

A FOUNDATIONAL STUDY OF THE GRAND
CONSISTORY OF LOUISIANA (1811-1815)

by

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“For multiple reasons, I directed that the Grand Consistory of Louisiana be converted into a statutory consistory of the Valley of New Orleans. I outlined the required procedure and our Grand Secretary General processed the necessary papers. Grand Consistories were inaugurated when communications over long distances were difficult. Later they were found to be an impediment to effective administration so became outmoded. All except Louisiana had been converted into statutory consistories. There is no longer any sanction under our Statues for a Grand Consistory.”

Henry C. Clausen, 33°
Sovereign Grand Commander.¹

Thus closed a significant chapter in the colorful history of Louisiana Masonry. While the "death" of the Grand Consistory of Louisiana (under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Council, SJUSA) is easily established, the events leading to and surrounding its birth are less apparent. The complex, elusive and highly emotional history of Louisiana Scottish Rite Masonry is often an enigmatic tale that reads, more often than not, like a best selling mystery novel.

THE BEGINNING

The earliest known appearance of the Grand Consistory of Louisiana was in New Orleans in 1811. There are unfortunately, no known surviving documents or minutes from this body. All the information that has been collected concerning the 1811 Grand Consistory is recorded in a few secondary sources. James Scot gives us, in his 1873 *Outline of the Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Louisiana*, the first piece of information concerning this body by reproducing a communication dated 20 April 1811 from the *Sov. Grand Consistory of Princes of the Royal Secret of Louisiana* to Etoile Polaire Lodge.² The communication seeks to establish relations between the Grand Consistory and Etoile Polaire Lodge and is issued under the name of "Des Bois, Grand Secretary." Scot explains:>>The signature is that of Bro. Jean Baptiste Des Bois³, who was Grand Senior Warden of the Grand Lodge in 1818. He was W.M. of Bienfaisance Lodge No. 1 in 1811 and W.M. of Concord Lodge No. 3 in 1815.<<

¹ *Transactions of the Supreme Council, 33° for the Southern Jurisdiction, USA* (SC SJUSA: Washington, D.C. 1973) 46

² James Scot, *Outline of the Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Louisiana* 1873 (New Orleans, LA: Michael Poll Publishing, reprint 11995) 21-22

³ Des Bois was a New Orleans School Master turned attorney. His home still exists in the French Quarter at 631-633 Dauphine St. Des Bois decorated the balcony of his home with wrought-iron railing with an elaborate "JBD" monogram in the center. Above his monogram, and fashioned on top rail iron-work, is a square and compass - a surprising public display considering the general disapproval of Masonry by many in New Orleans at that time.

Scot also theorizes that the members of the Consistory were likely >>men of advanced age, and it may be that the Consistory of 1811 was formed more for the purpose of social reunion than propagating the Rite.<<⁴

However, Scot acknowledges:>>This, however, is mere conjecture and it is not known how long the Consistory of 1811 maintained its organization.<<⁵ and >>Beyond the mere fact of its existence, nothing is known in regard to it.<<⁶ Scot's report, in effect, only establishes that this Consistory existed at the time that the communication was written. In addition to Scot's being uncertain as to the length of time this body existed after the date of the communication, he gives no clue as to the length of its existence prior to that communication.

More information concerning the 1811 Grand Consistory is contributed by Albert Pike in his 1882 *Official Bulletin V*. Pike not only gives additional names of those who were associated with this body, but he explains how this Consistory was formed. It is reported by Pike that Louis Duhart, Pierre Joseph Duhulquod, Christian Miltenberger, Jean Baptiste Des Bois, Nicolas Roche, Laurent "Segui,"⁷ Jean Baptiste Labatut, Jean Soulié, Thomas Urquhart, and Pierre François Dubourg were members of this body. The Consistory was granted a charter on 28 March 1811 by Louis Jean Lusson⁸ and Jean Baptiste Modeste Lefebvre,⁹ both S.G.I.G.'s of the Supreme Council of Kingston, Jamaica. The first meeting was held on Sunday 7 April 1811 at 5 p.m. in the hall of Perfect Union Lodge.¹⁰

Adding further to the information concerning the 1811 Grand Consistory is *A Library of Freemasonry* which states:¹¹

⁴Ibid, 22

⁵ Ibid, 22

⁶ Ibid, 89

⁷ Misspelling for "Sigur." Laurent Sigur was the first WM of Perfect Union Lodge in 1793. The Lodge was organized under Sigur's Rose-Croix Patent.

⁸ In 1811 Lusson was the Senior Warden of Réunion Désirée No. 112 and the owner of a merchandise shop on St. Peter St. in New Orleans. He received his 33°, from Gabriel Jastram in New Orleans on 10 November 1809.

⁹ In 1811 Lefebvre was a Past Master & Secretary of Etoile Polaire No. 129 and was a New Orleans merchant. Lefabvre received his 32° from Lusson on 1 June 1807.; It is unknown how soon after he received his 33°, but it is reasonable that he received it from Lusson.

¹⁰ Albert Pike, "*Official Bulletin of the Supreme Council of the 33d Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction USA*" Vol. V (Charleston: SC SJUSA 1882) 329-330. The hall of Perfect Union Lodge in 1811 was located behind 333 St. Charles Ave. in New Orleans, which, until the sale of the Masonic Temple Building 1996, was the home of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana.

¹¹ Gould, Hughan, Woodward, Lyon, Drummond, Carson, Parvin-Editors, *A Library of Freemasonry*, Vol. V Philadelphia; The John C. Yorston Publishing Co., (1932)

>>There is a Manuscript Register in the Carson Collection¹² kept by Jean Doszedardski, a Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the 33rd degree. This Register contains what purports to be a copy of Doszedardski's Patent, as a Prince of the Royal Secret, and Deputy Grand Inspector General and Member of the Sublime Council of the 33rd degree, dated May 5, 1813, signed by L.J. Lusson, S.G.I.G., 33rd degree, a member and representative of the Sovereign Senate sitting at Kingston, Island of Jamaica, in that Orient. [...] A most important historical matter contained in this register is an account of the organization of the first bodies of Sublime Masonry in New Orleans,¹³ especially a Consistory of S.P.R.S.

Under the date August 13, 1810, Gabriel Jastram, 33°, member of the Supreme Council of the 33rd degree at Kingston, Island of Jamaica, organized by the Count de Grasse Tilley, Grand Inspector General of the 33rd degree, Grand Commander *ad vitam*, by authority and power of the Sovereign Grand Council sitting at *Charleston in the State of South Carolina, &c.*, granted a Patent to Pierre Joseph Duhalquod,¹⁴ P.R.S., Jean Baptiste Desbois,¹⁵ Rose Croix, and others for a Symbolic Lodge in New Orleans, under the name La Bienfaisance, to confer the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason, of the Ancient Rite.

Then, under the date December 20, 1810, Gabriel Jastram, by the same authority and in addition, "Under the special protection of the said chiefs of Masonry (the Supreme Council at Kingston) representatives of the Grand and Sovereign Chapter Metropolitan d'Herodom of Kilwinning and Edinburgh in Scotland," granted a Patent to Duhalquod¹⁶, Savary, Desbois, and others for a Lodge of Perfection, Council of Elect, College of Scotland. Council of Knights of the East, Princes of Jerusalem, and Chapter of Scottish Rose-Croix, under the distinctive title of La Triple Bienfaisance, to be held in New Orleans, La., with powers to confer the degrees from the 4th to the 18th inclusive.¹⁷<<

What then follows is a near word for word duplication of what Pike reported in his *Official Bulletin* concerning the creation of the 1811 Grand Consistory. This would make the Doszedardski Register the probable source for the material that Pike published.

At the conclusion of the report on the creation of the consistory is a most interesting line which reads:

¹² This collection resides in the Museum of our National Heritage, Lexington, MA.

¹³ This is an incorrect statement. The first known Body of Sublime Masonry in New Orleans was organized on 2 April 1756 and connected to the 1752 Perfect Harmony Lodge in New Orleans. See: Sharp Document No.102.

¹⁴ Misspelling for "Duhulquod"

¹⁵ Des Bois maintained the original spelling of his family name throughout his life. The family name, however changed in later generations to "DesBois" and "Desbois" which accounts for the variation in its spelling.

¹⁶ Misspelling for "Duhulquod"

¹⁷ Gould, etc., *Library of Freemasonry* 298-299.

>>They [the Grand Consistory] were required to report in the shortest time to the Sovereign Grand Councils of *Charleston, South Carolina, and Kingston, Jamaica*.<<¹⁸

An examination of the known data concerning this body sheds more light than was previously known or understood. Clearly Scot's suggestion that the 1811 Grand Consistory might have been created by a group of old Masons>>more for the purpose of social reunion than propagating the Rite<<is not accurate. An examination of the names offered in the Doszedardski register reveals that the 1811 Grand Consistory contained some of the most active men in Louisiana Masonry and the community. In 1812 Pierre François Dubourg became the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, an office he held for three terms. Jean Soulié was the second Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, also serving for three terms, and was a successful merchant and director of the Bank of Louisiana, as was General Jean Baptiste Labatut, who in addition held the position of City Treasurer. General Labatut (the W.M. of Perfect Union Lodge No.29 in 1809) was also the Commander of the Corps of Veterans during the 1815 Battle of New Orleans and was a former Attorney-General of the Cabildo.¹⁹ Louis Duhart served La Triple Bienfaisance No.20 Rose-Croix Chapter as Venerable Master from 1820 until 1823 and again in 1825. In 1811, Thomas Urquhart was a Past Master and sitting W.M. of Perfect Union Lodge No.29 (an office he would hold again in 1820) and President of the Bank of Louisiana. Christian Miltenberger²⁰ was a prominent physician who served the Grand Lodge as Grand Treasurer from 1825 to 1829.

The creation of the 1811 Grand Consistory followed the creation of two other subordinate Masonic Bodies in New Orleans by a 33d from the Kingston Supreme Council. It can be reasonably viewed that the 1811 Grand Consistory gave assurance that Masons would be made and advanced according to the style accustomed to the West Indies' Masons from the Entered Apprentice degree to Prince of the Royal Secret - and, even Sovereign Grand Inspector General. There is nothing in their actions to suggest that the bodies being created were simply social clubs for the amusement of the members. It is clear that the Rite was very much being propagated in New Orleans by the Kingston Masons. The action of having the Grand Consistory report to the Supreme Councils at Charleston and Kingston is also fully in keeping with a serious desire to create and preserve these bodies. While there is very little information concerning the Supreme Council at Kingston, there are several facts that can be drawn out to help understand the situation a little better.

The Doszedardski Register suggests that the Kingston Council was created by Comte Alexandre François Auguste de Grasse-Tilly in 1804. Concerning this possibility, Alain Bernheim writes>>Grasse-Tilly had been made a prisoner in Saint-Domingue by the British toward the end of 1804²¹ and taken to Kingston. The 'letters of credence' which he had received from the Charleston Supreme Council, 21 February 1802, were 'vised' in Kingston, 11 January 1804, by 'Sol. Morales, P.:P.:S.:,Secretary' and by 'Jn Morales,G.:I.:Gal, 33d'. This was asserted by

¹⁸ Idid., 299

¹⁹ The Cabildo was the seat of government for the Louisiana Territory prior to its acquisition by the US.

²⁰ The family name of "Miltenberger" was originally spelled "Milten-Berger."

²¹ Misprint for 1803.

Baron de Marguerittes during the Masonic trial of Grasse-Tilly before the 'Prado' Supreme Council. It seems likely that 'Jn' is a misprint (or a wrong reading) for 'Ic'. The mention of the 33d degree after the name of Morales seems to be the earliest mention of the degree in Jamaica where Grasse-Tilly founded a Supreme Council during the short time he was there. He then returned to Charleston, where he was present at a meeting of his former Lodge, *La Candeur*, 15 February 1804, and then to France where he arrived in July.<<²²

To think that Grasse-Tilly could have founded a Supreme Council (his second) in Kingston and not mention this to the members of the Charleston Council when he arrived there before leaving for France, is absurd. Not only was Grasse-Tilly in a position to inform the Charleston Council of the creation and existence of the Kingston Council, Solomon Morales of the Kingston Council and Emanuel De La Motta of the Charleston Council had been friends at least 20 years prior to the establishment of the Charleston Council.²³ Lusson also had ties with the Charleston Masons. Lusson was in Charleston when he was made a Deputy Inspector General (25°) by Jean Baptiste Aveilhe on 12 December 1797.²⁴ The chances of there having been no communications between the two Councils is highly improbable to non-existent. The fact that the creation of the 1811 Grand Consistory in New Orleans included the instruction to make the creation known to the Councils of Charleston and Kingston makes the relationship evident.

EVENTS OF 1812 & 1813

The establishment of the 1811 Grand Consistory in New Orleans was a creation in an area that was only a territory of the United States. Louisiana was not granted statehood until 30 April 1812. Once statehood was achieved, the 1811 Grand Consistory was placed in a somewhat awkward position. Without question, the area was then under the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council. In fact, it was claimed by the Charleston Council as early as 1804 when the Council issued a patent to Jean Baptiste Marie Delahogue (father in law of Grasse-Tilly and Lt. Grand Commander of the 1802 Supreme Council in the West Indies) to establish bodies in New Orleans.²⁵ While Delahogue is shown as the Worshipful Master of Charity Lodge in New Orleans in 1804, there is no record whatsoever suggesting that he created any Masonic body in New Orleans during his stay there.

Once Louisiana became a state, action obviously had to be taken in regard to the 1811 Grand Consistory. To let it remain under the jurisdiction of the Kingston Council would allow more than one Council to have bodies in an occupied area.

²² Alain Bernheim, *Further Light on the Masonic World of Joseph Glock* (London: Ars Quatuor Coronatorum Vol. 100, 1987) 45.

²³ Bernheim, *Glock*, 45

²⁴ Gould, etc., *Library of Freemasonry* 298

²⁵ Ray Baker Harris, James D. Carter *History of the Supreme Council, 33° Southern Jurisdiction, USA (1801-1861)* (Washington, D.C.: The Supreme Council, 33° 1964) 92.

On 17 May 1830 Moses Holbrook, Grand Commander of the Charleston Council, sent a letter to John Holland, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana and Grand Commander in Chief of the Grand Council of Louisiana, which gave a report of a Consistory being formed in New Orleans on 12 May 1812 consisting of Louis Jean Lusson, Pierre Chameau, Sr., Jean Baptiste Pinta, Louis Casimir Moreau Lislet,²⁶ Jean Baptiste Casteret, Jean Baptiste Gillard “and some others” under the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council.²⁷ While many of the members changed (or were not accounted for), the 1811 Grand Consistory (created by Lusson and Lefebre) was as should be expected, clearly passing under the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council. Events then take an interesting turn.

From Charles Laffon de Ladebet’s *Proces Verbal*, P. 72:

>>On the 4th of December, 1812, Mr. Emanuel Gigaud, giving himself the title of Deputy Sov. Gr. Insp. Gen. 33d Degree, and Representative of the Grand Consistory established at New York by Joseph Cerneau, assembled certain persons possessing, regularly or irregularly, the high degrees of the A. and A. Rite, and raised them successively to the 32d Degree, and with them formed, provisionally, the so-called Grand Consistory of Louisiana.

On the 8th of February, 1813, Jean Pinard, Noel Fournier, Raymond Deveze, and Pierre Thomas Jarrie, asked for a Grand Consistory of J. Cerneau at New York for a charter for a Grand Consistory of S.:PP.:S.: 32d Degree, which they proposed to establish in Louisiana.

On the 10th of April 1813, the petitioners received a letter from New York, which informed them that their request had been granted and that the charter would be sent without delay.

The charter was dated April 24, 1813, but was not received until August of the same year.

On the 19th of June, 1813, the said Grand Consistory was regularly installed...<<²⁸

While the information that Ladebat provides is quite significant, it should be pointed out that the organizational structure of the Cerneau Council provided for Grand *Councils* of Princes of the Royal Secret and not Grand *Consistories* of Princes of the Royal Secret. Ladebat’s (and most future historians) use of the term “Grand *Consistory* of Louisiana” is incorrect for the body that was created in 1813 and existed under Cerneau.

²⁶ Lislet was the third Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana serving in 1818. He was a most respected jurist, whose decisions are discussed and remembered by the Louisiana Supreme Court to this day.

²⁷ Alain Bernheim, Introduction, *Outline of the Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Louisiana 1873* (New Orleans, LA: Michael Poll Publishing, reprint 1995) 3

²⁸ Charles Laffon de Ladebat *Proces Verbal* (New Orleans: 1857 quoted by Scot, *Outline 21*)

The first officers of the 1813 Grand “Council” of Princes of the Royal Secret in Louisiana were.²⁹

Commander in Chief	Emanuel Gigaud
1 st Lieutenant Commander	Jean Pinard
2 nd Lieutenant Commander	Noel Fournier
Grand Minister of State	Francis Martinez y Pizarro
Grand Treasurer	Raymond Deveze
Grand Secretary	Pierre Thomas Jarrié

BUT WHY CERNEAU?

By 1813, the Grand Consistory/Council of Louisiana had been under three jurisdictions since its 1811 creation. But many pieces of the puzzle now exist. If the 1811 Grand Consistory was the original Body from which would spring the 1812 Consistory and the 1813 Grand Council, then we must wonder what happened to cause the switch from Charleston to Cerneau. Since the 1811 Grand Consistory was instructed upon its creation to report not only to the Supreme Council at Kingston, but also to the one in Charleston, why did they, even after a Consistory was established in New Orleans under Charleston in 1812, move to the jurisdiction of Cerneau in 1813? Was there any reason that Cerneau Masonry should be considered “regular” by the New Orleans Masons in 1812?

To quote further from Ladebat:

>>It is worthy of remark that on the 3rd of May, 1814, the Grand Consistory of Louisiana received the denunciation of J. Ceneau by the Supreme Council of Charleston, and that on the 13th of November 1814, Bro. Louis Jean Lusson, 33^o, who, on the 4th of December 1812, refused to subscribe to the conditions imposed by J. Cerneau, renewed his opposition to the said Grand Consistory. For this he was tried and condemned by that body, August 14, 1815. He was a member of the Supreme Council of Charleston, and, as such, had published in New Orleans the denunciation of Joseph Cerneau by Emanuel de la Motta.<<³⁰

The first reported consideration given to passing under the Cerneau Jurisdiction came at a meeting on 4 December 1812 when a “provisional” Grand Council was formed. This was over 6 months after Lusson had created a Consistory in New Orleans under the Charleston jurisdiction. It would seem predictable that Lusson would object to the Cerneau Body’s being created in New Orleans, but the objection itself is a bit mystifying. There was no mention of “irregularity” concerning the Cerneau Body, nor with the area already being occupied by the Charleston Consistory, but only that Lusson did not approve of some unspecified “conditions” imposed by Cerneau. Does this suggest that if the resulting obstacles from these “conditions” had been overcome, then Lusson would have supported the Cerneau Grand Council of Louisiana?

²⁹ Ibid., 21

³⁰ Ibid., 21

The fact is that the Charleston Council did not act against Cerneau (and might not have even known of his creation) until the “summer of 1813”³¹ when Emanuel De La Motta traveled to New York and discovered the Cerneau and Bideaud Bodies.³² The condemnation of the Cerneau Bodies did not come to New Orleans until over a year after the Grand Council of Louisiana was created. We must also recognize that the Grand Constitution of 1786 provided for two Supreme Councils in the United States (or North America, depending on which version you read) and from the information contained in those Grand Constitutions, the Cerneau Council would have been, to the New Orleans Masons, just as regular as the Council created by La Motta.³³

However, the fact that there was no obvious reason to view the Cerneau Body as irregular at the time of the 1813 Grand Council creation, does not explain why the New Orleans Masons opted for Cerneau over Charleston. Even if the Cerneau Sovereign Grand Consistory had been welcomed with opened arms by the Charleston Council and declared perfectly regular, why would the New Orleans Scottish Rite Masons reject the Charleston Council? New Orleans was clearly within the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council and a Consistory under Charleston was already formed in New Orleans by Lusson. In order for the New Orleans Masons to embrace Cerneau, it was necessary to make the considered decision to reject the Charleston Council. Logic dictates that there must have been a compelling reason for the New Orleans Scottish Rite Masons to take this seemingly extraordinary action.

THE SITUATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA

In December 1808 a union took place between two rival Grand Lodges in South Carolina. *The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons* and *The Grand Lodge of the State of South Carolina, Ancient York Masons* (AYM) merged to form *The Grand Lodge of South Carolina*. The battle between the two Grand Lodges had been long and hostile and the union lasted only a matter of weeks. The AYM’s withdrew from the union and were, in turn, recognized as the regular Grand Lodge in South Carolina by most of the other US Grand Lodges. All of the *members* of the Charleston Supreme Council were members of *The Grand Lodge of South Carolina* which, at that time, was deemed irregular by most US Grand Lodges.³⁴ While this would have no effect on the regularity of the Charleston Supreme Council, it did, in fact, make all of the *members* of the Charleston Council “unrecognized” and unable to sit in a regular Lodge of Master Masons in most US jurisdictions. This clearly presented the Charleston Council (and any Masonic Body in relations with them) with a problem.

With all the members of the Charleston Council belonging to an unrecognized Grand Lodge, it is quite possible that the newly formed Grand Lodge of Louisiana did not desire to risk the possibility of being shut out of the regular Masonic Community by a Masonic body in their jurisdiction, that was composed of many members of the Grand Lodge, and entering into an

³¹ Harris, Carter *History* 115-117

³² LaMotta would create the Supreme Council Northern Masonic Jurisdiction out of the “healed” Bideaud Bodies.

³³ See: Michael R. Poll *The Controversy of Joseph Cerneau: A Brief Examination* Heredom Vol. 4 (Washington, D.C. : The Scottish Rite Research Society 1995) 47-61.

³⁴ Bernheim, Introduction to *Outline*, 7-8

association with a Supreme Council whose members were unrecognized and could be considered irregular. At that time, there was no mention of the Cerneau Council, or any of its members, being irregular. Cerneau's Deputy Grand Commander was Dewitt Clinton, long time Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New York and a very influential Masonic figure. Compounding the situation further, Perfect Union Lodge (the senior Lodge in the formation of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana) obtained its charter in 1794 from the Grand Lodge of South Carolina, "AYM." The Worshipful Master of Perfect Union Lodge in 1812 was Pierre François Dubourg (a member of the 1811 Kingston Grand Consistory of Louisiana) who would become the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana.

However, the fact that York Rite Grand Lodges viewed the Charleston Council members and their Grand Lodge as "irregular" might not have been enough to influence a Grand Consistory of the *Scottish* Rite. Since the decision was made, however, to pass under the Cerneau Sovereign Grand Consistory, we must examine if there could have been any influence from other Scottish Rite Bodies to make this switch.

Remarkably, the Grand Commander of the Kingston Supreme Council, J.J. Itter, is listed as an Honorary member of the Cerneau Sovereign Grand Consistory in its 1818 register of members.³⁵ The register is reprinted in Folger's 1862 *Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in Thirty-three Degrees* and carries the note: >>This Pamphlet is annexed because it is a much more perfect one, than those published in 1813,1814, 1815, and 1816. The others are not as full, and this is precisely like the preceding ones in every respect. The Author has preferred the one of this date.<<³⁶ While we cannot know how long prior to 1818 Itter was an Honorary Member of Cerneau's Body, Folger's report is supported by John James Joseph Gourgas (then Secretary General of the Supreme Council Northern Masonic Jurisdiction) who wrote to Emanuel de La Motta on 3 July 1815.>>...we have one [communication] which says that I.I.[sic., read J.J.] Itter, the Sn. Gr. Cr. there, loves money much, is a second Joseph Cerneau there and entirely devoted to him, that it is needful to take precautions for the correspondence with the Supe. Gd. Council, and even that the said Itter is the grand director and manager of everything. It is recommended, however, as a precaution, to correspond and direct to Ill. Br. Morales, formerly the Sn. Gd. Comr., &c., &c., &c.,<<³⁷

Regardless of the harsh comments made by Gourgas towards Itter, it is apparent that the Kingston Council (or, at least, its Grand Commander) has switched to the Cerneau camp. Given that the Kingston Council was the parent of the 1811 Grand Consistory of Louisiana, the action of the Kingston Council could reasonably be viewed as influential, if not, an expected "road map of action" for the New Orleans Masons to follow. The Kingston Council, however, was *not* the

³⁵ Robert B. Folger *Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in Thirty-three Degrees* (New York: Robt. B. Folger, 1862) 186.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 181.

³⁷ *Transactions of the Supreme Council of the 33d Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction USA* (SC SJUSA: Washington, D.C. reprint 1878) 46

only Supreme Council to recognize Cerneau. In 1813 the Supreme Council of France entered into Communications with Cerneau as would the Grand Orient of France in 1816.³⁸

Considering the regularity dilemma of the Charleston Council Members and the position taken by the Supreme Councils of Kingston and France, it should be no surprise that the New Orleans Scottish Rite Masons abandoned the Charleston Council for Cerneau. Given the known facts of that time, the New Orleans Masons could be viewed as irresponsible had they acted in any other manner.

THE ANALYSIS

Ladebat stated in 1857 that Lusson was a “member of the Supreme Council of Charleston.” It is possible that Ladebat confused the fact that Lusson was appointed a “Representative” of the Charleston Council in order to deliver the Charleston letter denouncing Cerneau to the New Orleans Masons with his being a “Member” of the Charleston Council. Because of Lusson’s action, Ladebat says that he was >>tried and condemned by that body [the Grand Council of Louisiana], August 14, 1815.<< While the minutes of the Grand Council (and later Grand Consistory) of Louisiana from 1822 to 1846 have been recently re-discovered, there are no known minutes prior to 1822 for the Grand Council. This is, indeed unfortunate, as the record of the Lusson “trial” would prove most interesting. It is unknown how a body controlling degrees no higher than that of 32d could hold a trial for a 33d, who would be under the jurisdiction of a Supreme Council.

Just as interesting as the “trial” of Lusson in 1815, is Lusson’s own actions in 1813. Lusson was a party to the creation of the 1812 Consistory acting on behalf of the Charleston Council and would again act on behalf of the Charleston Council, as their Representative, in publishing the Cerneau denunciation in New Orleans in 1814. Despite this, the Doszedardski Register shows that Jean Doszedardski was made a 33d on 5 May 1813 in New Orleans my *Lusson!* The register is even verified by Lusson’s own signature. Lusson, while carrying the Charleston banner in one hand, created a 33d in the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council. On whose authority did Lusson act? Regardless of Ladebat’s statement that Lusson was a member of the Charleston Council, Lusson signed Doszedardski’s patent as a member of the Kingston Council. His action of creating a 33d in the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council displays some defiance for the authority of the Charleston Council - or a bit of confusion.

To throw one more interesting tidbit into the “soup,” Solomon Morales, long time friend of Emanuel De La Motta and Grand Secretary of the Kingston Supreme Council, wrote to La Motta on 13 July 1815 asking for various rituals and included a current list of members of the Kingston Supreme Council. The names of Lusson, Lefebvre, Jastrum and Doszedardski are nowhere to be found on the list.³⁹ Were they suspended? Did they resign? Did they retire? Were they ever really members? Did Morales “forget” them? What happened? It also must not be forgotten that

³⁸ Robert B. Folger, *The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in Thirty-Three Degrees* (New York: Robt. B. Folger 1862) 109

³⁹ Bernheim, *Glock*, 46

by 1815 the Grand Commander of the Kingston Council had joined the Cerneau camp. Was the Kingston Council split? Was Morales acting on his own “behind the back” of Itter? Did Morales create a *second* Supreme Council in Kingston? What is not known is equal to (or surpasses) what is known.

Regardless of the reasons behind the creation of the Grand Council under Cerneau in 1813 and any later questions regarding its regularity, this was the body that was to survive. While there are only fragmented records of the members composing the Grand Council of Louisiana from 1813 to 1822, the minutes from 1822 to 1846 show that members of both the 1811 & 1812 Grand Consistories became members of the 1813 Grand Council. Lefebvre (1811 Kingston Grand Consistory) and L.C. Moreau Lislet (1812 Charleston Consistory) both became Commanders in Chief of the Cerneau Grand Council of Louisiana as well as Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. The Grand Council of Louisiana was clearly the Body that was accepted by the majority of the New Orleans Scottish Rite Masons and the members of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. Scot’s statement (reprinted by *A Library of Freemasonry*⁴⁰), >>The regularity of the New Orleans Consistory (sic) was questioned from the first, and several members of the Grand Lodge and its constituents in possession of the high degrees of the A. and A. Rite, refused to have anything to do with it.<<⁴¹ This displays a serious lack of understanding or acknowledgment of the New Orleans and Charleston situations during the time of the creation of the Grand Council.

The next chapters of the Grand Council/Consistory of Louisiana become even more involved and too voluminous for one paper. The “found” Minutes’ Book reveal that the Grand Council would pass under the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council on 21 February 1831 due to the slumber of the Cerneau Council. The Grand “Council” of Louisiana again becomes the Grand Consistory of Louisiana. The stay under the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council is short and due to Charleston’s entering into a slumber. The Grand Consistory of Louisiana passed under the jurisdiction of the United Supreme Council of the Western Hemisphere in New York on 1 September 1832. Upon this Body also entering into a slumber, the Grand Consistory of Louisiana passed under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Council of the United States of America sitting in New Orleans (The Supreme Council of Louisiana) on 9 October 1846. On 16 February 1855 a concordat is entered into between the Charleston and New Orleans Supreme Councils and the Grand Consistory of Louisiana who once again (for the third time) passed under the jurisdiction of the Charleston Council. Here, the Grand Consistory of Louisiana remained until its conversion into a statutory Consistory by Sovereign Grand Commander Henry Clausen.

⁴⁰ Gould, etc., *Library of Freemasonry*, 332.

⁴¹ Scot, *Outline*, 23

