodge subordinate to the Grand Lodge. As the membership register shows, some members of the Grand Master's Lodge also held office in the Grand Lodge itself. The most

important officers of the grand lodge were the deputy grand master, two grand wardens (junior and senior), the grand secretary and the grand treasurer. According to Lepper and Crossle, the holders of these offices were a mix of Dublin high society; sons of peers and gentry, lawyers, physicians.[148] From my consultation of the Grand Lodge register and that of the freemen of the city of Dublin, it can be seen that for the period 1790 to 1830, of the twenty officials, nine were freemen of the city of Dublin.

Figure 2. 15 Freemen as a total of Grand Master's Lodge officers, 1790-1830



Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5, (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

It must be remembered that, as Lepper and Crossle have stated, office holders in the Grand Master's Lodge tended to come from upper class backgrounds. This fact is reflected in how the above office holders were admitted to freedom. Of the nine officers stated above, four were admitted by grace especial, three by birth and two by virtue of being listed as 'city at large', which can be taken to mean they were possibly gentry and were admitted without having to pay a fine. This is significant because it shows

[148] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I,* pp 205- 221, op. cit. pp 422- 440.

that six of these office holders were admitted to freedom without having served an apprenticeship with a guild or being a son of a freeman. Instead, it seems that the title of 'freeman of the city' was just another in a collection of dignities.

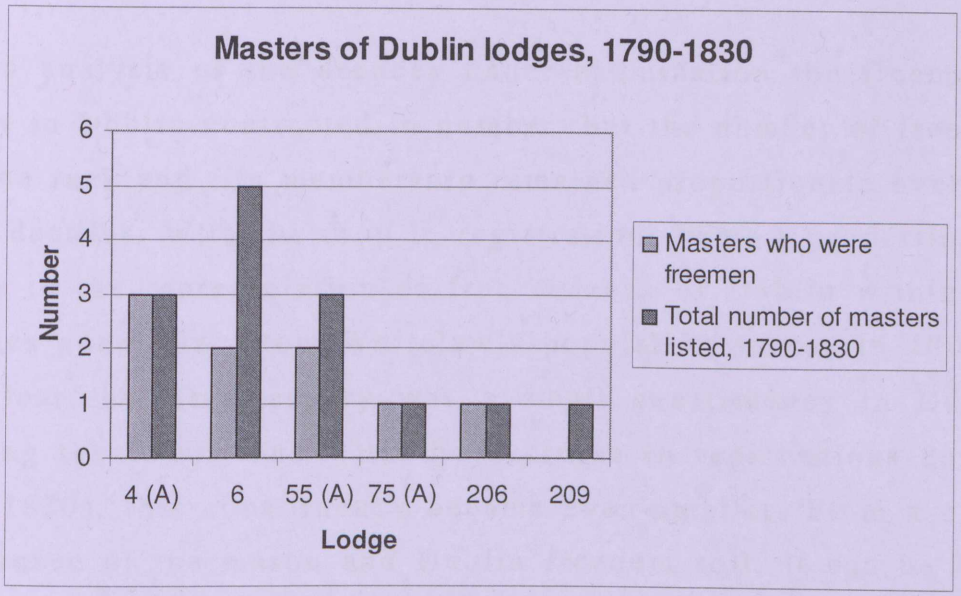
Other lodges in Dublin appear to have had only a master above the rank and file of members, and in this regard the record keeping of lodges appears to be less than conscientious. Of the other forty six lodges on the register, only lodges 4 (A), 6, 55 (A), 75 (A), 206 and 209 have a record of who was master of the lodge. Of the fourteen masters on the Grand Lodge register, nine were freemen; four were admitted by grace especial, two by birth, two by service and one was listed as 'gratis'.

Figure 2. 16a Masters of ordinate Dublin lodges, and the number therein who were freemen 1790-1830

Lodge number	Freemen Masters	Total number of masters of Dublin lodges 1790-1830
4 (A)	3	3
6	2	5
55 (A)	2	3
75 (A)	1	1
206	1	1
209	0	1
Total	**9**	**14**

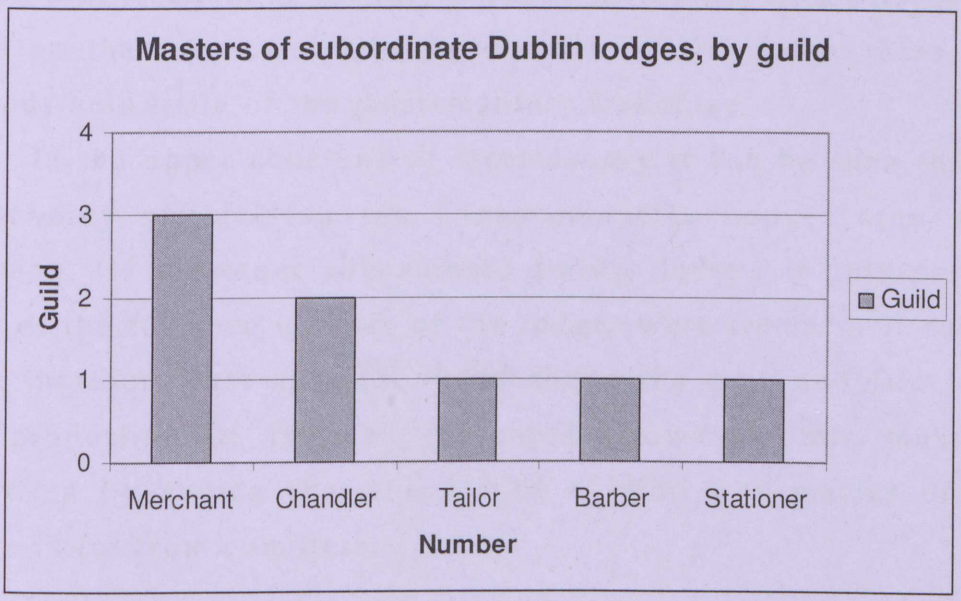
Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

Figure 2. 16b Masters of subordinate Dublin lodges, and the number therein who were freemen 1790-1830



Source: as figure 2.16a.

Figure 2. 17 Masters of Dublin lodges 1790-1830, by guild



Source: as figure 2.16 (a).

2.7 Conclusion

From analysis of the decades under examination the freemason body in Dublin contracted in number, but the number of freemen of the rank and file membership remained proportionate over the two decades. With the drop in registrations came a proportionate drop in the representation of free citizens of Dublin within the lodges generally. From Whitelaw's population survey in 1805 it is clear that freemasonry was a small constituency in Dublin during the 1790s, and with the decrease in registrations during the 1820s, this constituency became even smaller. From a cross reference of the mason and Dublin freedom roll, it can be seen that of the freemason body, only 20 per cent were also freemen in the 1790s and 21 per cent were freemen during the 1820s. As will be shown in chapter four, there were a small number of masons who were Catholic freeholders and thus also entitled to vote. Given that freedom of the city entitled the holder to a vote, it can be seen that rank and file freemasons of Dublin in these two periods held little of the parliamentary franchise.

In the upper echelons of freemasonry it can be seen that of the twenty officials in the Grand Master's Lodge, nine were freemen. Of the other subordinate Dublin lodges in this period, nine of the fourteen masters of the lodges were freemen. It can be seen therefore that amongst those above the rank and file level the proportion of freemen increased. However, this must be qualified by saying that the record of who was master of the lodge is far from complete.

CHAPTER 3- DUBLIN FREEMASONS AND THE DUBLIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 1783, AND THE DUBLIN CITY ASSEMBLY, 1790-1830

3.1 Subscribers to the first Dublin chamber of commerce, 1783
3.2 Dublin freemasons who sat on the city commons as guild representatives
3.3 Freemasons who were sheriffs' peers
3.4 Freemasons who were aldermen
3.5 Freemasons who were sheriffs
3.6 Freemasons who were lord mayor
3.7 Conclusion

This chapter will examine freemason involvement with the Dublin chamber of commerce in 1783, and membership of the Dublin city assembly. The city assembly consisted of two houses, the upper house which consisted of and twenty-five aldermen (including the lord mayor) and the lower house (known as the city commons), containing two sheriffs, sheriffs' peers and ninety-six representatives of the Dublin trade guilds. The board of aldermen and the city commons formed the governing body of the corporation. Four regular assemblies of the governing body were held each year. The 1760 act for the better regulating of the corporation of the city of Dublin gave the guilds the power of direct election of their own city commons representatives.[149] Those so elected were to follow the trade served by their guild, although by the end of the eighteenth century this system was breaking up. The city commons acquired the right to veto the aldermen's choice of lord mayor, and also gained a role in the selection of aldermen. When a vacancy for the post of alderman arose, the aldermen drew up a list of four sheriffs' peers, from

[149] Dublin city corporation act (33 Geo. II, c. 16).

whom the commons would choose one. Also, the two sheriffs were selected by the aldermen from a list drawn up by the commons.[150]

3.1 Subscribers to the first Dublin chamber of commerce, 1783

In ascertaining a profile of members registered to Dublin freemason lodges it is useful to compare the list of freemasons with the first list of subscribers to the Dublin chamber of commerce, which was published on 7 February 1783.[151] According to L.M Cullen, 'the heady democratic sentiments of 1782 and the prospect of free trade created a new impetus (for the creation of general union among traders to serve their common interests)'.[152] A meeting of the committee was held on 10 February 1783 'for the special purpose of taking into consideration a plan for instituting a chamber of commerce for the city'.[153] The drive behind the council was to create an alliance between traders 'and the more radical members of parliament, who in opposition to the existing political establishment, sought reform'.[154] According to Cullen, 'with an independent parliament secure, the line was sharply drawn between reforming members and those who wished to prevent the political revolution of 1782, which had made the Irish parliament constitutionally independent, from leading to wider reforms in political life. The support of the council was to be thrown firmly on the side of the reformers.'[155]

John Patrick and Joshua Pim, who proposed the formation of the council, proposed a membership fee of one guinea, and that 'any merchant or trader resident in the city or its dependencies' would be eligible.[156] The council was elected on 18 March 1783.

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[150] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 123.
[151] 'Subscribers to the Dublin chamber of commerce, 7 February 1783', reproduced in L.M. Cullen, *Princes and pirates: The Dublin chamber of commerce 1783-1983* (Dublin, 1983), p. 55.
[152] Cullen, *Princes and pirates*, p. 45.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Cullen, *Princes and pirates*, p. 46.

In total, 293 merchants paid subscriptions by 1783. As Cullen argues, while many conservative merchants were included in the list of subscribers, 'radicals were represented in force', [157] including Oliver Bond, a future leader of the United Irishmen, and a future freemason; he was registered to lodge 198 in 1785.[158] At the public meeting in March it was proposed that forty-one members would be elected to the council. According to Cullen, 'the liberal sentiments of the meeting were reflected in the fact that at least six Catholics and one Quaker were elected to the council'.[159] Included on the council was Alexander Jaffray, who in 1797 became a freemason, registered to the Grand Master's Lodge, and who held the post of junior Grand Warden in 1800 and deputy Grand Master in 1801.[160] Cullen notes that 'the council was in all probability from the start identified with the radicals...the distribution of ballots showed quite clearly that Dissenters, radicals and prominent Catholics polled best'.[161]

Of the 219 subscribers to the chamber of commerce in 1783, fifteen (7 per cent) were, or would become during the 1780s or 1790s, freemasons registered to Dublin lodges (figure 3.1). Looking at this on a lodge-by-lodge basis it can be seen that four of these fifteen were registered to lodge 198. This lodge began meeting in 1741 and until its cancellation in 1821 was sizeable in terms of registrations; between 1780 and 1800, for example, there were ninety-eight registrations.

[157] Ibid.
[158] Grand Lodge register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[159] Ibid.
[160] Grand Lodge register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[161] Cullen, *Princes and pirates*, p. 46.

Figure 3.1 Dublin freemasons registered 1780-1801 whose names appear on the first list of subscribers to the Dublin chamber of commerce, 7 February 1783

Surname	First name	Title	Lodge	Year freemason	Position
Bond	Oliver		198	1785	
Bourns	Charles		207	1801	
Burnett	Thomas		2	1792	
Cochran	Hugh		141	1790	
Dillon	Richard		207	1790	
Dunn	William Bruce		198	1795	
Hartley	James		198	1785	
Jaffray	Alexander		GML	1797	JGW (1800), DGM (1801)
Kirkpatrick	Alexander	Jun	198	1792	
Kirwin	Thomas		635	1808	
McLoughlin	Patrick		206	1785	
Medlicott	Edward		54	1801	
Plunkett	Michael		100	1792	
Shaw	Robert		137	1781	
Warren	Nathaniel		324	1788	

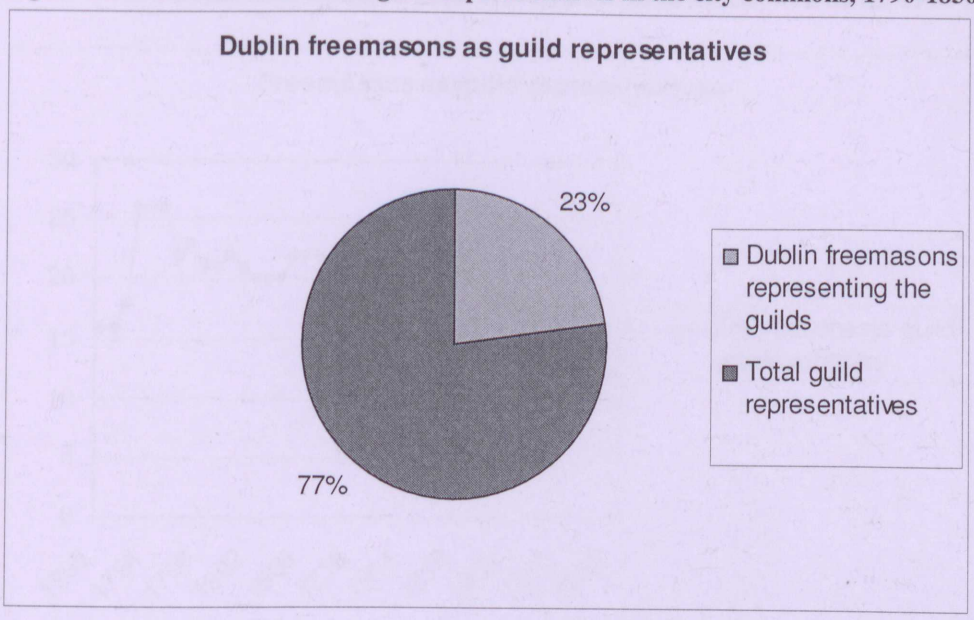
Source: 'Subscribers to the Dublin chamber of commerce, 7 February 1783', reproduced in L.M. Cullen, *Princes and pirates: The Dublin chamber of commerce 1783-1983* (Dublin, 1983), p. 55, and Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

This evidence therefore further suggests there were freemasons of liberal persuasion during the 1780s and 1790s. Whilst more research on the Dublin chamber of commerce is required, the evidence from the first list of subscribers indicates that a number of those involved were freemasons registered to Dublin lodges. With the exception of lodge 198, however, it seems there was not a discernable concentration of subscribers in any one lodge. Even in the case of lodge 198, it should be noted that the membership register indicates that by 1800 it can be approximated that up to 100 men were registered to the lodge.

3.2 Dublin freemasons who sat on the city commons as guild representatives, by guild

From the study of the membership of the guild representatives from 1790 to 1830, it seems that this term of office was not fixed at three years in all cases. Whilst the make up of those elected to the commons as representatives did not change significantly in years when an election was not held, throughout this thirty-two year period new members appear on an annual basis, most commonly in the guild of merchants. Amongst the other guilds, the membership of the commons was more uniform throughout the period. In addition to the name and guild of members, the directory list gives the street in which the member resided. Having established that approximately one fifth of freemen (who were members of a guild) in the periods 1790-1800 and 1820-1830 were freemasons, it can be supposed that some freemasons were also guild representatives. From examination of the list of representatives of the guilds there was found to be 460 guild members elected to the city commons between the years 1790 and 1830, and of this number 105, some 23 per cent, can be identified as freemasons registered to Dublin lodges between the years 1770 and 1830 (see figure 3.2 below).

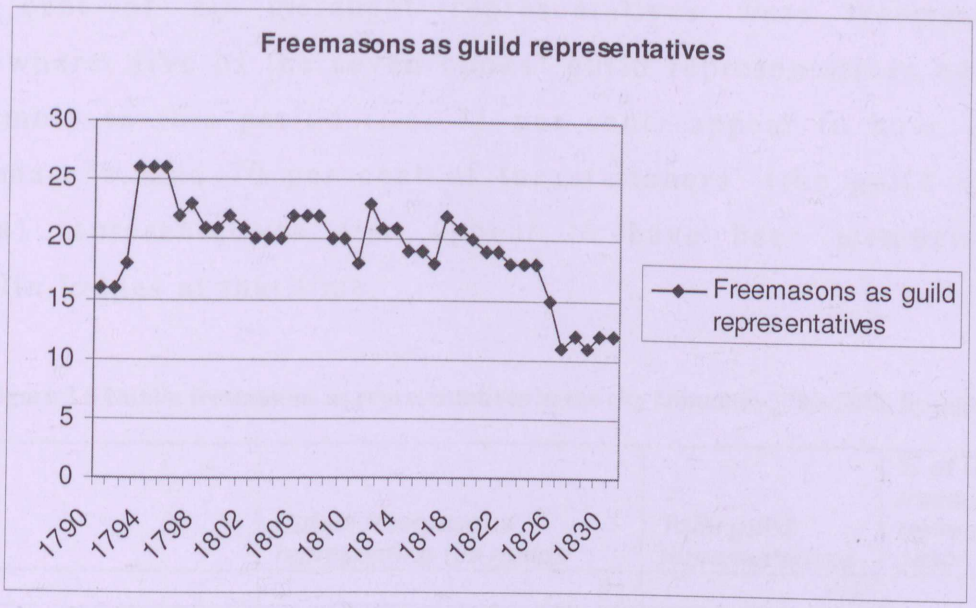
Figure 3.2 Dublin freemasons as guild representatives in the city commons, 1790-1830



Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin, and William Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1790-1830 (Dublin).

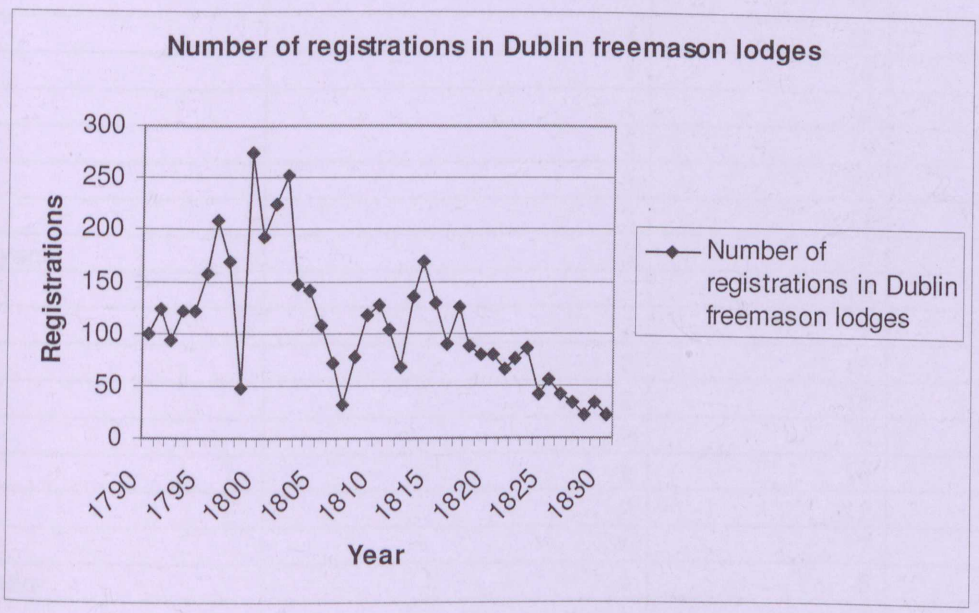
Taking each year individually, the number of freemasons on the council declined as the nineteenth century progressed, as figure 3.3 shows. When compared with figure 3.4, it can be seen that in crude terms that this drop was in line with the decline in registrations of Dublin freemasons after 1800.

Figure 3.3 Dublin freemasons sitting as guild representatives in the city commons, 1790-1830.



Source: as figure 3.1

Figure 3.4 Total freemason registrations in Dublin lodges 1790-1830



Source: Grand Lodge Register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin)

Figure 3.5 below shows that most of the Dublin freemasons who were elected as guild representatives to the city commons between 1790 and 1830 came from the guild of merchants, which

had thirty-two representatives, as opposed to the more usual two-four representatives of the other guilds. As figure 3.5 shows, 21 per cent of all merchant representatives were freemasons. Elsewhere, five of the seven cooks' guild representatives on the assembly in this period (i.e. 71 per cent) appear to have been freemasons, and 70 per cent of the stationers' (the guild of St Luke) representatives also appear to have been members of Dublin lodges at that time.

Figure 3.5 Dublin freemasons as representatives in the city commons 1790-1830, by guild

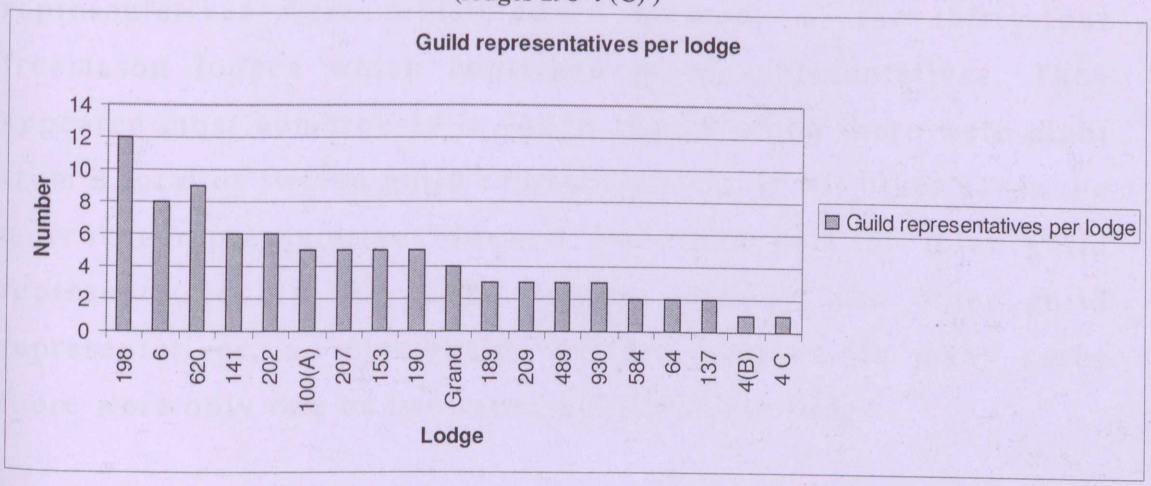
Guild	*Dublin freemasons representing the guilds*	*Total guild representatives*	*% of Dublin freemasons as guild representatives 1790-1830*
Merchants	34	178	21%
Goldsmiths	7	24	30%
Stationers etc	7	10	70%
Barbers	6	13	46%
Cooks	5	7	71%
Tailors	5	16	31%
Saddlers	4	12	33%
Carpenters	4	15	27%
Shoemakers	4	15	27%
Weavers	3	16	19%
Joiners	3	14	21%
Feltmakers	3	11	27%
Sheermen and Dyers	3	9	33%
Brewers	2	15	13%
Coopers	2	7	29%
Smiths	2	18	11%
Bricklayers	2	10	20%
Hosiers	2	9	22%
Butchers	2	13	15%
Bakers	2	12	17%
Curriers	1	7	14%
Glovers and Tanners	1	5	20%
Apothecaries	1	11	9%
Tanners	0	7	0%
Chandlers	0	6	0%
Total	***105***	***460***	***19%***

Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin, and William Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1790-1830 (Dublin).

In terms of the lodges from which representatives came, lodge 198 can be seen to be the lodge which had the greatest number of

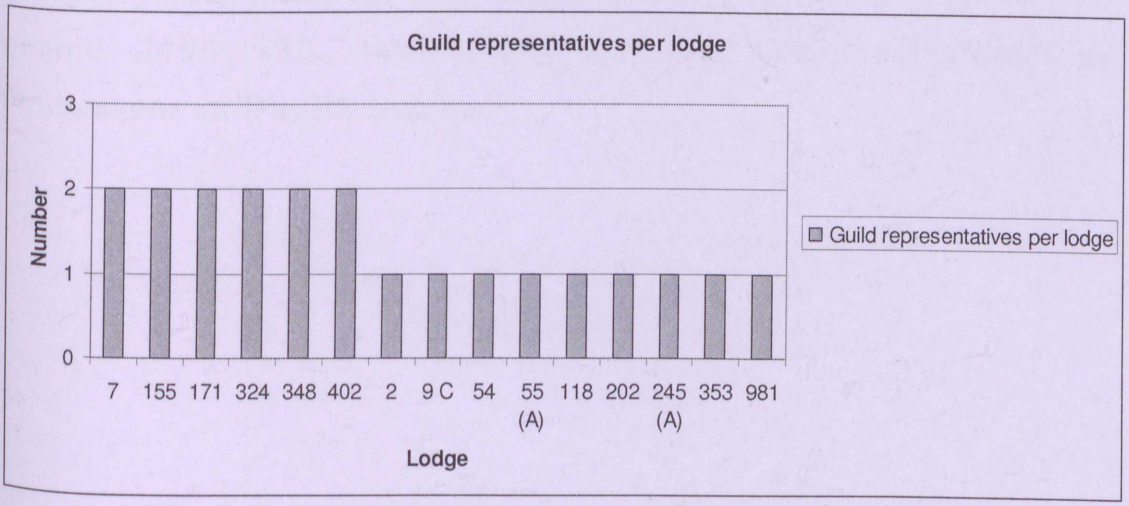
guild representatives registered to it. Of the 105 representatives two changed lodge during their period of office. Figures 3.6 (a) and (b) below include this change

Figure 3.6a Freemason city commons members in their respective Dublin lodges, 1790-1830 (lodges 198-4 (C))



Source: as figure 3.4.

Figure 3.6b Freemason city commons members in their respective Dublin lodges, 1790-1830 (lodges 7-981)



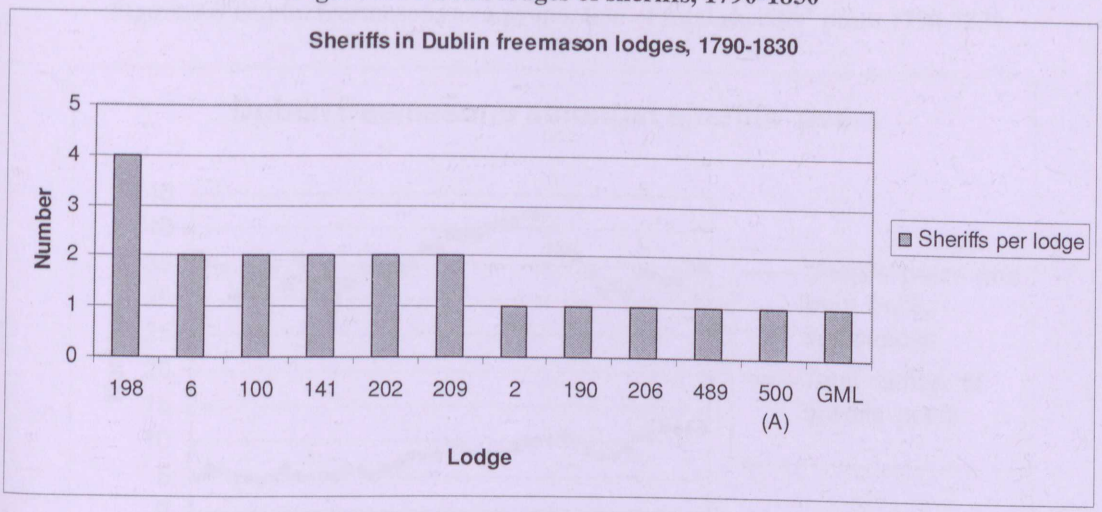
Source: as figure 3.4.

In total, thirty-four of the forty-six Dublin freemason lodges in this period contained at least one guild representative. Given the relatively large number of merchant guild representatives, it is most useful to study these guild representatives to ascertain whether representatives from the same guild tended to belong to the same lodge. In total, merchant representatives were registered to nineteen of the thirty-four freemason lodges which contained guild representatives. They appeared most numerously in lodge 198 in which there were eight from a total of twelve guild representatives. In all other cases the merchant representatives formed less than half of total guild representatives in the other lodges. Amongst the other guild representatives, no discernable pattern emerges. In many cases there were only one or two representatives per lodge.

3.3 Freemasons who were sheriffs

Two sheriffs were elected each year by the aldermen from a list drawn up by the commons. Once again it can be seen that freemasons constituted a sizeable number of those serving on the assembly. In total, of the eighty-four sheriffs serving in the period 1790-1830, twenty (24 percent) were registered as freemasons in Dublin lodges.

Figure 3.7 Dublin lodges of sheriffs, 1790-1830



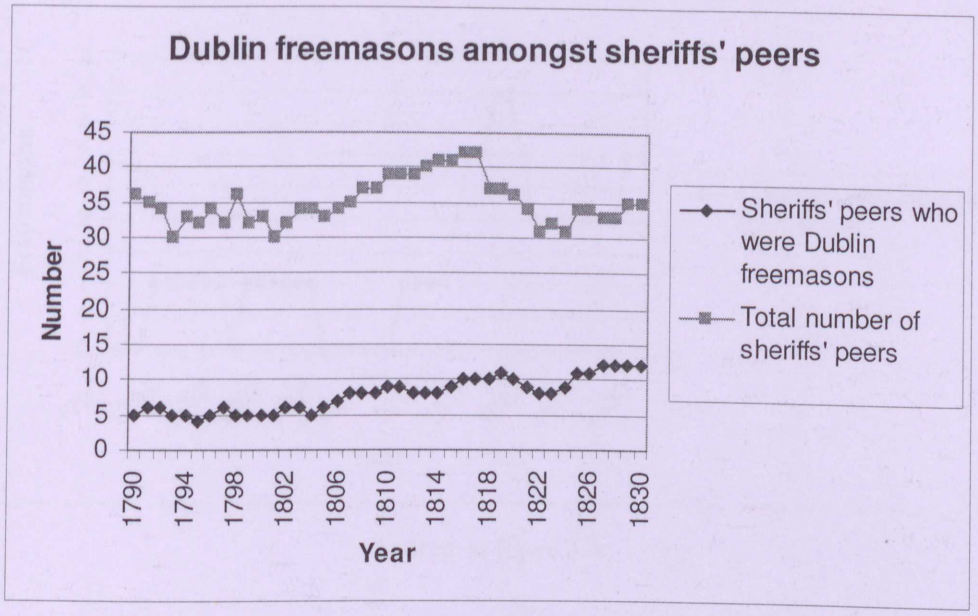
Source: as figure 3.4.

3.4 Freemasons who were sheriffs' peers

Sheriffs' peers were men who were former sheriffs, or men who were chosen as such but who didn't serve and paid a fine in order to avoid doing so, and then made life peers, and they sat in the lower house with the guild representatives.[162] Between 1790 and 1830 there were on average thirty-five sheriffs' peers on the lower house of the assembly. Of this figure, an average of eight were freemasons. Figure 3.8 below shows that the number of freemasons, climbing after 1822, remained proportionate to the number of sheriffs' peers throughout the period.

[162] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 129.

Figure 3.8 Dublin freemasons as a proportion of total sheriffs' peers 1790-1830

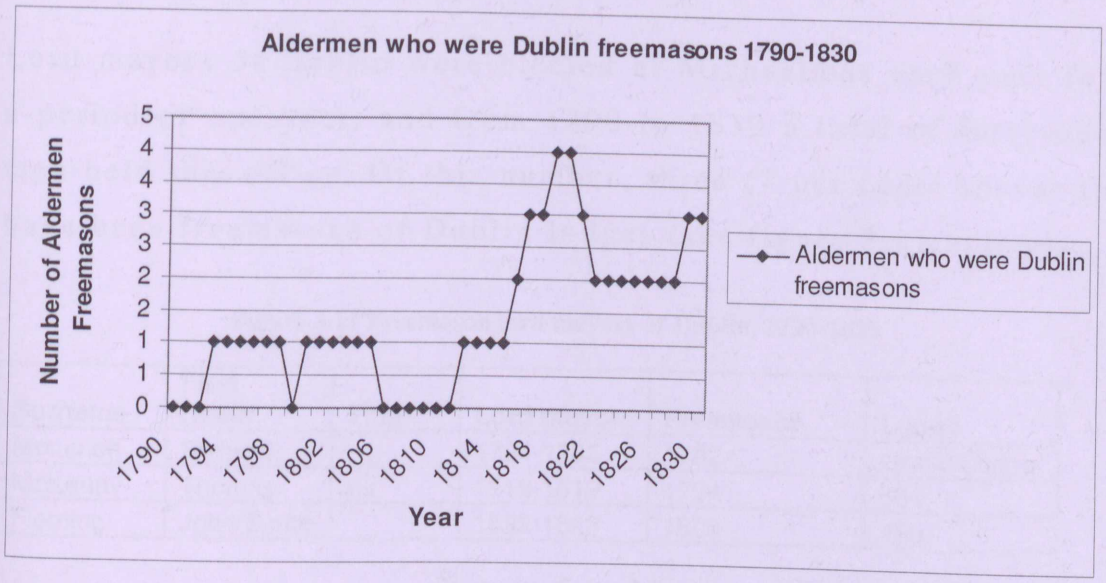


Source: as figure 3.4.

3.5 Freemasons who were aldermen

Of the board of twenty-five aldermen this research indicates that a small number of freemasons were present on the board most years from 1790 to 1830. Figure 3.9 below illustrates that in most years between 1790 and 1830 some aldermen were Dublin freemasons; this number peaked in the years 1819 and 1820, when four (16 per cent) of the twenty-four aldermen (excluding the lord mayor) were registered as freemasons in Dublin lodges.

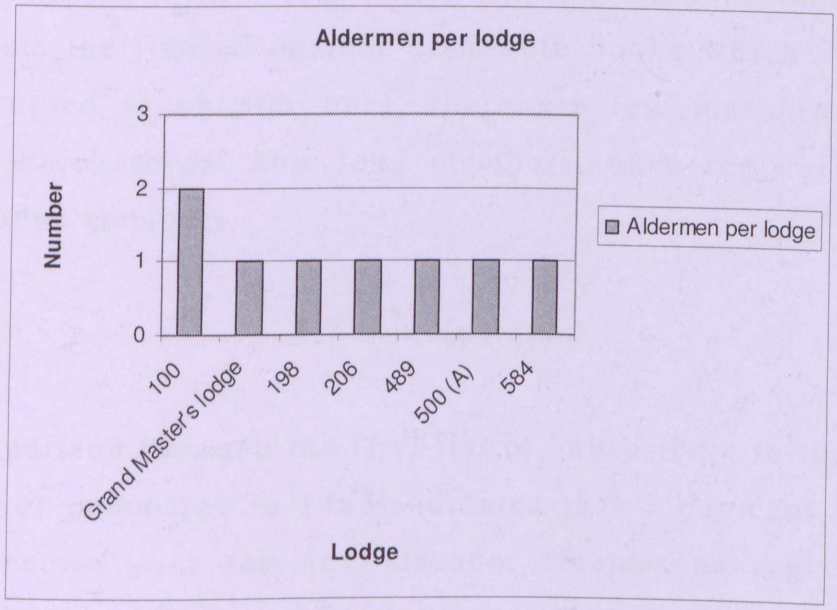
Figure 3.9 Dublin freemasons as aldermen, 1790-1830



Source: as figure 3.4.

These aldermen came from eight lodges. These lodges, shown in figure 3.10, were lodges which contained a relatively large number of freemen (as shown in chapter two).

Figure 3.10 Dublin lodges containing aldermen, 1790-1830



Source: as figure 3.4.

3.6 Freemasons who were lord mayor

Lord mayors of Dublin were elected at Michaelmas each year for a period of one year, and from 1790 to 1830 a total of forty-one men held this office. Of this number, three (7 per cent) appear to have been freemasons of Dublin lodges (see figure 3.11 below).

Figure 3.11 Freemason lord mayors of Dublin, 1790-1830

Surname	First Name	Title	Lord mayor	Freemason	Lodge
Moncrieff	Richard		1794-1795	1782	Grand Lodge
McKenny	Thomas	Sir	1818-1819	1794	584
Fleming	John Smith		1822-1823	1808	489

Source: as figure 3.4.

The warrant for McKenny's lodge, 584, was cancelled on 7 October 1813,[163] some five years before McKenny became lord mayor. Other members of this lodge moved on to lodges 198, 202 and 207,[164] but there is no record of McKenny joining another lodge. It is therefore unclear to what extent McKenny was a committed freemason, and exemplifies the point that freemason primary sources for this period are insufficient to be able to accurately assess how committed masons were to their lodge; aside from the limited number of minute books which still exist (as discussed in chapter one), there are few masonic primary sources which reveal how long members, once registered, were active lodge members.

3.7 Conclusion

The comparison between the first list of subscribers to the Dublin chamber of commerce in 1783 indicates that 7 per cent were, or would become over the next decade, freemasons registered to Dublin lodges. Given the perceived radical outlook of the

[163] Crossle, *Irish masonic records*, p. 116.
[164] Grand Lodge register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vols 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

chamber, this indicates reformist leanings amongst some freemasons. It is notable too that one-third of these freemasons came from one single lodge; lodge 198. In terms of the Dublin city assembly this research indicates that freemasons played an active role in the governance of the city in the period 1790-1830. 23 per cent of all guild representatives were freemasons registered to Dublin lodges, while twenty of the eighty-four sheriffs (24 per cent) were freemasons also. Amongst the aldermen, nine (18 per cent) were freemasons from a total of fifty and of the forty-one lord mayors in this period, three (7 per cent) were freemasons. This indicates that whilst freemasons were well represented in the lower house (i.e. amongst the guild representatives, sheriffs and sheriffs' peers), they did not feature as prominently amongst members of the upper house (i.e. as aldermen or lord mayors). It does not appear that freemasons of a particular guild necessarily came from the same lodge, but some lodges did contain multiple assembly members, whilst eleven of the forty-seven Dublin lodges in this period contained no assembly members at all. As noted in section 3.1, lodge 198 contained one-third of the first subscribers to the chamber of commerce; it also contained many members of the assembly. It had more guild representatives registered to it (twelve) than any other lodge (of whom eight belonged to the most prestigious guild, the merchants); it also contained the highest number of sheriffs (four), and had one of the eight aldermen registered to Dublin lodges.

Once again, however, conclusions derived from the above statistics must be qualified by the limits of freemason primary sources. The lack of comprehensive minute book data, or any other source to tell us when members left the brotherhood, mean that this chapter can only reveal the above members of the Dublin city assembly were freemasons at some point during period under study. As exemplified by the Thomas McKenny, it may have been the case that some of the above assembly members joined lodges

but, for whatever reason, dropped out. Likewise, it may have been the case that they joined and were committed to the brotherhood for a long time. Unfortunately, masonic primary sources in this period of their history by and large do not afford the luxury of being able to say.

CHAPTER 4- DUBLIN FREEMASONS AND THE ELECTIONS OF 1806 AND 1820

Freemason constitutions make clear that the brotherhood was, theoretically at least, a benevolent society whose aim was charity and fellowship. Freemasons, by way of regulations in Anderson's *Constitutions*, were 'never to express particular political opinions while clad as masons'. [165] However, during the 1790s it is generally accepted, even by masonic historians themselves, that some meetings of freemasons were infiltrated by political organisations, such as the United Irishmen, who sought to use the

[165] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 296.

secrecy of the lodge meeting as a cover for their own subversive ends.[166] Historians such as Patrick Fagan and Jim Smyth have suggested support amongst the freemason body for the Catholic cause, namely that some United Irishmen joined freemason lodges during the 1790s.[167] The aim of this chapter is to examine some aspects of the role Dublin freemasons played in Dublin politics from the 1790s until 1830. Key evidence in this regard will come from poll books of the elections of 1806 and 1820. In chapter two the list of Dublin freemasons with the roll of freemen of the city of Dublin was compared, producing a list of freemen of the city who joined Dublin freemason lodges during the 1790s and the 1820s. In this chapter the voting record of those freemen who became freemasons during the 1790s in the election of 1806 will be examined. From these findings it will firstly be ascertained how freemasons voted on a lodge-by-lodge basis. Secondly, what conclusions can be drawn from this in light of Fagan's link of freemason lodges with the United Irishmen will be discussed. Mirala has argued that members of freemason lodges in Ulster came from a wide range of political viewpoints.[168] This chapter therefore will explore, by examination of voting records, whether this was also the case in Dublin lodges.

As will be discussed in this chapter, the 1820 election 'gave Dublin voters for the first time an inescapable choice between a pro- and anti-emancipation candidates'.[169] The list of freemen of the city who became freemasons during the 1820s will be compared with poll book data from this election in order to ascertain what, if any, perceptible change took place of the political persuasions of men joining the masons in the 1820s from those who joined in the 1790s. The votes of the relevant freemasons who voted in 1806 and also 1820 will also be

[166] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge*, p. 296.
[167] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, pp 126-58, and Smyth, 'Freemasonry and the United Irishmen' in Dickson *et al*, *The United Irishmen*, pp 167-175.
[168] Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland*, p. 29.
[169] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 305.

examined. This will be significant, given that to date no study, other than the general work of Lepper and Crossle on the history of the Grand Lodge, has been carried out on Dublin freemasons in the early nineteenth century.

In addition, the list of Dublin freemasons involved in the Dublin city assembly (as guild representatives, sheriffs, aldermen and lord mayors) from 1790 to 1830 will be compared with poll data from both the 1806 and 1820 election. This will consider what change, if any, took place in the political persuasions of these Dublin freemasons in this period.

This chapter will also examine the list of those who voted in the 1806 and 1820 elections as freeholders, and this will be compared to the list of Dublin freemasons.

In addition, articles and advertisements in the *Freeman's Journal* in this period pertaining to Dublin freemasons will be considered and what could be perceived as evidence of their political persuasions, at both grassroots level and in the upper echelons of the organisation.

4.1 Dublin freemasonry in the 1790s- links to the United Irishmen, and the issue of Catholic relief and emancipation

Patrick Fagan devotes a chapter in *Catholiçs in a protestant country* to Catholic involvement in freemasonry, as well as a section on freemasons and the United Irishmen.[170] There is evidence of United Irish infiltration of lodges from Fagan's work (although, as Mirala argues, this evidence is not conclusive),[171] and indeed the masonic historians Lepper and Crossle refer to this episode in freemason history when a 'certain party designed to make use of the masonic lodges as a means of concealing the

[170] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, pp 126-58.
[171] Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland, 1750-1950*, p. 44.

plots in which it was engaged'.[172] According to Jim Smyth, the purpose of infiltration was that 'membership of the craft gave United Irish agents access to another ready made lodge network, and enabled them to call upon their masonic brothers' hospitality as they travelled around the country'.[173]

Fagan concludes that at least two lodges were used as covers for United Irish activity, namely lodge 792 (the medical lodge) and lodge 709 (the barrister's lodge).[174] As previously noted, freemason record keeping was often less than comprehensive. However, in the case of these two lodges at least, the evidence of the membership register indicates that these lodges may have been used for United Irish purposes. In the case of lodge 792 (established in February 1794), its three founder members were, according to Fagan, United Irishmen. In addition, by 1797 the membership had increased to seventeen, of whom Fagan positively identifies six as United Irishmen.[175] Of this number, Fagan asserts that at least five were Catholic, all of whom were physicians or surgeons, and that this lodge was most likely intended as a medical corps for the United Irishmen in the event of hostilities.[176] Of lodge 709, Fagan points to evidence that it had only ten members during its existence (all lawyers), and that its erasure from the register in July 1799 at the same time as the medical lodge 'seems to identify it as a United Irish cell'.[177] It has recently been argued that Daniel O'Connell himself was a United Irishman,[178] and he became a member of lodge 189 on 2 April 1799.[179] On that day twenty five other men were registered to this lodge, which leads Fagan to conclude that this lodge was a

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[172] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, p. 292.
[173] Smyth, 'Freemasonry and the United Irishmen' in Dickson *et al*, *The United Irishmen*, pp 167-75.
[174] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 142.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.
[178] C.J. Woods, 'Historical revision: Was O'Connell a United Irishman?' in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxv, no. 138 (Nov. 2006), pp 173-83.
[179] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

front for the United Irishmen.[180] Fagan suggests that other lodges, namely 7, 137, 584, 202, 324 and 198 contained some United Irishmen. It is interesting to note that Walter Wade, Deputy Grand Master in 1793,[181] appears to have been a United Irishman[182] which, Fagan argues, resulted in a serious rift developing between Wade and the Grand Lodge over the discussion of political and religious subjects in lodges.[183]

This evidence suggests that there were some sympathies for the United Irishmen amongst Dublin freemasons. Bearing in mind that the membership register indicate there was up thirty-three active lodges in the city in the 1790s (see chapter one) there is evidence to suggest at least some of these did contain members with links to the United Irishmen, and this appears to have been exclusively the case in lodges 709 and 792.

The Grand Master from 1789 until 1813 was Lord Donoughmore, who was 'well disposed to the Catholic cause',[184] and in June 1810 sponsored an unsuccessful petition for Catholic emancipation in the House of Lords.[185] Fagan quotes a letter to Donoughmore written by O'Connell in 1821 in which O'Connell acknowledges his indebtedness: 'for myself personally, I am under obligations to your Lordship and your family which no time can weaken nor can any opportunity ever occur to enable me sufficiently to testify my sense of the favours which I have received'.[186] The duke of Leinster became Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland in 1813. From the evidence of the *Freeman's Journal* he was inclined to favour Catholic claims for emancipation. On 26 February 1819 a petition appeared in the

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[180] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 146.
[181] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[182] R.B. McDowell, 'The personnel of the Dublin society of United Irishmen', in *Irish Historical Studies*, ii, no. 5 (Mar. 1940), p. 51.
[183] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 147.
[184] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 148.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Maurice R. O' Connell (ed), *The correspondence of Daniel O' Connell*, 8 vols (Dublin 1972-80), ii, p. 332, reprinted in Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 148.

Freeman's Journal 'to both Houses of Parliament for the relief of Catholic brethren'. There was a meeting of the Protestant freemen, freeholders and householders of the city of Dublin. The meeting was chaired by the lord mayor, Thomas McKenny (also a freemason, discussed further on), and upon his departure, the duke of Leinster. Amongst the resolutions passed was that

> we deeply lament that our Roman Catholic brethren should labour under any disabilities on account of their religion...we do most humbly petition your honourable house in favour of our brethren and fellow subjects, the persons professing the Roman Catholic religion...we do consider their application to be admitted to the privileges and franchises of the constitution to be just...we do most zealously implore your honourable House to comply with the prayer of said petition, and to relieve the persons professing the Roman Catholic religion from all civil and political disabilities...we consider the emancipation of the Roman Catholics to be a measure that would prove highly conducive to the tranquillity of Ireland, and that in our opinion, it is essentially necessary for the permanent prosperity of the United Empire.[187]

Further to suggest Catholic sympathies, on 24 January 1822 a notice appears of a meeting, chaired by the duke of Leinster, of 'friends and admirers of the late Henry Grattan', for the purpose of 'collecting subscriptions erecting a statue of the late Right Honourable Henry Grattan in some open and public situation in this city'.[188]

4.2 1806 election: background, and results amongst freemasons who joined the brotherhood during the 1790s

The election in 1806 was held to elect two members to represent the city of Dublin in the imperial parliament. The dominant theme of Dublin politics in the post union period was that of continuity.[189] Candidates were reluctant to take up sectional, class- based or reformist issues. This was due to pressures for counter-revolutionary cohesion.[190] According to Hill, 'during this

[187] *Freeman's Journal*, 26 Feb. 1819
[188] *Freeman's Journal*, 24 Jan. 1822
[189] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 270.
[190] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 271.

period traditional assumptions about the desirability of non-party approach meant that divisive matters were relegated to the background'. Grattan (whose had been the colonel in command of lodge 620, the First Volunteer Masonic Lodge of Ireland) and Robert Shaw (whose father appears to have been registered to lodge 137 on 7 June 1781)[191] were successful, with John La Touche losing. There were two issues of importance to voters; the act of union, which was resented, and loyalty to the king and (Protestant) constitution (which provided an obstacle to the pursuit of Catholic emancipation.

Each candidate was seen to be on the side of having opposed the union.[192] Grattan's name was still linked with the constitution of 1782, and this can account for his success at the poll.[193] However, by 1806 discussion of repeal was at an early stage and therefore it cannot be assumed that Grattan was elected on a repeal platform at this election. In addition, the issue of loyalty was important in post union Dublin politics. For example, during the electoral contest of 1802 the candidates' record during the rebellion was canvassed. In addition, the issue was present at guild and corporation elections. *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* in 1807 was satisfied that each candidate for the merchants' guild elections to the city commons had established their loyalty to king and constitution. Therefore it was an electoral advantage not to champion the cause of emancipation during the post union period. The king's opposition to complete equality for Catholics meant that it could be claimed that only Protestants could be completely loyal to the constitution. Whilst there was a section of the corporation which believed the monarch desired 'the cordial and hearty union of all classes of his subjects of this Kingdom', this group was very much in the minority in this period.[194]

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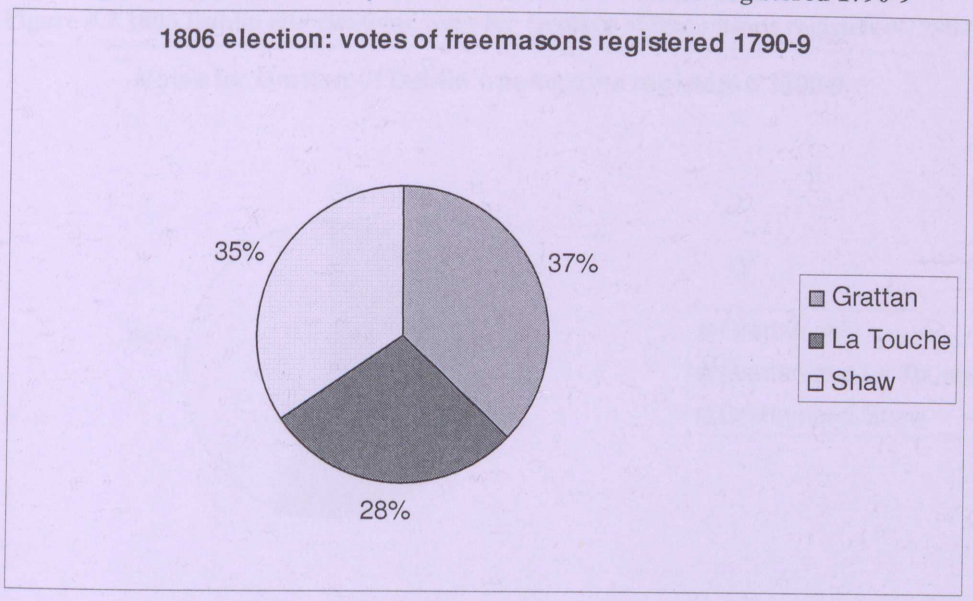
[191] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[192] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 272.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.

Despite some subtle changes which were creeping in to the debate on the Catholic question (such as their admission to certain political rights, for example the right to freedom of the city), the post union period in Dublin was 'inherently conservative, and in which it became hard to distinguish between the views of ultra Protestants and Orangemen from those of Dublin Protestants in general'.[195] Of the three candidates in the 1806 election, Grattan and La Touche were perceived to be friendly to Catholic claims. Shaw, who in 1805 presented the corporation's petition against Catholic emancipation to parliament, was not, and in light of this it is worth identifying voting patterns of Dublin freemasons at the 1806 election.

From the list of freemasons and the list of freemen of the city of Dublin a list of those freemasons who joined the brotherhood between the years 1790 and 1799 who were also on the list of freemen of the city of Dublin has been compiled (see chapter two). This list has been checked this list against the poll book from the 1806 election in order to ascertain voting patterns amongst the relevant freemasons who joined the brotherhood during the 1790s. From figure 4.1 below it can be seen that of these freemasons, 35 per cent voted for Shaw (the candidate perceived to be against Catholic claims for emancipation), 28 per cent voted for La Touche and 37 per cent voted for Grattan.

[195] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 274.

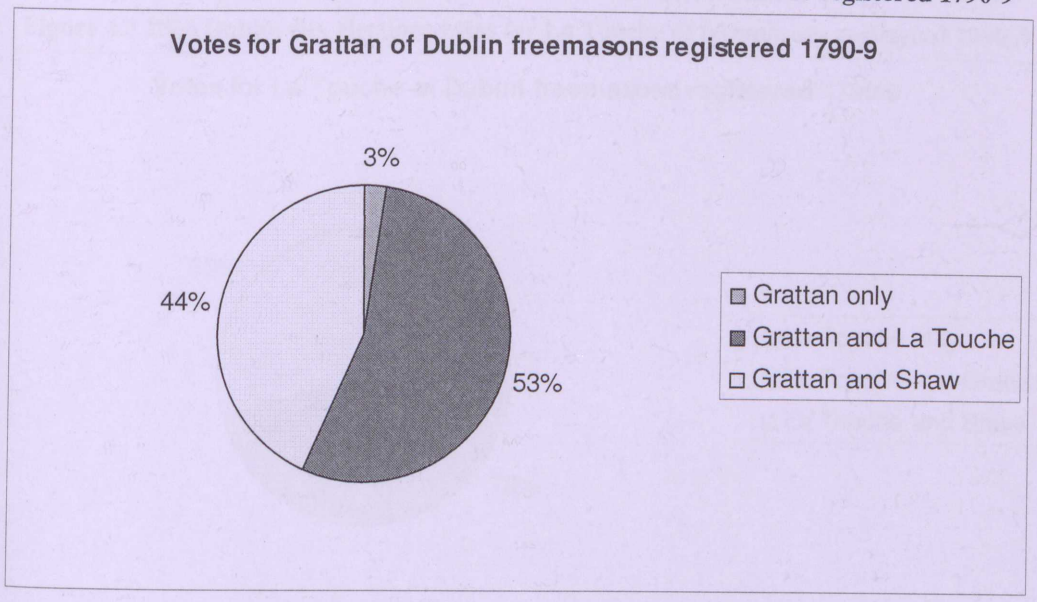
Figure 4.1 1806 Dublin city election: votes of freemasons registered 1790-9



Grattan	80	37%
La Touche	61	28%
Shaw	75	35%
Total	**216**	**100%**

Source: *The poll for electing two members to represent the city of Dublin in the imperial parliament...1806* (Dublin, n.d.), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

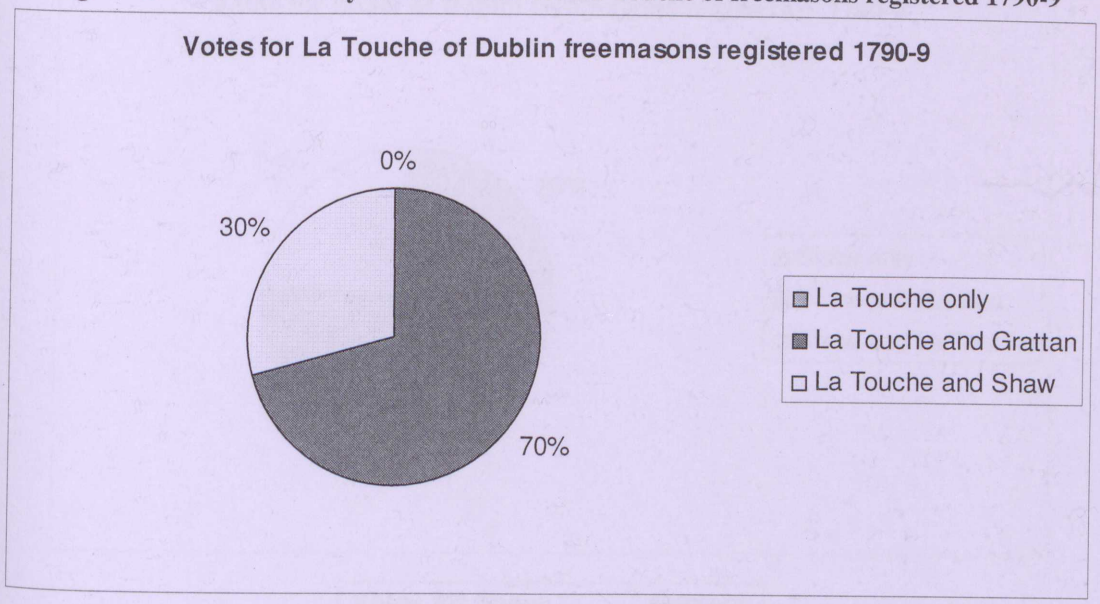
Figure 4.2 1806 Dublin city election: votes for Grattan of freemasons registered 1790-9



Votes for Grattan	Number
Grattan only	2
Grattan and La Touche	43
Grattan and Shaw	35
Total	**80**

Source: as figure 4.1.

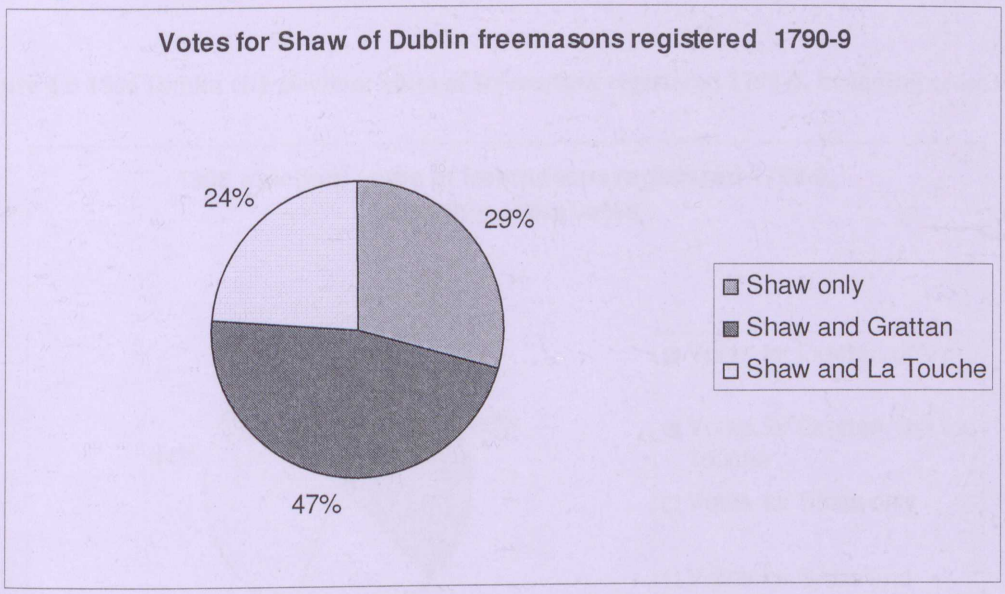
Figure 4.3 1806 Dublin city election: votes for La Touche of freemasons registered 1790-9



Votes for La Touche	Number
La Touche only	0
La Touche and Grattan	43
La Touche and Shaw	18
Total	**61**

Source: as figure 4.1.

Figure 4.4 1806 Dublin city election: votes for Shaw of freemasons registered 1790-9



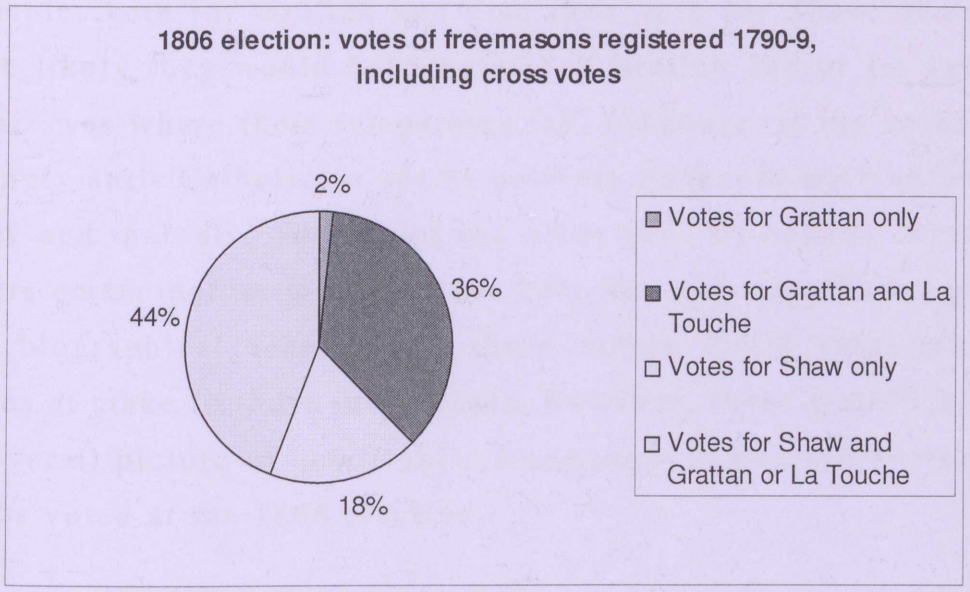
Votes for Shaw	Number
Shaw only	22
Shaw and Grattan	35
Shaw and La Touche	18
Total	**75**

Source: as figure 4.1

Looking at figures 4.2 to 4.4 which show the breakdown of votes for each candidate it can be seen that more freemason voters voted for Shaw and neither of the two other candidates than was the case for those who voted for Grattan or La Touche. It can be seen that 29 per cent of those freemasons who voted for Shaw did so and did not use their other vote for another candidate (figure 4.4). In contrast, 97 per cent of those freemasons who voted for Grattan also chose to vote for another candidate (figure 4.2), whilst in the case of La Touche, every single freemason who voted for him did so in addition to voting for another candidate (figure 4.3). Forty-three of the 122 freemasons who voted did so for both Grattan and La Touche, with two voting for just Grattan (figure 4.2). This is significant as it shows there was an element

among the voters under study (who voted for Shaw and neither of the other two) which seem to have been opposed to emancipation.

Figure 4.5 1806 Dublin city election: votes of freemasons registered 1790-9, including cross votes



Votes for Grattan only	2
Votes for Grattan and La Touche	43
Votes for Shaw only	22
Votes for Shaw and Grattan or La Touche	53
Total	**120**

Source: as figure 4.1

Considering the political persuasions of each candidate, Grattan and La Touche being friendly to Catholic claims and Shaw being hostile, figure 4.5 above can be used to deduce where the freemasons in question stood on this issue. As can be seen in the graph above, forty-five (38 per cent) of the 120 voters voted for Grattan or Grattan and La Touche (not Shaw). Likewise, twenty-two (18 per cent) voted for Shaw and neither of the other two. It therefore could be argued that of the freemasons who joined the brotherhood in the 1790s and who were freemen of the city and voted in the 1806 election 38 per cent showed a preference for the pro- Catholic relief candidates, whilst 18 per

cent showed a preference for the candidate perceived to be hostile to Catholic claims. The other fifty-three (44 per cent) cross-voted between Shaw and either Grattan or La Touche. It seems unlikely that a voter with strong pro- Catholic sympathies would, for example, vote for Grattan and also then vote for Shaw. It seems more likely they would have voted for Grattan and/or La Touche if this was where their sympathies lay. Likewise, if the voter was strongly anti- Catholic, it seems unlikely he would have voted for Shaw and then also for one of the other two. Of course, for some voters emancipation may not have been the only significant issue, and biographical research of these voters could establish the issues at stake to these individuals. However, these statistics give an overall picture of how Dublin freemasons registered during the 1790s voted at the 1806 election.

4.3 1806 election: voting patterns in lodges

From the above analysis it can be argued that of the freemasons who joined the brotherhood in the 1790s some 38 per cent of those who voted in the 1806 election voted for Grattan and/or La Touche (but not Shaw), who were in favour of Catholic relief, versus 18 per cent who voted for Shaw and neither of the other two, from which it could be argued that these freemasons were not on the side of Catholic relief. The remaining voters, some 44 per cent, voted for either Grattan or La Touche in addition to voting for Shaw; their political persuasions are therefore less clearly defined. The next step is to identify voting patterns within lodges. Figure 4.6 below shows the overall pattern of votes of freemasons on a lodge by lodge basis. This is useful as it gives an overall picture of how many votes each candidate received on a lodge by lodge basis.

Figure 4.6 1806 election: votes of Dublin freemasons registered 1790-9, by lodge

Lodge	Grattan	La Touche	Shaw
Grand Master's Lodge	3	1	3
2	3	3	4
6	4	4	2
7	1	1	0
54	2	2	2
64	1	2	0
97	1	0	1
100	4	2	2
118	3	1	2
137	5	2	4
141	7	4	5
153	1	0	1
155	3	2	2
171	1	2	2
189	2	2	4
190	4	3	2
198	5	3	1
202	2	3	4
206	3	4	2
207	1	0	3
209	3	2	5
348	1	1	2
324	6	3	8
353	4	4	5
402	1	0	1
489	1	1	2
584	3	3	2
620	5	6	2
635	0	0	1
930	0	0	1
Total	**80**	**61**	**75**

Source: as figure 4.1

It is useful to compare the above data on voting patterns within lodges with what Fagan has argued about some of these individual lodges. Figure 4.7 below shows lodges which Fagan considered 'Catholic-orientated',[196] and how members of these lodges who joined in the 1790s voted in the 1806 election.

[196] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 142.

Figure 4.7 1806 election: voting record of lodges Fagan considered 'Catholic-orientated'

Lodge	Votes for Grattan	Votes for La Touche	Votes for Shaw
54	2	2	2
64	1	2	0
137	5	2	4
353	4	4	5

Source: *The poll for electing two members to represent the city of Dublin in the imperial parliament...1806* (Dublin, n.d.), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vol. 1, series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).and Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country* (Dublin, 1998), p. 134.

Figure 4.7 demonstrates Fagan's assumptions about the orientation of lodges have some validity. In lodges which still existed by the 1790s (in which members registered in the 1790s, who were freemen of the city who voted) the candidates perceived to be friendly to Catholic claims polled quite well. In lodge 353 Shaw did win more votes, and even in this case both Grattan and La Touche won four votes. Of these lodges in total, Grattan won twelve votes, La Touche won ten and Shaw won eleven. Fagan argues that lodges 709 and 792 were fronts for the United Irishmen, but these lodges were erased from the register in 1799 and therefore are not represented in figure 4.6 above. By comparing the freemason membership register with McDowell's list of United Irishmen[197] Fagan suggests that other Dublin lodges may have contained United Irishmen, and their voting record is outlined in figure 4.8 below.

[197] McDowell, R.B., 'The personnel of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen', in *Irish Historical Studies*, ii, no. 5 (Mar. 1940), pp 12-53.

Figure 4.8 1806 election: voting record of freemasons who joined lodges during the 1790s which Fagan suspected of having United Irishmen as members

Lodge	Votes for Grattan	Votes for La Touche	Votes for Shaw
7	1	1	0
137	5	2	4
190	4	3	2
198	5	3	1
202	3	2	4
324	6	3	8
584	3	3	2

Source: as figure 4.7.

The voting records of these lodges show that the pro-Catholic candidates combined did match or exceed the votes won by Shaw. That said Shaw won votes in all but lodge 7. Therefore, whilst these lodges did appear to have support for emancipation, the number of votes won by Shaw, particularly in lodge 324, indicates that by 1806 none of these lodges appeared to have been strongly on one side or the other of the Catholic relief question. This may represent a change from the 1790s.

4.4 1820 election: background and results amongst freemasons who joined the brotherhood during the 1820s

The period of fifteen years after 1815 was dominated politically by Catholic claims for emancipation. The sense of grievance of Irish Catholics sprang from their continued exclusion from areas of Irish life. For example, despite the repeal of many of the penal laws in 1793, Catholics continued to be excluded from obtaining the freedom of the city of Dublin (as noted in chapter two). Furthermore, Catholics were disadvantaged in terms of the legal profession. It was important for the Catholic leaders of the emancipation drive to have Dublin metropolitan opinion on their side. According to Hill, 'its sheer size and status as the Irish capital; its ancient corporate traditions and patriot credentials;

the open nature of its parliamentary constituency, and the adherence of a great majority of the freemen to the established church' meant that Dublin was the most important Irish city in terms of the weight attached to the public expression of its views.[198] By the late 1810s it appeared that changes might be afoot. In Dublin Castle Chief Secretary Charles Grant (1818-21), was a supporter of Catholic emancipation, and the lord mayor of Dublin, Alderman Thomas McKenny (who was a freemason registered to lodge 584) was also sympathetic to Catholic claims. In addition, McKenny acceded to the request of Protestant peers (including the duke of Leinster, the Grand Master of the freemasons in Ireland) to a meeting which was held on 11 February 1819 to petition for emancipation, and at which it was judged that emancipation would be 'highly conducive to the tranquillity of Ireland'.[199] Whilst ultra-Protestants did organise a counter-petition, the fact that such a meeting was even held was a setback for opponents of emancipation, such as John Giffard, who stated that 'the world was upside down'.[200] The implication of this meeting was that a division in civic circles on the emancipation issue existed. Furthermore, it was seen as a snub to the corporation of Dublin, which was the official voice of Protestant Dublin opinion.

The death of Henry Grattan on 4 June 1820 gave Dublin voters for the first time 'an inescapable choice between pro- and anti-emancipation candidates'.[201] Ultra-Protestants never put up a candidate to oppose Grattan, such was his standing, but within days of his death Thomas Ellis, governor of the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley and described at a Catholic meeting as 'the advocate of intolerance',[202] declared his intention to stand as a candidate. 'Independent electors' and Catholic freeholders were

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[198] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 305.
[199] *Freeman's Journal*, 26 Feb. 1819.
[200] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 307.
[201] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 315.
[202] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 308.

encouraged to support the son of the decreased MP, Henry Grattan, junior. Although initially both campaigned on conventional issues such as the interests of the city of Dublin and Ireland in general, it became apparent that the major issue was that of the Catholic question. Grattan campaigned on the platform of the memory of 1782 and the issue of emancipation. In contrast, Ellis stood for the principles of 1688, i.e. civil and religious liberty in the traditional Protestant sense. Ellis was charged with being an Orangeman and his supporters of bigotry. Grattan's supporters were charged with threatening an economic boycott of those guilds who favoured Ellis. Furthermore, Ellis went as far as to imply that Grattan and his supporters were the remnants of a 'disaffected' party that had disgraced the country by precipitating the 1798 rebellion.[203] Ultimately, Ellis defeated Grattan by 1,094 votes to 785.[204]

In chapter two the list of Dublin freemasons who joined the brotherhood in the 1820s was compared with the Dublin city freedom roll. Using this list of Dublin freemasons who were freemen of the city (and thus eligible to vote in elections) and F. O' Neill's poll book of the 1820 election the voting patterns of these Dublin freemasons can be analysed and compared this to the election of 1806 in which the majority of freemason voters appeared to be in support of Catholic relief.

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[203] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 308.

[204] F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820).

Figure 4.9 1820 election: votes of Dublin freemasons registered 1820-9

Candidate	Number of votes
Grattan	12
Ellis	17
Total	**29**

Source: F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

During the 1820s 100 men who became freemasons in that decade were also freemen of the city of Dublin and were thus eligible to vote. It has been ascertained that sixty-nine of these were freemen in 1820 or before, and were thus eligible to vote in this election. However, the poll book indicates that forty of these 'stayed neutral', which can be taken to mean they did not vote. Of the twenty-nine who did, twelve voted for Grattan and seventeen voted for Ellis (see figure 4.9). Of the total electorate, Ellis won 58 per cent of the votes while Grattan won 42 per cent. Of the particular freemasons in figure 4.9 it can be seen that Ellis won the same percentage of the vote. Overall, the results indicate that most of the freemasons who joined the brotherhood in the 1820s and who voted did not favour emancipation.

4.5 1820 election: voting pattern in lodges

Figure 4.10 1820 election: votes of Dublin freemasons registered 1820-9, by lodge

Lodge number	Ellis	Grattan
2	1	2
4 (C)	4	1
6	1	0
9 (C)	1	0
50 (B)	0	2
55 (A)	1	0
141	0	1
153	1	1
171	1	1
245 (A)	0	1
278	0	1
489	2	0
620	1	0
930	1	2
Grand Master's Lodge	3	0
Total votes	**17**	**12**

Source: as figure 4.9.

It is useful to compare these statistics with those ascertained from the election of 1806. In figure 4.10 above it can be seen that Ellis won the majority of votes in seven lodges, with Grattan wining the majority in six, and two lodges had one vote for each candidate. None of the lodges which Fagan considers 'Catholic-orientated'[205] had voters in this election, nor did any of the lodges he suspected of having members who were United Irishmen in the 1790s. On this evidence, therefore, it seems that members who joined the brotherhood in the 1820s were less likely to have liberal tendencies of those who joined during the 1790s.

[205] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p.134.

4.6 Freemasons who were Dublin city assembly members 1790-1830

In chapter three, using the list of freemasons, list of freemen and the list of guild representatives, sheriffs, aldermen and lord mayors in William Wilson's *Dublin directories* the number of freemasons who sat on the assembly during the period 1790-1830 was ascertained. The aim of this part of the chapter is to ascertain voting patterns (i.e. votes for emancipation/ anti-emancipation candidates) amongst Dublin city assembly members who were also Dublin freemasons, and see what, if any, difference existed between how they voted and how freemasons of the 1790s and 1820s voted generally.

In addition to the work carried out by Fagan discussed in 'Links to the United Irishmen' above, the list of freemason members of the Dublin city assembly has been compared with McDowell's list of United Irishmen. From examination of the two lists it has been ascertained that six of these freemasons who were guild representatives between 1790 and 1830 were United Irishmen from the 1790s. The six in question are Thomas Bacon, Oliver Bond, John Chambers, Patrick McLaughlin, James Riddall and James Tandy.

Thomas Bacon was registered to lodge 7 on 28 December 1783.[206] He was elected as a guild representative of the tailors on the city commons until 1798.[207] He was arrested and executed in June 1798 on the charge of having been elected an officer of the rebels. [208] Oliver Bond was registered to lodge 198 on 27 December 1785. [209] He was a representative of the merchants'

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[206] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[207] William Wilson, *Dublin directory* 1790-1800 (Dublin).
[208] R.B. McDowell, 'The personnel of the Dublin society of United Irishmen', in *Irish Historical Studies*, ii, no. 5 (Mar. 1940), p .21.
[209] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol, 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

guild from 1792-3.[210] John Chambers was registered to lodge 209 on 25 June 1770.[211] He was a founder member of the United Irishmen, and master of the guild of cutlers, painters, stainers and stationers (the guild of St Luke) between 1793-4.[212] He was a representative of this guild in the city commons between 1789 and 1798.[213] He was charged with high treason in May 1798, and was banished and emigrated to France and then America.[214] Patrick McLaughlin was registered to lodge 206 on 1 September 1785.[215] He was a sheriffs' peer until 1805.[216] James Riddall was registered to lodge 141 on 6 August 1789.[217] He was a representative of the guild of merchants in the city commons between 1807 and 1810, and served as sheriff in 1810 and was subsequently made a sheriff's peer.[218] According to McDowell, he was a churchwarden of St. Audoen's parish, and was chairman of a meeting which passed resolutions in favour of reform, and according to a letter quoted by McDowell he was 'one who had all along avowed himself a United Irishman...was deputy treasurer to that society when held in Back Lane...is one of the committee...was concerned in the escape of Hamilton Rowan...and Napper Tandy is now known to have been secreted in his house'.[219] James Tandy was registered to lodge 190 on 3 November 1791[220] and was a wine merchant who served as a representative of the merchants' guild on the city commons until 1796.[221] According to McDowell, he joined the 'old United Irishmen', but disapproving of universal suffrage withdrew with

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[210] Wilson, *Dublin directory* 1792-1793.
[211] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[212] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 232.
[213] Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1789-1798.
[214] M. Pollard, 'John Chambers, printer and United Irishman', *The Irish Book, 3* (1964), pp 1-22.
[215] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[216] Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1790-1805.
[217] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[218] Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1807-1830.
[219], R.B. McDowell, 'The personnel of the Dublin society of United Irishmen', in *Irish Historical Studies*, ii, no. 5 (Mar. 1940), p. 46.
[220] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[221] Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1790-1830.

about forty 'respectable persons'.[222] He was arrested in 1803 'for several trivial and probably misinterpreted events, the fact he was his father's son,[223] and that he had given certain letters to Dowdall...which were merely for importing wine'.[224]

From this evidence, as indicated at the beginning of this chapter, it is clear that there were some sympathies for the United Irishmen amongst Dublin freemasons in the 1790s. Bearing in mind that Crossle's *Irish masonic records* indicate that there may have been up to thirty-three active lodges in the city in the 1790s (see chapter one) there is evidence to suggest at least some of these did contain members with links to the United Irishmen, and this appears to have been exclusively the case in lodges 709 and 792.

Of the members of the city assembly ascertained to have been freemasons registered to Dublin lodges, some appear to have had Catholic sympathies. Samuel Neville was a freemason registered to lodge 930 on 10 February 1806,[225] and was a representative of the goldsmiths' guild in the lower house of the Dublin city assembly between 1808 and 1812.[226] On 9 December 1822 he attended an 'orphan's friend society dinner', and spoke, 'declaring his conviction that liberality was making rapid strides in despite of the desperate efforts of factious spirits; and that the Protestants generally wished for Catholic emancipation'.[227] As outlined in chapter three comparisons of the freemason membership registers with Wilson's *Dublin directories* indicate

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[222] R.B. McDowell, 'The personnel of the Dublin society of United Irishmen', in *Irish Historical Studies,* ii, no. 5 (Mar. 1940), p. 50.

[223] James Napper Tandy: born in Dublin 1740. Officer in the Volunteer artillery corps, founding chairman of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen in November 1791. In 1792 was implicated in negotiations with Defenders, fled to Paris in 1798 and appointed general in the French army. Sailed to Rutland Island, Co. Donegal with the *Anacreon* in September 1798; on finding Humbert's expedition had been defeated at Ballinamuck, he left for the Continent. Extradited from Hamburg to England in October 1799, sentenced to death in Ireland five months later. Deported to Bordeaux in 1802, died the following year. Ruan O'Donnell, 'James Napper Tandy', in Brian Lalor (ed.), *The encyclopaedia of Ireland* (Dublin, 2003), p. 1033.

[224] R.B. McDowell, 'The personnel of the Dublin society of United Irishmen', in *Irish Historical Studies,* ii, no. 5 (Mar. 1940), p. 50.

[225] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 2, vol. 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

[226] Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1808-1812.

[227] *Freeman's Journal*, Dec. 10 1822.

that three lord mayors of Dublin between the years 1790 and 1830 were registered to Dublin lodges. These three (Richard Moncrieff, Thomas McKenny and John Smith Fleming) were considered to be liberal on the Catholic question. Several articles appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* which indicated that McKenny (registered to lodge 584 on 22 August 1793)[228] was in favour of Catholic relief. He chaired the meeting on 11 February to petition both houses of parliament 'for the relief of Catholic brethren', quoted previously. On 5 May 1820 a notice appeared indicating that 'a public dinner in compliment to alderman McKenny' was to take place.[229] The duke of Leinster (the Grand Master of Ireland) was in the chair, and amongst those from whom tickets for the dinner were available were Henry Grattan junior and Daniel O' Connell. On January 22 1822 a list of those who had paid subscriptions for the statue of Henry Grattan (chaired by the duke of Leinster) appeared in the same paper, and McKenny appeared in this list, contributing £10.[230]

From the opposite end of the political spectrum there is evidence that John Giffard, who was an apothecaries' guild representative from 1775 until his election as a sheriff in 1793, and described as the 'arch-exponent of the Protestant ascendancy', [231] was, in addition to being an Orangeman, a freemason registered to a Dublin lodge. Throughout his career Giffard was a controversial character. According to Hill, 'the lead in reaffirming loyalty to king and constitution was taken with great éclat by John Giffard, both in the corporation and through *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* (Giffard's subsidized newspaper), which paid fulsome tributes to George III and praised the British constitution as the best in the world. The "tyranny of France" was contrasted to "the liberty of Britons".[232]

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[228] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 2 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[229] *Freeman's Journal*, 5 May 1820
[230] *Freeman's Journal*, 22 January 1822
[231] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 386.
[232] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 273.

Giffard was a channel for communicating secret reports on the United Irishmen to the Castle,[233] and during his year as sheriff, he was 'active against radicals of all kinds...he picked- some say packed- the jury which convicted Hamilton Rowan (the United Irishman), and conducted the raid (with Police Commissioner Warren) on the tailors' hall that put an end to the public phase of the United Irishmen'.[234] According to Giffard after the public meeting of Protestants to petition for emancipation in 1819, 'the world was turned upside down'.[235]

Kevin Haddick-Flynn refers to Giffard as a 'prominent freemason',[236] although the author does not source this claim, nor does he indicate to which freemason lodge Giffard belonged. The membership register of Dublin freemason lodge 402 shows that a John Gifford became a member on 11 August 1810.[237] This raises a number of interesting points. Firstly, if this individual was in fact John Giffard, it indicates that Dublin lodges attracted members from across the political spectrum. As discussed previously, successive freemason Grand Masters were considered liberal on the Catholic question. Evidence produced in this chapter indicates there were some Dublin freemasons who favoured Catholic relief (Fagan argued some lodges were Catholic-orientated, and two lodges were in fact fronts for the United Irishmen).[238] The presence of Giffard, a loyalist, amongst the membership of Dublin freemasons would indicate masonic lodges were attracting men from differing political persuasions. Secondly, Giffard's membership of a masonic lodge strengthens the link between the freemasons in Dublin and the Orange Order. Petri Mirala has argued that in Ulster, some members of the early

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[233] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 235.
[234] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 243.
[235] Report of the Dublin corporation meeting (*Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 20 Feb. 1819), reprinted in Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 307.
[236] Flynn, *Orangeism*, p. 11.
[237] Grand Lodge register, series 1, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[238] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 146.

Orange societies came from masonic backgrounds;[239] the lack of a membership register for the Orange Order during this period inhibits one's ability to investigate how many masons may have been Orangemen also. However, an Orangeman of Giffard's significance (by 1810 he was Acting Grand Master) amongst Dublin freemasons would indicate there may well have been a number of men who were members of both organisations. Finally, it must be considered that in 1810 (when the membership register records John Gifford joining lodge 402)[240] John Giffard was 64 years old. This fact encourages one to speculate on the reasons for his joining a masonic lodge at such a relatively late stage in his life. Whilst the freemason membership register does not include information regarding the age of members, it can be speculated that one of the reasons for joining the masons was social networking and advancement, and it is reasonable to speculate that this would encourage men of a younger age than Giffard to join. Minute books from this lodge may offer clarity regarding the membership of the John Gifford registered to that lodge, but unfortunately none have survived.

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4.7 The Fitzwilliam episode

The Catholic convention assembled in Dublin in December 1792 and asked for the abolition of the remaining penal laws. They bypassed the Irish government and went to the prime minister with their appeal. The lord lieutenant, however, was convinced that the Protestant constitution should not be tampered with. It was argued that Catholic emancipation would lead to parliamentary reform, and a reformed parliament would weaken the connection with Britain. However, the British government, eager to conciliate Irish opinion in light of the certainty of war

[239] Mirala, 'Freemasonry, conservatism and loyalism in Ulster, 1792-9', in Gillespie (ed.), *The remaking of modern Ireland*, p. 32.
[240] Grand Lodge register, series 1, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

with revolutionary France, put pressure on the Irish government to grant Irish Catholics concessions. The result was the relief act of 1793. The results of this act were, however, disappointing. Whilst it did admit some Catholics to the first stage of freedom, these numbers were limited. Ultimately, this led to Catholic frustration at the prospect of continued exclusion from civic status.[241]

In January 1795 Earl Fitzwilliam, a Whig, and friend of Henry Grattan, became lord lieutenant. This increased the hopes of Catholics and their supporters for further reform and the removal of remaining disabilities. He believed that failure to act in favour of Catholics would have serious consequences. However, the British government became concerned at the speed in which he was moving and the abruptness with which he was dispensing with members of the Irish government. Grattan had introduced a Catholic relief bill to the house of commons, which the British cabinet instructed Fitzwilliam not to commit himself to. The British government felt that in agreeing to Catholic emancipation he was exceeding his instructions. As a result, Fitzwilliam was recalled, thus ending the chances Grattan's bill passing. Consequently, rioting was orchestrated by the United Irishmen.

The response of Dublin Corporation was mixed. A post assembly was called by corporation members opposed to Catholic relief. A committee was set up to petition the king and parliament against the bill. It made clear that the admission of Catholics to parliament (as was the object of the bill) would constitute a threat to civil and religious liberty, and to the Protestant religion.[242] Amongst the thirty members who consistently backed the petitions was John Giffard (who, as was argued in section 4.6, appears to have become a freemason in 1810). However, a minority of nineteen attacked the petition, and entered a formal

[241] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 244.
[242] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 245.

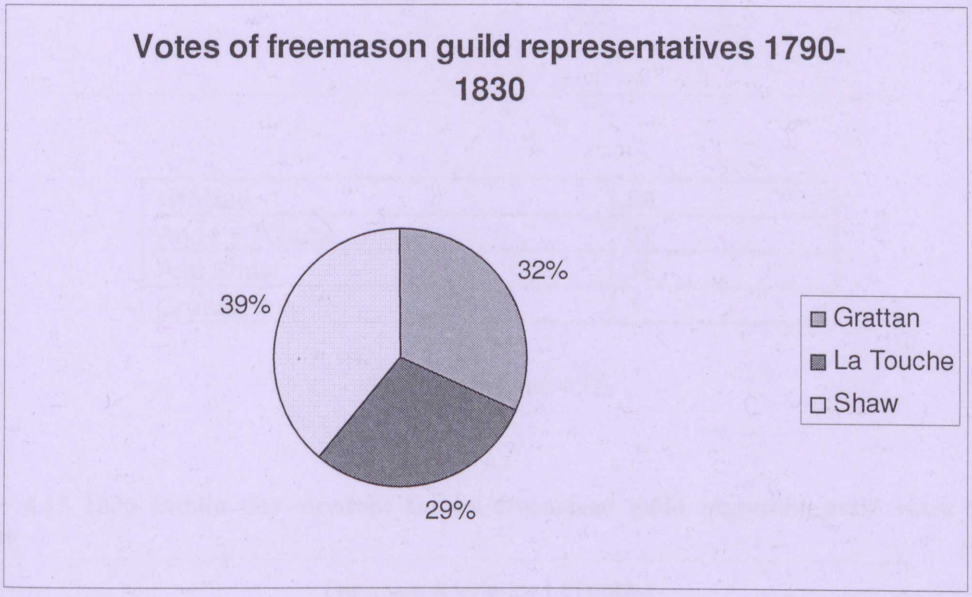
protest on the journals of the house. Each United Irishman on the city commons signed the petition, with the exception of Patrick McLaughlin.[243] It was signed by Thomas Bacon, James Tandy and John Chambers, who, outlined above, were also Dublin freemasons. Of the other signatories, who were not United Irishmen, two were freemasons, William Humphreys (registered to lodge 584 on 7 June 1781)[244] and John Rainsford (registered to lodge 190 on 3 November 1791).[245]

[243] *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin* xiv 537-42.
[244] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 2 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).
[245] Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

4.8 1806 and 1820 elections: vote of freemason guild representatives

Figure 4.11 1806 Dublin city election: vote of freemason guild representatives (1790-1830)

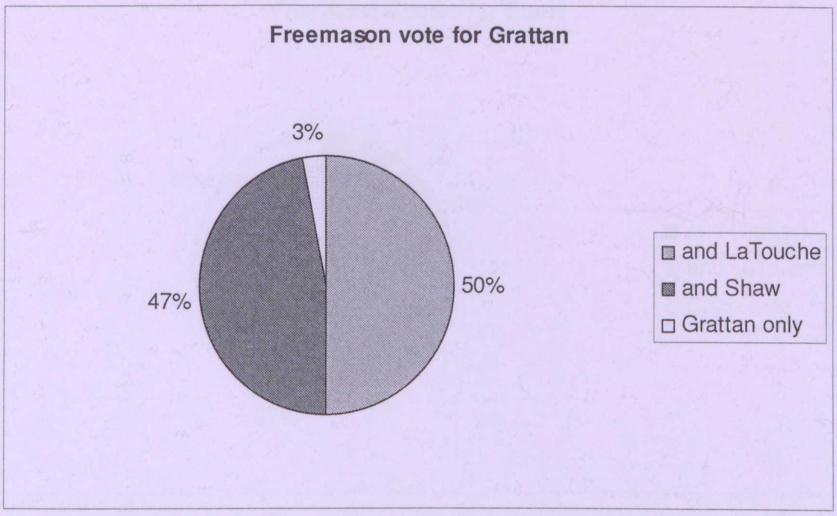
Candidate	Number of freemason votes cast	Percentage
Grattan	34	32%
La Touche	31	29%
Shaw	42	39%
Total freemason vote	***107***	***100%***



Source: *The poll for electing two members to represent the city of Dublin in the Imperial Parliament...1806* (Dublin, n.d.), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), William Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1790-1830 (Dublin) and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

From the above statistics it can be seen that Shaw and Grattan won the most votes from freemasons who were guild representatives sitting in the lower house of the Dublin city assembly. This is in line with the result overall, as the above two candidates were deemed elected.

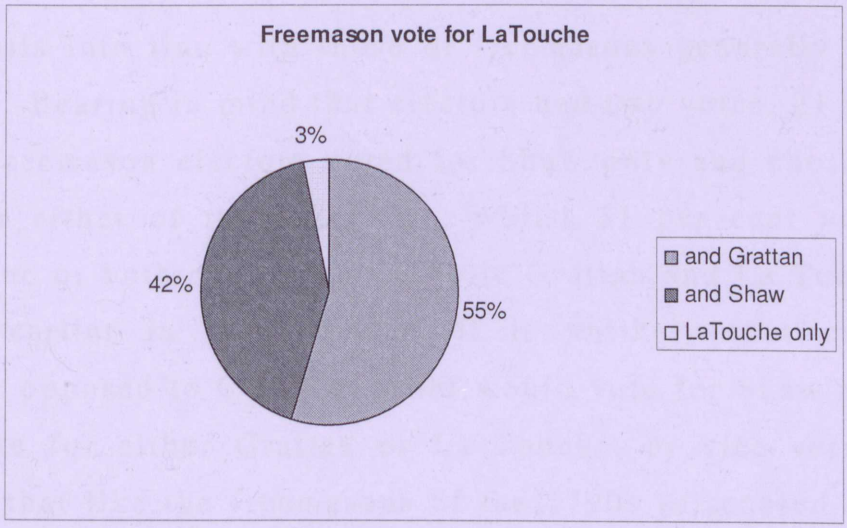
Figure 4.12 1806 Dublin city election: Dublin freemason guild representatives' votes for Grattan



Grattan	34
And La Touche	17
And Shaw	16
Grattan only	1

Source: as figure 4.11.

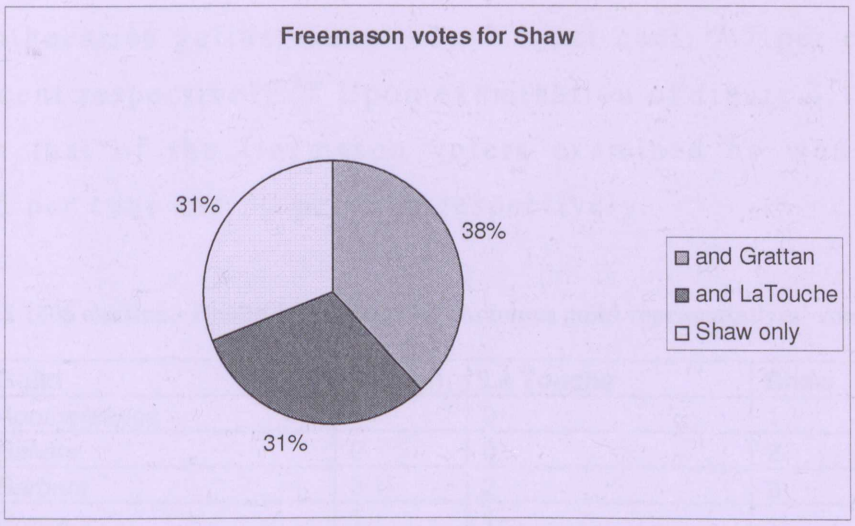
Figure 4.13 1806 Dublin city election: Dublin freemason guild representatives' votes for La Touche



La Touche	31
And Grattan	17
And Shaw	13
La Touche only	1

Source: as figure 4.11

Figure 4.14 1806 Dublin city election: Dublin freemason guild representatives' votes for Shaw



Shaw	42
And Grattan	16
And La Touche	13
Shaw only	13

Source: as figure 4.11

The breakdown of votes for each candidate (figures 4.11-4.14) falls into line with those of freemasons generally (figures 4.2-4.2). Bearing in mind that electors had two votes, 21 per cent of the freemason electors voted for Shaw only and chose not to vote for either of the other two, whilst 31 per cent voted for either one or both of the pro-Catholic Grattan and La Touche. As argued earlier in this chapter, it is unlikely that candidate strongly opposed to Catholic relief would vote for Shaw and then also vote for either Grattan or La Touche, or vice versa. This implies that like the freemasons of the 1790s (discussed earlier), for those freemason guild representatives for whom emancipation was an issue, more appeared to be on the side of Catholic relief.

Looking at the freemason votes by guild (figure 4.15 below), it can be seen that proportionately Shaw secured a higher number of votes amongst freemasons than in the election overall.

For example, of the total number of voters in the brewers, hosiers and apothecaries guilds, Shaw won 7.1 per cent, 7.7 per cent and 14 per cent respectively.[246] Upon examination of figure 4.15 it can be seen that of the freemason voters examined he won 33 per cent, 25 per cent and 50 per cent respectively.

Figure 4.15 1806 election: Dublin freemason city commons guild representatives' votes, by guild

Guild	Grattan	La Touche	Shaw
Apothercaries	1	0	1
Bakers	0	0	2
Barbers	3	2	3
Brewers	1	1	1
Bricklayers	2	1	1
Butchers	1	0	1
Carpenters	0	1	1
Cooks	0	0	2
Coopers	2	0	2
Stationers etc	2	3	3
Feltmakers	1	1	0
Goldsmiths	5	3	3
Hosiers	1	2	1
Joiners	1	1	0
Merchants	8	9	10
Saddlers	1	3	3
Sheermen and Dyers	1	0	1
Shoemakers	1	1	3
Smiths	0	1	1
Tailors	2	2	1
Weavers	1	0	2
Total	**34**	**31**	**42**

Source: as figure 4.11

[246] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p.275.

Looking at poll data on a lodge by lodge basis, it can be seen that most lodges voted for Shaw;

Figure 4.16 1806 election: Dublin freemason city commons guild representatives' votes, by lodge

Lodge number	Votes for Grattan	Votes for La Touche	Votes for Shaw
Grand Master's Lodge	0	0	1
4 (B)	0	1	0
6	1	1	3
9 (C)	1	1	0
54	0	0	3
64	1	1	2
100	3	2	1
137	1	1	2
141	3	3	2
153	2	0	0
155	1	1	0
171	0	0	2
189	2	2	2
190	3	2	3
198	3	4	8
202	3	2	3
207	1	0	4
209	1	0	1
245 (A)	1	1	0
353	0	0	1
489	1	0	1
584	1	1	0
620	4	6	2
930	1	2	1
Total	**34**	**31**	**42**

Source: as figure 4.11

From figure 4.16 it can be seen that the majority, nine, of lodges voted for Shaw. The lodges that voted for Shaw more than any other candidate were the Grand Master's Lodge and lodges 6, 54, 64, 137, 171, 198, 207 and 353.

Comparing the list of freemason guild representatives with McDowell's list of United Irishmen, it has been ascertained that five of these freemasons were United Irishmen from the 1790s. The five in question are Thomas Bacon (lodge 7), Oliver Bond (lodge 198), John Chambers (lodge 209), James Riddall (lodge

141) and James Tandy (lodge 190). In addition, Patrick McLaughlin, who was a sheriffs' peer from 1790 until 1805, was a member of lodge 206 and appears on McDowell's list.

Figure 4.17 1806 election: votes in lodges which had United Irishmen amongst its city commons guild representatives

Lodge	Vote for Grattan	Vote for La Touche	Vote for Shaw
141	3	3	2
190	3	2	3
198	3	4	8
209	1	0	1
Total	**10**	**9**	**14**

Source: *The poll for electing two members to represent the city of Dublin in the imperial parliament...1806* (Dublin, n.d.), Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, series 2, vol. 1 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin) , R.B. McDowell, 'The personnel of the Dublin society of United Irishmen', in *Irish Historical Studies,* ii, no. 5 (Mar. 1940), pp 13-59, and William Wilson, *Dublin directory* 1790-1830 (Dublin).

Of these five, only Riddall and Tandy voted in the election (both for Grattan and La Touche). Thomas Bacon's lodge (7) and Patrick McLoughlin (the only United Irishman on the city commons who did not sign the protest against the petitions to the king during the Fitzwilliam episode)'s lodge 206 did not have any assembly members who voted in the 1806 election. Therefore, of these lodges which contained United Irishmen and who were freemason members of the Dublin city assembly between 1790 and 1830 (and could have been considered to by sympathetic to Catholic claims), Shaw received fourteen votes, Grattan ten and La Touche nine.

The two signatories to the Fitzwilliam protest who were freemasons but not United Irishmen were William Humphreys and John Rainsford of lodges 584 and 190 respectively. Humphreys does not appear in the poll book (Thomas McKenny, the only other assembly member in the lodge, voted for Grattan and La Touche), but Rainsford voted for Grattan and La Touche. Other

members of his lodge voted twice for Grattan, once for La Touche and three times for Shaw.

Figure 4.18 1820 election: result

Ellis	1094	34.5%
Grattan	785	24.8%
Neutral (i.e. did not vote)	1292	40.8%
Total freeman vote	***3171***	***100%***

Source: F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820).

From figure 4.18 it can be seen that Ellis had a wining margin of 10 per cent over Grattan. Taken from F. O'Neill's poll book, it can be seen that some 41 per cent of the electorate did not vote in this election. Of those who did, Ellis won 58 per cent of the votes, Grattan 42 per cent.

Figure 4.19 1820 election: votes of guild representatives from 1790-1830 who were freemasons registered to Dublin lodges

Ellis	**33**	76%
Grattan	**11**	24%
Total freemason vote	***44***	**100%**

Source: F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin). and William Wilson, *Dublin directory,* 1790-1830 (Dublin).

Figure 4.2 shows that overall freemasons identified as guild representatives from 1790-1830 favoured the anti-emancipation candidate to a greater extent than the voters generally. In the case of these freemason voters it can be seen that Ellis secured 76 per cent of their votes, whilst Grattan received 24 per cent of these votes. When this result is compared to the result amongst all freemasons who were freemen and joined during the 1820s (58 per cent voted for Ellis, 42 per cent voted for Grattan, see figure

4.9), it can be seen that the section of freemasons who were guild representatives appeared to be more conservative than the freemason body in general.

Figure 4.20 1820 election: Dublin freemason guild representatives' votes, by guild

Corporation	Ellis	Grattan	Majority votes overall
Bakers	0	1	Grattan
Barbers	1	0	Ellis
Brewers	0	0	Grattan
Bricklayers	1	1	Ellis
Carpenters	2	0	Ellis
Cooks	1	1	Ellis
Coopers	2	1	Ellis
Curriers	1	0	Ellis
Stationers etc	4	1	Ellis
Feltmakers	1	1	n/a
Goldsmith	1	4	Grattan
Hosiers	0	0	Grattan
Merchants	11	0	Ellis
Saddlers	2	0	Ellis
Sheerman and Dyers	0	0	Grattan
Shoemakers	2	0	Ellis
Smiths	1	0	Ellis
Tailors	2	1	Ellis
Weavers	2	0	Ellis
Total	***34***	***11***	***Ellis***

Source: F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin), William Wilson, *Dublin directory,* 1790-1830 (Dublin) and Jacqueline Hill, *From patriots to unionists: Dublin civic politics and Irish protestant patriotism* (Oxford, 1997), p. 311.

Figure 4.20 shows that by guild freemason voters voted in the same way as their fellow guild members. In all cases, where either Grattan or Ellis won the majority vote within a guild in terms of the overall vote, freemason voters voted the same way. For example, in the case of the pro-Catholic goldsmiths' guild, Grattan won the majority of votes among voters overall. When one considers the vote of freemasons of this guild only, Grattan again came out on top. This was the case for all guilds. In some cases, such as the guild of sheermen and dyers, neither freemason

members voted. Therefore, whilst Grattan won the majority vote of the freemen of the sheermen and dyers guild, neither of the relevant freemasons voted.

Figure 4.21 1820 election: Dublin freemason guild representatives' votes, by lodge

Lodge	Ellis	Grattan
Grand Master's Lodge	2	0
2	0	1
4	2	0
6	5	1
9 C	3	0
54	1	0
55 (A)	1	0
64	2	0
100 (A)	0	1
141	0	0
153	1	1
155	1	0
171	0	0
189	0	1
190	2	1
198	5	0
202	3	1
207	1	1
209	1	0
245 (A)	0	1
348	1	0
353	1	0
584	0	0
930	1	1
981	0	1
Total	***33***	***11***

Sources: as figure 4.19.

It should be noted that of the lodges in the above table 190 and 981 had ceased to exist by 1815 and 1817 respectively. From figure 4.21 above it can be seen that some lodges clearly favoured the anti- emancipation candidate Ellis, whereas in those lodges where Grattan was favoured, he was by a much smaller margin. It is useful to compare these findings with Fagan's analysis of Dublin lodges for the eighteenth century. Of the lodges listed above, he considered those numbered 64, 324 and

348 and to be 'Catholic-orientated'.[247] However, when the voting record of guild representatives in the 1820 election is taken into consideration, it can be seen that the majority in every lodge Fagan considered to be Catholic-orientated voted for Ellis, the anti-emancipation candidate, rather than Grattan, the pro-emancipation candidate. Taking into account the lodges of freemason assembly members who were United Irishmen it can be seen that Ellis emerged with the majority of votes.

Figure 4.22 1820 election: votes in lodges (which still existed in 1820) which had signatories against the petitions to the king and parliament (1795) amongst its guild representatives

Lodge	Ellis	Grattan
198	5	0
209	1	0
Total	**6**	**0**

Sources: F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820), Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vol. 1, and series 2, vols 1-2 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin* xiv 537-42 and Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin).

From figure 4.22 above it can be seen that of the lodges of signatories against the petitions to the king and parliament in 1795 (which still existed at the 1820 election), there were no supporters of Grattan amongst the guild representatives in lodges 198 and 209. Similar to the conclusions above, this indicates that whatever Catholic tendencies which existed during the 1790s seem to have dissipated by 1820, or at least amongst those freemasons who had a vote.

[247] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 134.

4.9 Votes of freemasons who voted at both 1806 and 1820 elections

In this chapter the voting tendencies amongst freemasons from the 1790s and those of the 1820s have been examined. The evidence suggests that the men joining the brotherhood in the 1820s were more conservative than their counterparts in the 1790s. To test this theory further, the list of relevant (i.e. Dublin city assembly) freemason voters from the 1820 election have been cross-checked with the list of voters from the 1806 election in order to ascertain to what extent, if any, a change in political persuasion (i.e. from emancipation- to anti-emancipation candidates) can be discerned. Before proceeding it is worth bearing in mind that there is very little by way of masonic primary sources to prove that these people who voted in 1806 (having joined in the 1790s) were still active masons by 1820. In fact, what little minute book evidence there is suggests that those who joined in the 1790s were not active members by 1820. That said it is still worthwhile to examine their voting records, as it will demonstrate to what extent, if any, the political persuasion of these men (whether they were still active freemasons or not) changed from 1806 to 1820.

In total, thirty-three freemasons who joined the brotherhood in the 1790s and who voted in 1806 did so again in 1820 (see figure 4.23 below).

Figure 4.23a 1820 election: votes of freemasons registered during the 1790s and who voted at the 1806 election

1820 election	Votes
Grattan	13
Ellis	20
Total	**33**

Figure 4.23b 1820 election: votes of freemasons registered during the 1790s and also voted at the 1806 election

1806 Candidates	Votes	1820 Candidate	Votes	1820 Candidate	Votes
Grattan and/or La Touche	10	Grattan Jnr	7	Ellis	3
Shaw	8	Grattan Jnr	3	Ellis	5

Source: F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), Dublin city assembly freedom roll, vol. 5, 1774-1820, and vol. 6, 1820-1841 (Dublin city archive, Pearse St., Dublin). and William Wilson, *Dublin directory,* 1790-1830 (Dublin).

Figure 4.23b shows that of the ten voters who voted for Grattan and/or La Touche in 1806, seven voted for Grattan and three voted for Ellis in 1820. Similarly, of the eight who voted for Shaw only in 1806, three voted for Grattan junior and five for Ellis in 1820. Overall, of all those who voted in both elections, twenty voted for Ellis and thirteen voted for Grattan junior. Therefore, it can be said that these results overall are broadly in line with the 1820 vote generally. Of the eighteen voters in figure 4.23, the shift towards the anti- emancipation candidate amongst freemasons generally (discussed earlier), does not seem as marked among these voters.

4.10 1806 and 1820 elections: vote of freeholders who were freemasons

Masonic historians John Lepper and Philip Crossle argued that during Lord Donoughmore's tenure as Grand Master (from 1789 to 1813) the majority of freemasons (of the brotherhood overall)

were Catholic.[248] Patrick Fagan noted that 'it appears groups of Catholics came together to form lodges',[249] but, peaking during the 1760s, 'a quite significant falling off in Catholic membership can be detected from about 1770'.[250] He further states that 'although Catholic participation in freemasonry in Dublin in the eighteenth century was sizeable, it was never the majority'.[251] Fagan's conclusions are weakened somewhat by his method of ascertaining Catholic involvement: whether the name was 'Catholic sounding'. Results derived from this method are likely to be impressionistic. In order to investigate Catholic involvement in Dublin freemasonry, the list of Dublin freemasons has been compared with the list of freeholders (who were almost wholly Catholic)[252] in poll books for the two elections under study, those of 1806 and 1820. It will therefore be possible to ascertain firstly how many of those freeholders listed in poll books were Dublin freemasons, and how these freemasons voted in these two elections. In the previous section it was ascertained that freemasons registered to lodges during the 1790s tended to be more liberal than their brethren in the 1820s. This comparison of freeholder votes will test further this statement.

Freeholders were voters who met one of the qualifications for the electoral franchise by owning or holding a lease for lives (as opposed to for a term of years) of land worth at least forty shillings per annum after payment of rent and other charges. As figure 4.24 below indicates, of the 364 freeholders who voted at the 1806 election, thirty-six (some 10 per cent) were freemasons registered to Dublin lodges at some point during the period under study. Research in chapter one indicated that although declining by 1806, Dublin freemason lodges still attracted a sizeable number of new members; in 1802, 252 men were registered to

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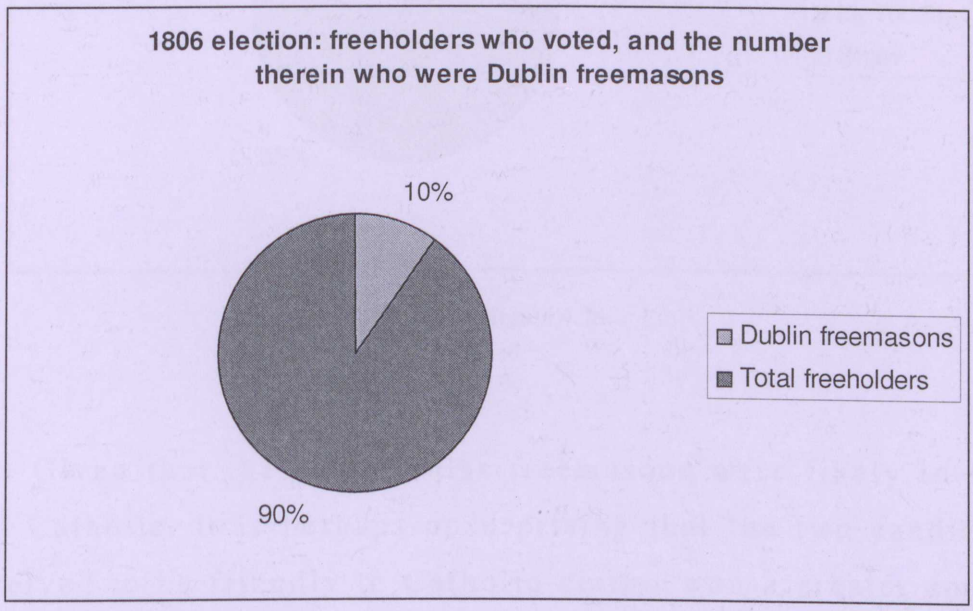
[248] Lepper and Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge vol. I*, pp 88-90.
[249] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 137.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 150.
[252] Peter R. Newman, *Companion to Irish history 1603-1921* (Oxford, 1991), p. 70.

Dublin lodges, and while this figure dropped to 76 new registrations by 1806, the cumulative effect was likely to have been that Dublin freemasonry consisted of hundreds of members.

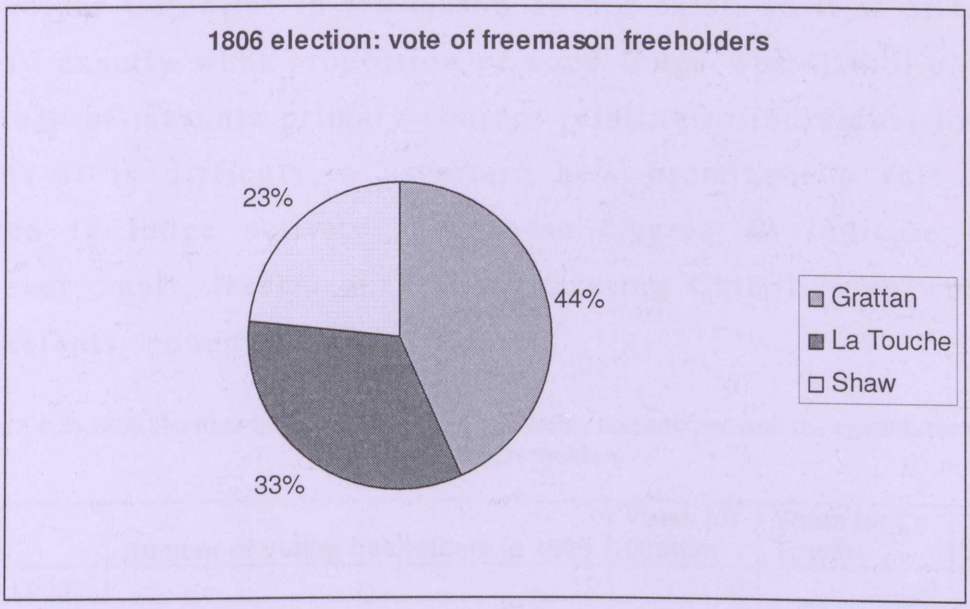
Figure 4.24 1806 election: total number of freeholders, and the number therein who were Dublin freemasons



Source: *The Poll for electing two members to represent the city of Dublin in the imperial parliament...1806* (Dublin, n.d.), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

As figure 4.25 (below) indicates, Grattan and La Touche won the most votes from freeholders who were freemasons registered to Dublin lodges in 1806 or before.

Figure 4.25 1806 election: vote of Dublin freemason freeholders



Source: as figure 4.24.

Given that these particular freemasons were likely to have been Catholic, it is perhaps unsurprising that the two candidates perceived to be friendly to Catholic claims won a greater amount of votes than Shaw. These results were in contrast to the result overall (with Grattan and Shaw deemed elected), and the votes amongst freemasons who were free of the city (and nearly all Protestant, see 4.2) and joined their respective lodges during the 1790s (of those voters, Grattan won 37 per cent of the votes, La Touche 28 per cent and Shaw 35 per cent).

From examination of the freemason membership register it appears that 34 lodges were active and registering members in 1806. [253] Figure 4.26 demonstrates that 19 lodges contained freeholders who voted in the 1806 election. As freeholders were in nearly all cases Catholic, it can therefore be said that most Dublin freemason lodges contained some Catholics at the start of the nineteenth century. However, the number of freeholders in each of these lodges was small in comparison to the number of

[253] Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin)

members registered overall. Sources that could identify non-freeholder Catholics in freemason do not exist, so it is difficult to say exactly what proportion of each lodge was Catholic. And the lack of masonic primary sources relating to individual lodges means it is difficult to ascertain how prominent a role they played in lodge activity. But these figures do indicate that, however small, freemasonry was attracting Catholics as well as Protestants around this time.

Figure 4.26 1806 election: lodges which contained voting freeholders, and the candidates voted for by those freeholders

Lodge number	Number of voting freeholders in 1806	Votes for Grattan	Votes for La Touche	Votes for Shaw
Grand Master's Lodge	1	0	0	1
100	1	1	0	0
118	1	1	0	1
137	1	1	1	0
141	4	4	4	0
155	2	2	2	0
171	1	1	0	0
189	2	2	2	0
190	3	1	2	2
198	5	1	1	4
202	1	1	0	1
206	2	2	2	0
209	2	2	2	0
348	1	1	0	1
353	3	2	2	1
402	2	2	1	1
584	1	0	0	1
620	2	2	1	0
721	1	0	0	1
Total	**36**	**26**	**20**	**14**

Source: as figure 4.24.

In *Catholics in a protestant country* Fagan identifies twelve lodges he considered to be 'Catholic-orientated'.[254] In section 4.3 it was argued that the voting patterns amongst that group of freemasons indicated that Fagan's conclusions may have been

[254] Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country*, p. 134.

correct insofar as lodges he identifies as being Catholic-orientated seemed to favour the pro-Catholic candidates in 1806. Of course, even if Fagan was correct in concluding these lodges were Catholic-orientated during the eighteenth century it does not necessarily follow they contained freeholders, or freeholders who voted in 1806. However, of the six lodges which still existed in 1806, three contained freeholders. These freeholders appear to have favoured the pro-Catholic candidates. As figure 4.27 below shows, of these voters Grattan won three votes, La Touche two and Shaw two. It is interesting to note also that lodge 198 contained more freeholders than any other lodge; it was shown in chapter three that this lodge had more guild representatives between 1790 and 1830, as well as the highest number of sheriffs and also had one alderman.

Figure 4.27 1806 election: votes of freeholders in Fagan's 'Catholic-orientated' lodges

	Fagan's 'Catholic-orientated' lodges			
Lodge number	Number of voting freeholders in 1806	Votes for Grattan	Votes for La Touche	Votes for Shaw
54	0	0	0	0
64	0	0	0	0
137	1	1	1	0
324	0	0	0	0
348	1	1	0	1
353	2	1	1	1
Totals	**4**	**3**	**2**	**2**

Source: *The Poll for electing two members to represent the city of Dublin in the imperial parliament...1806* (Dublin, n.d.), Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin), and Patrick Fagan, *Catholics in a protestant country* (Dublin, 1998), p. 134-7.

Comparing the list of freeholders contained in the poll book for the 1820 election[255] with the list of freemasons it can be seen that at the 1820 election of the 160 freeholders who voted, sixteen (i.e. 10 per cent) were freemasons registered to Dublin

[255] F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820).

lodges. That was the same proportion as at the 1806 election (see 4.24). Of this sixteen, ten voted for Grattan and six voted for Ellis.

In this chapter it has been argued that the voting patters of freemen who became freemasons during the 1790s and 1820s, in addition to freemasons who served as guild representatives between these years, indicated that Dublin freemasons (who voted) were more conservative by the end of the period under study. Of the sixteen freeholders who voted and who were freemasons at the 1820 election, ten (62 per cent) voted for Grattan and six (37 per cent) voted for Ellis.[256] Given that these freeholders were likely to have been Catholic, and that Ellis campaigned on an anti-Catholic platform, it is to be expected that all freeholders voted in greater numbers for Grattan. Figure 4.28 (below) shows this to be the case; 79 per cent of freeholders voted for Grattan and 21 per cent voted for Ellis.

Figure 4.28 1820 election: votes of freeholders, and votes of freeholders who were Dublin freemasons

Votes	Freeholders total	Freemasons
Grattan	127	10
Ellis	33	6

Source: F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820), and Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

[256] F. O' Neill, *The stain removed, and corporation juggling explained, being an alphabetical list of the freemen and freeholders...with their residences and occupations, who voted at the late election. And also a list of those who remained neutral on that occasion* (Dublin, 1820), and Grand Lodge register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin).

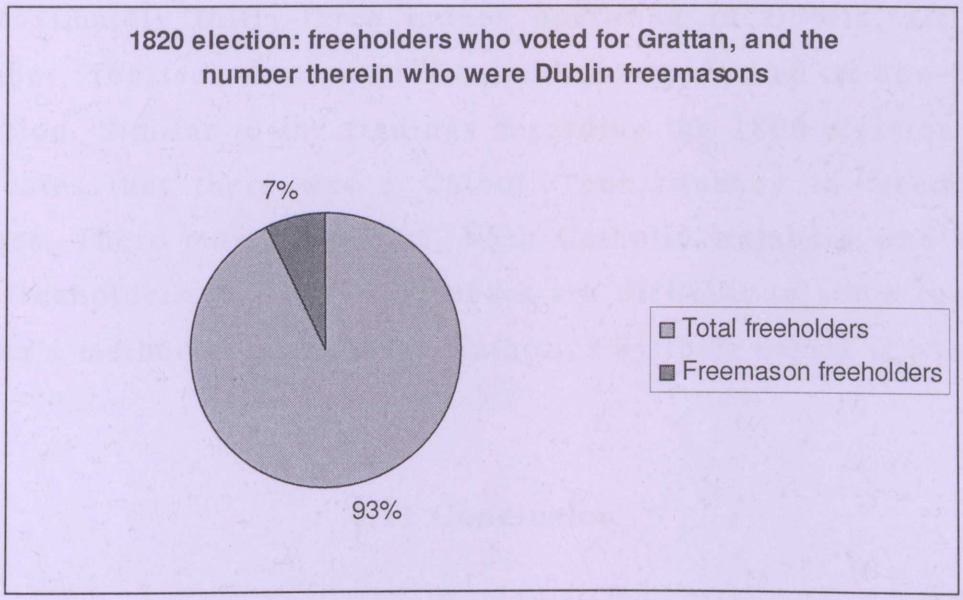
Figure 4.29 1820 election: votes of Dublin freemasons who were freeholders, by lodge

Lodge number	Votes for Grattan	Votes for Ellis
Grand Master's Lodge	0	1
2	1	0
6	0	1
54	1	1
64	1	0
137	1	0
141	2	0
153	0	1
171	1	0
198	0	1
202	0	1
206	1	0
245 (A)	1	0
402	1	0
Total	**10**	**6**

Source: as figure 2.28.

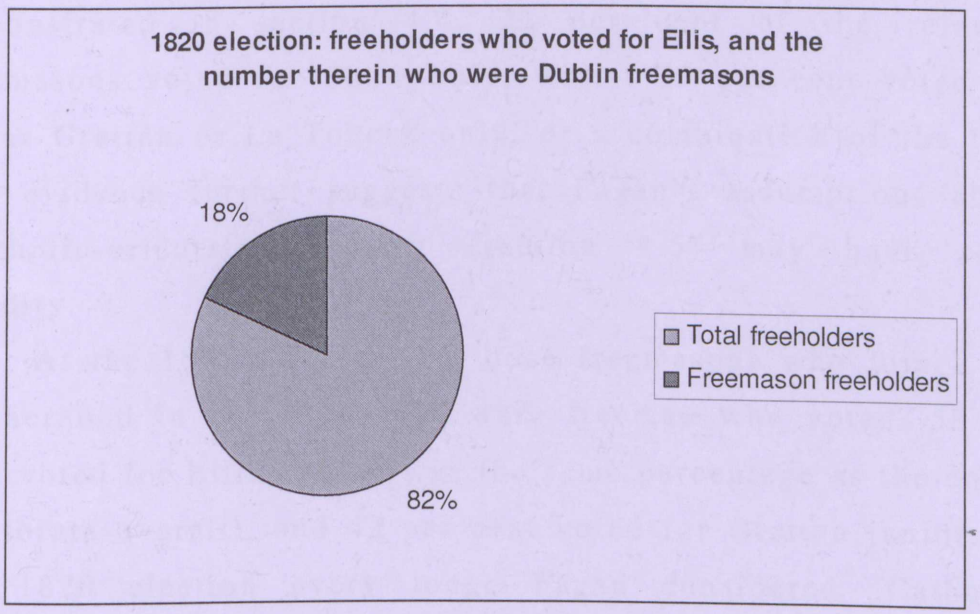
It can be argued that whilst more freemasons who were freeholders voted for Grattan, the pro-Catholic candidate, there were a higher percentage of freemasons amongst those freeholders who voted for Ellis. As figures 4.30 and 4.31 indicate, freemasons made up 7 per cent of the freeholders who voted for Grattan. Of the freeholders who voted for Ellis, freemasons accounted for 18 per cent. This indicates there was a conservative leaning amongst those freeholders who voted at the 1820 election and who were freemasons.

Figure 4.30 1820 election: freeholders who voted for Grattan, and the number therein who were Dublin freemasons



Source: as figure 4.28.

Figure 4.31 1820 election: freeholders who voted for Ellis, and the number therein who were Dublin freemasons



Source: as figure 4.28.

The freemason registers indicate that by 1820 there were approximately thirty-three lodges operating in Dublin. Of this number, fourteen contained freeholders who voted at the 1820 election. Similar to the findings regarding the 1806 election this indicates that there was a Catholic constituency in freemason lodges. There may, of course, been Catholic members who were not freeholders, and these members are difficult to trace (unless Fagan's method of identifying Catholics by their names is used).

4.11 Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter indicates that there was a something of a shift in political opinion amongst men who were freemasons during the period 1790-1830. During the 1790s Fagan has presented evidence, and others have argued in favour of, United Irish involvement in freemason lodges, and at the 1806 election it appears that of those who joined the brotherhood in the 1790s and were freemen who voted, the majority voted for the candidates who were in favour of Catholic relief. As was demonstrated in section 4.4, 22 per cent of the relevant freemasons voted for Shaw only, whilst 38 per cent voted for either Grattan or La Touche only, or a combination of the two. The evidence further suggests that Fagan's assumptions about 'Catholic-orientated lodges' (section 4.5) may have some validity.

At the 1820 election, of those freemasons who joined the brotherhood in the 1820s and were freemen who voted, 58 per cent voted for Ellis (which was the same percentage as the entire electorate overall), and 42 per cent voted for Grattan junior. By the 1820 election every lodge Fagan considered 'Catholic-orientated' during the eighteenth century had ceased to exist. Mirala notes that papal denunciations of freemasonry from the eighteenth century (*In Eminenti*, 28 April 1738, and *Providas*, 18

May 1751) began to be generally observed after 1800,[257] and this may have been a factor in the closure of such lodges.

Amongst those freemasons who were guild representatives sitting on the city commons the change from liberal to conservative voting is more perceptible. Of the nineteen representatives who signed the Fitzwilliam petition, five were freemasons (section 4.10). At the 1806 election it was ascertained that 31 per cent voted for Grattan and/or La Touche (not Shaw), whilst 21 per cent voted for Shaw only. In contrast, at the 1820 election, 76 per cent of freemason guild representatives voted for Ellis, the anti-emancipation candidate, with 24 per cent voting for Grattan junior. Furthermore, of the two lodges which contained signatories to the Fitzwilliam petition (which still existed by 1820) Ellis won six votes; Grattan won none (section 4. 12).

Poll book evidence indicates that 10 per cent of freeholders who voted were freemasons registered to Dublin lodges. At the 1806 election these freeholders favoured the pro-Catholic candidates Grattan and La Touche. At the 1820 election freeholders overall (i.e. all freeholders listed as voters in the poll book, masons and non-masons) 79 per cent voted for Grattan and 21 per cent for Ellis. Significantly, freemasons who were freeholders made up just 7 per cent of Grattan's votes and 18 per cent of the Ellis' votes.

In chapters two and three the evidence indicates that lodge 198 contained some prominent figures on the side of reform, such as Oliver Bond. Indeed, when the votes of those who joined the lodge during the 1790s are examined it shows a majority in favour of the pro-Catholic candidates (figure 4.6). Amongst its guild representatives at the 1806 election, the analysis is less clear (figure 4.16). However, the votes of those guild representatives at the 1820 election show a clear preference for

[257] Mirala, 'Orangemen and freemasons', p. 53.

the anti-Catholic candidate (figure 4.21). Whilst voting records suggest pro-Catholic sympathies amongst those who joined Masonic lodges during the 1790s, there is evidence to suggest that John Giffard, the 'arch-exponent of the Protestant ascendancy',[258] joined a Dublin freemason lodge in 1810, a time when he was the Acting Grand Master of the Orange Order. This suggests that masonic lodges attracted men from differing political persuasions.

A word of warning must be issued when discussing voting patterns by lodges, however. As stated in chapter one, only minute books from twelve lodges have survived, and even of these not all years in this period are covered. From examination of the relevant minute books, it appears that many of those who joined may have left the lodge soon after joining. What strikes one when reading these minute books is that whilst the register indicates scores of men joining the lodge, lodge meetings themselves appear sparsely attended, with the number just reaching double figures in many cases. Alternatively, this could be due to the time lapse between members joining a lodge, and the lodge informing the Grand Lodge of its new members. In terms of the above statistics, the only way one could establish with certainty the political persuasion of lodges would be if a more complete set of minute books existed. Nonetheless, this chapter does at least show the voting tendencies of men who were at some point freemasons during the selected periods. The degree to which they were committed freemasons is something which is difficult to ascertain with the primary sources which survive. In addition, this research has looked at only those freemasons who were registered in two different decades (the 1790s and 1820s) and those who were elected to the city commons. It is possible that other lodge members had different political views. Whilst primary sources for those members are limited, it is another

[258] Hill, *From patriots to unionists*, p. 386.

aspect of freemason history in Dublin that is need of further research.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to explore areas of freemasonry which hitherto have been neglected amongst historians, namely to quantify membership of Dublin lodges between 1770 and 1830 and to examine the role of these men as freeholders, freemen of the city (and in terms of how they voted at parliamentary elections) and as members of the Dublin city assembly. In collating membership data from the Grand Lodge registers it has been ascertained that membership figures in Dublin lodges increased significantly from the mid 1790s (a point at which other works have suggested that the brotherhood was infiltrated by subversive organisations), reaching a peak around 1800 before dropping off considerably around 1810. The graph of active lodges in the city has shown a similar pattern. As has been stated, however, it is important to be conscious of the fact that masonic record keeping in this period was not an exact science, and indeed many lodges whose warrants were cancelled may have been dormant for some time (as this research has indicated).

Comparing these Dublin freemasons with the lists of freemen of the city it has been ascertained that during the 1790s twenty per cent of all freemasons registered to Dublin lodges in this period were freemen of the city. It has been further ascertained that of those becoming members in the 1820s, approximately the same percentage of those joining in this decade were freemen also. This indicates that although numbers were decreasing at the nineteenth century progressed, the same proportion of members were freemen (although one must bear in mind the requirements for admission to freedom were probably decreasing at this stage also). Amongst those office holders in the Grand Master's Lodge and those other ordinate Dublin lodges which recorded office holding in the register, it has been shown that the proportion of freemen was greater.

In comparing the list of the first subscribers to the Dublin chamber of commerce with the list of freemasons it was ascertained that seven per cent of these men were, or would become during the 1780s and 1790s, freemasons. These freemasons included men of radical stock, such as Oliver Bond. It has been considered that the liberal sentiments of the first meeting of the subscribers was reflected in the persuasions of those elected to the chamber, one of whom was Alexander Jaffray, who joined the Grand Master's Lodge in 1797, rising to the position of deputy Grand Master in 1801.

Looking at the Dublin city assembly it can be seen that freemasons were well represented in this period. In chapter three it was demonstrated that of the guild representatives in the city commons, some 23 per cent were freemasons, while twenty of the eighty-four sheriffs (24 per cent) were freemasons also. Amongst the aldermen, nine were freemasons from a total of fifty (18 per cent) and of the forty-two lord mayors in this period, three were freemasons. On a lodge by lodge basis the evidence does not suggest that these members necessarily came from a particular lodge or lodges (with the possible exception of lodge 198), but the case study of the merchant guild representatives indicates that it may have been the case amongst members of that guild. However when looking at statistics on a lodge-by-lodge basis it must be borne in mind that primary sources do not exist to indicate how long a member once registered stayed in a lodge. Thus any conclusions drawn from lodge-by-lodge statistics must be qualified by the lack of primary sources which would indicate a member's commitment or otherwise to the lodge.

In chapter four, data from the elections of 1806 and 1820, the evidence suggests something of a shift in political persuasion of Dublin freemasons (who voted) between 1790 and 1830. Looking specifically at registered masons during the 1790s and 1820s, who were freemen and voted, it can be seen that Fagan's assumptions about 'Catholic orientation' in lodges may have

some validity. However, at the 1820 election, the Dublin freemasons registered during the 1820s voted for the anti-emancipation candidate, Ellis, in the same proportion as voters generally. This indicates that those joining the masons in the 1820s were more conservative than their brethren joining in the 1790s. Looking at the voting record of guild representatives over the entire period 1790-1830 this trend is replicated. At the 1820 election, 76 per cent of these freemasons voted for Ellis. The evidence suggests, therefore, that freemasons registered to Dublin lodges during the 1820s were more conservative than those who joined during the 1790s.

With the primary sources available it has proved difficult to ascertain the religious breakdown in freemason lodges. Fagan's technique of identifying Catholics by the sounding of their name, while useful, can be unreliable. This thesis identifies the small number of masons who were freeholders; it is reasonable to consider almost all of these men were Catholic. However, the respective poll books for the two elections under study only list those freeholders who voted, therefore it is hard to establish what number of Dublin freemasons were freeholders. And, of course, lodges contained Catholics who were not freeholders.

Research is reliant on primary sources, and, as previously outlined, masonic sources for this period are less than comprehensive. It was therefore necessary to cross reference these with other primary sources, namely the *Dublin directories*, poll books and freedom rolls. It is inevitable when dealing with such a large number of freemasons (over 6,000) that some discrepancies may have occurred. In dealing with primary sources and lists of names it has been sought to make judgements in consistent manner.

As stated in chapter four, those minute books that exist suggest that lodge meetings did not always have a big gathering in terms of numbers (although they do indicate that meetings were often attended by masons of another lodge). Looking

through lodge records show that some meetings, despite the large numbers of members on the membership register, were sparsely attended. This raises the question as to how seriously some members took freemason membership. For example, in chapter four the votes of the relevant freemasons who voted in both the 1806 and the 1820 election were considered. When the relevant lodge minute books were examined (only five of these exist, however), it seems that only two members' names appear as attending meetings in the 1810s. So therefore, when looking at chapters three and four it must be remembered that although these men were freemasons at some stage in the period under study, it did not necessarily mean they were committed freemasons over a long period of time. This in turn raises the issue of why people felt compelled to join the freemasons in the first place. Whilst the constitutions convey lofty ideals of enlightenment and self-improvement, this may not have been the reason why every mason joined. As Peter Clark notes when referring to freemasonry in Britain, 'in practice, lodges only spent a small amount of time on ceremonial activity. Complaints recur of a lack of knowledge and interest among membership. At some lodges, rituals were carried out in a separate room, away from those brethren who "have no desire to attend and improve themselves."' [259] Masonic primary sources which might answer the question conclusively of motivation to join a lodge, convivial, political or otherwise, do not exist. And also, some 20 per cent of those freemasons examined were freemen, and the political persuasion of these men who held the right to vote is traceable to some extent (as was sought to do in chapter four). The question remains as to what the political persuasion of the remaining 80 per cent of the members registered was. Likewise, masonic primary sources which would be able to answer these questions do not exist.

[259] Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 335.

Wilson's *Dublin directories* have been used in this research to investigate whether Dublin freemasons were also members of the Dublin city assembly. These directories contain much useful information which could be cross-referenced with the list of Dublin freemasons in order to fill in the gaps which still exist regarding the social status of masons in this period. For example, the directories include lists of nobility and gentry, bankers, merchants, traders, barristers, attorneys, public notaries, physicians, surgeons and city officers. It would be useful to conduct further research on freemasonry in Dublin to see if it could be established how many masons belonged to the above groups. Articles in the *Freeman's Journal* in this period suggest Catholic sympathies among masons who were Protestant. Given the size of membership, however, it is likely that some members did not view the Catholic question with such sympathy. For instance, it was noted in chapter four that John Giffard, the prominent Orangeman, was likely a mason registered to a Dublin lodge in 1810 (by this time he was Acting Grand Master of the Orange Order). The records of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland were consulted during this research. Unfortunately, a Dublin membership register for this period has not survived. It would be interesting to know how many of Dublin masons in this period were members of the Orange Order also. Mirala has noted in the case of Ulster that members of Orange societies were in many cases 'hedgemasons', i.e. men who called themselves freemasons but who were not affiliated to the Grand Lodge of Ireland. Was this also the case in Dublin, or were there affiliated masons who were members of the Orange Order, or were the two organisations mutually exclusive? This is another aspect of Dublin associational history which awaits further research.

Appendix A: *Guild representatives on the city commons 1790-1830 who were registered to Dublin freemason lodges*

Surname	First name	Title	Guild	Start commons	End commons	Year freemason	Lodge	Address
Alley	John		Brewers	1823	1826	1827	GML	Townsend St
Alloway	John B		Merchants	1811	1823	1781	198	Exchequer St/Harcourt St (1812)
Bacon	Thomas		Tailors	≤1790	1799	1800	489	Ship St
Beasley	Thomas	jun	Sheermen and Dyers	≤1790	1805	1805	198	New Market
Bennett	Lewis Moore		Merchants	1829	≥1830	1813	141	Charlemont St
Bible	Thomas	M.D.	Barbers	1824	1826	1793	584,202	Essex Bridge
Blacker	James		Merchants	1793	1807	1790	198	Parliament St
Bond	Oliver		Merchants	1792	1793	1785	198	Bridge St
Bourns	Frederick G		Weavers	1807	1812	1803	207	Clarendon St
Buchannan	Beaver		Apothecaries	1808	1814	1805	198	Grafton St
Burnett	Edward		Butchers	1799	1816	1790	137	Patrick St/Bride St (1813)
Callaghan	Cornelius		Smiths	1793	1799	1793	206	Mary St
Chambers	John		Cutlers etc	≤1790	1799	1770	209	Abbey St
Charles	Richard		Carpenters	1829	≥1830	1815	9	Brunswick St
Clarke	Edward		Shoemakers	1792	1796	1793	620	Fishamble St
Clarke	Arthur		Goldsmiths	1802	1805	1802	202	Bride St
Cochran	Hugh		Merchants	≤1790	1802	1790	141	Usher's Quay
Connor	George		Goldsmiths	1805	1808	1810	245	Fowne's St
Connor	Luke		Carpenters	1823	1829	1810	4 (C)	Cuffe St
Cooper	Henry		Saddlers	1811	1817	1804	141	Dominick St
Crowe	Laurence		Merchants	1817	1823	1797	202	Stephen's Green/Golden Lane (1822)
Darley	Charles		Brewers	1812	1814	1802	620	Great Britain St
Davis	William		Tailors	≤1790	1798	1774	7	Golden Lane
Davison	Richard		Barbers	1806	1808	1790	620	Parliament St
Deane	William		Barbers	1793	1796	1792	7	Strand St
Deverell	Jonathan		Weavers	1814	1820	1817	153	Meath St
Dooley	John		Shoemakers	1805	1808	1802	54 (B)	George's St

Eades	Christopther		Cooks	1799	1805	1784	402	Bride St
Eaton	Benjamin		Carpenters	1808	1823	1787	100 (A)	Blackhall Place/Fitzgibbon St (1821)
Ferns	John	Sir	Merchants	1795	1801	1799	GML	Abbey St
Fitzsimmons	John B		Merchants	1820	1825	1800	GML	Anglesea St
Fleming	John Smith		Merchants	1811	1815	1808	489	Fitzwilliam Sq
Flint	Benjamin	jun	Weavers	1805	1807	1796	189	Drumcondra
Franklin	Luke		Butchers	1793	1798	1792	6	Mary's Abbey
Franklin	Richard		Feltmakers	1796	1799	1796	155	Mary's Lane
Franklin	John		Cutlers etc	1820	≥1830	1820	930	Lower Ormond Quay
Garre	Augustine		Cooks	≤1790	1793	1789	489	Fade St
Gonne	Thomas		Goldsmiths	1817	1820	1807	981	Crowe St
Gregg	Tresham		Barbers	≤1790	1793	1806	930	Fishamble St
Hamilton	Francis		Saddlers	1793	1806	1804	189	Castle St
Hamilton	Baker		Merchants	1800	1802	1796	190	Fleet St
Hautenville	Thomas		Tailors	1799	1808	1799	189	Mary's Abbey
Hay	John Mountiford		Merchants	1801	1804	1797	202	Dawson St/Upper Dorset St (1803)
Heffernan	David		Joiners	1808	1814	1785	620	Bachelor's Walk
Holmes	George		Shoemakers	1811	≥1830	1812	171	Capel St
Hoyte	George		Merchants	1826	1829	1821	620	Sackville St
Humphreys	William		Sheermen and Dyers	1793	1799	1781	584	Usher's Quay
Humphreys	Christopher		Smiths	1805	1808	1782	141	Andrew's St
Jameson	William		Sheermen and Dyers	1812	1823	1815	141	Dorset St
Jewster	William		Feltmakers	1802	1805	1799	6	Dame St
Jones	Patrick		Cutlers etc	≤1790	1802	1808	100 (A)	Henry St
Judge	John		Cooks	1804	1812	1794	207	Dorset St
King	James		Merchants	1793	1799	1796	190	Dame St
Lamprey	Samuel		Merchants	1819	1824	1815	6	Castle St
Lamprey	Joseph		Merchants	1817	1825	1805	202	Westmorland St
Lee	Andrew		Tailors	1802	1805	1803	202	Arran Quay/Dame St (1804)

Lindsey	Wybrants		Merchants	1799	1810	1802	620	Parliament St
Lloyd	John		Goldsmiths	1814	1817	1798	171	Castle St
Lodge	Francis		Merchants	1814	≥1830	1809	207	Ross Lane
Lodge	Robert		Merchants	1823	≥1830	1807	348	Castle St
Mallett	Robert		Joiners	1799	1805	1793	118	Capel St
Manders	Robert		Bakers	≤1790	1796	1783	6	Hawkins's St
Manders	Isaac	sen	Bakers	≤1790	1825	1801	190	Aston Quay/Prospect House (1813)
Mansfield	Nicholas M.		Merchants	1829	≥1830	1811	153	College Green
McCready	William		Saddlers	≤1790	1820	1785	620	Bride St
McKenny	Thomas		Hosiers	1796	1806	1794	584	Stephen St
Minchin	Humphrey		Merchants	1793	1798	1772	198	Parliament St
Mitchell	Arthur		Merchants	1806	1812	1801	198	Dame St
Morrison	Arthur		Cooks	1814	1826	1822	GML	Dawson St
Murray	Gervais		Joiners	1826	1828	1805	930	Great Britain St
Neville	Samuel		Goldsmiths	1808	1812	1806	930	Jervis St
Newell	Robert		Barbers	1793	1807	1799	207	Great Britain St
O Neill	William		Bricklayers	1798	1805	1797	100 (A)	Mountjoy Sq
Oldham	John		Shoemakers	1793	1808	1802	6	Arran Quay
Overend	George		Merchants	1805	1812	1799	6	Lurgan St
Paisley	Jonas		Coopers	1813	1814	1791	190	Summerhill
Palmer	Thomas		Saddlers	1805	1814	1796	353	Peter Row
Palmer	George		Merchants	1823	1826	1824	348	French St
Parker	Stephen		Cutlers etc	1829	≥1830	1822	153	St Andrews St
Patterson	William		Cooks	1808	1814	1784	207	College Green
Porter	William		Cutlers etc	1811	1829	1781	198	Grafton St
Powell	Robert		Merchants	≤1790	1795	1772	198	Thomas St
Rainsford	John		Merchants	≤1790	1796	1791	190	Beresford St
Read	John		Cutlers etc	1797	1814	1793	198	College Green
Riddall	James		Merchants	1807	1810	1789	141	Suffolk St
Short	Arthur		Curriers	1817	1826	1817	55	Camden St

Sims	Charles		Barbers	1807	1826	1820	153	Capel St/Mountrath St (1821)
Stoker	William		Tailors	1827	≥1830	1800	6	Sackville St
Sweeny	John		Glovers and Tanners	1805	1808	1799	100 (A)	York St
Swinny	Bladen		Merchants	1817	1820	1819	9	Kildare St
Tandy	James		Merchants	≤1790	1796	1791	190	Chancery Lane
Thome	Francis		Merchants	1814	1819	1772	198	Com. Buildings/Nelson St (1815)
Thorpe	Charles	jun	Bricklayers	1805	1822	1778	202	North George's St
Todd	John		Merchants	1805	≥1830	1818	4 (B)	Crompton Courty/Dame St/ Arbour Hill (1814)/Country (1830)
Tudor	John		Goldsmiths	1805	1805	1792	209	North Frederick St
Tyndall	Samuel		Merchants	≤1790	1801	1781	198	Abbey St
Usher	Robert		Coopers	1793	1813	1802	64	Prince's St/Abbey St (1805)
Walker	John		Hosiers	≤1790	1793	1787	64	Hanbury Lane
Wall	Garrett		Merchants	1799	1802	1789	155	Fleet St
Warner	George		Goldsmith	1812	1814	1793	100 (A)	College Green
Wheeler	George		Merchants	1815	1818	1797	100 (A)	Dame St
Wilkinson	Thomas		Carpenters	1793	1796	1781	402	Winetavern St
Wood	William		Merchants	1817	1819	1806	6	Bishop St/ Lower Mount St (1818)
Wright	Richard		Feltmakers	1820	≥1830	1819	620,2	Lower Ormond Quay
Yeates	Richard		Cutlers etc	1814	≥1830	1822	153	Arran Quay/Parliament St (1815)

Source: Grand Lodge of Ireland register, series 1, vols 1-3, and series 2, vols 1 and 5 (Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin, and William Wilson, *Dublin directory*, 1790-1830 (Dublin).

Note: ≤ 1790 indicates the member was a guild representative before 1790

≥ 1830 indicates the member was a guild representative after 1830

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