

The Free Gardeners'

Alexander Walker

CB setting

alternates chords → D Bmin Emin A

marching air

1. D G Emin A D D A D

2. D G D D A D

Walker's original B2 melody implied different chords.

FREE GARDENERS', THE.

Walker: *A Collection of Strathspeys, Reels, Marches, &c.*, 1866; No. 77, pg. 27.

Scottish, March (4/4 time). D Major, AA'BB'

i. Carl MacKenzie, LP, 1980s.



Order of Free Gardeners.

The Order of Free Gardeners

The Order of Free Gardeners is a fraternal society that was founded in Scotland in the middle of the 17th century. In Scotland, in the 17th century rich landowners were interested in Renaissance architecture and the design of formal gardens for their vast estates. The first members of the Haddington lodge were not gardeners by profession, but small landowners and farmers who practised gardening for pleasure.

This organisation set up in Haddington could be viewed as a primitive form of union. It organised cooperation between members, provided practical training and ethical development, and supported the poor, widows, and orphans. The lodges of gardeners were also the first to organise floral exhibitions, from 1772.

About 1715, a lodge similar to Haddington was founded in Dunfermline, supported by two members of the local aristocracy, the Earl of Moray and the Marquess of Tweeddale. From its origin, it admitted numerous non-gardeners as members. It created a charitable society to benefit the widows, orphans, and poor of the lodge, sponsored a horse race and organised an annual horticultural fair before transforming itself little by little into a mutual aid society.

During the 18th Century, about twenty other lodges were created, always in Scotland, and on 6 November 1849, they organized a meeting with a view to create a Grand Lodge. Establishments then accelerated, and in 1859, in Edinburgh, the Grand Lodge gathered representatives from more than 100 lodges, including three established in the USA.

At the peak of the movement, there were more than 10,000 Free Gardeners for the Lothians alone, belonging to more than 50 lodges. In 2000, there was no more than a single lodge (in Bristol) for Great Britain, but mentioned the survival of the Order of Free Gardeners in the Antilles (Caribbean British Order of Free Gardeners) and in Australia.

Alexander Walker Connection

A branch of the Order was set up in Rhynie, Alexander's home town in 1812 and eventually dissolved in 1848. The last Secretary was a Mr John Cran of Rhynie. It is possible that Alexander was a member of the Order there.

