



The Nova Scotia FREEMASON

THE OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE GRAND LODGE OF NOVA SCOTIA



"FREEMASONRY IS AN ORGANIZATION OF LIKE-MINDED MEN WHO ACCEPT A LIFESTYLE BASED ON A UNIVERSAL SYSTEM OF MORALITY DEDICATED TO THE SELF-IMPROVEMENT OF ITS MEMBERS AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTING TO THE BUILDING OF A BETTER COMMUNITY."

The Nova Scotia Freemason

The Official Bulletin of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia Freemason is published electronically bi-monthly August, October, December, February, April and June. Deadline for submissions is the 15th day of the preceding month

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167 Coronation Avenue
Halifax, NS, Canada B3N 2N2.

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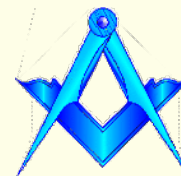
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Deadline for next issue November 15th

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Cover: **Hermes Trismegistus** (Ancient Greek: Ἑρμῆς ὁ Τρισημέγιστος, "thrice-greatest **Hermes**"; Latin: Mercurius ter Maximus) is the purported author of the Hermetic Corpus, a series of sacred texts that are the basis of Hermeticism.

.....

I hope everyone is coping with the continuing situation of self protection and social distancing. I have managed to meet with a few of the brethren (in very small numbers!) and we are very lucky to be living in the Atlantic Bubble. The practice of masonry doesn't depend on lodge meetings and I wish you well in your daily advancement in the Craft. Why not drop a line and let us know how you are coping in your daily practice. Ed

THE GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE



Dear Brethren,

I would like to take this opportunity to reach out and update you in regards to where we stand on summer gatherings, events and our work to plan for the fall.

At this time, Lodges will remain closed until such time as the provincial government and the health department provide us with the green light to open our Lodges to regular gatherings. While up to 50 may gather, it would be difficult to open Lodges as some Brothers may feel uncomfortable attending. Additionally, a Brother may show up to visit a Lodge but not be able to enter due to restrictions in the size of gatherings.

Lodges may hold unofficial events outdoors during the summer, while observing social distancing protocols and keeping gatherings small, such as for barbecues.

The Grand Lodge and its officers are looking towards the fall season and how we may be able to operate. Key is social distancing rules. In addition, we have to take extra precautions such as wearing masks and gloves and making hand sanitizer available as well as cleaning protocols for Lodge buildings and rooms.

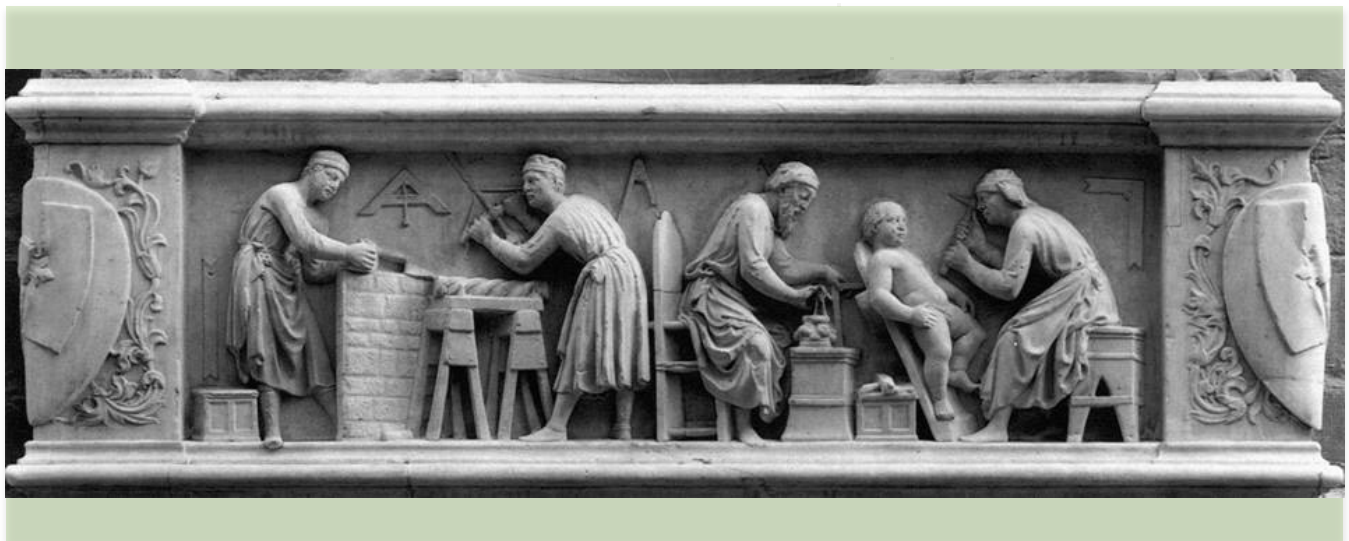
Brethren, socializing is an important part of our Order. We all miss our regular meetings, annual communication and community activities. As we continue respecting the current protocols, I want to thank you for your patience and ask that you check in on your Brothers by utilizing your phone committee. Hopefully before too long, we will be able to meeting again upon the level. I will keep you updated as we progress into the fall season.



Sincerely & Fraternaly,

George A. Grant
MWTGM

Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia



FREEMASONRY AND THE HERMETIC TRADITION

FREEMASONRY & THE HERMETIC TRADITION

By R.A. Gilbert

If, as is stated categorically by the United Grand Lodge of England (1), Freemasonry "is not a Secret Society" and is "not a religion or a substitute for religion," then what is it? And why should students of the occult be concerned with the history, symbolism and rituals of this "peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols," which is defined officially as, "one of the world's oldest secular fraternal societies . . . a society of men concerned with spiritual values. Its members are taught its precepts by a series of ritual dramas, which follow ancient forms and use stonemasons' customs and tools as allegorical guides. The essential qualification for admission and continuing membership is a belief in a Supreme Being. Membership is open to men of any race or religion who can fulfill this essential qualification and are of good repute"? (2)

Perhaps the occultist, who sees in freemasonry the survival of ancient, pagan mystery religions, sees something that, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder, for what he sees is clearly invisible both to the governing body of the Craft and to the bulk of its members.

Freemasonry does have a traditional history (around which its rituals are constructed) that places its origin at the time of the building of King Solomon's Temple, but in the material world we can trace its history from 1717 A.D. when the first Grand Lodge in the world - the Grand Lodge of England - was founded at London. From that time on Freemasonry has expanded, undergoing many vicissitudes along the way - schisms, reconciliations, quarrels over jurisdiction and quarrels over essential beliefs until today it is firmly established in most countries of the world (the exceptions being countries of the Communist bloc, and those countries that suffer under Islamic fundamentalism).

Regular Freemasonry - which, among other things demands from its members a belief in God, forbids the discussion of religion and politics in its lodges, and forbids also the admission of women to membership - is strongest in the English-speaking

world, and it is a curious paradox that England, where the Craft is most conservative, should have produced not only the foremost masonic historians, but also the most adventurous (and most widely read) speculative interpreters of masonic symbolism and philosophy.

These latter have been invariably influenced by the masonic traditions of continental Europe, where "higher" degrees and exotic Rites have proliferated since the middle of the eighteenth century. (At this point it would be well to emphasise that all "higher" or "additional" degrees and grades are later inventions than the three Craft degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason, including "the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch" - declared in 1813 by the United Grand Lodge of England to be the only degrees of "pure Antient Masonry" and further, that the governing bodies of the "higher" degrees have no control whatsoever over the Craft degrees.)

The complex phenomenon of European Freemasonry was significantly different from its counterpart in eighteenth century England. The essential masonic tenets of tolerance and benevolence were overlain from an early date with layers of metaphysical speculation, while the simple Craft rituals were extended into elaborate ceremonies for a multiplicity of degrees, grades and Orders, all of which involved extravagant traditional histories and hierarchical ruling bodies that became increasingly divorced from reality. To some extent such Rites represented a way of escape from the political oppression of illiberal regimes and the spiritual oppression of the Roman Catholic Church, which had been implacably hostile to Freemasonry from the beginning, (3) but they inevitably drifted away from "pure Antient Masonry" to become either politicised or steered into overtly esoteric channels.

Given their nature, it is scarcely surprising that it has been from these esoteric Rites within and around Masonry - The Elus Cohens, the Strict Observance, the Illuminati, Cagliostro's Egyptian Masonry, and the thousand-and-one self-styled Templar Orders and Chivalric degrees - rather than from Craft Masonry, that occultists and esoterically inclined freemasons alike have drawn,

and continue to draw, their inspiration for Orders of their own, and their plethora of false notions about the Craft and its origins.

It is unfortunate that there can be no authoritative, official refutation of these false notions, but there can be no definitive pronouncement about the origins of Freemasonry for the simple reason that there is no certainty as to what those origins are. It is undeniable that masonic ritual, in its essentials, is based upon the presumed customs and the working tools of medieval stonemasons, but there is little a no evidence to support the popular theory of a regular progression from operative masonry to the speculative Craft via a hypothetical "transitional" period during the seventeenth century, in which non-working members were gradually accepted into masonic lodges until they constituted a majority.

A more probable theory of origin - but still, it must be stressed, only a theory - is that which suggests that Freemasonry arose during the seventeenth century from the efforts of a group of enthusiasts who sought to establish tolerance in religion and the general improvement of society in an era in which intolerance prevailed. They protected themselves by adopting the myth of the building of King Solomon's Temple as an allegory of their aims and by utilising the wholly appropriate structure of extant building guilds. An eminently sensible theory, but for occultists wholly inadequate.

There must be, for their purposes, both a strictly esoteric content in masonry and an ultimately Gnostic source: tolerance is too prosaic, and the medieval building guilds unsatisfactory by virtue of their uncomfortably orthodox profession of Christian faith. Either the Knights Templar or the Rosicrucians, or both, offer a more satisfying explanation of the emergence of Freemasonry in its speculative form. That there is no shred of historical evidence linking the Templars with Masonry, nor any certainty that the Rosicrucians as an organised body ever existed, does not matter, since for occultists - and for esoteric freemasons - Freemasonry exists primarily to perpetuate the teachings of the ancient Mystery Schools, and there is thus necessarily a definite, if hidden, connection between Freemasonry and its supposed forerunners.

To the conclusive demonstration of such links masonic writers of esoteric inclination have devoted their literary careers, only to have their work rejected as unsound by more prosaic masonic scholars. "Esoteric" masons, however, have been, and still are, mightily impressed by the apparent scholarship of authors such as the Rev. F. de P. Castells, who considered that he had proved beyond doubt the link with the Rosicrucians, and maintained that "Freemasonry originated with certain Hebrew mystics associated with the Temple of Jerusalem, and that they are represented by the Kabbalists of historic times." (Our Ancient Brethren the Originators of Freemasonry, 1932, p. 24)

Castells wrote during the 1920s and 30s, and although he was far from being the first masonic "historian" on whom occultists had drawn, he was among the most impressive, for he united his historical studies with a critical analysis of masonic rituals and their symbolism. And it is masonic symbolism that has proven always more irresistible to the occultist even than masonic history.

The rituals of the Craft degrees represent the progress of the apprentice towards the mastery of the Craft, illustrated by the building of the Temple, and accompanied by the inculcation of moral precepts, culminating in the symbolic reenactment of the death of the architect Hiram Abiff, who preferred to die rather than betray the secrets of his Order.

In the First Degree the three "Great Lights" (the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Square and Compasses) and the three "Lesser Lights" (the Sun, the Moon and the Master of the Lodge) of Masonry are explained to the candidate in symbolic form, while in each of the three degrees the appropriate "Working Tools" are similarly explained (the gavel, plumb-rule, level, etc.). There is also an elaborate emblematic diagram, or Tracing Board, for each degree, the symbolism of which - variously architectural, biblical and numerical, - is explained in detail.

While such a wealth of symbolism has a very specific meaning within Freemasonry, its very richness has left it vulnerable to the most wild and extravagant interpretations on the part of occultists and of "esoteric" masons who ought to

know better. Nor is the unreason of such interpretations lessened by the invariable insistence of the interpreters on seeing the Third Degree as a rite of death and resurrection - which it is not. It may suit the purposes of the occultist to see it in this light, but it is simply and solely a representation of the death of Hiram and his subsequent exhumation for decent reburial.

Speculation on the meaning of masonic symbols began in the eighteenth century, but serious attempts to relate those symbols to ancient resurrection myths and to the mainstream of the Western Hermetic Tradition did not begin until the Occult Revival of the late nineteenth century. At the same time, amateur historians of occultism began to seek esoteric origins for Freemasonry itself. When these two paths of research merged, the results were curious indeed.

H. P. Blavatsky, who was effectively the principal architect of the Occult Revival, had little interest in Freemasonry, but she utilised - and believed - much of the information amassed by Kenneth Mackenzie in his *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia* (1877), and thus through her own writing acted as a channel for its dissemination throughout the Theosophical world and far beyond the confines of Masonry itself. To what extent Mackenzie (who, surprisingly, did not accept that Freemasonry had its roots in Rosicrucianism) believed his own statements is unclear, but he and his colleagues (F.G. Irwin, John Yarker, Dr. Woodman et al) consciously attempted to emulate the eighteenth century proliferation of grandiose masonic degrees and esoteric Orders with considerable success, for it was from this background of exotic Rites that William Wynn Westcott gained the inspiration for his immortal brain-child, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. That amazing creation, which came into being in 1888, owed its success in part to the increasing familiarity with masonic symbolism (via the works of Madame Blavatsky) on the part of both male and female occultists. It is surprising enough that English Freemasonry should have given rise, however indirectly, to an androgynous Order that it should have provided the administrative structure, the framework of its rituals and no small part of its eclectic symbolism is even more surprising, given that the proportion

of English Freemasons interested in and informed about occultism was (and is) minute.

Of those Freemasons who were inclined towards occultism at the close of the last century, the majority were deeply involved in the Theosophical Society, or at least in the teachings that it propagated they absorbed from it the notion of the great antiquity of Eastern religions and the superiority of Eastern philosophy over Western thought. From their subsequent mental confusion arose most of the books that have propagated original and bizarre ideas about the history and meaning of freemasonry. But however reliable their "histories" may be, and however unsound their conclusions, their influence among fellow occultists has been so widespread and so pervasive that the student of the Hermetic Tradition and its history cannot ignore them if he wishes to separate fact from fantasy and to understand how the present syncretistic structure of occultism has come about.

During his lifetime the most influential of these "alternative" masonic historians was John Yarker, whose monumental work on the *Arcane Schools* (1909) is really a prehistory of Freemasonry, which he saw progressing from the Egyptian and Greek Mysteries via Mithraism, Gnosticism and Alchemy, with a brief conclusion on its history in modern times. Yarker controlled or influenced numerous quasimasonic Rites and through these he effectively directed the thinking of many of his esoteric contemporaries not least those who were members of the Co-Masonic Order, whose activities he supported while wisely refraining from joining.

Universal Co-Freemasonry (which admits both men and women) was founded in France in 1893 and spread to England in 1902 by way of the Theosophical Society, collecting Annie Besant and her coterie en route. Once Mrs. Besant was established, in 1907, as President of the T. S., her support, coupled with that of C. W. Leadbeater, led to a rapid expansion of Co-Masonry among theosophists, taking in even those who had previously been bitter opponents of Freemasonry. (4) The Order was, however, susceptible to the wider teachings of Theosophy, as Leadbeater made clear in his utterly uncritical *Glimpses of Masonic History* (1926): "With the advent of Dr. Annie

Besant to the leadership of the Order in the British Empire, the direct link between Masonry and the Great White Lodge which has ever stood behind it (though all unknown to the majority of the Brethren) was once again reopened" (p.328).

Other occultists saw Freemasonry as deriving from sources not quite so far East. For Max Heindel (who was not a freemason) it was "rooted in hoary antiquity", its very name was Egyptian (Phree messen = Children of Light), and the progress of "Mystic Masonry" would ultimately hasten "the Second Advent of Christ" (Freemasonry and Catholicism, 1931, pp. 86 & 98). This was admittedly an extreme interpretation: esoteric masons were generally more cautious in their imaginings - although Manly Palmer Hall could claim that "Masonry came to Northern Africa and Asia Minor from the lost continent of Atlantis, not under its present name but rather under the general designation Sun and Fire Worship" (The Secret Teachings of All Ages, 1936, p. 176). (5) He further maintained that "within the Freemasonic Mysteries lie hidden the long-lost arcana sought by all peoples since the genesis of human reason" (ibid p. 176), and while this is strictly a personal opinion, Hall's arguments are presented as authoritative, and the influence of his books (which have remained continuously in print) has been so widespread among American occultists over the last sixty years that those who read nothing else on Masonry have tended to treat his opinions as facts.

In England other speculative masons have been equally influential. J.S.M. Ward saw masonic symbolism in the initiation rites of virtually every human culture, past and present, and Freemasonry was for him "the survivor of the ancient mysteries nay, we may go further, and call it the guardian of the mysteries" (Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods, 1926, 2nd ed., p. 341). Ward's symbolist approach to masonic history ought to have appealed to occultists, but they are often unaware of him, for his work has been confined almost exclusively to masonic circles - unlike that of Dr. Westcott for whom the reverse was true. As befitted the Supreme Magus, or head, of the masonic Rosicrucian Society, Westcott believed firmly in the development of Freemasonry out of Rosicrucianism, and he argued forcefully that masonic ritual was deeply tinged with Kabbalistic

ideas. And yet for all the flaws in his scholarship Westcott appreciated the value of historical research, and he thus rejected as unfounded the claims of Yarker, Ward and others for a descent of Freemasonry from Mithraism or from the Essenes (see *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, Vols. 1, 28, 29).

But while Westcott's purely occult works have remained popular, his masonic writings are virtually unknown, and in attempting to bring Freemasonry to the notice of the occult world he was less successful than his younger and more mystical contemporaries, W. L. Wilmshurst and A. E. Waite, both of whom wrote for a wider audience than a purely masonic one. They presented their respective visions of Freemasonry as a part only of a more comprehensive and continuing spiritual tradition: and more importantly, the works of both men are still available - reaching and influencing an infinitely greater number of readers than either the works of Westcott or those of their little-known critics who wrote to protest against their errors of fact (Waite especially was prone to treating historical data in a very cavalier manner).

And this is the paradox of the hermetic misunderstanding of Freemasonry. The ideas of its motley crew of apologists are propagated in books that survive when the lives of their authors (and their opponents) are long forgotten, for there is a common thread that binds them all together. Credulous oddities such as Heindel and Leadbeater earnest, if unsound, scholars like Ward and Westcott and such luminous mystics as Wilmshurst and Waite, all shared a passionate conviction that Freemasonry holds a key indeed, the key - which will unlock the ancient mysteries, the Secret Tradition, or whatever one chooses to call that subtle alternative to mundane history and orthodox thought.

In the last analysis, that is what matters. It is of little consequence whether or not Freemasonry is descended from the mystery religions of antiquity: the important thing is that influential figures in the recent history of the Hermetic Tradition believed that it did and this belief coloured their perception of Hermeticism as a whole and determined the manner in which they gave those perceptions practical expression. Without an appreciation of their idea of

Freemasonry, however distorted and inaccurate it may have been, we cannot fully understand their role in the development of the Hermetic Tradition in the modern era.

Nor is this all. We must also be aware of the true nature of Freemasonry itself, of its relationship with esoteric systems of thought during the period of its creation, and of the more esoteric theories of its origin. It may be that none of these theories is correct, that the occultists were right, after all, in assuming a vast antiquity for the Craft but even if it proves to have been nothing more than a curious social club, its presence, however passive, lay behind almost all of the esoteric Orders of the last two centuries - Orders whose creators believed in Freemasonry as the supreme vehicle for the transmission of a superior traditional wisdom. Unless we acknowledge the influence of the idea of Freemasonry and attempt to understand its nature, both as it is and as it was believed to be, our understanding of Hermeticism will be impoverished. We shall be like the candidate for Masonic initiation: in a State of Darkness.

*R.A. Gilbert is an antiquarian bookseller in Bristol, UK. He is the author of *The Golden Dawn: Twilight of the Magicians*, and *A.E. Waite: Magician of Many Parts* and is currently working with John Hamill,*

*the librarian of the United Grand Lodge of England, on *A World History of Freemasonry*.*

Notes

1. The U.G.L.E. is the governing body of English Freemasonry the quotations are taken from a leaflet issued by their Board of General Purposes, entitled *What is Freemasonry?* Although I refer throughout the text to English Freemasonry, the arguments hold for the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite in the U. S. A. and for Regular Freemasonry throughout the world.
2. Quoted from *What is Freemasonry?*, as reproduced in John Hamill, *The Craft: A History of English Freemasonry*, Crucible Books (1986) p. 12.
3. The first papal pronouncement against Freemasonry was the Encyclical, *In eminente*, issued in 1738.
4. e.g. F. D. Harrison of Bardford who became Grand Secretary of Universal Co-Freemasonry in England, although he had left the Horus Temple of the Golden Dawn because he disliked its masonic ethos.
5. This is the title by which it is commonly known. The correct title is *An Encyclopedic Outline of Masonic, Hermetic, Qabalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolical Philosophy*.



FROM THE DEPUTY GRAND MASTER



Greetings Brethren;

I trust you are all keeping safe and well and are continuing to reach out to your Brothers as this pandemic continues. It seems almost unbelievable that after more than six months little or nothing has changed in our daily routines and we are still faced with a future that is very unpredictable.

We have certainly been given an opportunity for reflection and reassessing of the role we can play in providing support and assistance to those in need. I have found myself feeling a tremendous sense of loss due to the inability to meet with you my "Brothers" face to face and although I have attended Zoom meetings as frequently as possible and although they are a very useful tool in these times, there is something missing. The time spent apart for me has led to increasing contemplation of what it means to be a part of a "Brotherhood". The following article published in by the American Canadian Grand Lodge "Masonic Short Talks" address this in a forceful manner. I offer it for your consideration:

Brotherhood

"My Brother, for by that sacred appellation I now address you."

This salutation is sometimes used in the ritual of the first degree when the initiate is greeted for the first time as Brother. It is not found in every version of Masonic ritual. Regrettably, it has disappeared from some which formerly contained it. Perhaps it has become a victim of the desire of modernists who want to "shorten the work" or to make it "more relevant to our times".

In most versions of the ritual the candidate is addressed as "Mister Blank," or "My friend," until that moment when he may be properly saluted as "My Brother". Then the Worshipful Master merely changes the mode of address from "Mister" or "Friend" to "Brother," without any special emphasis or observation.

If the language of Masonic ritual is one of the most important elements which help

initiates to become impressed with the meaning and philosophy of the Fraternity, that salutation needs to be made significant and impressive. That sacred appellation is a key for revealing the fundamental spiritual quality of the institution. Merely to slip in the words, "My Brother," as a variation in a form of address, is to risk the initiate's failure to discern the mystic quality of Masonic brotherhood.

Archaic as the word appellation may sound to the ear of a twentieth century initiate, it does suggest to his surprised mind that Freemasonry is a society of cultivated men, that it is rooted in intellectual aspirations, and that he is being addressed as a man who will strive for mental attainments.

The word sacred is even more stimulating to the attentive initiate because of its connotations. Not only does he realize that he is now accepted as a member of the Fraternity, that he is now a Brother among Brethren; but also, even if only vaguely, he becomes aware that this new relationship of brotherhood is to be something special, something spiritual, something related to the ideas he has acquired from sacred writings, something scriptural perhaps, something related to the purposes of the Great Creator.

We Masons like to describe the special quality of our fraternalism as the Mystic Tie, a phrase which acknowledges the spiritual quality of our associating and working together. Mystic, of course, is derived from a Greek word which designated "an initiate into the ancient mysteries," and further suggests a sense of awe or wonder in contemplating or communing with God.

Any expression in the ritual which helps the initiate to relate his Masonic experience to such a spiritual understanding is worth preserving, be it ancient or modern, archaic or new, "My Brother, for by that sacred appellation I now address you."

To qualify the title of Brother as sacred, the first time it is used to salute a new member, is to prepare him to understand "the great secret" of Freemasonry, a secret which is no real secret at all, for it has been told again and again by the lives of dedicated Craftsmen. It is a secret and a mystery only to those who have never been made Masons, for it is the meaning of brotherhood as experienced only by Masons, and even by them,

only imperfectly.

Dr. Joseph Fort Newton once wrote, "The secret of Masonry, like the secret of life, can be known only by those who seek it, serve it, live it. It cannot be uttered; it can only be felt and acted. It is, in fact, an open secret, and each man knows it according to his quest and capacity. Like all things most worth knowing, no one can know it for another and no one can know it alone. It is known only in fellowship, by the touch of life upon life, spirit upon spirit, knee to knee, breast to breast, hand in hand. "

Such is the thinking-feeling which is stirred in every receptive Mason when he hears the words, "My Brother," as a sacred appellation. Such are the elements of reverence which should characterize his understanding of the Mystic Tie.

He is not merely an associate or ally; he is not merely a well-wisher or a sympathizer; he is not merely a comrade or supporter; he is not merely a confidant or friend.

A Mason is a Brother, in the oldest, finest and truest sense of that word. He is a brother human being, for the sake of humanity. No dogma binds the brotherhood together; no narrow political or social goal, no intolerance of class or nationality provides the brotherhood with a common platform.

Masons are Brothers, in the universal meaning of the word, men who are united by complete freedom of conscience under the banner of pure tolerance, of an affectionate regard and respect for every other human being. A Mason is a man without prejudice. (So mote it be.)

He is a Brother when he estimates the worth of a fellow human being, not by his profession or vocation, not by his special interests as a fellow citizen, not by his sectarian religious beliefs, not by the color of his skin, and not by his age, or nationality, or economic status.

A Mason is a Brother because, of his own free will and accord, he has chosen to seek the light of truth which will set humanity free, because he has been accepted by the Brotherhood to work for the welfare of the whole human family, and because he earnestly desires the Brotherhood of Man, of all men, under the

Fatherhood of God.

If that Masonic hope and ideal were the real secret of Freemasonry, it is obviously no secret at all. It is an ideal shared by many men in many places, in many religious and benevolent associations. The secrecy associated with Masonry's mission and purpose lies not in its universal hopes and aspirations; it lies in its methods of instruction, in its ritual and ceremonies, in its fraternal activities and labours.

That secrecy is really symbolic, for its purpose is not to exclude the "profane", but to benefit the individual initiate, by making his initiatory experiences, in which he must actively participate, sacred, i.e., a mystic consecration. It is the nature of man to seek that which is hidden and, like Prometheus, to acquire "the knowledge of the gods".

The real secret of Masonry, therefore, is an experience which only the members of the Fraternity have voluntarily undergone. The Mystic Tie is their expression for this experience of Masonic brotherhood. They have lived the Mystic Tie when they have visited another lodge in an unfamiliar city, where no one knew them even by name. But having established their claim to genuine Masonic brotherhood, they found themselves accepted and drawn affectionately into the mystic circle of the members of the lodge. No demand for rank, or money, or social status was made. Only the ancient phrases and forms to prove the Brother's Masonic experience were required.

And once he had demonstrated his knowledge of the common Masonic experience, whether it

were in Europe, or Asia, or the North American continent, he found himself welcomed with joy into a group of men who were concerned only with the work of making brotherhood real; and the special joy of that common aspiration brightened every activity of the lodge, whether at labor or around the festive board.

Only a Mason can understand the more solemn expression of brotherhood which may come to him as he visits at the bedside of a dying Brother, who in his feeble speechless condition, responds to his sympathetic ministrations with a certain pressure on the hand, as if he were trying

to say, "Thank you, my Brother; with that sacred appellation I'm about to say farewell."

Unfortunately, there are Brethren to whom the mystic Masonic experience is a dimly remembered verbal exercise only. The words of the Masonic ritual were impressive, and they acknowledge the noble and lofty ideas which they inspired. But to ponder them as challenges to the self, as testing tools to measure their own Masonic effort "to improve myself in Masonry," this is disquieting enough to "turn them off," and to regard themselves merely as members of a comfortable club or social organization.

They have heard the Masonic instruction: "By the exercise of brotherly love, we are taught to regard the whole human species as one family - the high and the low, the rich and the poor, who, as created by one Almighty Parent, and inhabitants of the same planet, are to aid, support, and protect one another. On this principle, Masonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained

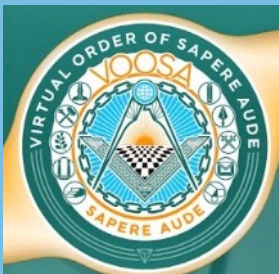
at a perpetual distance."

My Brother, for by that sacred appellation I now address you, in what ways do you exercise brotherly love? Do you really regard the whole human species as one family, in which every man is just as much of a brother as you are? What do you actually do to unite men of every country, sect, and opinion? How can a Mason help to aid, support, and protect our human brothers of that generation with which communication seems so difficult? How do you conciliate true friendship, even in the narrow arena of your own lodge?

On your working answers to such questions, my Brother, depends not only the strengthening of the Mystic Tie, but in a world of tumultuous changes and disturbances, the future influence and usefulness of our gentle Craft.

*Fraternally & Respectfully;
John Dollimont DGM*

Looking for some Masonic Education? Check out on YouTube "Sapere Aude" hosted by the Grand Lodge of Georgia. There are 83 lectures recorded plus discussion sessions. In the past four weeks some of the topics addressed:



Veracruz Cradle of Freemasonry in Mexico
 Examination of White Paper: politics in Masonic Research
 DeMolay International
 Ancient and Masonic Order of the Scarlet Cord
 United Grand Lodges of Germany - Prehistory and Creation
 G is for Gnosis
 Influence of the Templar's on Portugal
 Freemasonry in the Dutch East Indies and Indonesia
 Freemasonry in Indonesia after the Second World War
 Masonic implications in Romania, 1734-1993
 Foundation of the Grand Lodge of Scotland
 The History of the Freemasonry in Israel
 Where Arabs and Jews Embrace as Brothers
 The History of Jewish Kabbala Parts 1 and 2
 Atalanta Unveiled Count Michael Maier's alchemical emblems

WHEN IS MAN A MASON?

For many many years now, we as a great learned Society, have tried to define when a Man becomes a Mason. There have been great arguments as to the interpretation of that in our Rituals, and most Jurisdictions differ in the Rituals that they use. Grand Masters, Grand Lecturers, Committees, and Boards have attempted to stifle laws as to when one has become one. So we keep trying to find those physical Landmarks, be it; the completion of a ceremony, the the successful completion of a series of questions and answers, or the receiving of a diploma or dress apron, that will confirm that we are indeed Masons and our journey has ended. However, if we recall being told that upon completion of the ceremonies of the third degree, that though we believe ourselves to be one, that is not the case, nor do we know that we will ever become one. From that I am led to believe that our quest to become a Mason may be more connected to our desire to learn, and to grow as a person, than the passing of any Rite or Ceremony. Joseph Fort Newton ends his great book, *THE BUILDERS*, with a paragraph that has gone around the world. It has been translated into many tongues, and gives us great cause for Contemplation.

G.C.P.

"When is a man a Mason? When he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope and courage—which is the root of every virtue. When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, as vile, as divine, as diabolic, and as lonely as himself, and seeks to know, to forgive, and to love his fellow man. When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yea, even in their sins—knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them, and above all how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt the birds without a gun, and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child. When he can be happy and high-minded amid the meaner drudgeries of life. When star-crowned trees, and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters, subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead. When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response. When he finds good in every faith that helps any man to lay hold of divine things and sees majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be. When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something beyond mud, and into the face of the most forlorn fellow mortal and see something beyond sin. When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellow man, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of song—glad to live, but not afraid to die! Such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to all the world.

I hope I have not caused any confusion within the Craft my Brothers, but I honestly feel that there is much merit in what Brother Joseph Fort Newton has to say, thus, reinforcing that important lesson found within our 2nd Degree; "the Internal and not the External qualifications of a Man is what Masonry regards".

Gary C. Patterson
PGL GLNS

FROM THE SENIOR GRAND WARDEN



The following paper was published by the MSA as a Short Talk Bulletin.

WHY I BECAME A MASON

by Stewart M. L. Pollard

Prior to his initiation, a candidate is asked pertinent questions relative to his motivation in seeking the privileges of Masonry and is asked to give assurances that his decision was not influenced by mercenary motives. However, he is not asked to be specific as to what actually influenced him to become a Mason. It is not until we listen to the ritualistic exchange between the Worshipful Master and the Senior Warden that we hear the question 'what induced you to become a Master Mason?' The ritual answer to that question is familiar to all of us.

The Master of a Virginia Lodge a few years ago received word just as he was about to Open his lodge that his guest speaker for the evening had been rushed to the hospital moments before. Undaunted, he opened the lodge, conducted the necessary business, and then announced the alternative program for the evening. 'What induced YOU to become a Mason?' he asked. After allowing the brethren to think about it for a few minutes, he called upon several brethren to give their answers. It seems that each of us have vivid memories of when, where and why we made the decision to apply for membership in the world's largest and oldest fraternal organization.

This paper was inspired by the answers given on that night. Since then, all over the country, that question has been posed to many brethren. The responses have been fascinating, inspiring and interesting. Basically, the responses fall into several general categories:

- Example set by family and friends
- Urging of wives, mothers or sweethearts
- Demolay activities
- Impressive Masonic funerals
- Masonic Charities
- Curiosity

Surprisingly, the number who indicated that they joined just so they could get into one of the appendant bodies, or who acknowledged that they were ASKED to join, were so few that it appears not to be a major factor. One Grand Master confided that when he proposed to his wife, one of the stipulations she made before she would agree to marry him was that he would have to petition a Masonic Lodge. (She was active in Job's Daughters.)

R.W. Brother 'Jack' Kelly, Past Grand Master of Texas, recalls that when he was a small boy in Indiana he was recuperating from pneumonia at the time that his grandfather died. He remembers being wide-eyed when the house seemed to be filled with men wearing funny hats with white feathers on them and carrying swords. He was told that they were Knights Templar and were there to conduct Grandpa's funeral. He also has fond memories of the kindnesses and concern the men had for him. When it was explained that his grandfather had been the Commander of the Knights Templar and the men were there because of their love of his grandfather it made a great and lasting impression upon him. One of his most cherished possessions is the engraved Templar sword which had been his grandfather's. He claims that that early exposure to Masonic brotherhood was a great influence on his desire to become a Mason. A surprising number of brethren informed me that they were Masons as a result of the urging of their children, who were anxious to join one of the youth groups, and many of them expressed how surprised they were when they learned that other close family members or business associates were sitting on the sidelines when they were raised. Had they known that these family members or friends were members of the fraternity they would have petitioned sooner. This points up the fact that we tend to carry Masonic 'secrecy' too far when we fail to talk about our Masonic activities to our friends and family.

A young Junior Warden of a Wyoming Lodge, approached me at a Grand Lodge of Wyoming Annual Communication and announced that he was a Master Mason as a result of an M.S.A. Short Talk Bulletin. When asked to explain, he said that he had come home from work one day and his father passed him a copy of the Short Talk

Bulletin, suggesting that he read it. That evening he did read the bulletin and the following morning asked his father for a petition. As a matter of curiosity, I asked him if he recalled the title of that Short Talk Bulletin. It turned out that it was a bulletin I had written several years before, entitled, 'Dear Son'. I hope his father knows how proud I am to have assisted in being an influence.

A District Inspector in the Grand Lodge of Maryland is quick to explain that he was influenced to become a Mason by the example set by Past Grand Master William Jacobs of the District of Columbia, who many years before had been the Dad Advisor of his DeMolay Chapter. 'I wanted to be just like Dad Jacobs, who so willingly gave of himself to every boy in the Chapter. If Dad Jacobs was a Mason, then I wanted to be one! What an example he was to us!'

Ed Rose, former Director of the Veterans Administration Voluntary Services Division, tells his fascinating story related by his Grand-mother when he was growing up. It seems that she and his grandfather had gone to Arkansas from their home in Virginia for a vacation. While there, his grandfather became gravely ill and passed away. His grand-mother was at wits end. She wanted to take the body back to Virginia for burial in the family plot, but she had no funds until she could get back. Fortunately, the Coroner learned that her husband was a Mason, and contacted the local Arkansas lodge. Almost immediately, members of the lodge were there to comfort and console her and to offer assistance. Within a few hours, they had made arrangements for the body to be shipped to Virginia by train and she was provided with a train ticket to accompany the body. Members of that lodge also traveled with her until they were met by members of her husband's lodge. She quickly went to the bank and withdrew funds so she could repay them, but those who had accompanied her could not be located. She told that story over and over again to her grandchildren, emphasizing that that was the kind of men they should try to be. Ed likes to tell that he made the decision to be a Mason when he was eight years old. Isn't it great to know that there are men of that stature in our government!

Ill. Bro. Joseph R. (Jose") Gilbert, 33 1-7, a Pennsylvania Mason living in New Jersey gave this reply when asked what had induced him to

become a Mason. 'Without the 'built-in' advantage of having my Dad or brother as members of the Craft, I made my decision to petition a lodge for membership only after much thought and some years of decision. I did my best to find things I did not like about Freemasonry and found that I was wasting my time there was no such thing! Every man I saw with that pin on, every man I called a dear friend who wore the Square and Com-passes, every man I met in business, at church, socially . . . all were of a purpose, a principle, a way of life . . . that I felt a kinship with. I felt quite sure, even before I submitted my petition, that the men I assumed to be Masons as I went through life, were an accurate representation of what I would find if I were fortunate enough to be accepted. That was over forty years ago and I have no reason to think otherwise since that night I was raised. I thank God for that!'

In the January 1989 issue of The Virginia Masonic Herald, there was an open letter from a newly raised brother (Bro. Michael Stairs of Willis V. Fentress Lodge #296 Virginia Beach, VA.) As his letter so graphically explains his motivations in joining the fraternity, generous extracts from his letter follow:

'Several years ago I met and married a young woman who would turn my life around in ways neither she nor I expected. You see she is the daughter of a Master Mason. I knew very little about Freemasonry then, but the more I became acquainted with her father the better my perception of Freemasonry became. My respect for this man has grown to immense proportions. He is a good man, an honest man, a man of virtue and integrity, a spiritual man a man that will go out of his way to do what he feels in his heart is right a man that can't be swayed by the evils of the world and a man of immeasurable character and pride. The more I got to know this man the more I began to think to myself that there must be something to Freemasonry.

Several years after I married, I approached my father-in-law and asked him how I could become a Mason. He said, 'All you have to do is ask.' I did and soon thereafter, I was initiated into the mysteries of Freemasonry. This was the first step towards what have been some of the richest,

greatest, and most pro-found experiences of my life.'

To avoid him any embarrassment, we won't identify the brother who confided that his original motivation to join the Craft was because he thought it would be 'good for business.' He had noticed that a number of men who were in the same line of work were Masons, and that maybe he could gain some advantage if he were to become one. As he progressed through the degrees he realized how wrong he had been. One of his business competitors served as his mentor as he learned his catechisms and became one of his closest friends. On the night that he was raised he was amazed to find his father, his father-in-law and two of his uncles had flown in just to be with him on that 'special milestone' in his life. It was then that he fully realized how wrong his initial motivation had been.

Think about it! What induced YOU to petition for the degrees? Think about the Masons who have influenced your life, and your way of thinking.

We thought that the poem 'I See You've Traveled Some' would be a nice way to end this STB. We do not know the author but the poem is in our file here at M.S.A .

Editor

I SEE YOU'VE TRAVELED SOME

Wherever you may chance to be
 Wherever you may roam
 Far away in foreign lands,
 Or just at Home, Sweet Home
 It always gives you pleasure.
 It makes your heart strings hum
 Just to hear the words of cheer'
 'I see you've traveled some.'

When you get the brother's greeting,
 And he takes you by the hand,
 It thrills you with a feeling
 That you cannot understand.
 You feel that bond of brotherhood
 That tie that's sure to come
 When you hear him say in a friendly way,
 'I see you've traveled some.'

And if you are a stranger
 In strange lands all alone,
 If fate has left you stranded
 Dead broke and far from home,
 It thrills you makes you dumb,
 When he says, with a grip of fellowship,
 'I see you've traveled some.'

And when your final summons comes,
 To take a last long trip,
 Adorned with Lambskin Apron White
 And gems of fellowship
 The tiler at the Golden Gate,
 With square and rule and plumb
 Will size up your pin, and say,
 'Walk in-I see you've traveled some.'

=====

Stewart M. L. Pollard is a member of Ralph J. Pollard Lodge # 217 Orrington Maine and served the Masonic Service Association as its Executive Secretary from 1977-87.

Stew shares many stories of 'why' men have become Masons. MSA would encourage Lodges to use this STB as a program and ask the Brothers present to tell their story too!!

Editor (STB)



MASONIC EXHIBITION IN KINGS COUNTY

The Kings County Museum has offered to dedicate space in the Museum to serve as an opportunity to celebrate 150 years of Freemasonry. As a result the MWGM was present for the opening of the display. The display will be open for small group viewing by appointment until the first of December 2020.



L-R: RWB Gary C Patterson, PM; VWB Gary Candow, Secretary; WB Ralph Pietersma, Worshipful Master; Sister LaVerne Porter, Past Worthy Matron, Evangeline Ch OES; The MWGM, MWBro. George Grant; RWB Alan Jarvis SGW



From now to the 1st of December 2020, Guided tours for groups of five people or less can be arranged, under COVID guidelines, by contacting the Museum 24 hrs in advance with the Names and Tel No's of those wishing to attend.

Contact info: 37 Cornwallis St, Kentville, NS.

kingscountymuseum.ca

info@kingscountymuseum.ca

902 678 6237





Above: MWTGM examining one of the display cases. Below: WB Ralph Pietersma, Master of Kentville Lodge No 58 and VWB Gary Candow, Secretary. Mr Maynard Stevens, Museum Guide is in the background.





Ah, When Shall We Three

John H. Sheppard

Ah, when shall we three meet, like them
 Who last were at Jerusalem? For three
 there were, but one is not, -
 He lies where Acacia marks the spot.
 Though poor he was, with kings he trod

Though great, he humbly knelt to God
 Ah, when shall those restore again
 The broken link of friendship's chain?

Behold, where mourning beauty bent
 In silence o'er his monument,
 And widely spread in sorrow there
 The ringlets of her flowing hair!
 The future Sons of Grief will sigh,
 While standing round in mystic tie,
 And raise their hands, alas! to
 Heaven, In anguish that no hope is
 given.

From whence we came, or whither go,
 Ask me no more, nor seek to know,
 Till three shall meet who formed, like
 them

The Grand Lodge at Jerusalem..



FROM THE JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN



I hope this article brings to mind the way we would like to be treated and the way we treat all our fellow human beings .

Bob Cowley JGW

EVERY LODGE AND VALLEY HAS ONE

Ill. Bro. David Freeman, TPGM

“We are apt sometimes to confound prominence with importance, and to imagine that which bulks the largest on our eye is of the greatest consequence. The cornice of a building is prominent, but is it more important than the foundation that lies unseen in the earth? Is not the peasant who raises the corn for our food more important to us than the Prince in his palace? The people of a state are of greater consequence than their governors; and the members of the Lodge are more important than their officers. We all stand together, and our duty is to fill our places wisely and well, like stones in a building, true and square to those below, around and above us. In the perspective of the universe, in the measurement of eternity, there is no distinction between the position of the monarch with his sceptre and the beggar with his staff, between the master with his mallet and the apprentice with his gavel. The only difference recognised is in the use they make of their privileges and power“.

A.S. Macbride in “A Modern Masonic Philosopher” (Ed. M.R. Poli).

Every Lodge and Valley has one. They are the Brother who arrives early and pitches in without being asked to set up the lodge. They are the Brother who when asked is always ready to help with a degree. They are the Brother who steps up to assist with a Valley function. They are the Brother who writes a letter or visits a widow or sick Brother. They are the Brother who encourages the new member. They are the Brother who actively participates in meetings. They are the Brother who can always be depended on to complete a task. They are a

Brother who loves the Craft Lodge and/or Scottish Rite. They are the Brother who believes in what we as SR Freemasons stand for. They are the Brother who behaves in ways that are consistent with our Doctrines. They are the Brother who poses the question what can I do for you rather than what can you do for me? They are the Brother who asks little and gives much. They are the quiet leader. Very much part of our strength. A hero of the Rite. When they are not in the Valley, we miss them. We all know a Brother like this. The next time you see him say thank you.

As a Brother takes on more responsibility he will expect and should receive a “thank you”. Perception in this case is so important. The Brother sees his action as being related clearly to the operation of our Blue Lodge or Valley and believes his involvement is a direct linkage to the its success. Thus, he has influence on the ongoing procedures. The officers are perceived as doing what they do for the love of the task and the group. The Brother expects tangible physical, emotional, or psychological rewards.

The best approach to say thank you is to recognize Brethren in the way we like to be recognized. How do I like to be spoken to? How do I like my opinion to be listened to?

How do I like my work to be seen? How do I like Brethren to show interest in me? How do I like decisions that involve me to be made?

How do I like my ego to be treated? How do I like my personal goals to be respected? How do I demonstrate my Integrity?

The answers to these questions form the framework for supporting our Brethren in their Masonic Lodge or Scottish Rite journey and meeting the ethos. Gratitude encourages a Brother to be adaptable to what is best for the Valley. He can be responsible for his decisions, display his passion for our fraternity and be organized in a way allowing other Brethren to be organized. Consider praising a Brother in public and only offering him advice in private. Consider “in private” any more Brethren beyond yourself and your Brother.

Saying thank you is not only good manners it enhances our Brotherhood. Thank you says to our Brother we value you for who you are and what you bring to our Valley. Thank you cements our relationship with our Brother. Thank you enriches a Brothers self esteem and may lead him to seek more opportunities to serve in the Valley.

SR and Freemasons may be self-conscious about the appreciation we are offered by our Brothers as we are servants of our Lodges, Valleys and the Rite. Yet most of us really do want to hear someone thank us for the things we do, even if it is something we are supposed to be doing anyway. If someone says thanks, we should accept the thanks graciously. We should never undermine the compliment. Phrases such as “Oh, it’s no big deal,” or “Thanks, but it was nothing,” says to the Brother offering the compliment they have made a mistake. Their gratitude has been rejected.

Avoid a compliment battle. Trying to out compliment a Brother or one up the compliment by downplaying the accolade being given in favour of perceived humility starts a chain leading to dissatisfaction with the conversation. “Yes, it went well but my contribution was nothing as meaningful as yours”. A Brothers only choices are to withdraw from the conversation or to escalate the competition.

A way we do not often think of to say thank you to our Brethren is to honour their time during our meetings. The only meetings people wish had run longer are those magical ones that take place when lovers first set eyes upon one another. We should never make the mistake of thinking our business meetings are that thrilling.

To paraphrase Albert Schweitzer, at times, our own light fades and is rekindled by a spark from another Brother. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those Brethren who help keep the Masonic and SR flames



BE AN INSPIRER

MR: A poor blind candidate who is desirous of having and receiving a part in the rights, light and benefits of this Worshipful Lodge , erected to God and dedicated to the memory of the Holy Saints John, as all brethren have done who have gone this way before him.

BROTHER: Who has been duly initiated as an Entered Apprentice and now wishes more light in Masonry by being passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft.

BROTHER: Who has been duly initiated as an Entered Apprentice, passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft and now wishes further light in Masonry by being raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason

We have all heard these words as we entered Lodge on each of our Degrees. But how many can give me a reason why you joined masonry? And can remember more than one thing that stands out for you on you journey though the 3 Degrees?

We all know it would be great to get new members; that is not the problem. The real problem is not just giving them a reason to join but giving them a reason to stay and move forward through their masonic Journey in this great fraternity of Brothers, family and friends.

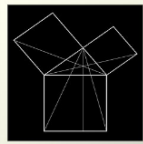
I think we can do this with that we already have: Ritual, Floor Work, Education. The way a candidate is taken on a journey through each degree, he should be left in AWE. Mentoring each new member on a masonic educational journey, which gives us the chance to teach about our fraternity and our work. Then comes education, a tool that should not bore people but should inspire a person to want to come back to learn more, giving all of our brethren a reason to want to come to lodge.

So Brethren, if we all work together to make this fraternity one that inspires then we can leave the new candidate in awe when he first comes through the door of the Lodge to start his Masonic Journey.

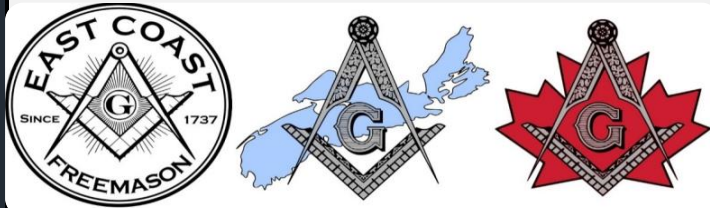
I know this is just the opinion of one Brother, but I feel deep down I am not the only one who feels this way. Lets inspire ourselves so we can make this a great fraternity.

Calvin Carter
PDDGM

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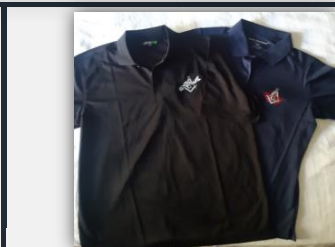
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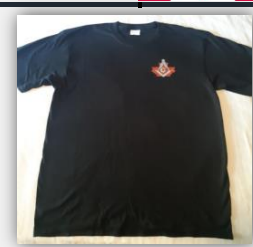
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THE LEVEL AND THE SQUARE

by Robert Morris

WE MEET upon the Level and we part upon the Square,
 What words of precious meaning those words Masonic are!
 Come, let us contemplate them! They are worthy of a tho't;
 In the very walls of Masonry the sentiment is wrought!

We meet upon the Level, though from every station come
 The rich man from his palace and the poor man from his
 home.

For the rich must leave their wealth and state outside the
 Mason's door,
 And the poor man finds his best respect upon the
 Checkered Floor.

We act upon the Plumb,—'tis the order of our Guide—
 We walk upright in every way and lean to neither side;
 Th' All-Seeing Eye that reads our hearts doth bear us witness
 true,
 That we still try to honor God and give each man his due.

We part upon the Square, for the word must have its due,
 We mingle with the multitude, a faithful band and true,
 But the influence of our gatherings in Masonry is green,
 And we long upon the Level to renew the happy scene.

There is a world where all are equal, we are hurrying to it
 fast,
 We shall meet upon the Level when the Gates of Death are
 past;
 We shall stand before the Orient and our Master will be
 there,
 To try the blocks we offer with His own unerring square.

We shall meet upon the Level there, but never thence
 depart,
 There's a Mansion, 'tis all ready for each trusting, faithful
 heart,
 There's a Mansion and a welcome and a multitude is there;
 Who have met upon the Level and been tried upon the
 Square.

Let us meet upon the Level then while laboring patient here,
 Let us meet and let us labor though the labor be severe;
 Already in the western sky the signs bid us prepare
 To gather up our working tools and part upon the Square.

Hands round! Ye faithful brotherhood, the bright fraternal
 chain,

We part upon the Square below and meet in Heaven again;
 And the words of precious meaning, those words Masonic
 are:

“We meet upon the Level and we part upon the Square.”

Many references state that Rob Morris was born on August 31, 1818, near Boston, Massachusetts. However, there is some evidence that he was born Robert Williams Peckham, in New York, and that he adopted the name of his foster parents after the death of his birth parents, later shortening his name to Rob to avoid confusion with another poet named Robert Morris. He grew up in New York, where he (apparently) also went to college.

He worked as a teacher for 10 years before moving to Oxford, Mississippi, where he continued teaching at Mount Sylvan Academy, a school established by Freemasons. While living in Oxford, he met Charlotte Mendenhall, whom he married on August 26, 1841.

After he became a Mason on March 5, 1846, he became convinced that there needed to be a way for female relatives of Masons to share in some measure in the benefits of Freemasonry. While teaching at the Eureka Masonic College ("The Little Red Brick School Building") in Richland, Mississippi in 1849-1850, he wrote Eastern Star's first ritual, titled *The Rosary of the Eastern Star*. He organized a "Supreme Constellation" in 1845 to charter Star chapters. In 1866, because of his planned travel abroad, he handed over the organizational authority of Eastern Star to Robert Macoy.

He later served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky in 1858-9. Upon being given a job as professor of the Masonic University, he moved to La Grange, Kentucky in 1860.

Over the years, he wrote over 400 poems, many of which were devoted to Eastern Star and Masonry. While traveling in the Holy Land, he wrote the words to the hymn "O Galilee". In 1854, he wrote "*The Level and the Square*", which may be his best-known poem.

Because of his many works on Masonic subjects, on December 17, 1884, he was crowned the "Poet Laureate of Freemasonry", an honor which had not been granted since the death of Robert Burns in 1796.

His health began to fail in 1887, and in June 1888, he became paralyzed.[2] He died on July 31, 1888, and is buried at La Grange, Kentucky. The Rob Morris Home is kept as a shrine to Rob Morris by the Kentucky Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star.

 WHY BE A MASTER?

Bro. Michael Arce - Mt. Vernon Lodge #3 in Albany, New York.

This is my third attempt at writing this article. They say you are supposed to "write what you know." Outside of a virtual experience in a concordant degree, my time in the Master's Chair has been limited to Blue Lodge degree work. Pursuing the Road To The East is not only a course offered in my jurisdiction; it is almost an expectation for every man who possesses leadership traits. "When you are Master..." is a phrase a new Mason will hear from older members and line officers at dinner, degree rehearsals, and outside of Lodge meetings. My view was that becoming Master of my Lodge was an expectation, one that I have gone back and forth on pursuing during my Masonic career. There have been times when this decision was either a question or a goal.

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The Master's Chair was the second object that caught my attention the first time I stepped foot in a Lodge room. I am the first man in my family to visit a Masonic Lodge, the first to become a Master Mason. I keep my personal experience in mind every time I give a Lodge room tour. I was 35-years-old at that time. Freemasonry was not the first community group or charity I had expressed an interest in joining. Growing up in southwest Arizona, I was a member of my local 4-H club and high school FFA chapter. As an adult, I have volunteered with the American Heart Association, served on non-profit leadership boards, and am a professional society member. But there was something distinctively different about the Master's Chair the evening of my first Lodge visit.

First, the placement struck me. It's the highest seat in the room. Most Master's Chairs are ornate. I noticed the decoration, distinctive hard carvings, that must relate to the duties of the office. There was a small pedestal, about waist high, with a gavel within arm's length. A set of stairs led up to this seat. Below the station was the alter, situated in the center of the room. The alter was the first object to catch my eye. There aren't many meeting rooms that have an alter!

I was a visitor, a guest, during my first Lodge meeting. There was a handful of other interested men that evening; we all sat in a row together. My

second observation about the Master's Chair is the man who occupies it. There was another striking difference between this Mason and the others in the room: he was the only man wearing a hat. He was able to stand and move freely around the room when he spoke. And when he addressed those in attendance, he had their complete attention. I had never seen anything like this! I looked around the room, taking an inventory of the men. They were engaged, not one side conversation or comment was made as he spoke. The way these men revered this leader intrigued me to learn more about the significance of this role.

Years later, when the question is asked, "why be a Master," I point to that first experience as what initially drew me to being the Master of a Lodge. After I was raised, like many new Brothers, the Master of the Lodge approached me to take a position in his line as a Steward. I accepted, and so began my journey to the East. Over the next three years, I advanced through the line to the Junior Warden's station. It was during that time when I began to question my path. "Why be Master" was something I would ask myself after seeing the division and politics that is a part of any organization. My impression of the role began to tarnish; I witnessed the stress that is a by-product of being the top decision-maker, the man ultimately responsible for every aspect of the Lodge. I saw past the cheery greetings and friendly handshakes the Master would extend, to his frustrations and personal fears.

Why be Master when you are the center of attention and the target of criticism? Shakespeare was right. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." Or, in our case, the hat.

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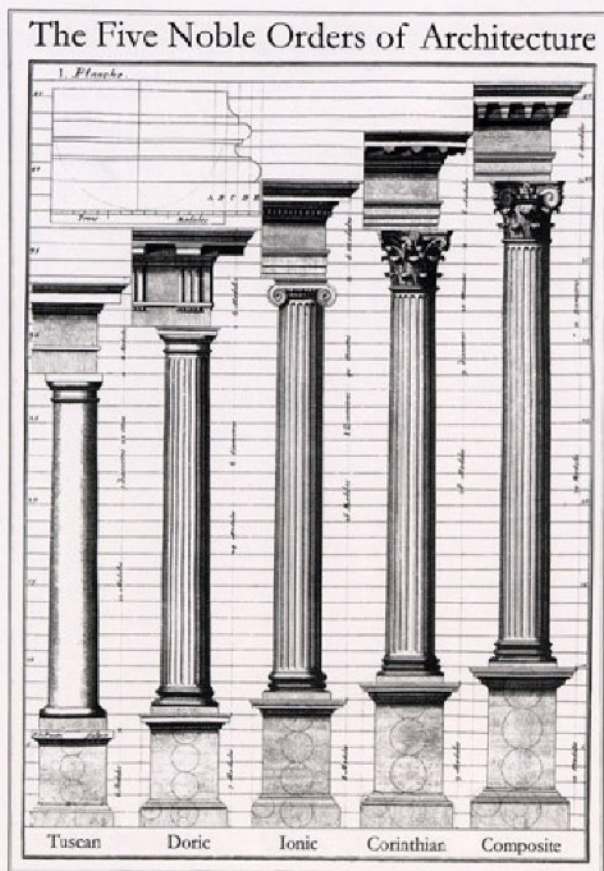
This article has taken three attempts to complete because I needed to find my answer — that required time, experience, and perspective. This May marked my fifth year as a Master Mason. I am now a member of my third Lodge. I want to be a Master to contribute to the experience of the Brethern. While that may seem like a simple answer, I realize the complexities. To me, becoming Master is more than having a place in a progressive line — it is the dedication and work

invested in improving myself. One must know one's self before offering help to another, right? My focus is on being the best Blue Lodge member I can be right now. I want to learn my parts for ritual, not for perfection, but to be proficient and a resource for others. I need time to understand the challenge that comes in leading a diverse group of like-minded men. That can only be observed by investing the time to work through the chairs. Most importantly, instead of making plans for what I will do during "my year" in the East, I need to sit, watch, and support the Brothers who precede me.

I now know that being a Master is more than learning the word, getting a fancy ring, special apron, or Grand Honors. Being a Master means you are the man your Brothers elect to lead them and care for the Lodge.

There is a reason the Master's Chair is prominent: it is a large chair to fill.

This paper was circulated by Bro. Wayne Anderson as a Sunday Masonic Paper No.987 and was recommended by a brother in the Jurisdiction. Ed



How Do You Address the East?

This act is always prefaced by the D.G. and S. in a tyled Lodge, never the Sign of Fidelity, (except open installations, or special presentations of jewels or awards when the Lodge is at ease.)

Nothing has changed with the due guard and penalty sign since our initiating, passing and raising. After the obligation in each degree the Worshipful Master told us that *“this due guard and sign are always to be given as a salutation to the Worshipful Master on entering or retiring from a Lodge, or on rising to address the Worshipful Master in a Lodge.”* These are the **ONLY** times it is appropriate to give the D.G. and S. (Degree work excepted).

There is a separate and distinct movement for the D.G. and S. of each degree. **They are not done together as one movement.** This D.G. and S. is part of how we communicate in Masonry, a sign language. It is a silent but very visible message telling the brother in King Solomon’s chair and all brethren present that we remember our obligation of that degree.

The brother seated in King Solomon’s chair is **always** addressed first. **There are no exceptions.**

Regardless of the rank of the WM, he is addressed only as WM, not V.W. Bro. WM or R.W. Bro. WM and certainly not sitting or ruling Master or Worshipful Sir. If the M.W. the Grand Master is present and the WM is in the chair, the WM is still addressed first.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Only a few grand lodges currently have social media policies in place for their members. This leaves over a 150 other grand lodges that don't have such a policy in place. If your grand lodge is one of these few, you should of course defer to their rules on the matter. But in the absence of such, here are some common sense pointers that should help keep you out of trouble.

The downfall of privacy.

Each and every single thing you type into a computer becomes a matter of permanent record. You cannot take things back, can you not remove them 100%, you cannot go back fix the damage once it is done. Think before you act, don't out other brethren as masons without their consent. Don't tag people in photos without their consent. Does facebook allow you to? Of course it does but if you think facebook is acting in your best interests, then you need substantially further education on the topic. Facebook is a free service, that means you are the product. You are bought and sold like any other open market commodity based on your age, location and interests. When you mention, tag, photograph, link to or in any other way identify online a man as being a brother, without their consent, you are making them the product and you have no right to do this.

Photos

This isn't a game. This is a serious problem with real life consequences..Today's technology allows anyone online to upload a photograph of someone and immediately see all the other photographs online that have that same face appearing in them. So what you ask? Keep reading.

Example (Fictional): A few years ago there was a member of my lodge, let's call him John and he was very enthusiastic not just about being a freemason but also about posting everything related his masonic career on his business website, his business card, his email footer, his facebook page and basically anywhere else that had a post or upload button. This was all well and good until one day Brother John posted a photograph of all the officers. This photograph tragically included another brother named Rakesh, our senior warden at the time. Rakesh did not even realize that his photo had been posted online. It was not until one day he flew back to his home country for a funeral that this unfortunate fact would become known to him. Now for those of you who have not been to the Middle East, when an American steps off the plane at customs, particularly a younger one, the first thing they do is type that persons name into google or facebook and see what comes up. On this sad day in a nameless theocratic nation, Rakesh's identity as a freemason was finally revealed and because freemasonry is outlawed in that country, Rakesh was immediately taken into custody for crimes against the state and sits in a jail cell to this day. There is no trial, no release date, no nothing, just our brother, gone. Snatched away from us ultimately by the indirect hand of another brother. Next time you go to click the upload button with a photograph of any mason other than yourself, perhaps you should think twice about doing so.

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*May it be their portion to bear those words
"Well done, thou good and faithful servant"*