

Forfarshire Masonic Celebrities



Chevalier James Burnes of Montrose (1801-1862)

**Provincial Grand Master of the Three Presidencies in
India**

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FORFARSHIRE MASONIC CELEBRITIES
THE CHEVALIER JAMES BURNES

Chevalier Dr James Burnes L.L.D., F.R.S.

1801 to 1862

From Ars Quatuor Coronatum (19th Century Publication)

Chevalier James Burnes
Provincial Grand Master of the Three Presidencies in India
By Bro R. F. Gould, P.G.D.

The subject of this memoir was the son of James Burnes, a worthy gentleman sometime Provost of Montrose, and for many years the honoured Master of St Peters Lodge in that ancient city. His great grandfather was the elder brother of William Burnes, the father of Scotland's immortal Bard; and his grandfather was the relative to whom the Poet appealed, and not in vain, for pecuniary assistance when lying on his deathbed.

The sons of the Provost of Montrose were James born in 1801, Adam in 1802, Alexander in 1805, David in 1806, and Charles in 1812. All five were Freemasons and four were commissioned officers, three holding appointments in the Indian Army, and one in the Royal Navy. *(Their maternal Grandfather was twenty-two years Provost (Glegg) of Montrose.)*

The first born was named James after his father; and the third, Alexander, after whom I know not, but there could have been no better name for one who was destined to do great things in the countries watered by the Indus and bounded by the Caucasian range. He often used to say, in later days, that he found his name a help to him. In Afghanistan he was always known as 'Secunder Burnes,' and "Secunder" (Alexander) has been a great name in that part of the world ever since the great days of the Greek occupation.

These two – the remaining brothers will only be incidentally referred to – arrived in India and were taken on the strength of the Bombay Army, James as a medical officer, and Alexander as a cadet, in October 1821.

Philip William Le Geyt, of the Bombay Civil Service, also reached India and entered upon his duties in the same year, and the next brother whose name will be brought into this narrative, was Ensign (afterwards Lt General Sir) James Outram, whose arrival in the Bombay Presidency and appointment to the 4th Regiment of Native Infantry had taken place at a slightly earlier date, namely in 1819.

At that period (1819) and until some few years after the "Brother Burnes" and Philip W. Le Geyt had landed in Western India (1821), the only Lodge in the Presidency of Bombay was and English one, No. 361, in the 17th Dragoons.

Six commissioned officers (of other Regiments) and one civilian were admitted to the membership of the Lodge in 1821, and in the same year a petition from the seven for a Grand Lodge Warrant was forwarded and recommended by No. 361.

The Benevolent Lodge, No. 746, which met in the first instance at Poona, and afterwards at Bombay, was established (on the above recommendation) in 1822. Among its distinguished members were the Hon. Sir Charles Colville, Commander-in-Chief (one of the Duke of Wellington's favourite brigadiers), 1825; General Sir John Malcolm, Governor of Bombay (author, soldier and diplomatist), 1827; and, at a slightly later period, Lieutenant (afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel Sir) Alexander Burnes.

All the military petitioners for No. 746 were founders of another Lodge, "Orion in the West," which was "installed" in the Bombay Horse Artillery, at Poona, in 1823.

The first civilian, in the person of Mr. Philip William Le Geyt, of the Bombay Civil Service, was initiated in this Lodge on the 19th of July 1824, and a meeting of the brethren was held at his residence (of which a later example will be given in connection with another Lodge) in 1825.

At this period non-commissioned officers could only be admitted into "Orion" as serving brethren, so a number of them belonging to the Bombay Artillery took advantage of the presence at Poona of the 20th Foot, and were initiated in the "Minden" (an Irish) Lodge, No. 63, attached to that corps. This Lodge, on October 25th, 1825, assisted in laying the foundation stone of a Temple of Masonry, at which ceremony Lieut.-General the Hon. Sir Charles Colville, Commander-in-Chief, officiated as Grand Master.

The "civil" element of "Orion" soon after seceded and established Lodge "Hope," No. 818, of which Le Geyt was a founder, in 1826.

The next Lodge to spring into existence was "Perseverance," No. 818, which was established at Bombay in 1827. This, in the inception, was a working-man's Lodge, and four of the founders, including Bro. William Willis (of whom an anecdote has elsewhere been narrated ([Military Lodges 193](#))) and other N.C.O.'s of the Bombay Artillery, were initiates of the "Minden Lodge" (Irish) No. 63.

At the above date (1827), Dr. Burnes was not a Freemason, nor did he become one, as we shall presently see, until 1834, but he joined No. 818, and his example was followed by his friend W. H. Le Geyt and his younger brother, Charles Burnes, under circumstances that will be related in their due sequence, after his return to India from furlough in Europe, in 1838.

After meritorious service with the artillery and infantry, Dr. Burnes, in 1824, was appointed Surgeon to the Residency in Cutch, and as a volunteer he accompanied the field force which expelled the Scindians and other freebooters in 1825. Two years later the Ameers of Scinde, between whom and the British Government a very un-cordial feeling had long subsisted, unexpectedly solicited his services, sending an envoy to invite him to their capital, where he remained several months, and was only allowed to depart on a promise of his early return.

The doctor wrote a narrative of his *Visit to the Court of Scinde* (comprising *A Sketch of the History of Cutch*), which was published at Edinburgh in 1831, and has gone through many successive editions; being the best account of the country we yet possess.

In October 1833, Dr. Burnes was obliged to leave Cutch on sick certificate, and in the following February he embarked for Europe, travelling by the overland route (at that time attended by some difficulty), and visiting Malta, Sicily, Naples, Rome, Florence, Venice, Geneva and Paris. While at home, among other honours conferred upon him, he was created a Doctor of Laws by the University of Glasgow, and elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, and of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. He was also presented at Court by his friend the 9th Earl of Dalhousie—Grand Master of Scotland, 1804-5—who had then returned from the command of the Army in India, and received the honour of Guelphic Knighthood (K.H.), from which he derived the title which was very commonly bestowed upon him, of the "Chevalier Burnes."

The minutes of St. Peter's Lodge, Montrose—extracts from which have been kindly furnished me by Bro. D. C. Wills—record, that in February 1834, Bro. Alexander Burnes, of the "Benevolent Lodge," Bombay, received the compliment of honorary membership, and delivered an interesting address.

At a subsequent meeting of the Lodge in August of the same year, Dr. James Burnes, K.H., and two of his brothers, viz., Charles Burnes (afterwards of the Bombay Army), and David Burnes, M.D., of London (who entered the Royal Navy as a Surgeon in 1826, and retired from it in 1835), were enrolled as members, having been "entered, passed and raised" in the course of the evening. At this gathering their venerable father and his five sons were all present, the latter including besides Alexander, Adam Burnes, who had been, admitted a member in 1830.

A brief memoir of Lieutenant (afterwards Sir) Alexander Burnes has been given in a recent publication. (*Military Lodges, 194, et seqq.*) Nearly nine hundred copies of his book of travels (into Bokhara) were sold off in a single day. The Bombay Lieutenant was the lion of the hour. He was complimented by Baron Humboldt, by the Institute of France, and by the "Royal Asiatic Society of Paris, elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and honours of all kinds were showered upon him. The great traveller was sent for by Louis Philippe, in order that he might confer upon him the decoration of the Legion of Honour with his own hands.

"I am killed with honours and kindness," said the young officer in a letter, "and it is a more painful death than starvation among the Usbeks." In this there was no exaggeration. The magnates of the land were contending for the privilege of a little conversation with "Bokhara Burnes," and as a climax the King William IV — commanded his presence, and listened to the story of his travels and the exposition of his views for nearly an hour and a half.

The remaining events in his life are matters of history. On the 2nd of November 1841, the crisis occurred, of which he had repeatedly warned the Indian Government. The Cabool tragedy opened with the murder of Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Alexander Burnes (as he had then become), and only finally closed after the annihilation of a force, including camp followers, 'of between twelve and fifteen thousand men.

Burnes, who occupied a house in the native city, had been apprised of the approaching danger, and urged to take refuge in the cantonments, but believing that he could quell the tumult declined to move, and was in consequence brutally murdered by the Afghan mob, his younger brother Charles, and Lieutenant William Broadfoot his assistant, perishing at the same time.

Of Charles Burnes, the fifth son of the Provost of Montrose, it may be observed, that he was appointed in 1835 a cadet on the Bombay establishment, in recognition of the services of Sir Alexander. At the period of his death he was a lieutenant in the 17th N.I., and having been in bad health he had gone on a visit to his brother when the insurrection took place.

Returning to Dr. James Burnes, we find him on May 7th, 1835, forming one of a deputation from Lodge Canongate Kilwinning (Edinburgh), by whom James Hogg, the "Ettrick Shepherd," was received into Masonry, in order that the office of Poet Laureate of the Lodge might be revived, which, had been, in abeyance since the death of Robert Burns.

In September of the same year, the doctor was elected Proxy Master of St. Peter's Lodge, Montrose, and in the following June, at a meeting of "Canongate Kilwinning," No. 2 (of which he had become a joining member in April, 1835), it was carried *nem. con.*, — "That the cordial thanks of this Lodge be tendered to Bro. James Burnes, LL.D., M.D., and F.R.S., for his great and meritorious exertions during the past year in advancing the cause of Masonry in this country, and in this Lodge in particular." (*Allan Mackenzie (Historian of No. 2), to B.F.G., February 1900.*)

In September, 1836, Dr. Burnes was elected Master of his Mother Lodge, but other and higher honours of the Craft were in store for him, and two months later he was appointed Provincial Grand Master for Western India, retiring on the same date from the chair of St. Peter's Lodge, Montrose, No. 154, in which he was succeeded by his next brother, Adam Burnes, who had previously vacated it in his favour.

Shortly afterwards—December 13th—on the occasion of his visit to Mary's Chapel, Edinburgh, "Brother Burnes was, amidst the acclamations of the brethren, and while they were at refreshment, made 'an honorary and full member of the Lodge (without payment of the usual fee).'" (*Lyon, History of Lodge of Edinburgh, 341.*)

On St. John's Day (in Winter) 1836, a splendid Bible was handed to the R.W.M. of No. 154. It bore the following inscription: — "From the R.W. Bro. James Burnes, the third Master in descent of that name and family, of St. Peter's Lodge, Montrose, as a token of affection to his brethren."

The gift was suitably acknowledged, and early in January, 1837, the members of St. Peter's Lodge again met for the purpose of presenting the donor with a magnificent snuff-box, beautifully chased, as an expression of their esteem, and to mark their sense of his indefatigable exertions in the cause of Freemasonry. The R.W. Master, Adam Burnes, who presided, was supported by the R.W. Masters of the Montrose Kilwinning, and Incorporated Kilwinning Lodges, in the Warden's chairs—a beautiful illustration of Masonic feeling, and highly complimentary to Dr. Burnes.

In the course of the following month, he was deputed by Lord Ramsay to present to each of the Grand Masters of England and Ireland (the Dukes of Sussex and Leinster) one of the gold medals that were struck in honour of the centenary of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

In Edinburgh while making preparations for his return to the East, a splendid entertainment was given him – April 27th, 1837 – by the Fraternity. The Grand Master, Lord Ramsay, afterwards the 10th Earl and 1st Marquis of Dalhousie (without doubt the greatest statesman that ever occupied the Scottish Masonic throne, and whose speeches in eulogy of the benign influence of Freemasonry have left him unsurpassed as an orator of the Craft presided, and, in presenting the guest of the evening with a beautiful silver vase, he informed him that the object for which they had met was that he might receive from them a memorial of their regard for him as a gentleman and a Freemason.

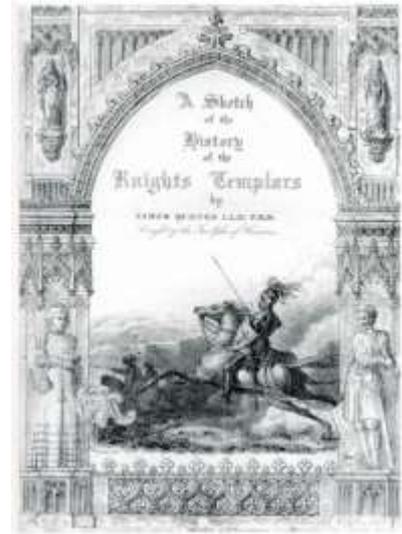
The addresses of Dr Burnes were always models of their kind, and at the Edinburgh Banquet, in the course of an eloquent and dignified reply to the toast of his health, he observed: -

“What feelings, indeed, must be mine if they are not deeply affected by the events of the last three years, brought this evening to such a termination? Scarcely has that period elapsed since

I appeared among you as a nameless wanderer. So loose had become my ties to my native country that I had quitted India with deep regret, aggravated by a separation from my friends and brother officers there, and heightened by all the doubt and dread which naturally beset a stranger in entering upon a new and untried sphere. What is my situation now? What has been the presiding star over my destiny to which I am to attribute so much unexpected preferment? My friends, it is you who have stimulated my exertions, now so splendidly requited, in the cause of Masonry. Confidence in the excellence of that glorious institution, and experienced in its advantages, I have, with your aid, endeavoured to give a popularity and charm to its character and observances among the higher classes of society, where, perhaps, they had not retained the credit they deserve.

Among the “Remarkable occurrences in Masonry,” to use a somewhat stock phrase, with which many of my hearers will be familiar, there are none that appear more extraordinary than the absolutely unique position in the craft attained by Dr Burnes within less than three years from his initiation at Montrose.

In the annals of the Chivalric Orders for the same period, his name should also be blazoned as the first and foremost of its chiefs. The Society of the Templars he revived from a profound slumber, which had well nigh passed into the sleep that knows no waking, and the few hours of leisure he could command during the closing months of his absence from Bombay, he devoted to a “memoir of the Order of the Temple,” which he left behind him, as a token of remembrance to his many friends, on return to India in December, 1837.



Early in 1838 a Provincial Grand Lodge (under the Scottish Jurisdiction) was duly constituted for the Western Provinces of British India. At the head of it was Dr James Burnes. “Captain Alexander Burnes, envoy to Cabul,” was a Grand Warden, and among the other Provincial Grand Officers were distinguished members of the Civil Service, the Chief Secretary to the Government, The President of the Chamber of Commerce, Lt. Colonel Neil Campbell, Quartermaster General of the Bombay Army. Two Past Masters each (of English) Lodges “Orthes” and “Thornton,” in the 6th and 40th regiments of Foot respectively, and Lieutenant Charles Burnes, 17th N.I.

The subject of this notice, for some years after his return to the East, would have been best described in ecclesiastical phraseology as a Provincial Grand Master “in partibus infidelium” for whatever Lodges then existed throughout the length and breadth of India were strangers to Scottish Masonry.

Nor, indeed, for reasons which do him the highest credit, was Burnes in any immediate hurry to establish Scottish Lodges in Bombay. He rightly judged that his first duty was to do all in his power to prevent the then subsisting Lodges from falling into decay, and with this aim he joined Lodge Perseverance, under the English Constitution (a fragment of whose earlier history has already been related) in November, and was elected its first Master in December, 1838.

Other joining members of the same Lodge were Lieutenant Charles Burnes, 17th N.I., in January, and Philip William Le Geyt, in February 1839.

At the annual festival of this Lodge on St John's day (in Winter) 1839, Burnes was re-elected Master, when he delivered an admirable address, and was solicited to accept, as a humble mark of the high esteem in which he was held by the members, a gold badge, or some other token that might be deemed more appropriate.

The sum of one thousand rupees was soon after contributed by members of the Lodge, and it was resolved that the offering should consist of three Masonic silver pillars, representing the three most noble orders of architecture, surmounted by the figures of Faith, Hope and Charity, the token "to show the affection of the brethren for their R. W. Master, to mark their deep felt gratitude for his conduct to themselves, and their high sense of his brilliant efforts in the cause of Charity, Friendship, and Love to all men."

The *Freemasons Quarterly Review*, at that time the solitary organ of the English speaking Craft, under the heading of "Bombay, January 1st, 1840," has the following:

"The present advanced state of Freemasonry here is entirely to be attributed to the unceasing exertions of that distinguished Mason, Brother Doctor James Burnes. We trust that the *Grand Lodge of England* (italics mine) may be induced to take an early opportunity of acknowledging the claims which this excellent and worthy Mason has upon its consideration."

In the same year (1840) Dr. Burnes paid a visit to Calcutta, and the announcement that he was about to leave Bombay evoked a very general regret, notably in what may be called the Military section of the fraternity. At an emergency meeting, the Orthes Lodge No. 445 (under the English jurisdiction), in the 6th Foot, held at Poona, in June, unanimously resolved, "That the Master and Wardens do communicate to our worthy Brother Dr. James Burnes, K.H., the thanks of this Lodge for his zeal and exertions in the cause of Masonry, and the deep sorrow with which they have learned that the Lodges of Western India must for a time at least be deprived of so distinguished a light in Freemasonry."

On the arrival of the Provincial Grand Master of Bombay in the City of Palaces, it was decided, with genuine hospitality and brotherly alacrity, to celebrate a series of Masonic ovations, to mark how welcome was his arrival among the fraternity in Bengal. It would be impossible to say which of these entertainments was the most delightful, or at which the eloquence of the distinguished visitor shone with the greatest lustre.

At the banquet given in his honour by the Lodge of Industry and Perseverance, he declared: -
" I have devoted my utmost energies to Masonry in India, not only because it draws closer the bonds of social union amongst educated individuals, like ourselves, bringing together in happy intercourse our countrymen of all conditions, who are disposed to walk upright, live within compass, and set upon the square, to the incalculable advantage of every respectable portion of European society, but also as a means admirably suited for extending, without awakening religious prejudice, a truer knowledge of the ~Great Architect of the Universe, and more just notions of their duty to each other, among the natives of this mighty Empire."

The revival of Masonry in India, which had languished in the leading Presidency ever since the departure of the Earl of Moira – 1st Marquis of Hastings – in 1823, has always been associated with the visit to Calcutta of the Provincial Grand Master of Bombay.

A few military brethren in Bengal were, indeed, distinguished for their Masonic zeal at a period slightly anterior to the fraternal invasion of that territory by Dr. Burnes. Two names deserve especial mention, those of Dr William John Grant, and Major R. C. Macdonald, 49th N.I. To the efforts of these officers must be ascribed the restoration of the Provincial Grand Lodge, in the chair of which the former had just been installed on the arrival of his illustrious confrere of Western India at Calcutta in 1840. The later a grandson of Flora Macdonald, whom Sir Walter Scott has commemorated in his *Waverley* as Flora McIvor, was untiring in his Masonic duties, and at the period of his untimely decease (1841), his name and fame were spread over the whole Indian Empire.

The Addresses of Dr. Burnes to the Calcutta Lodges were in every instance worthy of his high reputation as an Orator of the Craft, and one of them,

“On the duties of the Masonic Soldier,” delivered before the brethren of Humility with Fortitude, present No. 229, on the 8th December, 1840, has lately been reproduced in a publication (*Military Lodges, 196*) with which some of those present tonight will be familiar.

Burnes returned to Bombay early in 1841, having been selected for the office of Secretary to the Medical Board. In that year he presided at the St. Andrew’s Dinner, but owing to the catastrophe at Cabool in which his brothers lost their lives he remained for some time afterwards in retirement.

We now approach a period of his career when the strange sight was witnessed of the English Masons in Western India deserting their Mother Lodges to such an extent that those fell into abeyance, in order that they might give their support to Lodges newly constituted by the Grand Lodge of Scotland. In one case, indeed, a Lodge – Perseverance, of which Burnes himself was (or had been) the Master – under England went over bodily to the enemy and the charge was accepted by Scotland.

The *English* records of the Lodge have disappeared, (*I. M. Shields to E. F. G., February 8th, 1900.*) so that we really know nothing whatever of the closing history of "Perseverance" under its old Obedience, but from such collateral evidence as we possess, it may be inferred that it could have been on no slight grounds that Dr. Burnes withdrew from the English Craft, and gave his undivided allegiance to the Masonry of his native land.

His refusal to grant Scottish Charters at an earlier date, and the desire he expressed to infuse new life into the existing English Lodges, have been already mentioned, and to quote once more from the same source of authority (reviewing the result of Dr. Burnes' first term of office as W.M.), — "The success of Lodge Perseverance must be gratifying to everyone. It has quadrupled its members, attracted the general consideration of society, and drawn forth a gratifying evidence of goodwill on the part of the government." (*Freemasons' Quarterly Review, 1840*) It seems to me, therefore, having regard to all the known facts of the case, that in his efforts to promote the spread of Masonry in the East, Burnes must have had little or any support from " the power behind the throne " of our English Grand Lodge, if, indeed, which is perhaps more probable, he did not sustain a mortifying rebuff. Before and after that time the

Lodges and brethren in our Colonies and Dependencies had good reason to complain of the persistent neglect which they experienced from the Grand Lodge of England.

(History of Freemasonry, in., 331, 466 ; Eobertson, History of Freemasonry in Canada, passim).

It may also well have been/and the extracts already given from the then leading journal of the Craft, appear to favour the supposition, that the efforts of his friends were unsuccessful in obtaining for the Doctor an English patent as Provincial Grand Master?

But whatever was the cause of the eminent man, whose career I am unfolding, retiring from English Masonry, there is scarcely room for doubt that he must have been actuated by conscientious motives, and with the predominant wish to more generally-diffuse the principles of the Society in the East.

Although the records of Lodge " Perseverance," Bombay, while under the English banner, have disappeared, those of its Scottish successor are still happily intact. From the latter I derive the following : —

"Bombay, 6th December, 1842.

To

Rt: Wor: Brother James Burnes, K.H.,
Provincial Grand Master of Western India.
Right Worshipful Sir and Brother,

We, the undersigned Masons, unconnected with any Masonic Lodge, being desirous of disseminating the principles of the Craft under your control, do respectfully request, that you will be pleased to form us into a Lodge, and grant us a Warrant empowering us to work as Masons under the name and style of Lodge "Perseverance."

We remain" etc.

[The names of thirty-two brethren are appended to the above letter, twenty-three of which appear in the Grand Lodge Register, on the roll of *English*—or original—Lodge "Perseverance," at Bombay. The first signature to the petition is that of "P. W. Le Geyt"]

" Bombay, 6th December, 1842.

Dear and Worshipful Brethren,

I have been, favoured with your application of this date, requesting that, as a body of Masons unconnected with any Lodge, you may be, by me, incorporated into a Lodge, to be denominated Lodge Perseverance; and having perfect confidence in you, and a due regard for the interests of the Craft, I have resolved forthwith to give full effect to your request.

I do therefore require and authorise you to assemble at the Town Hall on Saturday next, the 10th instant, at 4 p.m., when I shall be prepared to receive you, and to erect you into a regular Lodge of which the under-mentioned Brethren will be nominated interim officers to carry on the duties until St. John's day.

The Brother whom I mean to propose for your acceptance as Worshipful Master for the ensuing year, is Brother Harry J. Barr, and if this proposal be agreeable to you, I shall be

prepared to install him and four other officers, as well as to consecrate your new Lodge on St. John's day, when I request the favour of your assembling at my residence at half-past three p.m., where the ceremonial will be performed in the presence of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Western India, to be then and there convoked for the purpose.

On the evening of Friday, the 16th instant, at 6 p.m., the new Lodge Perseverance will hold its first meeting for the reception of the candidates at the apartments, in the Fort, of Brother Le Geyt, when it is proposed, with the concurrence of the Brethren to confer the Second Degree on Brother Outram. The Lodge could not commence its operations with a more distinguished candidate, and I entreat the presence of all the Brethren on this occasion .! .!

[Signed] James Burnes, P.G.M."

[Addressed to P.W. Le Geyt and other petitioners.]

For a copy of the foregoing correspondence I am indebted to Bro. H. Sadler, who received it from Bro. I. M. Shields, and the latter has since kindly set on foot further inquiries respecting the fourth paragraph of the doctor's letter, about which there is some confusion.

Without doubt, however, the "distinguished candidate" referred to by the Provincial Grand Master was Major (afterwards Lieutenant-General Sir James) Outram), to whom a public dinner had been given in the previous month—November 5th, 1842—by the Military Society at Sakhar, on the occasion of his departure from Scinde. At this nearly one hundred officers of the three Presidencies were present; and among them Sir Charles James Napier, who, as Chairman, spoke as follows: —

“Gentlemen, — I have told you that there are only to be two toasts drank this evening; one, that of a lady (the Queen) you have already responded to, the other shall be for a gentleman. But before I proceed any further, I must tell you a story. In the fourteenth century there was in the French Army a Knight renowned for deeds of gallantry in war, and wisdom in council; indeed, so deservedly famous was he, that by general acclamation he was called the Knight *sans peur et sans reproche*. The name of this Knight, you may all know, was the Chevalier Bayard. Gentlemen, I give you the ‘Bayard of India, *sans peur et sans reproche*, Major James Outram, of the Bombay Army.’” (*Sir F. J. Goldsmid, James Outram, a Biography, I, 292*)

Outram then proceeded to Bombay on his homeward journey, but on the 12th of December was ordered to return to Scinde, for which part of India he embarked in the "Semiramis," on the 16th of the same month (*Sir F. J. Goldsmid, James Outram, a Biography, I, 292*) — the date on which he was to have been passed to the second degree, " at the apartments, in the Fort, of Brother Le Geyt."

I learn, moreover, from my friend and fellow student, the Grand Secretary of Scotland, that; while the first working warrants issued by Dr. Burnes under his commission were granted in 1842, this was not reported to the Grand Lodge until 184", when information was received of the erection under Dr. Burnes' Warrants of two Lodges in India, namely " Hope, Karachi, Scinde," on the 25th of April, and " Perseverance, Bombay," on the 27th (and *not* on the 16th) of December, 1842.

" The first return of intrants from Lodge Perseverance, Bombay, is dated in 1847, and the name of James Outram is not among those sent." (*D. Murray Lyon to E. F. Gould, September 5th, 1899*)

The idea, therefore, that the "Bayard of India" was either a member of, or received a degree in, Lodge Perseverance, Bombay, must be dismissed as chimerical; though of the fact that he was at least a Freemason, in December, 1842, and a candidate for advancement in the Craft" at the apartments of Brother Le Geyt," equally the personal friend of Dr. Burnes and himself, there would seem to be no room for doubt.

The grandson of the General—the Rev. James Outram, Vicar of St. Peter's Ipswich, in reply to my inquiries, after conferring with his father, the present baronet, and the Dowager Lady Outram, writes (*January 5th, 1900*): —"Neither of them has any recollection of Sir James having any connection with Freemasonry. My grandmother is of opinion that he would certainly have made her acquainted with the fact if he had been, and that he never did so. If, as is to be supposed from your note, *re* December 16th, 1842, he was initiated, Lady Outram imagines it must have been before his' marriage in 1835."

From the published *Biography* (*Goldsmid, I, 296*) of the General, I glean the fact that in December, 1842, Mrs. (now the Dowager Lady) Outram, was in Europe, which will explain how it was that the passing intention of her husband to rejoin the Masonic fold failed to fall under her personal observation. But in the surmise that Sir James must have become a member of the Craft before his marriage in 1835, I fully concur, and consider it highly probable that like Sir Alexander Burnes, he was initiated in the Benevolent Lodge No. 746, Bombay. The latter officer wrote to a correspondent: —"In 1828 they raised me to be Assistant Quarter-Master General of the Army, and transferred me to the headquarters at Bombay. There I met Sir John Malcolm."

Generals the Hon. Sir Charles Colville, Commander-in-Chief, and Sir J. Malcolm, Governor of the Presidency, joined the Benevolent Lodge, the former in 1825 and the latter in 1827. The records have wholly disappeared, and the latest entry relating to No. 746, in the Grand Lodge Register, is dated October 16th, 1828.

The admission of Alexander Burnes, *whom from his own statement alone*, we know to have been a member, must therefore have occurred at a slightly later period, and among the other initiates whose names are similarly unrecorded in any official document, James Outram, who equally with Burnes enjoyed the friendship and esteem of the Governor of the Presidency, Sir John Malcolm, may be entitled to a place.

Ontram's career (after the mutiny) as military member of the Supreme Government of India, extended from May, 1858, till July, 1860. He and Lady Outram shared a good house at Garden Reach (Calcutta) with his old friend Mr. Le Geyt of the Bombay Civil Service. (*Goldsmid, II, 364, ut supra*).

Le Geyt, also a member of the Supreme Government of India, joined Star in the East No. 67, Calcutta, in 1855; and Bro. H. D. Sandeman (who was present) informs me—that he was installed as Master of the Lodge on January 13th, 1858.

The next prominent appearance of Dr. James Burnes was on the occasion of his-laying the foundation-stone of the Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy Hospital in January, 1843, which ceremony

created a great sensation and led to the formation of a Lodge for the purpose of receiving into Masonry, under certain qualifications, the native gentlemen of India.

This Lodge, " Rising Star of Western India," was established, with Burnes as the first Master, in December, 1843, and at the first regular meeting there were two initiations, one candidate being a Parsee and the other a Mahomedan — both of them ranking among the most highly cultured of their own people—the first named being an F.R.S. and man of science. In the following July, there were present in Lodge nine native brethren, three of whom were followers of Zoroaster, two of Confucius, and four of Mahomet, but all assembled in brotherly love with the followers of Christ to worship the Masons' God.

Eight of these native brethren were initiates of the Lodge, and the ninth, Bro, Manockjee Cursetjee, an affiliate from the Grand Orient of France, was the first Parsee Mason ever invested with the insignia of the Fraternity.

At the first anniversary meeting of Lodge "Rising Star," in December, 1844, Dr. Burnes was unanimously re-elected Master, and it was resolved that in order to commemorate his act in throwing open the portals of Freemasonry to the natives of India, a medal should be struck, which it was hoped would " render his name resplendent throughout the East."

The consecration of Lodge St. Andrew's in the East, at Poona, took place in the same-year. Dr. Burnes presided, and among those present were " several highly respectable non-commissioned officers," whom he appears to have particularly addressed in the following-passage of his address: —" Not more wonderful, perhaps, is that annihilation of all strife, and the substitution in its stead of a kindred sympathy, which Masonry enforces amongst those whose creeds, customs, climes and languages, are essentially discordant, than is that beautiful application of our system here exemplified, by which the iron chain of one of the strongest bonds that restrain man is deprived, not indeed of its strength, but of its weight, and under whose genial influence the military superior and his more humble, though no less exemplary follower, mingle together in fraternal communion on the broad footing of amoral level, alike gratifying to both, but which can be misunderstood by neither, since all enlightened men know that, as in the Lodge so in the world, gradations must inevitably exist, and that Masonry ever upholds legitimate authority, and represses inordinate pretensions; and teaching every man his place and duties within his sphere, is equally the enemy of tyranny on the one hand and insubordination on the other."

The Brethren of St. Andrew's in the East presented Dr. Burnes with a Knight's Cross of the Guelphic Order, enriched with brilliants, as a mark of their esteem; and the Prov. G.M. in return, asked them to accept a Bible as a token of his love. The sacred volume is, I believe, still carefully cherished by the Lodge, and certainly was, when I enjoyed the privilege of being a member of it, in 1819.

In 1845, Dr. Burnes established a new Order — "The Brotherhood of the Olive Branch of the East," consisting of three classes, Novice, Companion and Officer. From the reputation of its founder it was received with much enthusiasm by Indian Freemasons. But it never took root, and in the expectation that "if the standard of such a Brotherhood was raised, Bombay would be the centre of a movement which for purposes of charity and enlightenment, could not fail to influence the remotest corners of the earth," the disappointment of the originator was complete.

In January 1846, he presided at a great Masonic Festival, held in Bombay, and in proposing the health of the Commander-in-Chief, spoke of him as having been brought up at the feet, as it were, of the most distinguished Mason—Francis Rawden, Earl of Moira and first Marquess of Hastings—that had existed in their times.

General Sir F. McMahon, after an eloquent reply, spoke as follows:—" Eight Worshipful Sir and Brethren – I beg leave to propose that we should pay due homage to the memory of a great Statesman, a great General, and a great Mason; I allude to the late Marquess of Hastings, whose virtues and talents gained for him the exalted reputation which he bore throughout India and over all Europe. I may say of this distinguished nobleman that he was the scholar of the camp, the patriot, the benefactor of the poor, and one of the brightest ornaments of his country."

Another Military brother present, Colonel (afterwards General Sir John Lysaght) Pennefather, 22nd Foot, returned thanks for the visitors.

In July of the same year, Dr. Burnes was promoted to be Superintending Surgeon, and a service of plate was voted to him by his brother officers.

A month later his Indian jurisdiction was extended, and a commission granted to him as " Provincial Grand Master of the Three Presidencies in India (including Aden)." It is stated by Laurie (*History of Grand Lodge of Scotland*, 395) whose mistake has been copied and re-copied by later writers, that he was invested with the title of " Grand Master of Scottish Free-Masons in India," but an examination of the actual records of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, which has been kindly made by my valued friend Bro. William Officer, has definitely settled what the terms were in which the Provincial patent previously held by the doctor, was enlarged.

In 1849, his colleagues on the Medical Board (to which he had been promoted in the previous year) intimated to the local government their deep regret that ill health was about to deprive the Army Medical Service of an officer who had been " so long its pride and ornament."

An invitation to meet the brethren at a general festival prior to his departure, Dr. Burnes was obliged to decline, but among the valedictory honours that were proposed, there was one which he accepted with the utmost gratification. It was a proposal by the Lodges to strike medals for the encouragement of learning and good conduct in the Grant Medical College, the Byculla Schools, and the Academy at Montrose, where his own education had taken place.

Burnes left Bombay in December 1849, and was accompanied to the place of embarkation "by troops of friends and admirers and nearly every Mason on the island."

The Minutes of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, under the date of May 6th, 1850, record the following:—

"A letter from Bro. Dr. James Burnes, to the Grand Secretary, dated London, 27th April, 1850, intimating his return from India and his resignation of the office of Provincial Grand Master of India, was submitted. Bro. Dr. Barnes' resignation was accepted and the thanks of the Grand Lodge voted to him for his able and zealous services in the East. Bro. Burnes' suggestion of a successor for *Western India* was given effect to and Bro. Philip William Le Geyt of the Bombay Civil Service was appointed Provincial Grand Master for Western India." (*William Officer to R. F. G., February 12th, 1900*).

In 1851 Dr. Burnes published a little work, being a series of "Notes on his Name and Family." There is a crest on the title-page which he obtained from the Herald's office, in commemoration of the devotion to their country shown by his two brothers. Out of a mural crown—the rim inscribed *Cabool*—a demi-eagle is displayed transfixed by a javelin; and round the whole is the appropriate motto: — OB PATBIAM VULNEEA PASSI.

At the time these "Notes" were penned, the writer had three sons, a lieutenant in the 1st Bombay Fusiliers, an ensign in the 33rd Madras N.I., and a midshipman in the Indian Navy, respectively. The death of his' eldest son, the lieutenant, occasioned by a noble' act of self-devotion during the Indian Mutiny, brought him no common sorrow. It is probable that all three were Freemasons, though the evidence at my disposal only points with certainty to the admission of the youngest son, H. W. H. Burnes of the Indian Navy, who was "entered, passed, and raised" on the 15th of September, 1855, in the same Mother Lodge—St. Peter's, Montrose—which had already welcomed so many of his name and family.

In addition to being an able writer, Dr. Burnes was an eloquent and impressive speaker. Fond of company, in which he was always the favourite, and where he eminently shone, he was the Chairman most generally selected to preside at public meetings, not only of the Masonic fraternity, but whenever entertainments were given in Western India either to distinguished strangers or members of the community. His address, on the occasion of a public dinner being given at Bombay to Sir Henry Pottinger when returning from China, was so much admired as to be reprinted in all the leading journals of Europe. Later still, at an influential meeting, held in March, 1861, long after his retirement from active service, and only shortly before his death, to do honour to that distinguished soldier and statesman,

Sir James Outram, the speech of Dr. Burnes—in the course of which he observed that he had passed the best days of his life in the same public service with, and in daily observation of, the guest of the evening—was adjudged by common consent, to have borne the most eloquent testimony to the splendid career of the Bayard of the East.

There seemed every prospect of the doctor attaining a green old age, but he sickened and died after a brief illness, at Manchester on the 19th September 1862. It has been said, and the statement remains unchallenged, that at the period of his decease he was without an enemy, and with scarcely an acquaintance who was not also an admirer and a friend.

ADDENDUM. —I have not mentioned in the body of my paper that Dr. William John Grant, Provincial Grand Master of Bengal (1840), like his *confrere* of Bombay, the-"Chevalier Burnes," was an army surgeon. Of the same military and medical status was Terence Gahagan, a third Provincial Grand Master of earlier date, through whose energy and zeal, after the war in the Carnatic, Masonry was prevented from sinking into a second lethargy on the Coast of Coromandel. Other medical brethren who served with armies in the field, were Zibra M. Phillips and Robert Kerr, whose services to the Craft, in positions-of high authority, are fully narrated by Past Grand Master Ross Robertson in his admirable-" History of Canadian Masonry." (See also " The Medical Profession and Freemasonry," *A.Q.C.*, VIII, 143-171.)—R. F. GOULD.

Bro. PURDON CLARICE, in asking for comments on the paper just read, said that one of the most interesting points for him was the evidence of the large-mindedness of Dr. Burnes in providing facilities for the admission of worthy men of the eastern races to our mysteries. He

thought the remarkable career, Masonic and otherwise, of our distinguished Brother had been placed before the Lodge in a very clear, concise and admirable manner which would well deserve the vote of thanks which it was now his pleasure to propose.

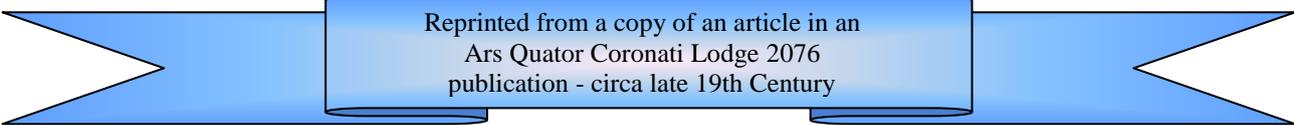
Bro. KLEIN seconded the vote of thanks with a few words of appreciation.

Bro. SHACKLES thought that few more valuable papers were ever read before our Lodge than the series of biographies which had issued from the pen of Bro. Gould, of which this was the eighth. Some brethren were perhaps less partial to biography than he was-himself, holding as he did that every good biography contained *ex necessitate* much valuable general information, to which was superadded the charm of tracing an individual through various phases of his career. It was the personal element which invariably lent piquancy to history, and without the biographical details which almost always cropped up in our papers, no matter what was the main subject of research, the flavour of our *Transactions* would be perceptibly flatter. He wished to make an appeal to the brethren, perhaps one of them could help him. The Byculla medal mentioned in the paper had hitherto escaped all efforts on his part to acquire it, or even to obtain sight of one. Not only did its absence-cause a gap in his own cherished collection, but the Lodge was now engaged in bringing out a book on British Masonic Medals, and it would be a great pity if we were unable to-figure the Byculla medal with the others. Possibly some of the brethren connected with India might be able to obtain one, or at least the loan of one for a few weeks.

Bro. C. H. MALDEN thought that the chief reason of the decay of English Masonry in India at one time, and the rise of Scottish, was due to the fact that the Indian brethren-found it at that period almost impossible to get their warrants, letters, petitions, and other-communications attended to by the authorities at home.

Bro. J. R. B. BELL pointed out that at that time, before the Overland Route was in working order and ships went to India round the Cape of Good Hope, Bombay was the least easily reached of the Presidencies. Calculating by the number of days required to reach it, and not by the miles in direct line, it was a long way further off from England than Madras or Calcutta. The position had now been reversed, but the plea might perhaps be urged in extenuation of any apparent neglect, on the part of the central authorities.

The vote of thanks to Bro. Gould for his interesting paper was then heartily concurred in.



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