

These records show that Masonic work was being conducted in Sunderland fully ten years prior to 1755.

In dealing with the earliest date of Masonry in Sunderland there is one speculative idea that is worth mentioning for the benefit of those who may be specially interested therein. It is believed that the oldest Lodge in the Province of Durham, the Industry Lodge, No 48, which meets at Gateshead, and was previously located at Swalwell, was originally established in Sunderland. There is no question but that the Industry Lodge was founded by Sir Ambrose Crowley's people at Swalwell. Before Crowley went to Swalwell he had selected Sunderland as the site of his Iron Works, and built a factory in Low Street, at the foot of Russell Street, in 1682, where he remained about eight or nine years. It was here that the Smiths' Miracle Play was performed by the Guild up to the year 1817, when the last ceremony was recorded, St Eloy's Day, June 21st. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the early members of Sir Ambrose Crowley's works in Sunderland would have their Lodge before they went to Swalwell, so that the Masons from Sunderland who joined the Lodge at Durham would be members of the Lodge which had been formed by those who remained in town when the others who were connected with Sir Ambrose Crowley removed to Swalwell.

In early times, and even up to the year 1813, when the Grand Lodges were united, the Brethren under the rival Grand Lodges were frequently distinguished from each other by the names of their respective Grand Masters. Thus, the members of the Lodges under the "regular" or "Constitutional"