



THE RUBICON MASONIC SOCIETY
and
WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH

Masonic Book Reviews & Summaries

4th Edition, 2024

The Rubicon Masonic Society

INTRODUCTION

In our technology-driven world, we find untold multiple thousands of documents, papers, books, essays, commentaries, and articles about Freemasonry. Distinguishing the worthy from their opposite is difficult, especially for men new to the Fraternity.

Since 2013, this publication has been provided to thousands of Masons in hardcopy, as well as in electronic format.

The reviews and summaries in this work are not intended to be an exhaustive collection, but, rather, one that offers interested and serious-minded members a reference, or at least a starting point, that may assist them in finding materials and information to constructively supplement their journey and Masonic knowledge.

The first edition in 2013 included 23 book reviews and summaries. In 2021, the reviews and summaries increased to 54 and included summaries of 7 Masonic journals and magazines. This 4th edition now includes 49 additional book reviews from the William O. Ware Lodge of Research in Covington, Kentucky, and with the addition of a popular virtual Masonic Education Series, it offers 110 Masonic resources.

Future editions of this publication are planned.

John W. Bizzack
Dan M. Kemble
Editors
January 2024

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ABOUT THE RUBICON MASONIC SOCIETY

Founded in 2013, The Rubicon Masonic Society is an invitation-only Masonic interest group of Master Masons based in Lexington, Kentucky.

The purpose of the group is to study the historical aim and purpose of the fraternity and promote the understanding of Freemasonry through education and Masonic events.

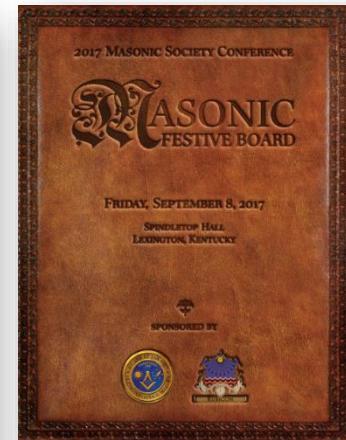
Members of the Society are dedicated to the preservation of expressive fellowship as a means of transmitting wisdom, improving themselves, and the world around them. Meetings are held in Lexington where brothers enjoy a meal, fellowship, and Masonic education presentations along with purposeful discussions about our fraternity and, of course, Freemasonry.

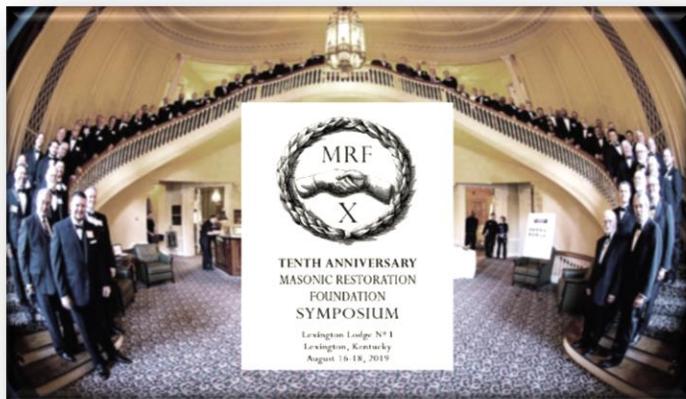
Member status in the Society requires that these men remain actively engaged and involved with their respective lodges in offering their time and services for the benefit of the Craft. Furthermore, Member status is not considered a substitute for involvement in regular Freemasonry.



Since 2013, Rubicon has sponsored and coordinated annual, formal Masonic Festive Boards, conferences in Lexington for the Masonic Restoration Foundation (MRF) and The Masonic Society, published papers and essays, and co-sponsored research programs and initiatives with the William O. Ware Lodge of Research in Kentucky. Since May 2020, Rubicon has been central in coordinating and delivering (to date) forty-five episodes of a virtual education series titled 21st Century Conversations About Freemasonry. The series is scheduled through 2024. To date, the episodes have attracted attendees from twenty-seven American jurisdictions and five countries.

More information about the series is found on page 199 of this publication.





The Rubicon Masonic Society

Masonic Book Reviews & Summaries

THE MASON'S WORDS

THE HISTORY & EVOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN MASONIC RITUAL

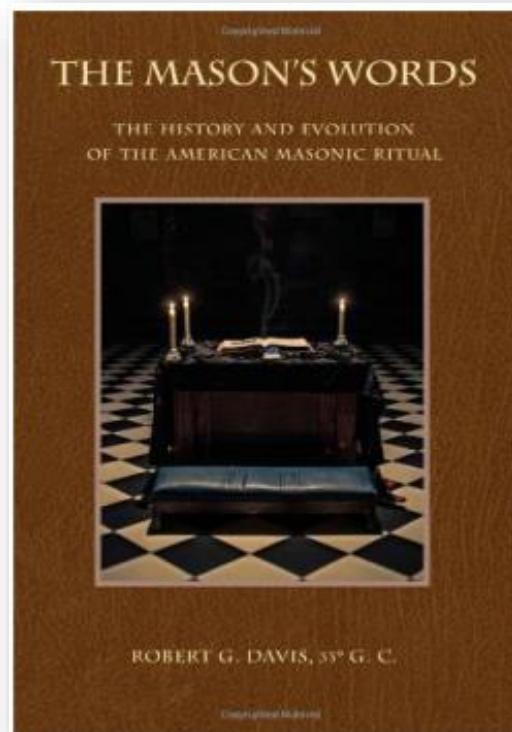
Robert G. Davis

Freemasonry is entirely built around traditions. From time immemorial, those who have belonged to the world's oldest and largest fraternal order have metaphorically passed between the pillars of Solomon's Temple to nurture within themselves a harmonious bond between tradition and modernity.

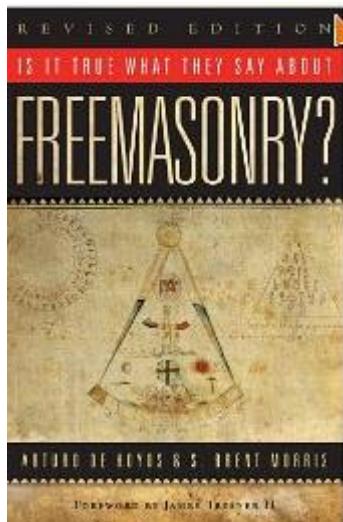
This is the story of the Masonic ritual, the language and ceremonial forms that have evolved into the present structure of American Freemasonry, defined its lodge space, and offered its members the same stabilizing influence of instruction that has prevailed on every continent for nearly 400 years.

The reader will discover that the language of the world's oldest fraternal society has also made its own interesting journey and been tested by the most powerful and the most humbling of men. The result is that, in Masonic lodges across America, and, indeed, the world, men from every walk of life, of all ages, every social category and every spiritual and philosophical conviction are able to find a basis for reflection on who they are, why they are here, and what has meaning to them.

By its common language delivered in a common culture of fraternal relationship, Freemasonry is enabled to exemplify a universal brotherhood of man. This is the story of the Mason's words, the history and evolution of the American Masonic ritual. It is an interesting bit of history that is perhaps all the more fascinating because it is so rarely known. Davis's book is one of the more important books of the past several decades.



IS IT TRUE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT FREEMASONRY?



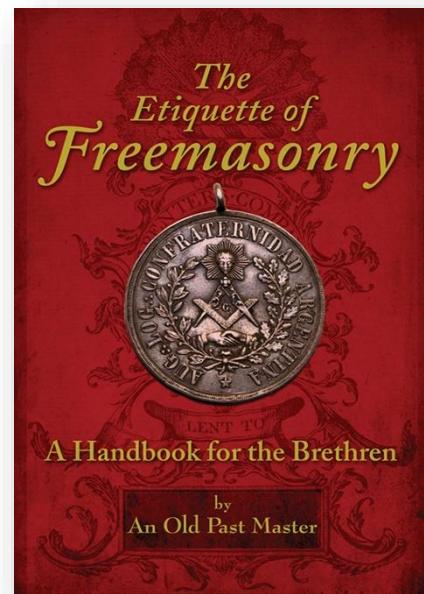
Arturo de Hoyos and S. Brent Morris

For as long as there have been Freemasons, there has been a calculated effort to disparage and discredit them as well as their practices. But why does this incessant attack exist, and from where does it originate? In this insightful text, Masons Arturo de Hoyos and S. Brent Morris explore the origins of the anti-Masonic mind-set and delve into the falsehoods on which critics have based these perennial sentiments. Confronting opponents one at a time, the authors methodically debunk the myths that have surrounded Freemasonry since its establishment, investigating the motives and misconceptions that drive these antagonists to spread deceit about Masonic traditions. With close readings and thorough research, they uncover a history of fallacies that have been handed down through the generations, and ultimately expose anti-Masonic prejudices that reach almost three hundred years into the past.

RULES OF MASONIC ETIQUETTE A HANDBOOK FOR THE BRETHREN

Unfortunately, Masonic Etiquette ...or Blue Lodge Etiquette, is largely unpublished as well as unspoken, therefore, up until now, it has been more difficult to learn its rules and nuances. You may study ritual work, degree work, floor work and know all Masonry's glorious history, Masonic symbols, jewels, etc. but there is very little written about how to comport yourself so they do not look foolish or be regarded as disrespectful. Some are small things, and some are not, but your Lodge conduct is continually on display. Few Masonic mentors include a list of proper Lodge behavior, as they have learned it, themselves, incident-by-incident, and usually learned by them after their having made an error and being kindly informed by another member as to the correct Masonic etiquette of the situation. -

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



THE ROSSLYN HOAX?

VIEWING THE ROSSLYN CHAPEL FROM A NEW PERSPECTIVE

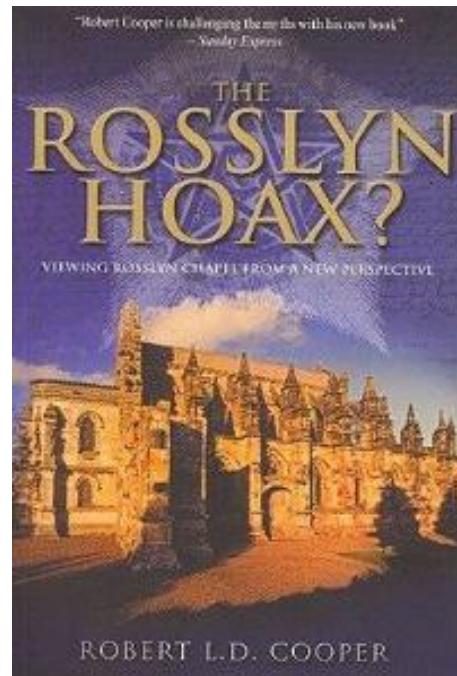
Robert L.D. Cooper.

Much has been written over the years about Rosslyn Chapel and its connection with Scottish Freemasonry, as well the St. Clair family, the Knights Templar, and a variety of "lost treasures." The author looks in depth at the validity of the published material and the legends associated with the Rosslyn Chapel exposing major differences between Scottish Freemasons' view of their history and heritage and that described by those who are not Freemasons.

Robert L. D. Cooper's book "The Rosslyn Hoax" is perhaps the most important book yet published about Rosslyn Chapel, the Templars, Scotland, and the Freemasons. What makes it so important is that he actually has physically investigated the many claims made about the enigmatic little church over the centuries, especially that made in the last few decades. He has laid his eye on so many artifacts described by others, and tracked them to their likely, provable meanings or sources. And he has traced the origins of so many legendary claims to their originators, instead of parroting the work of other "speculators."

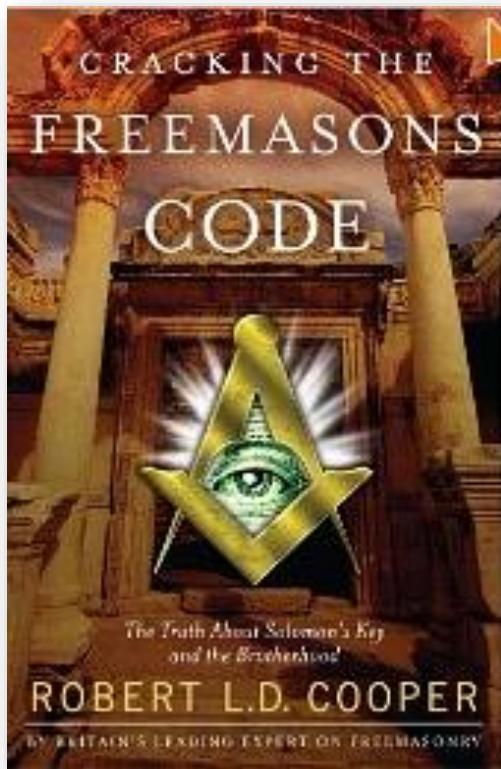
Although it is an important book, say it will not make everyone happy. And the reason why is because he slaughters an entire herd of sacred cattle with his investigations of the many claims of Templar involvement in Freemasonry's formation and the building of Rosslyn. Or to put it another way, if you believe Born in Blood: The Lost Secrets of Freemasonry, The Temple and the Lodge, and Rosslyn: Guardian of the Secrets of the Holy Grail to be the truth, Robert Cooper is your blasphemer.

Cooper is the curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland's library and museum, which possesses much original material that other authors have written about, but never actually gone to look at and study in person. Moreover, Cooper takes claims of Templar sites, burial markers and supposed influence and subjects them to the historical record or compares them to provable, authentic Templar sites. Most important of all, he places the origins of the initial claims made (often by 17th and 18th century Scottish Masons) into their proper historical and social context, exploring just why Scottish Freemasons might have desired an older, more glorious heritage for their fraternity than those uppity English Masons down in London who were claiming it as their own. Cooper makes an outstanding case for forgeries, Victorian alterations, and a lot of wishful thinking.



Certainly, there is a place for mythology in this world, and it would be a pretty barren life indeed if we didn't have our share of story tellers who, with a gleam in their eye and a wink to the knowing, began by speaking the words, "Once upon a time..." Freemasonry is no different. Just as long as we understand what is myth and what is history, and the difference between them.

As I said, if you believe the Knights Templars saved the day at Bannockburn, built Rosslyn Chapel, and then morphed into the Freemasons, you should undoubtedly already be collecting logs and kindling for Robert Cooper's pyre. But if you are a seeker of the truth behind this curious and beautiful place, start with *The Rosslyn Hoax*. - *Review by Christopher L. Hodapp*



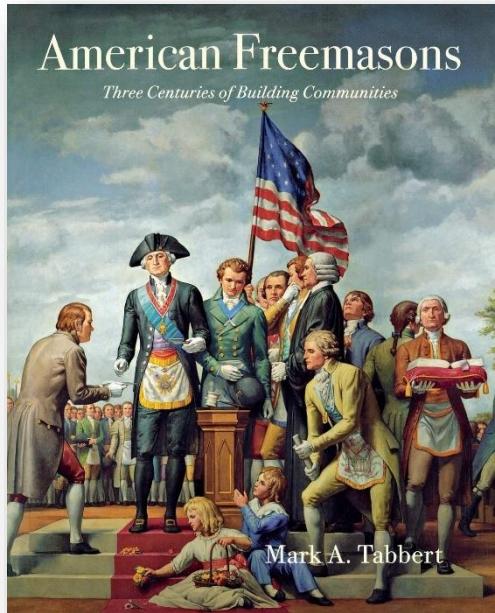
CRACKING THE FREEMASON'S CODE

Robert L.D. Cooper

Prompted by mounting public interest and provoked by controversial stories on the Freemason Society, respected historian and Scottish Freemason Robert L.D. Cooper offers a rare inside look at this secret brotherhood. As curator of the Scottish Masonic Museum and Library, the author has unparalleled access to material dictating the history and function of the Masons.

In *Cracking the Freemasons Code* Cooper explains the structure of the Masonic interculture, its connections to covert organizations, the identities of historical Masonic members (who include George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle), the locations of famous Masonic sites, and much more.

Readers will discover the true role Freemasonry has played throughout history, its purposes, the functions of its many members, and the way in which it has helped shape our modern society. Laying out the symbolism, beliefs, and ethos of a Mason, Cooper addresses the considerable amounts of controversy surrounding those practices. His book includes never-before-published images and seldom-seen documents to give readers a privileged view of this elect brotherhood.



AMERICAN FREEMASONS

A CENTURY OF BUILDING COMMUNITIES

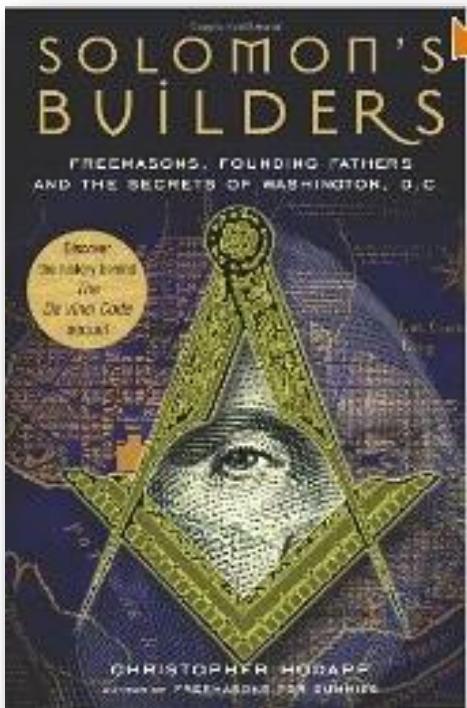
Mark A. Tabbert

The real history of Freemasonry is arguably more interesting than all the tales woven about it. From colonial times to the present, Masons have always been central to community life in America. Mark Tabbert tells their story in a fresh and arresting way. This informative and visually delightful book introduces us to a vital aspect of our nation's civic history.

Published in conjunction with the National Heritage Museum, this extravagantly illustrated volume offers an overview of Freemasonry's origins in seventeenth-

century Scotland and England before exploring its evolving role in American history, from the Revolution through the labor and civil rights movements, and into the twenty-first century. American Freemasons explores some of the causes for the rise and fall of membership in the fraternity and why it has attracted men in such large numbers for centuries. American Freemasons is the perfect introduction to understanding a society that, while shrouded in mystery, has played an integral role in the lives and communities of millions of Americans. Tabbert's thorough history is particularly useful to those seeking understanding how this 300-year-old fraternity continues today.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



SOLOMON'S BUILDERS FREEMASONS, FOUNDING FATHERS AND THE SECRETS OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

Christopher L. Hodapp

DID THE FREEMASONS CREATE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA?

Step back in time to the birth of a revolutionary new republic and discover how the utopian ideals of a visionary secret society laid the foundation for the most powerful nation on earth. Follow George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, and other Founding Fathers as they transform the democratic principles of their Masonic lodges into a radical new nation.

Solomon's Builders unravels history from myth as it takes you on a Freemason's tour of Washington, D.C. It reveals the evidence of Masonic influence during the construction of America and its new capital, including clues hidden in plain sight:

- Masonic connections to national monuments;
- Puzzling pentagrams and symbolism in city streets; and
- Washington's temples of the "Widow's Sons."

Solomon's Builders relates the true stories of our visionary Founders, and the fascinating meaning behind the cryptic codes, enigmatic symbols and intriguing architecture that was the basis for the sequel to *The Lost Symbol*, Dan Brown's sequel to the DaVinci Code.

OBSERVING THE CRAFT

THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

IN MASONIC LABOUR AND OBSERVANCE

Andrew Hammer

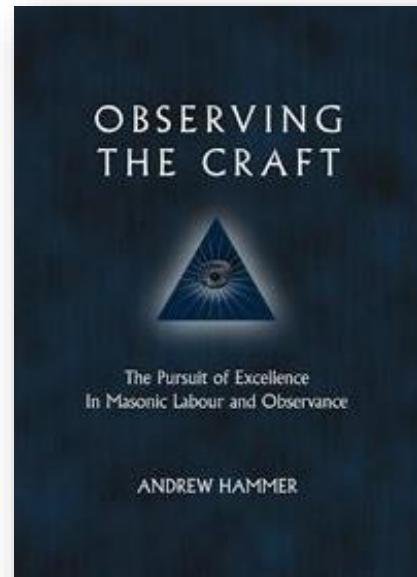
Written by Andrew Hammer, Past Master of one of the world's most historic Masonic lodges (Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22), Observing the Craft is a manifesto of sorts for the observant Mason, who seeks quality over quantity in every aspect of Freemasonry. It is a stringent argument for the Symbolic Lodge as being the whole of Masonry, calling for nothing but the utmost effort and commitment to be put into the operation of a Masonic lodge and its meetings.

REVIEW: There are many books about the history of Freemasonry, but Observing the Craft, by WB. Andrew Hammer falls within the much rarer category of books about the future of our Ancient Institution. Hammer explicitly affirms Masonry's role as "a philosophical society," a sacred initiatic process focused on the internal and diligent labor of each Brother to attain personal perfection. He points to the loss of this focus as the cause of the Craft's falling numbers and its inability to provide a truly enlightening experience for our contemporary Brethren.

Brother Hammer does not mince words; the first chapter states, "[If] for you Masonry is about simple brotherhood, good times and philanthropy, and should not be bothered with contemplating anything beyond what can be easily and completely understood by all... you have gone through all of Masonry in as much darkness as when you started... And this is the greatest danger facing the Craft today."

What Hammer does, however, is remind each of us that our Fraternity is a labor of which we are all blessed and privileged to be a part, and one that should be protected from lazy members and unworthy potential members. He advises that every attempt to make our Order more appealing to the profane world, every time we advance a man through the Degrees prior to him demonstrating that he has committed his mind and energies to self-improvement, every time we engage in any activity that diminishes the sacred confines of our Lodge room, we are doing a disservice to ourselves and abdicating the responsibility we adopted upon being Raised as Master Masons.

This book is not some tough-love pap; it is not a series of lectures telling contemporary Freemasons what they have done wrong. Instead, as the book states that Masonry "demands of its members the highest standards in all areas of its labours," Observing the Craft spells out a clearly defined series of steps wherein a Lodge can maintain "the insistence on observing and maintaining those standards." From Investigations, to Candidate preparation, to decorum within the Lodge room, to striving for excellence in Ritual, to sensory stimulation, to the Festive Board, Hammer's work provides an attainable



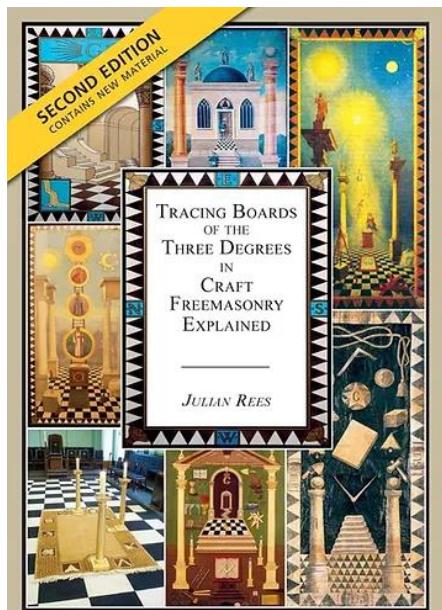
vision of how to surpass the limitations of the common man in order to meet the mandate for excellence implicit in Freemasonry. There is no room for laziness, nor is there berth given to Brothers who make excuses for sloppy Masonry. Instead, this book provides inspiration to the youngest Master Mason and the most seasoned Grand Lodge Officer alike, on how we as a Brotherhood can--and indeed, should--utilize the principles of Masonry to elevate man from his station in life, and usher in true and enduring Light.

There are elements of Hammer's book that are likely to cause offense. But with each potential affront comes nuanced and well-reasoned arguments why none of us who would call ourselves Masons should do anything but strive for excellence in our Masonic labors.

Observing the Craft is the single most important book on contemporary Masonry that this Brother has ever had the pleasure to read.

Review: An Attainable Vision for Excellence, 2011, Christopher E. Murphy.

TRACING BOARDS OF THE THREE DEGREES



Julian Rees

This work is Rees's 2019, second edition of his popular work, in which we see many of the previous tracing boards in his 2009 first edition, and discover new ones from around the world, some of which are nearly 300 centuries old. Rees includes tracing boards designed in the 21st century as well that display some aspect of Masonic allegory not included in previous boards.

Rees offers a detailed method of understanding and revealing the importance of the tracing boards used in the three degrees. In the fourth chapter he provides a brief overview of the history, development, and use of the boards in England, and addresses the many boards and Lodge Cloths from around the world. Outside of museums, there is likely no other place to find the illustrations and images of the collection that Rees offers in his second edition.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack

FREEMASONRY

A JOURNEY THROUGH RITUAL AND SYMBOL

W. Kirk MacNulty

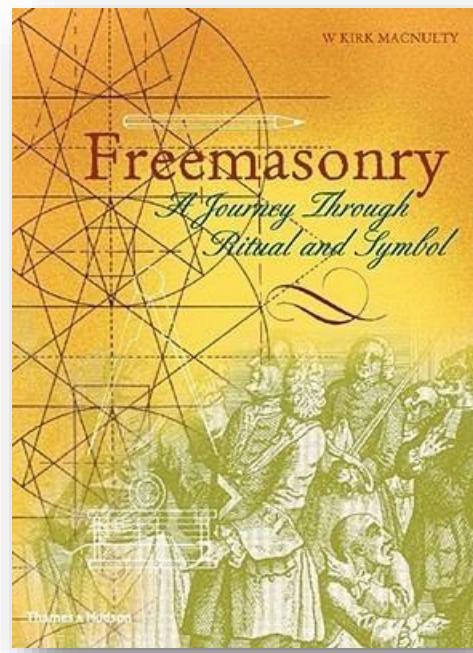
This 1991 book provides a well-written and clear meaning of Freemasonry.

MacNulty, who is well versed in the mystery religions and sacred architecture of classical times as were the founders of the Craft, offers a digest of what the symbolism in each of the degrees were actually intended to mean. Using 113 beautiful illustrations, this is not just another trivial writing about Masonic ritual and symbols.

He explains the significance of the three degrees and does not seek to reveal the arts, parts and points of the hidden mysteries of Freemasonry. He offers practical insight into the psychology of the degrees. There are no "secrets" revealed here.

MacNulty explains Freemasonry through the psychology of the 17th and 18th centuries and how the symbolism of the Craft relates to different psychological states in a person's development—an approach to Masonic education that has paved the way for later writers through today.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



FREEMASONRY

SYMBOLS SECRETS AND SIGNIFICANCE

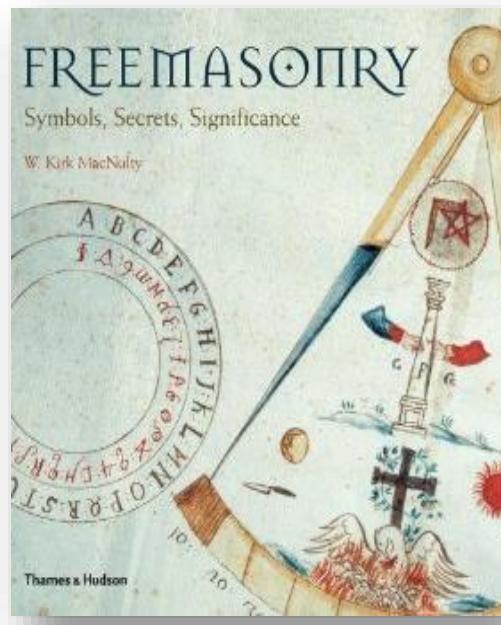
W. Kirk MacNulty

This book is MacNulty's second addition to the rich collection of symbols and lore that illuminate Freemasonry. He draws the world's collections of Masonic material, and including many objects never before published prior this work.

The reader is taken on a grand tour of Masonic history, structure and symbolism by way of lavish illustrations. Featuring over 380 images, it is worth browsing as a visual feast alone, while it also contains brief but informative text on several aspects of Freemasonry, complete with facts, explanations and anecdotes.¹ The seven sections cover topics that include legends of origin and the questions surrounding them, Grand Lodge Freemasonry and its development, conveniently subdivided into subtopics that cover its relationship with the Church, anti-masonic activity and issues of Regularity. The Craft and higher degrees are afforded separate sections, as is freemasonry's role in society.²

As with his previous work, MacNulty does not offer deep or hidden meanings behind the symbols he includes and leaves it up to the individual who has experienced initiation, passing and raising to formula his own interpretation.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



¹ Sasah Chaitow, Review of *Freemasonry: Symbols, Secrets, Significance*, Journal for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism, <https://journal.equinoxpub.com/JRFF/article/view/7964/9385>, accessed, November 2022.

² IBID.

DISCOVERING FREEMASONRY IN CONTEXT

THE LABORATORY OF MORAL SCIENCE

John W. Bizzack

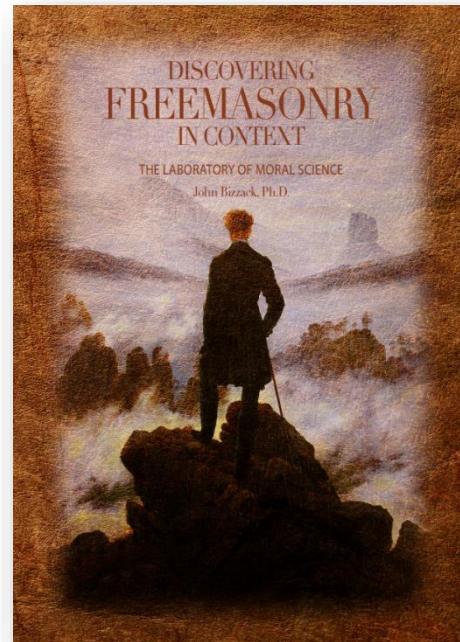
This book provides a welcome and enjoyable reminder of the importance of thinking in context and especially doing so when researching Freemasonry and history in general.

Written with an eye-opening and balanced style, it encourages us with many examples to put things in context and look with clear vision to validate our thinking – and not fall prey to evidence-troubled theories and the thinking they typically cause. Jam-packed with detailed information about all sorts of high-lights and sidelights of the Masonic fraternity's passage through time, from the earliest presumed roots on through the most recent times.

Encyclopedic in coverage, the book offers something for Masons as well as non-Mason – straightforward, direct, and informative. An important contribution to Masonic literature.

From the book: *"The greatest ignorance conceivable is when we reject something we know nothing about or know so little for certain about that we instantly adopt conclusions based on personal bias based on little or no valid evidence. Wrongheadedness about Freemasonry stems from ignorance, a lack of distinction between what is known and not known, and an inability to put legends in context."*

Review by: Jim Tresner, Grand Lodge of Oklahoma, Scottish Rite Journal



THE SECRETS OF MASONIC WASHINGTON

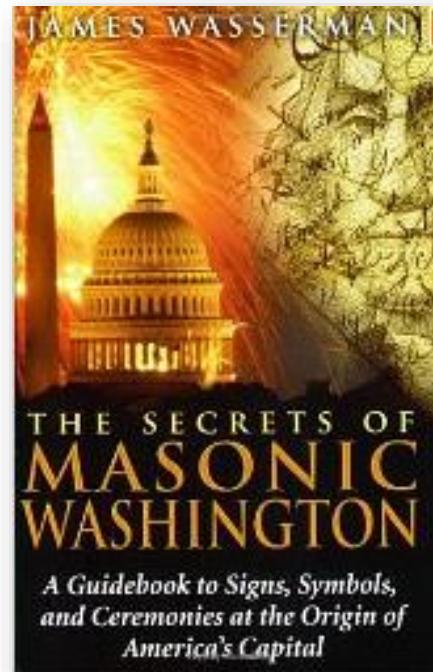
James Wasserman

A fully illustrated guide to the Masonic origins and present-day Masonic sites of Washington, D.C.

- Provides a walking tour of the Masonic sites and symbols of the city
- Explores the critical role of Freemasonry in the founding of the United States

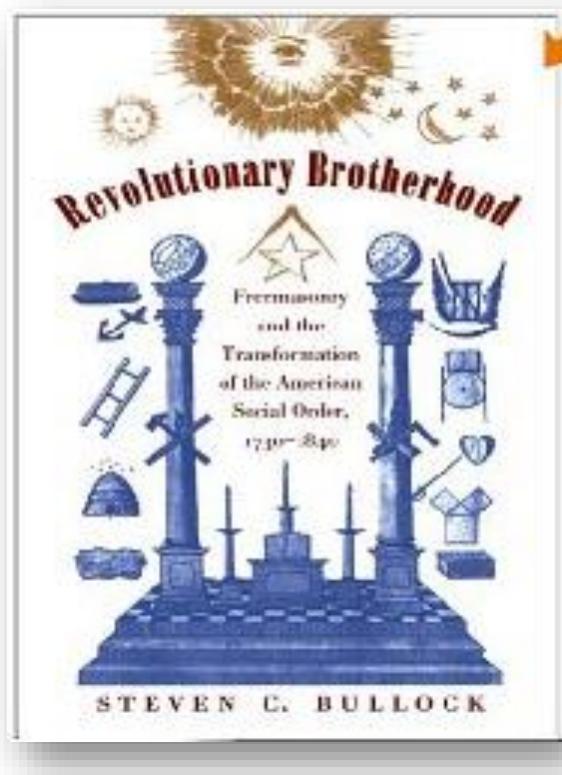
In this guide to the Masonic underpinnings of America's capital, James Wasserman addresses the esoteric symbols and the spiritual and visionary ideas that he believes lie hidden in the buildings, monuments, and physical layout of Washington, D.C. His walking tour of these Masonic sites includes both the expected and unexpected--from the Lincoln Memorial and the Capitol Building to the Federal Reserve complex, National Academy of Sciences, and the Library of Congress. Each location includes descriptions, interpretations, and explanations of the Masonic symbols and ritualistic meanings hidden within its structure, all illustrated with contemporary color and historic black-and-white photographs.

Wasserman offers his explanation for the purpose behind these symbols and Masonic designs and how all these monuments fit into the spiritual vision held by the founding fathers. He addresses the role that Freemasonry played in the 18th-century Enlightenment movement and shows how in the New World of America, free of monarchy and aristocracy, the ideas of the Enlightenment were in a position to flourish. The book will be welcomed by students of esoteric art and symbolism, admirers of American history, and devotees of Dan Brown novels and *National Treasure* movies.



REVOLUTIONARY BROTHERHOOD

Steven C. Bullock



Revolutionary Brotherhood is a major work of historical scholarship. In the first comprehensive history of a fraternity known to outsiders primarily for its secrecy and rituals, Bullock traces Freemasonry through its first century in America. He follows the order from its origins in Britain and its introduction into North America in the 1730s to its near-destruction by a massive anti-Masonic movement almost a century later and its subsequent reconfiguration into the brotherhood we know today.

With a membership that included Franklin, Washington, Paul Revere, and Andrew Jackson, Freemasonry is, of course, fascinating in its own right, but Bullock also places the movement at the center of the transformation of American society and culture from the colonial era to the rise of Jacksonian democracy.

This thoroughly researched account of the influence of Freemasonry on America's early development and the changes that were occurring in the fraternity during that time shows how the ideals of the Revolution became closely related to the transformed fraternity in America.

Using lodge records, members' reminiscences and correspondence, and local and Masonic histories, Bullock links Freemasonry with the changing ideals of early American society. His research is exhaustive, his argument learned and subtle, his prose clear, and his insights numerous.

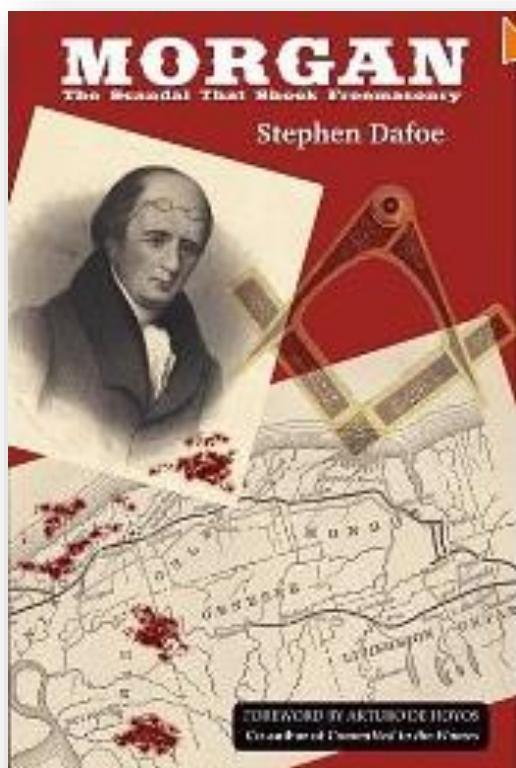
As a non-Mason, Bullock's approach to the Craft is very objective. The book is both fair and respectful.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack

MORGAN

THE SCANDAL THAT SHOOK FREEMASONRY

Stephen Dafoe



For more than a century, Freemasons have held fast to the belief that Masons did not murder William Morgan; rather they deported him to Canada. In "Morgan: The Scandal That Shook Freemasonry," author, journalist and Freemason Stephen Dafoe disassembles that myth while reassembling the trail of evidence that remains to uncover the facts behind this 183-year-old Masonic cold case.

Stephen Dafoe produces an honest and engaging look at the disappearance of William Morgan, an event that haunted Freemasons for years to come and perhaps continues to do so today. His excellent narrative style offers a readable and intriguing mystery. The book is, however, not a work of fiction. It is backed profusely with factual documentation given in the book, yet in a fashion so as not to disrupt the enjoyment of the story. Dafoe's suppositions are rare. His conclusions on what possibly occurred to Morgan are well-reasoned in light of the facts and face up to

possibilities some may find uncomfortable.

Truth is more important than comfort for Dafoe, which makes this a very readable and enjoyable examination of the available facts. A great treatment of this controversial subject. -

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack

NOTE: See page 44 for John W. Bizzack's, *Age of Unreason: Dissecting the Infancy of the Morgan Affair and Its Aftermath* another work that explores the Morgan Affair from a different perspective.

ALBERT PIKE

THE MAN BEHIND THE MONUMENT

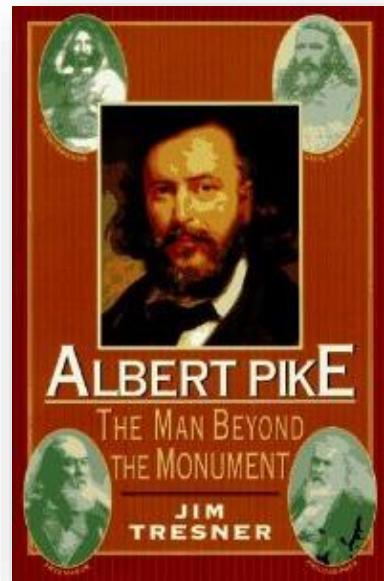
James Tresner

As the author points out, there are Masons who are reluctant to approach the subject of Albert Pike. Many find that his writings, written in the wordy Victorian style of the 19th century, are beyond their comprehension. As a result, many Mason are overwhelmed by Pike's writings and have not approached his work that is surrounded by so much mystery.

Tresner shows that Pike is indeed approachable and keeps his work focused on the humanity of Pike and his contributions. Pike was a lawyer, general during the Civil War, journalist, author, explorer, a musician and an early advocate of Native American rights.

Unlike most biographies, which start at the subject's birth and chronologically list his achievements until death, Tresner devotes each chapter to a separate aspect of Pike's life. There is a chapter devoted to his relationship with the American Indians, one devoted to his lifelong pursuit of knowledge in Freemasonry, even one about his collection of pipes.

- Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



A PILGRIM'S PATH

John J. Robinson

There are other works which are much longer and go into much more detail, but page for page this is probably one of the best books written, about or for, Masons.

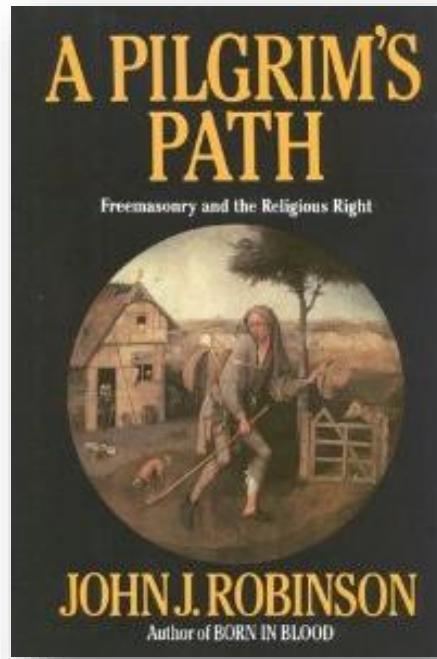
Furthermore, it would be a perfect read for any man about to join the Brotherhood; and his family, especially his wife, should read it as soon as he is finished. John Robinson writes in a style that not only can be understood by someone who has never been exposed to Masonry, but it also holds the total interest of someone who has been a Mason for years and who grew up going to Lodge functions.

Robinson spends the first section of the book taking on the Anti-Masons of the world. He has, without a doubt spent a lot of time making a study of Anti-Masonic writings for he is able to take their arguments one at a time and expose the deception and outright lies on which they make a living. For example, Pat Robertson, James Holly, and others like them take a document credited to Albert Pike which makes it appear like Pike, if not all Masons do indeed worship Lucifer. This document was in fact written by a man named Leo Taxil, who would later freely admit he made the whole thing up and that Pike had nothing to do with it. Taxil, in fact, took great delight in telling people how he had pulled the wool over their eyes and had made a fortune in so doing. Robertson, in his book, *A New World Order*, attributes this document to Pike. Either he didn't research his work too well or he simply didn't care about the truth.

Finally, Robinson delivers several great ideas to help Masonry not only survive but grow. Several of the mistaken ideas he mentions that he has heard from Masons themselves I have heard also. As he points out, to exclude your family from your Masonic life is to invite problems. Masons everywhere should listen to his advice and Masonry can't help but benefit.

In short, if you are curious about Masonry or have already been given a bad impression of Masonry but still have an open mind, read this book.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack

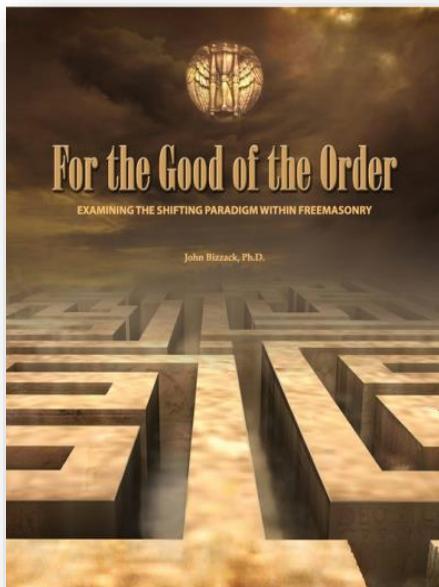
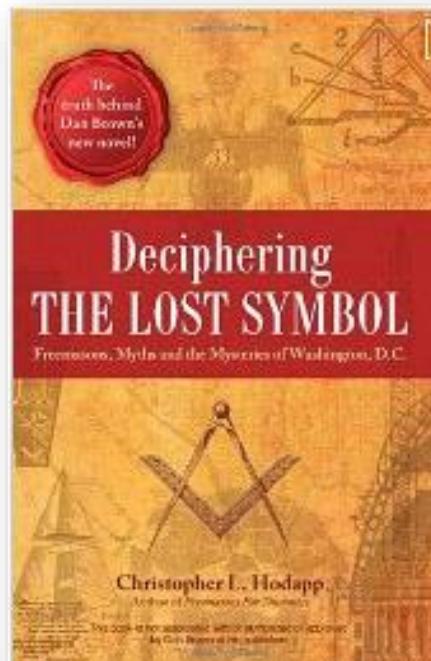


DECIPHERING THE LOST SYMBOL

DISCOVER THE SECRETE BROTHERHOOD BEHIND DAN BROWN'S THE LOST SYMBOL

Christopher Hodapp

The influence of Freemasons on the founding of Washington, D.C., is evident throughout the city's buildings, statues, and monuments--but it's written in coded symbols that few people understand. Dan Brown's thriller sends the fictional symbologist detective, Robert Langdon through the capital to unravel its supposed "Masonic secrets." In *Deciphering The Lost Symbol*, Chris Hodapp compares each clue and plot twist in Brown's story to the true facts and places in context what Brown does not.



FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER EXAMINING THE SHIFTING PARADIGM WITHIN FREEMASONRY

John W. Bizzack

What has transpired in North American Freemasonry since the 1960s has been influenced by not only factors external to the institution, but less obvious internal ones as well. To better understand where the Craft has been, and where it will likely be in the future, requires a balanced examination in context, a context wherein Freemasonry is viewed as a whole, not in fragments.

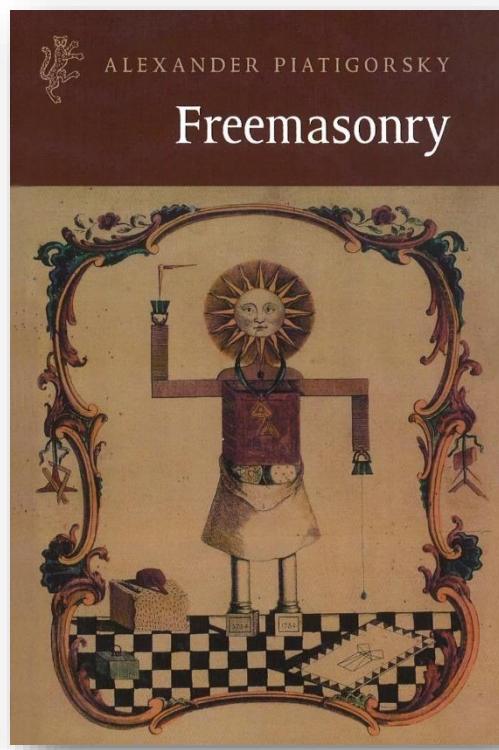
For the Good of the Order examines long-standing attitude regarding membership decline and lack of engagement by men who enter the West Gate with initial enthusiasm, but soon find their zeal for active involvement in the Fraternity waning. This

panoramic view and examination illustrates that much of what the institution faces today, and in the future, regarding membership decline, is much more likely to be effectively addressed by what can be seen slowly emerging in Masonry today around the country: a return to past traditions and practicing traditional Freemasonry in our lodges.

FREEMASONRY

Alexander Piatigorsky

Cited as "a man who was widely considered to be one of the more significant thinkers of the age," Piatigorsky offers this study considering the institution of Freemasonry from the point of view of both Masons and their critics, as well as from the author's own.³



King Solomon.

Freemasonry, Piatigorsky argues, is a survivor, whose defining characteristics – “political non-involvement, social abstractedness, religious vagueness and ideological unseriousness” – have existed almost unchanged since the beginning of the 18th century, quietly defying history and the march of time.” *Review by John W. Bizzack*

Piatigorsky looks at Freemasonry as "phenomenon: on the one hand he analyzes it as an object of thought, what do Masons think of Masonry and themselves and what do others think; and on the other hand, he examines Masonry as an object in itself, the Lodges, rituals, signs, and symbols, their habits, language, and speeches.

In the first section, it gives an outline of Masonic history, from the foundation of the Grand Lodge in Covent Garden in 1717 through its major role in Enlightenment Europe and the American War of Independence, its many tribulations, and schisms in the 19th century to the present day.

The book looks at one of the main sources of Masonic history, Anderson's "Constitutions," which documents Masonic practice and the Masons' mythical history back to Hiram Abiff, and the reign of

³ Parfitt, Tudor (5 January 2010). "Alexander Piatigorsky obituary". *The Guardian*.

ISLAND FREEMASONRY

THE FINAL BASTION OF THE OBSERVANT LODGE

John W. Bizzack

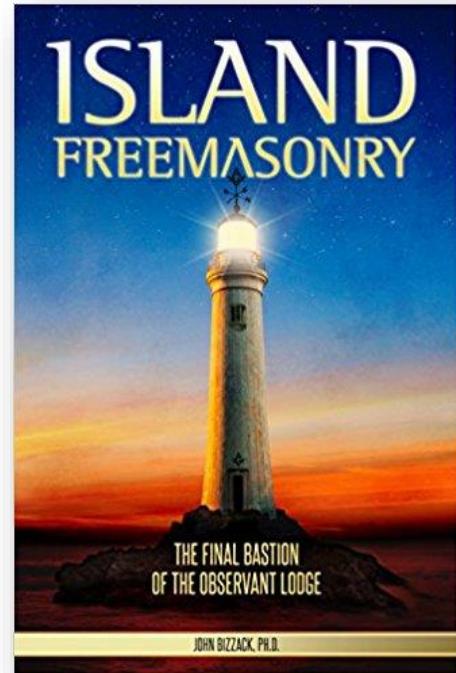
Once a cornerstone of civil society, in the last one hundred years American Freemasonry subsided in influence, popularity, and relevance. Membership numbers steadily declined for the last sixty-years, resulting in nearly empty lodge rooms and shuttered temples across the nation.

Why? What changed?

The rush to expand Freemasonry without the essential infrastructure to support and pass on its aim, purpose and heritage is found at the root of the reason mainstream American Masonry continues to decline. From Anderson's Constitutions to the Morgan Affair to the Post-War Boom in membership, John Bizzack's latest book *Island Freemasonry: The Final Bastion of the Observant Lodge* examine the evolution of American Freemasonry from its arrival in colonial times to the twenty-first century. In this groundbreaking new study, Bizzack traces the roots of Masonry's decline by charting how the American mainstream Freemasonry lost its way, departing from the original design and blueprint in a never-ending quest for numbers.

Through meticulous and thoroughly documented scholarship, the author documents the formation and spread of the Order in North America and charts its early successes until the cataclysm: the Morgan Affair, after which everything changed. In the period that follows, nothing escapes Bizzack's gaze as he explores social evolution, grand lodge policies and local lodge practices which contributed to the fraternity's reversals. But beyond documenting the ills suffered by the American Freemasonry, Bizzack reveals the prescription for its recovery: a return to the core values of the order emphasizing proper instruction, education, and preparation of leadership.

Review by Michael A. Halloran, Editor, PGM, Kansas



OPERATIVE FREEMASONRY

A MANUAL FOR RESTORING LIGHT AND VITALITY TO THE FRATERNITY

Kirk C. White

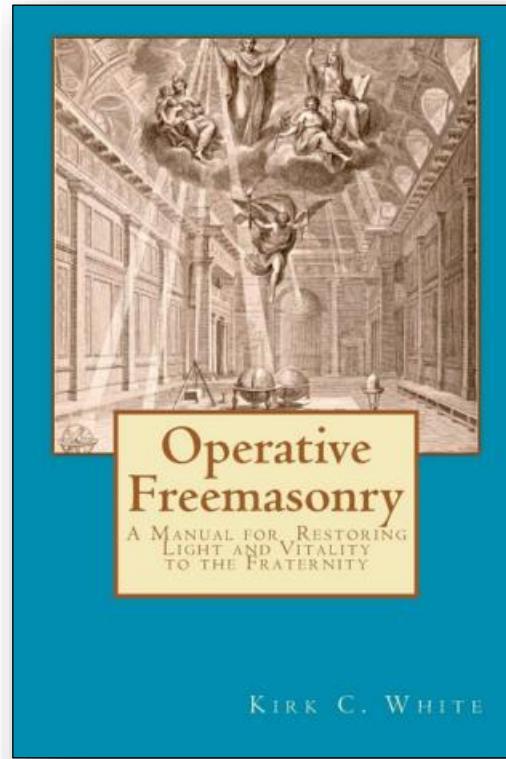
By providing detailed information and advice often overlooked or forgotten on how Freemasonry "works," this book explores how the fraternity can actually "make good men better" and keep them active in our lodges and chapters.

Areas covered include:

- Light Defined - Secrets and Mysteries
- Prospective Freemasons: how to find them
- Framing the Sacred: Preparation for Lodge
- Openings and Closings
- Initiation: what it is and how it works
- Mentorship: how to keep our brothers active
- Daily Freemasonry.

This book is indeed a resource for every Mason who seeks to bring Light and Vitality back to his lodge and the fraternity.

Review by Dan M. Kemble



THE RENAISSANCE OF FREEMASONRY

THE REVIVAL OF SPECULATIVE MASONRY IN MODERN AMERICA

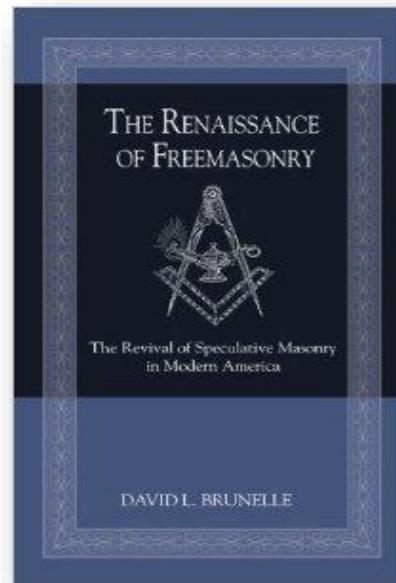
David L. Brunelle

Books like this will change Freemasonry permanently for the better. When it comes to Masonic books, bigger isn't always better. The Renaissance of Freemasonry packs a lot of "thought" into a pocket-sized volume suitable for mass distribution to Masonic candidates, new Master Masons and Lodge Officers alike. This book should be mandatory reading for all Masons.

The topics covered are clearly presented and cause immediate reflection. This book allows the individual Mason to decipher how he might be a part of the current Masonic "renaissance" of which the author speaks. The content even spills over into practical application in one's personal life. Leaders of other fraternal groups will also find value in reading this book.

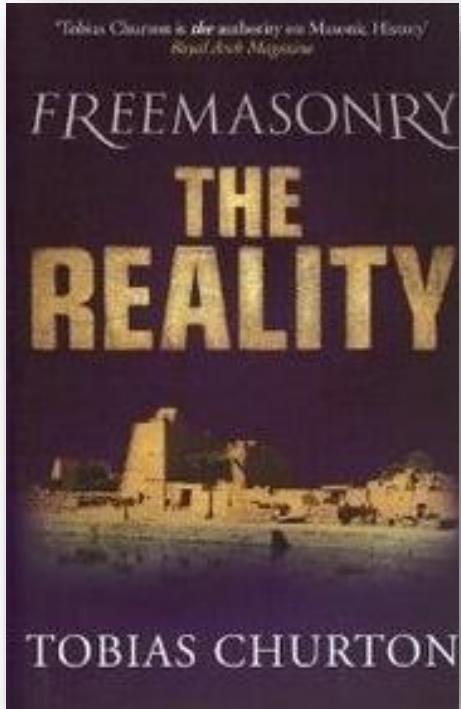
I get approached by a lot of young men interested in learning more about Masonry; I will give copies of this digestible reference to each person that approaches me. Rather than a historical dialog about what Masonry has been, this is an insightful and introspective work on what Masonry is now, and is becoming. Aspiring seekers that are coming to Masonry's door express desire for meaning, and that is what the symbolism and allegory of Masonry's teaching is meant to provide. Mr. Brunelle does a good job addressing that desire; his work is a beneficial for current Masons, line officers, and those who are looking to petition a Lodge alike.

Review by Andrew Hammer



FREEMASONRY - THE REALITY

Tobias Churton



Churton is not just a Freemason writing on the fraternity; he is also a scholar and professor at Exeter University, and Lecturer in Freemasonry and Rosicrucians at the Center for the Study of Western Esotericism. Churton's published works span the breadth of western mystery traditions, encompassing the early Gnostics, Rosicrucian's, and Freemasons, which pull together many of the offshoots and ideas that went into the composition of the groups today. Churton's work however is less about dazzling aggrandizement of a mysterious past, focusing instead on the known and with a meticulous hand, reconstructing the holes of the fraternity's formation.

In *Freemasonry – The Reality*, Churton leaves no stone unturned, and with his meticulous hand reconstructs the modern-day mystery tradition from its most extreme foundational stories buried in the footnotes of history. He follows each loose thread back into the whole garment of the present-day craft. In this work he refuses to hold back any punches in his analysis that our

present manifestation of the craft is every bit a result of our manufactured past, from the clever arrangement of James Anderson and the constitutions of 1723 and the marrying of the “Speculative” with the “Operative” tracing back the foundation of Masonry’s earliest of ideas to the early Renaissance work of author Pico Mirandola and the Oration on the Dignity of Man.

One aspect that stands out in crisp detail is the way in which Churton pulls together several seemingly unrelated bits of history, and finds their common connection that brings them into a coherent theme. From early meeting notes, names on a register, royal archives on the guilds, and diary mentions, each of these fragments become the framework by which he assembles the whole work. By digging deep into symbols that, at one time, held great significance, he re-illuminates them so as to demystify and put them back into a proper perspective.

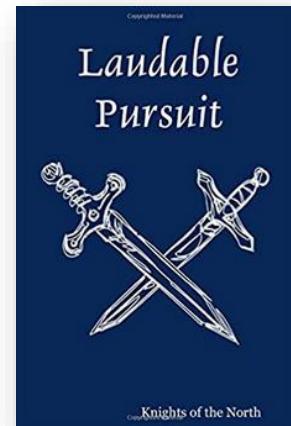
Review by John W. Bizzack

LAUDABLE PURSUIT

A 21ST CENTURY RESPONSE TO DWIGHT SMITH

Knights of the North

Laudable Pursuit was written in 2005 and distributed in booklet format by a group known as The Knights of the North. In early 2004, an extended paper was widely disseminated anonymously in Masonic chat rooms, forums, and elsewhere online. Entitled *Laudable Pursuit* and attributed to an unidentified collection of more than a dozen authors calling themselves the "Knights of the North," the paper became both notorious and praised.⁴ The Knights also contributed 26 original essays to the Masonic Dictionary website at masonicdictionary.com, on a broad array of topics, from pleas for rescuing the fraternity's significant, endangered temple buildings, to Masonic jurisprudence.



Laudable Pursuit is forty-two page response to two publications written by Dwight Smith, past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Indiana in the early 1960s (*Whither Are We Traveling*, and *Why This Confusion at the Temple*). Smith warned the Masonic fraternity of the direction it was headed but the past six decades show that much of the Fraternity has successfully failed to heed his clarion call.

As Christopher Hodapp wrote: "It's hard to believe that this has been out for a dozen years now, and yet plenty of Masons have still never run across it before." While the booklet remains available as a freely circulated download online at on various web sites (including knightsofthenorth.com) a paperback booklet version is also available for convenient reading.

As Hodapp notes, "The work holds up today because, sadly, so many items discussed in it have not changed."⁵ He goes on to say that the work was "never thought to be a silver bullet for lodge problems", but rather a starting point for Masons to examine their lodge and find answers of their own to create a better experience for their members.

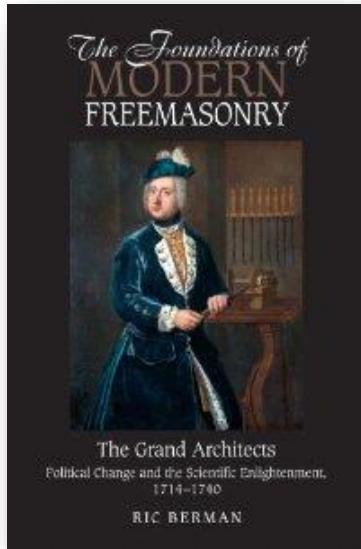
It is rare to find a Masonic book that speaks with such directness and some may find it criticisms too harsh. Regardless, *Laudable Pursuit* has caught the hearts of serious-minded Masons and has become the blueprint for many Lodges in their rejuvenation efforts.

Review by John W. Bizzack

NOTE: See *Whither Are We Traveling?* and *Why This Confusion At The Temple* in this edition.

⁴ From "Editorial Reviews," Amazon.

⁵ Christopher Hodapp, *Freemasons for Dummies*, July 07, 2016, "Laudable Pursuit," <https://freemasonsfordummies.blogspot.com/2016/07/laudable-pursuit.html>, accessed July 2016.



THE FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN FREEMASONRY

Ric Berman

The transformation of English Freemasonry after the foundation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717 was especially marked by the (largely nominal) leadership of young aristocrats who transformed Freemasonry into an important component of the economic, scientific, social, and political changes of the 18th century.

Freemasonry rapidly became an important facet of the upper reaches of English society, and Berman traces the role these aristocratic architects played in the formation of what quickly became the most prominent and socially elite fraternal order of the modern era.

There were important connections between Freemasonry and the judiciary, the Royal Society, and other learned and professional societies. Berman provides a useful introduction to these

key figures, as well as a series of valuable appendixes, giving readers the Grand Officers of the Grand Lodge of England, excerpts from the Masonic 1723 Constitutions, a list of the various military lodges, and an inventory of the Masonic membership of selected professional societies. A valuable work for serious Masonic historians.

Review by John W. Bizzack

TAKING ISSUE

John W. Bizzack

Taking Issue is a collection of refreshingly candid commentaries examining many issues relative to the state and practices of Freemasonry in North America today. The author presents clear and convincing arguments genuinely advancing the discussion of these issues in context, characterizing the voice of those Masons who seek the fraternity to

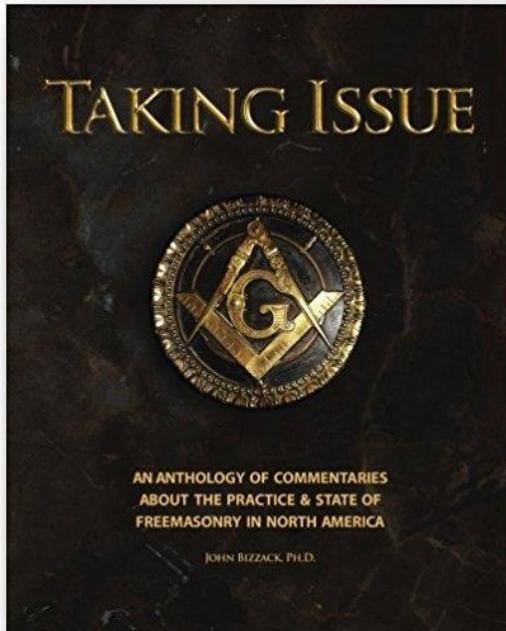


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be more than ordinary. These timely commentaries and observations cut to the heart of various topics validating with clarity how Freemasonry is intended for practice as a complete system. Collectively, these essays affirm

in no uncertain terms, that Freemasonry is meant to be an educational institution with the purpose of improving the minds and effectiveness of its members through its practices. This compendium of straightforward and introspective writings not only considered the causes for today's trends, but offers solid evidence in preparation to act on remedies. Commentaries, particularly those offering critical thinking and rhetorical reasoning can often validate what we have thought or are thinking. Sometimes they provoke us to face our views and weigh them against those presented. In essence: they cause us to think beyond what we sometimes just accept.

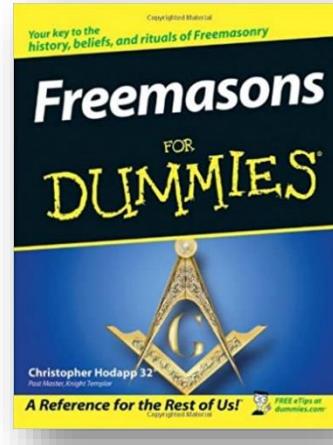
Review by Dan M. Kemble

FREEMASONS FOR DUMMIES

Christopher L. Hodapp

Do not allow the title of the book dissuade you from reading. Considered by many to be the best general contemporary book on Freemasonry for any Mason or non-Mason, *Freemasons For Dummies* is the internationally best-selling introduction to the Masons, the oldest and largest "secret society" in the world. Written in typical "For Dummies" format, this book is full of information, is easy to follow and, as you read, you simply want to read more, which makes it an excellent primer.

Chris Hodapp's balanced, eye-opening guide demystifies Freemasonry, explaining everything from its elaborate rituals and cryptic rites, to its curious symbols and their meanings as you learn what goes on in a Masonic meeting. You will understand the true purposes of Masonic "secrecy" and philosophy and read about notable men throughout history who were also Masons, and discover related organizations like the Knights Templar, the Scottish Order of the Eastern Star, and the Shriners. Explore the controversies and conspiracy theories that swirl around Freemasonry and changes coming to the Craft.



Rite,

Order of the Eastern Star, and the Shriners. Explore the controversies and conspiracy theories that swirl

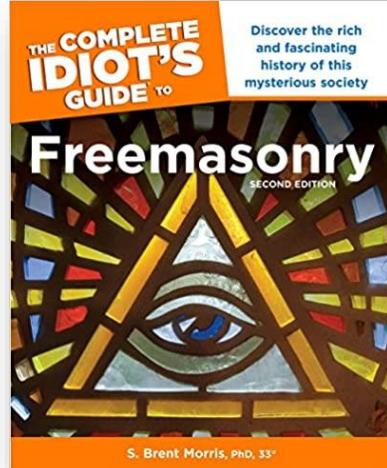
Review by John W. Bizzack

THE COMPLETE IDIOTS GUIDE TO FREEMASONRY

DISCOVER THE RICH AND FASCINATING HISTORY OF THIS MYSTERIOUS SOCIETY

S. Brent Morris

Dr. Morris outlines many details about the fraternity in very clear and concise terms. New members will find a better understanding of the organization. Veteran members can still benefit from this book by seeing information provided in a new light.



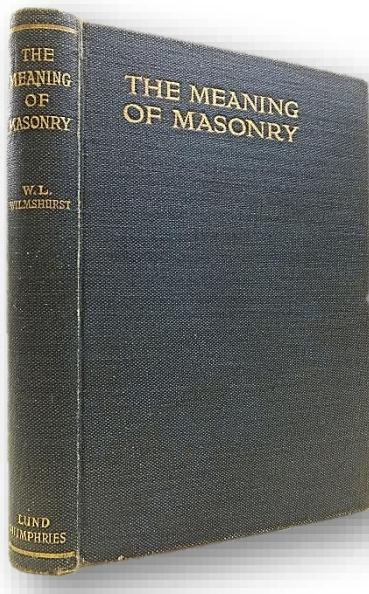
The book includes a field guide to Masonic symbols and regalia, with photos and explanations of significance, the history behind Masonic philanthropic efforts and youth groups, a history of African American Freemasonry and the role of women in Masonic organizations, to name only a few areas.

As with Hodapp's *Freemasons for Dummies*, this is a fact-filled book. Morris's work is well-written, thorough, and comprehensive book by an author who, like Hodapp, knows what he is talking about.

Review by John W. Bizzack

THE MEANING OF MASONRY

W.L. Wilmshurst



Freemasonry has had many great scholars who devoted their time and talents to the philosophical exposition of the character of the Craft, the meaning of Craft symbols and the religious aspects of the Fraternity. *The Meaning of Masonry* is a coherent spiritual discourse of Freemasonry that is an important addition to the library of any non-casual Masons seeking

Walter Leslie Wilmshurst (1867-1939) was a prominent British Freemason and esoteric philosopher.

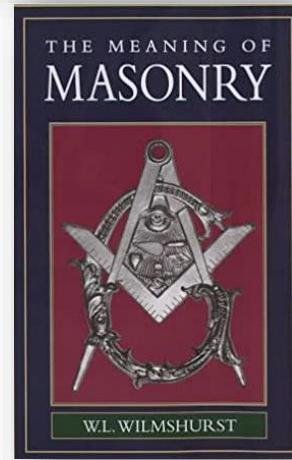
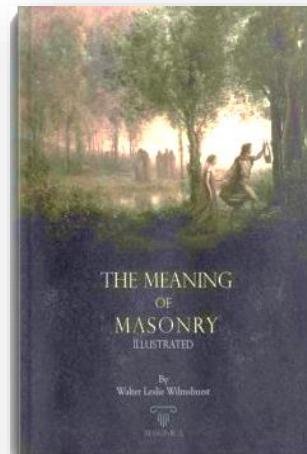
A masterful lecturer, he spoke and wrote frequently on the inner meaning of

Masonic ritual and symbolism. *The Meaning of Masonry* (1922) implores the reader to learn to see in Freemasonry something more than a parochial system enjoining elementary morality, performing perfunctory and (many insignificant rites) serving as an agreeable accessory to social life. The greater system of spiritual doctrine contained in the rituals of the three degrees is strongly emphasized.

Wilmshurst wrote *The Meaning of Masonry* with a view toward promoting a deeper understanding of the Fraternity at a time when the fraternity and its members were experiencing unbridled expansion of members with less adequate instruction. An early pioneer of Masonic restoration, he outlines not only a style of personal contemplation of Freemasonry, but also ways in which Lodges can become more attuned to the historical speculative intent of the Craft.

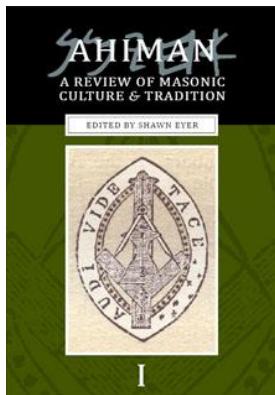
Original copies of this work are rare but available as are numerous reprints with various cover designs.

Review by John W. Bizzack



AHIMAN: A REVIEW OF MASONIC CULTURE & TRADITION, VOLUME I

Shawn Eyer



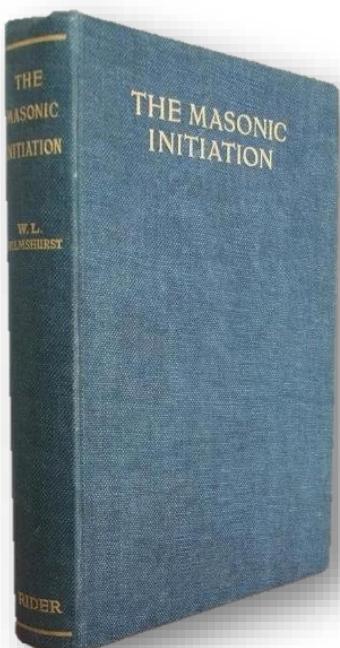
Ahiman is an anthology of Masonic writing, offering a serious exploration of the rich initiatic traditions of Freemasonry. Edited by Masonic scholar Shawn Eyer, Ahiman is dedicated to stimulating scholarship, penetrating interpretation and inspiring creative expressions focused upon the history, rituals, symbolism, iconography, and philosophy of Freemasonry. Carefully researched and lavishly produced, each edition of Ahiman offers important material of interest to Freemasons and other students of Western esoteric traditions.

THE MASONIC INITIATION

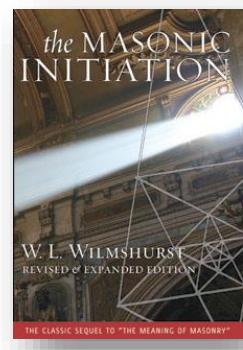
W.L. Wilmshurst

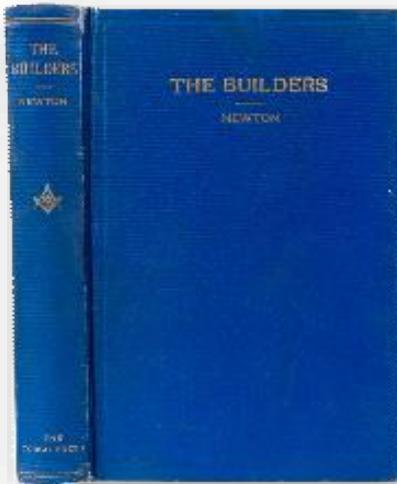
Annotated by Shawn Eyer

In this powerful sequel to his most enduring classic, *The Meaning of Masonry*, W.L. Wilmshurst explores the profound depths of Masonic ritual as a contemplative art and offers his vision of the future of the Order. This new edition, revised and re-set in clear, modern type, has been enriched with extensive notes expanding on Wilmshurst's points, elucidating his sources, and explaining the differences between American and British Freemasonry. Masonic researcher Tony Baker calls Wilmshurst's work "a constant source of instruction and assistance to those who are seeking for that which was lost."



The Masonic Initiation is his most advanced expression, and one that will continue to delight students of Freemasonry. "A new look at a timeless classic which has induced many generations of Masons to feel that, when they are in the sacred space of lodge, they are in the presence of a mystery that goes to the root of their own being."—Robert G. Davis. Numerous reprints of this work are available—Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



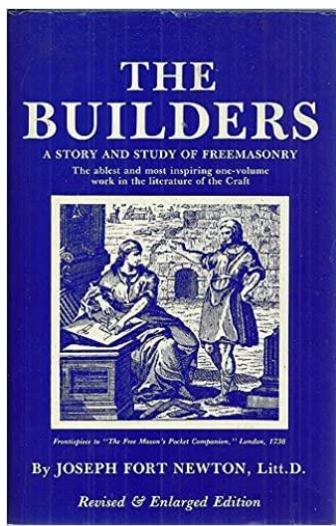


THE BUILDERS

A STORY AND STUDY FREEMASONRY

Joseph Fort Newton

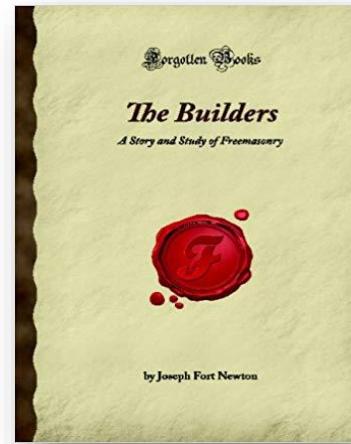
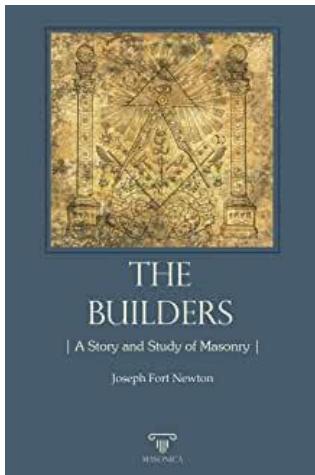
The Builders, first published in 1915, has been regarded as an outstanding classic in Masonic literature. Joseph Fort Newton stands among the few Masonic authors of the early 1900s who qualifies as a Masonic scholar. *The Builders* has been translated into six languages and has been reprinted by over a dozen publishers.



The first part covers the early history of Freemasonry: Its tradition, mythology, and symbolism. The second is the story of the Order of builders through the centuries from the building of King Solomon's Temple. The final part is a statement and exposition of the faith of Masonry. Bibliography, Index, Illustrated Table of Contents: Publisher's Preface; The Anteroom; Prophecy; The Foundations; The Working Tools; The Drama Of Faith; The Secret Doctrine; The Collegia; History; Free-masons; Fellowcrafts; Accepted Masons; Grand Lodge Of England; Universal Masonry; Interpretation; What Is Masonry; The Masonic Philosophy; The Spirit Of Masonry; Bibliography; Endnotes.

Original copies are rare but available and reprints of this work bear a variety of covers.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



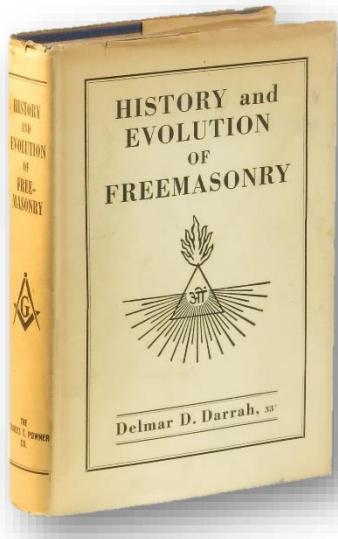
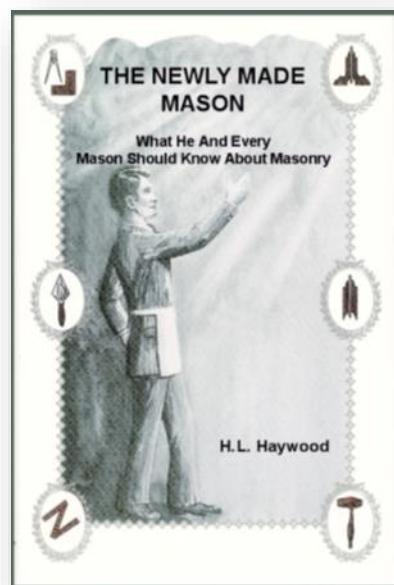
THE NEWLY MADE MASON

What He & Every Mason Should Know About Masonry

H.L. Haywood

This is an outstanding Masonic book for the new or experienced Mason. Haywood's work is chock full of Masonic facts for all, and covers the origin, history, philosophy, symbolism, organization, and operation of the Order. This book is divided into 5 parts: Operative Freemasonry: Beginning from 1330 to 1717 A.D. Transition from Operative to Speculative Masonry. The First Grand Lodge of "Ancient" Freemasonry. The Petition: The Origin of Petition, Ceremonies and Rites. How Masons are made. The Great Symbols: The Lodge, The Working Tools, The Master, The Lights, The Letter "G", The Ruffians, The Search, and many more Masonic symbols. Freemasonry Symbols are explained in detail in this chapter. Religion and Masonry: Masonic Philosophy, Masonic Relief, Masonic Etiquette, Masonic Penalties (symbolic), Masonic Clothing. Visiting Masons: Books, Records, Monitors - early and present day, Famous Masons and What Masonry Meant to Them, The Individual Masonic Lodge, The Masonic community, Freemasonry's Place in the World, and more.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



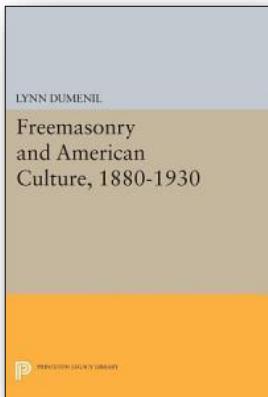
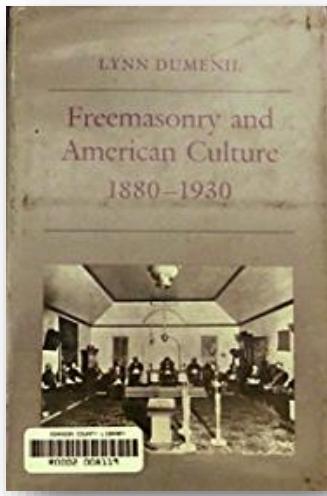
THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF AMERICAN FREEMASONRY

Delmar D. Darrah

Written in 1915, *The History and Evolution of Freemasonry* traces the development of the Craft from its earliest emergence through the early years of the Twentieth Century. Darrah uses a fact-based approach to the history of the Fraternity seldom found among Masonic historians, particularly those of his era. He served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois in 1912-1913. Perhaps one of the most significant aspects of Darrah's work is his consistent theme regarding the evolution of Freemasonry over the centuries. He painstakingly points out the incongruities between common practices in the 18th Century, and those

present in the early years of the 20th Century. As WB Dan M. Kemble writes in his review appearing on the William O. Ware Lodge of Research website, “Delmar D. Darrah’s *The History and Evolution of Freemasonry* is a gem that should be much better known than it is.”

Review by Dan. M. Kemble



FREEMASONRY AND AMERICAN CULTURE

1880-1930

Lynn Dumenil

The fraternity has been institutionally disinclined to engage in any deep introspection as to the path it has taken over its nearly three centuries on the American Continent. If you want evidence

about how, during the period known as “The Golden Years of Fraternalism,” American Freemasonry all but completely shed its

spiritual and contemplative nature and adopted an activist persona intent on performing community improvement projects and “having fun,” then Dumenil, a professor of American history will provide you that proof in her 1984 research. Her writing is among the first instances of academia taking notice of Freemasonry and making it the subject of serious study. Echoing Albert Pike, Dr. Dumenil asserts that Freemasonry is, in part, a victim of its own success. As its membership grew, its ability to claim to be an exclusive organization declined. No longer being perceived as exclusive, membership in its ranks became less attractive. Her analysis reveals a fraternal society that, in its effort to adapt to a changing society, became unmoored from its founding principles. American Freemasonry has no hope of addressing its future successfully until it comes to a thorough understanding of its past. Lynn Dumenil’s *Freemasonry and American Culture 1880 to 1930* is an important key to gaining such an understanding.

Freemasonry and American Culture 1880 –1930, although out of print, remains available from online booksellers, both in its original version and in print-on-demand editions.

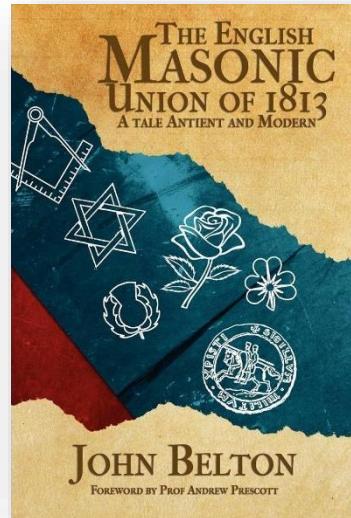
Review by Dan. M. Kemble

THE ENGLISH MASONIC UNION OF 1813

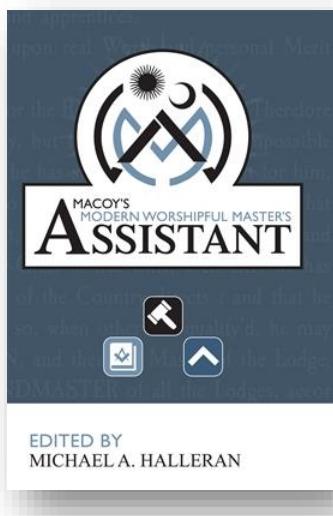
A TALE OF ANCIENTS AND MODERNS

John Bolton

The bringing together of the Antients and Moderns to form the United Grand Lodge of England in 1813 was a tricky matter. How all this came about is not just an English tale but an Irish and Scots one as well. Complexities concerning "union" included what to do about other Masonic orders, especially the Royal Arch and the Knights Templar. For the first time ever, this account provides a birds-eye view of the issues and personalities behind one of the big events of Masonic history still affecting us today. "In this pioneering and stimulating book, Belton tells with verve and enthusiasm the story behind the events which led up to the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England in 1813. Providing completely new perspectives on this key event in the history of British Freemasonry.



Review by Prof Andrew Prescott, Kings College London



MACOY'S MODERN WORSHIPFUL MASTER'S ASSISTANT

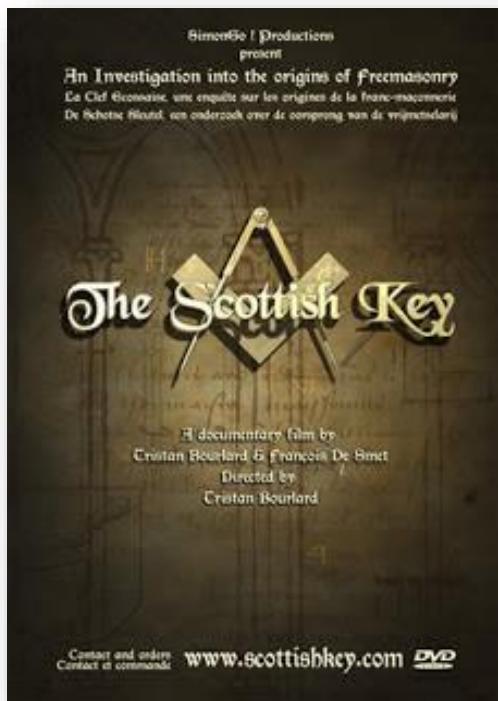
Edited by Michael A. Halleran

In 1885, Robert Macoy wrote the *Worshipful Master's Assistant*, the first-ever handbook for Masonic lodge officers, and it has remained continuously in print since its original release.

Michael Halleran retains the organizational and editorial style of Macoy's classic while presenting the twenty-first century lodge officer with practical and useful advice on lodge administration, the powers, prerogatives and responsibilities of the Master, subordinate officers' duties, lodge bylaws and committees, and

Masonic law, all explained through comparative examples from grand jurisdictions across North America. This handbook is an important study and exceptional resource for members ascending to the East.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



THE SCOTTISH KEY (DVD)

A DVD on the origins of Freemasonry. Written by Belgian researchers Tristan Bourlard and François De Smet, The Scottish Key assembles quite a lineup of Masonic scholars in its interviews: Andrew Prescott, Keith Moore, Roger Dachez, Jessica Harland-Jacobs, David Stevenson, Ewan Rutherford, John Hamill and Robert L.D. Cooper all appear in the film.

A glance through the Gallery section of the site shows a tantalizing selection of period reenactments and attention to detail, with images about the Craft you haven't seen a thousand times.

Review by Christopher L. Hodapp

The Scottish Key. An Investigation into the Origins of Freemasonry. An enigmatic and mysterious topic, subject to allegations and fantasies of all sorts. Spread across the globe, this discrete and mysterious association has been a source of curiosity, fascination and suspicion for over 300 years. Today Freemasonry gathers several millions of people throughout the world.

Protected from the outside world, from which they isolate themselves for the length of an evening, freemasons meet in lodges and there develop a peculiar spirituality. How was this movement born? Are its origins veiled in secrecy? Even amidst its own members, few know the actual beginnings of Freemasonry. The lodges themselves have forgotten from whence they came.

For the first time, based on the most recent findings, a critical documentary investigates the question of the origins of Freemasonry. What are its links with the Knights Templar? Are they the descendants of stone masons from the Middle Ages? How did the first lodges come to be? Take an esoteric road of unsolved mysteries, starting in England in the 18th century.

Discover the events that led to the creation of the Grand Lodge of London in 1717. Ascertain the true ambitions of the men who launched this incredible adventure, and how the most intriguing fraternal society of modern times was born. Explore the centuries old stone mason lodges and their ties to the birth of Freemasonry in London.

See how these men were inspired by their secular rites such as the mason's word and the art of memory. Find out the roots of Freemasonry in Scotland, and the real influence of the Middle Ages.

Review from Pietre Stone http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/DVD_scottishkey.html

SINS OF OUR MASONIC FATHERS

THE LOST STRENGTH OF FEWNES IN AMERICAN FREEMASONRY

John W. Bizzack

American Freemasonry expanded so rapidly that it gave birth to a flawed, long-standing, counterfactual and false standard: the belief that Freemasonry in America can be found and measured by the number of names on its membership rosters. As a result, the fraternity abandoned the source of its real strength: fewness.

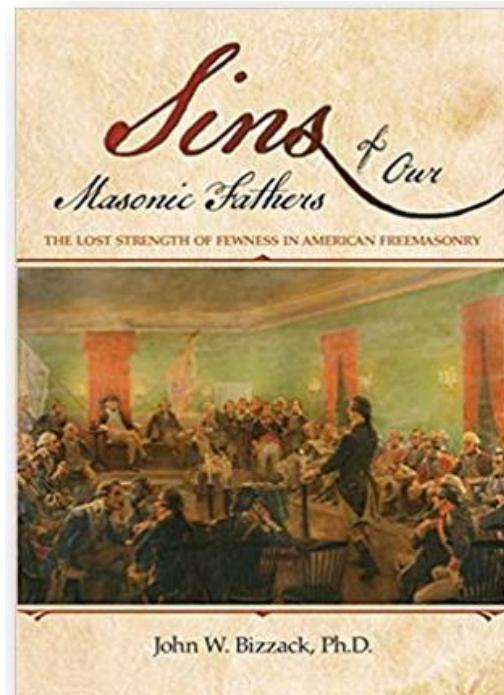
Sins of Our Masonic Fathers offers a broad, but thorough, analysis of various historical aspects of Freemasonry as it unfolded in the United States. This look at the evolution of American Freemasonry identifies the misplaced, misdirected, and misspent energy in the past that challenges today the essential labors required to successfully delivers the understanding of the real aim and purpose of the Fraternity to its members.

This book does not merely list what are called “sins” of our Masonic Fathers, but undertakes the difficult task of examining and framing the reasons why and how these errors in action and miscalculations occurred.

Insight into why the Fraternity today is where it finds itself is illustrated in a persuasive manner and makes clear how its perpetuity will now, more than ever, depend on the quality of its leadership, administration, and practices in the delivery of its intended promise.

The question for this and future generations is whether the fraternity will stop playing host to the miscalculations and errors in action deeply embedded in its history.

Review by Dan M. Kemble



THAT RELIGION IN WHICH ALL MEN AGREE

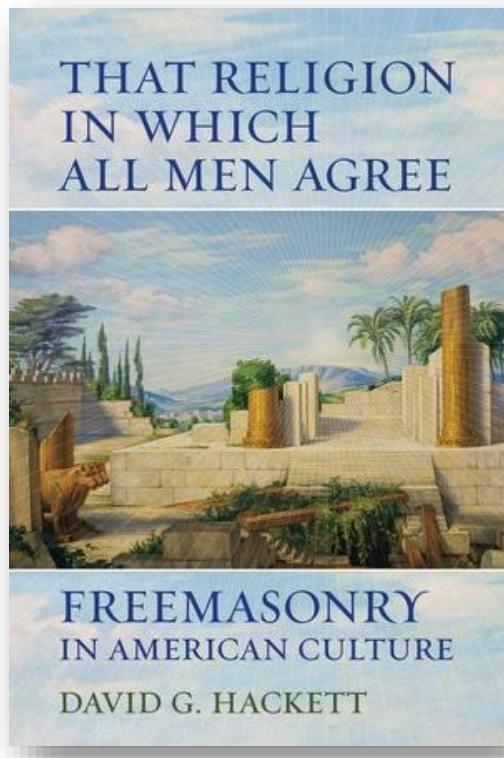
FREEMASONRY IN AMERICAN CULTURE

David G. Hackett

This powerful study weaves the story of Freemasonry into the narrative of American religious history. Freighted with the mythical legacies of stonemasons' guilds and the Newtonian revolution, English Freemasonry arrived in colonial America with a vast array of cultural baggage, which was drawn on, added to, and transformed during its sojourn through American culture.

David G. Hackett argues that from the 1730s through the early twentieth century the religious worlds of an evolving American social order broadly appropriated the beliefs and initiatory practices of this all-male society. For much of American history, Freemasonry was both counter and complement to Protestant churches, as well as a forum for collective action among racial and ethnic groups outside the European American Protestant mainstream.

Moreover, the cultural template of Freemasonry gave shape and content to the American "public sphere." By including a group not usually seen as a carrier of religious beliefs and rituals, Hackett expands and complicates the terrain of American religious history by showing how Freemasonry has contributed to a broader understanding of the multiple influences that have shaped religion in American culture.



COIL'S MASONIC ENCYCLOPEDIA, CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY, AND A COMPREHENSIVE VIEW OF FREEMASONRY

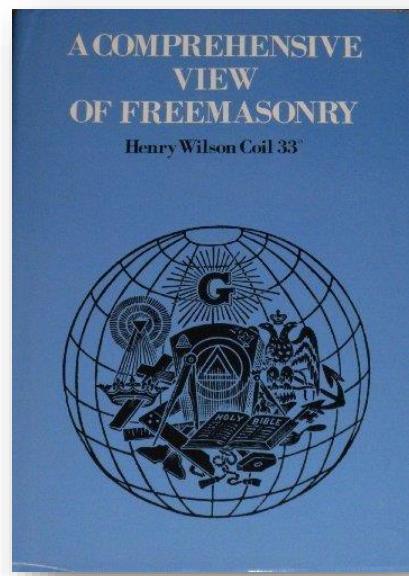
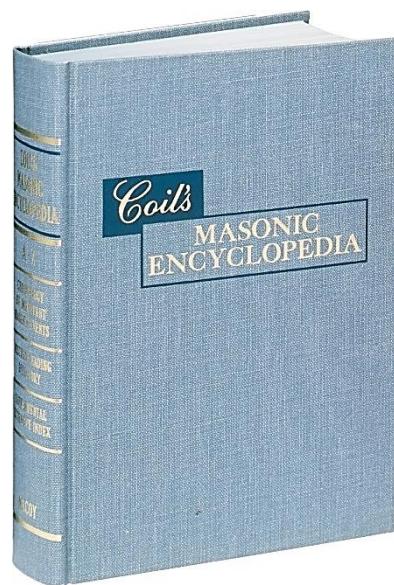
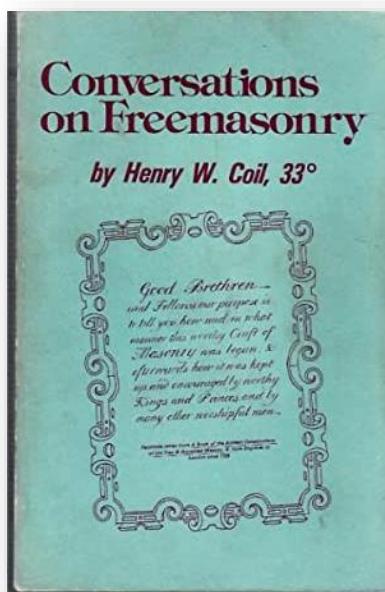
Henry W. Coil

Henry Coil, a distinguished California attorney, Masonic student, scholar, and author left the fraternity a wealth of extensive research and insight.

His work is firm, confident, seasoned with common sense, and urges members to discover the realities of Freemasonry, its challenge, and its promise by absorbing and advancing knowledge and enlightenment.

More objective than other Masonic cyclopedias, but without detracting from earlier cyclopedists, Coil's 700-page compilation is written without infusing his own personal beliefs, likes, and dislikes, stating facts, some of which we may not like either from prejudice or because of wishful thinking. Coil's

Masonic Encyclopedia was first published in 1961 and updated in 1996. The previous Masonic encyclopedia in America was published 1867 (*Macoy's Cyclopedie of Freemasonry*) and Coil's version, incorporating the changing conditions of Masonry was sorely needed and stands today as the best Masonic Cyclopedia available. The Henry Wilson Coil Library & Museum of Freemasonry is named in his honor.



Review by John W. Bizzack

THE AGE OF UNREASON

DISSECTING THE INFANCY OF THE MORGAN AFFAIR AND ITS AFTERMATH

John W. Bizzack

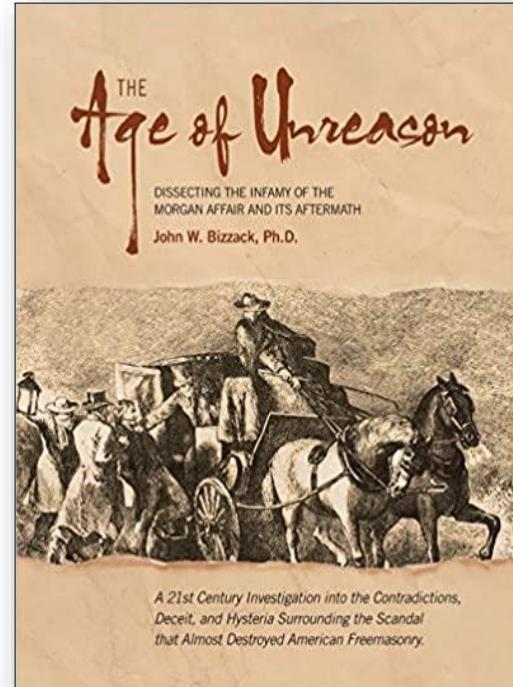
In Batavia, New York, the few people who knew for sure where William Morgan was on the morning of September 12, 1826 were all Freemasons.

The previous night Morgan had been abducted. His abductors were Freemasons. Months prior to his abduction, Morgan was writing an exposé of Freemasonry. Despite his disappearance, the book was published three months later. The abduction and disappearance of Morgan fueled the flame of anti-Masonic sentiments of the era, creating a firestorm and scandal that tarnished and has haunted American Freemasonry for almost two centuries. That firestorm and its aftermath, at least for a brief period, also put an end to one of the reasons the event occurred in the first place: the unbridled rapid expansion of members and lodges that resulted in the fraternity losing sight of what historically the Institution of Freemasonry was designed to be. Too many lodges were created to be properly supported. Likewise, as a result, unworthy candidates were admitted. The excitement surrounding this chapter of American history was a momentous catalyst changing the course of Freemasonry in the United States and led to the creation of a short-lived third national political party.

The Age of Unreason provides a reappraisal of the hasty actions, injudicious reactions, politics, deceit, incautious behavior, loss of trust and reputation, and the lasting effects of the Morgan Affair, in context with the era, that were taken by accusers and defenders of Freemasonry and illustrates how fitting the saying is that, “lies and rumor can travel halfway around the world while the truth is still putting on its boots.”

Review by Dan M. Kemble

NOTE: See page 20 for Stephen Dafoe's, *Morgan, The Scandal That Shook Freemasonry* for another detailed account of the Morgan Affair.



21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT FREEMASONRY A CANDLE IN THE DARK

John W. Bizzack and Dan M. Kemble

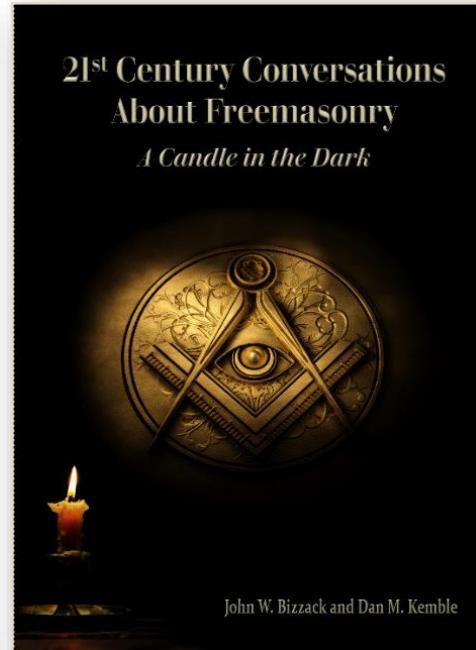
In *21st Century Conversations About Freemasonry: A Candle in the Dark*, authors John W. Bizzack and Dan M. Kemble have used a fictional series of virtual meetings to identify and address how the Masonic Fraternity has lost its sense of identity as an Enlightenment Era institution. As contemporary society has moved away from Enlightenment Era thinking and precepts, so too has Freemasonry.

The imagined Brothers use 21st century technology to stay connected, while pinpointing their several concerns about the current state of the Craft.

Tracing an historical (albeit winding) path from the Age of Enlightenment to the modern era, two separate strains of practicing Freemasonry emerge. One strain, referred to as the Mainstream Masonic Community, prefers a less intellectually rigorous approach and is essentially a community service club. The other strain, while much smaller, identified as Heritage Seekers, looks to re-connect the Fraternity with its Enlightenment Era roots.

THE discussion that unfolds in the book is the same discussion being held Masonic groups across the United States at this time. It is a discussion that addresses the very essence of Freemasonry.

Review by Brian T. Evans

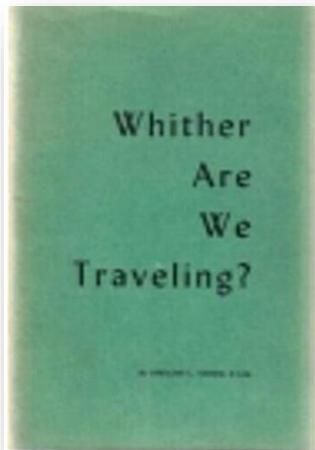


Whither Are We Traveling? and Why This Confusion at the Temple?

Dwight L. Smith

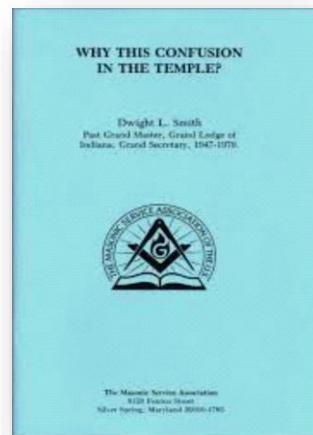
In the early 1960's, Dwight Smith, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Indiana and at the time of publication, its Grand Secretary, wrote a series of articles for the *Indiana Freemason Magazine* that eventually were collected in two classic booklets:

Whither Are We Traveling? and Why This Confusion In The Temple?⁶



Smith's writing on the decline of Freemasonry in America and how to rebuild it reads as if it were written today. His questions and observations are as valid as they were when he wrote them, perhaps more so, given the current atmosphere within Freemasonry concerning declining membership numbers. Smith's universal answer to the problems of Freemasonry as an institution was to "Try Freemasonry."

That is, return the fraternity to its most basic tenets, strip it of its innovations, and get back to the business of concentrating on making men better. It has been nearly sixty years since Smith's papers were published. A response to the hard truths found in these publications were then, and remain difficult today, for much of the Fraternity that has fallen prey to the very pitfalls he predicted.



Review by John W. Bizzack

These publications may be found at the below sites.

ARS QUATUOR CORONATORUM Volume LXXVI FOR THE YEAR 1963

https://www.freemasonry.bcy.ca/aqc/whither_are_we_travelling_aqc.pdf

https://www.masonicrestorationfoundation.org/documents/DLS_WhyThisConfusion.pdf

<http://pictoumasons.org/library/Smith,%20Dwight%20L%20~%20WhitherAreWeTraveling%20%5Bpdf%5D.pdf>

⁶ See *Laudable Pursuit: A 21st Century Response To Dwight Smith* in this edition.

EXPLORING EARLY GRAND LODGE FREEMASONRY

STUDIES IN HONOR OF THE TRICENTENNIAL OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

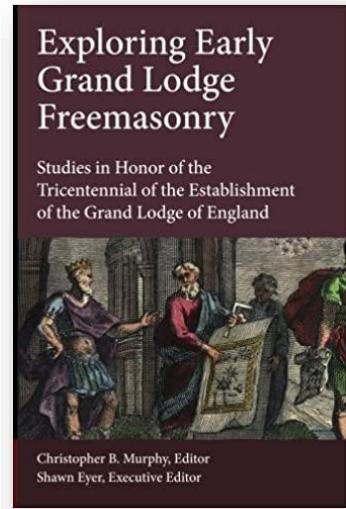
Christopher E. Murphy and Shawn Eyer

Soon after the Grand Lodge of England was established on June 24, 1717, Freemasonry, and its obscure origins and antiquity, began to spread rapidly throughout and beyond the British Empire.

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"Spiritual and Heavenly People in Corners": Embracing Masonic Ethos through the Eyes of James Anderson DANA SCOFIELD	216
Freemasonry, the London Irish, and the Antients Grand Lodge RIC BERMAN	241
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This volume of intriguing essays by eminent and emerging Masonic scholars explores the history and culture of Freemasonry during that period of expansion.



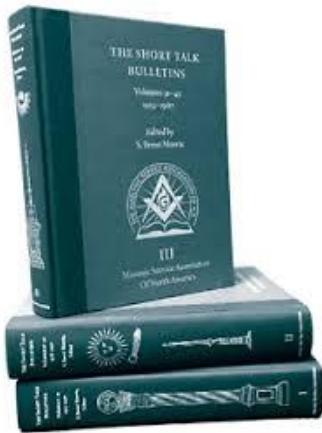
What did Masons of the early Grand Lodge era actually do in their lodges? How did these brethren think of themselves and their Craft? What were their motivations and ideals? What was their experience with Freemasonry?

By posing such questions, the contributors to this work have been able to study not just an institutional beginning, but the cultural realities of Masonic life in the first decades of the Grand Lodge's history.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack

SHORT TALK BULLETINS

S. Brent Morris, Editor

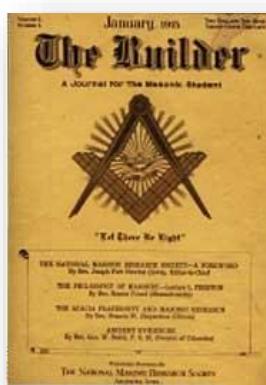
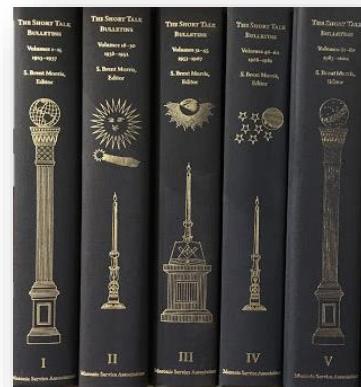


The Masonic Service Association of North America (MSNA) has published a *Short Talk Bulletin* virtually every month since 1923. It is now possible to own complete bound sets on subjects that range from Masonic history to symbolism, philosophy, and biographies. There are hundreds of education materials, historical tales, ritual information, symbolism explanations and exploration, and scores of other sorts of topics to be found in these 700 plus page

volumes. All well-stocked Masonic library would have these volumes available to their members.

Every Short Talk Bulletin from 1923 through 2017 has been edited, re-typeset and indexed for these books by S. Brent Morris for the Scottish Rite Research Society. It would take years of lodge meetings to read one Short Talk Bulletin at each meeting. msaoffice@msana.com

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



THE BUILDER (1915-1930)

Joseph Fort Newton, Editor

The Builder Magazine was published from 1915 through 1930 by the National Masonic Research Society. Many Masonic Librarians and scholars believe that *The Builder Magazine* was the best American Masonic magazine ever published. Nearly a century later, it has yet to be surpassed in terms of quality of content. The publication did not rely on grip and grin photos to fill its pages; it relied on the research work of the leading Masonic writers of the day. The fifteen-year collection (185 monthly issues) include thousands of excellent articles on Masonic history, philosophy, jurisprudence, poetry, landmarks, and symbolism. *The Builder* is available on-line. At the following link:

<https://archive.org/details/TheBuilderMagazine1930VolXVIno01/The%20Builder%20Magazine%201915%20Vol%201%20no%2001/mode/2up>.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack

INTRODUCTION TO FREEMASONRY

Carl H. Claudy

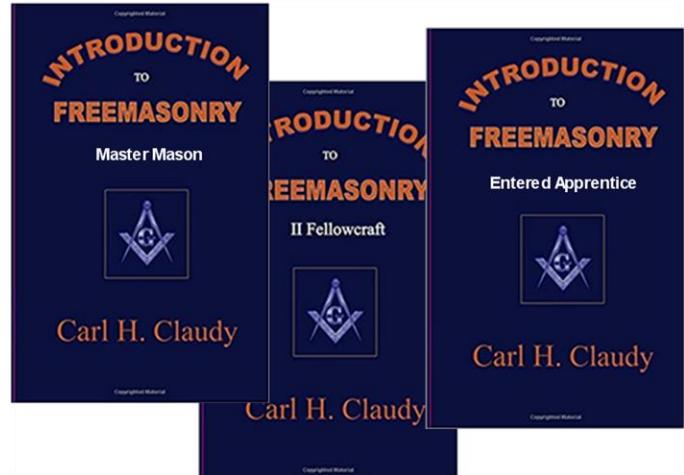
These three volumes are different than most Masonic books. Written by a brother with long experience as a Masonic speaker and writer, they have a simple manner of presentation, a plain statement of facts, a spiritual interpretation of Masonic teachings and visualize the vital reality behind the allegory and the symbol.

These books answer the simple elementary inquiries of the new brother to whom all the Craft is strange. They will make many an older Mason sit up in astonishment that what he thought obvious and uninteresting is so vividly alive.

For the brother old in the Craft who will read them, a revelation awaits. For the initiate, here is wisdom, strength, and beauty. For all, the Ancient Craft is here set forth in an unforgettable trilogy of books which not only tell the facts but forget not the vision, which not only describe the form but also reveal the spirit of Freemasonry.

Carl H. Claudy was the author 32 books and a galaxy of essays and short stories numbering more than 1,600, and author of approximately 350 *Short Talk Bulletins*.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



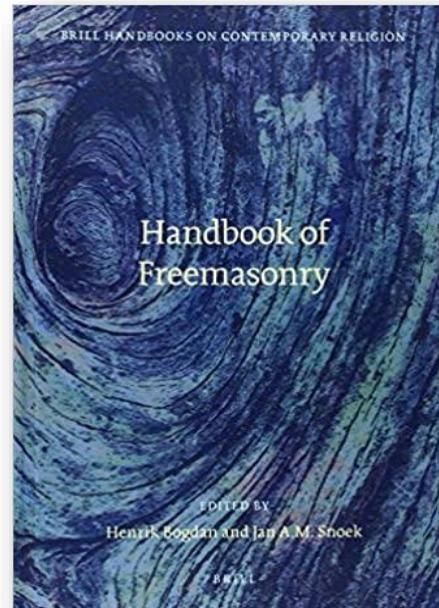
HANDBOOK OF FREEMASONRY

Henrik Bogdan and Jan A.M. Snoek

The Brill *Handbook of Freemasonry* is a pioneering work that brings together, for the first time, leading scholars on Freemasonry.

The first section covers historical perspectives, such as the origins and early history of Freemasonry. The second deals with the relationship between Freemasonry and specific religious traditions such as the Catholic Church, Judaism, and Islam. In the third section, organizational themes, such as the use of rituals, are explored, while the fourth section deals with issues related to society and politics - women, blacks, colonialism, nationalism, and war. The fifth and final section is devoted to Freemasonry and culture, including music, literature, modern art, architecture, and material culture.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack



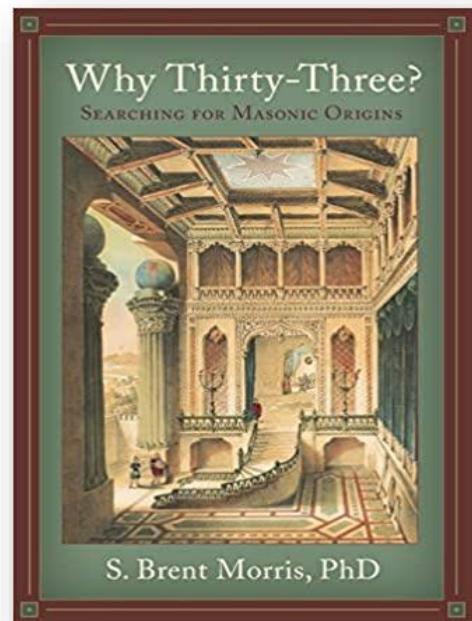
WHY THIRTY-THREE? SEARCHING FOR MASONIC ORIGINS

S. Brent Morris

The papers presented here represent over twenty-five years of publications by S. Brent Morris. They explore his many questions about Freemasonry, usually dealing with origins of the Craft.

While all writings from Morris are worth having in any Lodge or personal Masonic library, *Why Thirty-Three*, delves into questions common in Masonry. As seen in the Table of Contents, Morris addresses topics that are common among many Masons about the Scottish Rite and more.

Morris's section on "Itinerant American Masonic Lecturers" is of particular interest and Morris points out that the fabric of Freemasonry in America would be less established without the period in which they were active. In "New Light on the



- ix Foreword: The Accomplishments of Brent Morris*
- xi Author's Preface*
- 1 The High Degrees in the United States: 1730–1830*
- 17 The Royal Secret in America before 1801*
- 39 Henry Andrew Francken & His Masonic Manuscripts*
- 47 "Why Thirty-Three?"—A Revisit*
- 71 The Polite Revolution: The Formation of American Grand Lodges, 1777–1806*
- 93 Itinerant American Masonic Lecturers*
- 117 Early Newspaper Accounts of Prince Hall Freemasonry*
- 161 The Structure of American Freemasonry*
- 169 The Impact of English Freemasonry on America and Vice-Versa*
- 183 American Freemasons and the Spirit of Freedom*
- 189 Voting With Their Feet*
- 195 Themes of Anti-Masonry*
- 207 The Letter "G"*
- 211 The Eye in the Pyramid*
- 217 Pike, Mackey, and The Ancient Mysteries*
- 221 Albert Pike and the Ku Klux Klan*
- 225 The Tripos of 1688 at Trinity College, Dublin*
- 267 The Post Boy Sham Exposure of 1723*
- 297 New Light on the Gormogons*
- 337 Lodged in the Canon*
- 345 Lestrade's Boss: Sir Charles Warren, KCMG, KCB*

Gormagons," Morris identifies previously unknown sources on this satirical "rival" of the London brotherhood that arose after the 1723 Grand Master, Philip Wharton, 1st Duke of Wharton, left the fraternity and his involvement in the Gormogons. This made him the last Grand Master to ever hold that office without serving as Master of his lodge.

Morris's personal interest and knowledge on Sherlock Holmes, treat the reader to insightful information about the creator of the Holmes character, Arthur Canon Doyle, his work, and connection to Masonry.

A complex organization with a lengthy pedigree like Freemasonry has many basic foundational questions waiting to be answered, and that is what this book does: *answers questions*.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack

THE CRAFT

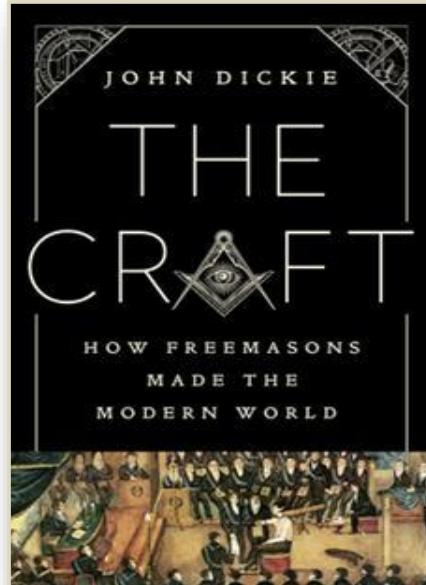
HOW FREEMASONS MADE THE MODERN WORLD

John Dickie

A fascinating tale that turns legend into history.

The Craft is lauded as one of the best general histories of Freemasonry ever written for non-Masons. It has been recommended around the world by numerous grand lodges, including the United Grand Lodge of England, and featured in a Time Magazine piece on Freemasonry.⁷

With an abundance of books on Freemasonry written by Freemasons, occasionally something difference emerges. Sometimes a non-Mason's view, particularly one from a trained historian, is welcomed.



⁷Maynard Edwards, Interview with John Dickie, *Scottish Rite Journal*, November-December 2020.

John Dickie, a professor of Italian studies at University College London, broadcaster, author, and historian, recounts the history of Freemasonry by breaking it down into splendidly written stories. *The Craft* often reads like an adventure novel and unfolds as an enthralling exploration of a movement that helped to forge modern society.

Although readers will be attracted to different parts of the book, it is certainly worth a read. Dickie is not critical of Freemasonry and does not use his work to promote it ways beyond the interesting history that surrounds it. His persuasive style and visceral understanding of its aim and purpose compliments an important story, making it an enlightening read for Masons and non-Masons alike.

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack

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Set to work under dispensation in 1964, and chartered in 1965, William O. Ware Lodge of Research is Kentucky's oldest Research Lodge and is named in honor of Most Worshipful Brother William O. Ware, who served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, 1957-58.



The follow book reviews are from the William O. Ware Lodge of Research website (<https://williamowarelodgeofresearch.com/>).

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE MEN'S HOUSE

Joseph Fort Newton

Reviewed by John W. Bizzack, P.M.

Lexington Lodge No. 1, Research Committee Chair, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

What is Masonry? What is it trying to teach? What does it seek to do? Above all, what can it do for the man who receives it into his heart, loves it, and lives in the light of it?

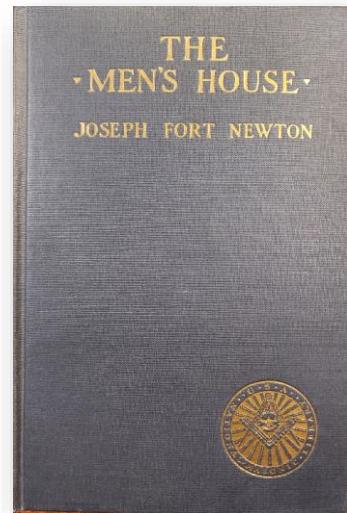


You get the answers to these questions from reading Joseph Fort Newton's 1924 book, *The Men's House*. And the answers come from a 20th century Mason who viewed Masonry through his faith and embraced a simple insight into the dignity and truths of its principles.

Author of one of the most lasting books in Freemasonry, *The Builders: A Story and Study of Freemasonry* (Cedar Rapids Iowa, The Torch Press, 1914), *The Men's House* is a collection of Newton's Masonic addresses and papers that carry forward themes matching his description of the Fraternity. He saw Masonry as rooted in the nature and need of humanity – an order of men initiated, sworn, and trained to uphold all the redeeming ideals of society, and the righteousness of the will of the Great Architect of the Universe to prevail.

Earning the distinction of Masonic scholar in a period with other fine Masonic authors like W.L. Wilmhurst and H.L. Haywood, his fine writing makes clear what led him to his views about Masonry. The integrity of his writing can be trusted.

The years of World War I were a turning point in the perception of many Masons regarding the fraternity's relationship to the outside world. The view that Masonry as an institution should take an active part meeting the social problems of the day was growing. Newton promoted the view, but believed it best accomplished by educating the public about Masonry. His writings call for the instruction of its members in the principles of righteously found in the design and intent of Masonry, and then providing the consistent inspiration necessary in Lodges to inspire men to adhere to those precepts. Finding no conflict with his religious beliefs, his faith in the idea of Masonry, and his life-long encouragement of members to study the Craft and integrate the lessons of its noble ideas to a practical life, is Newton's footprint in American Freemasonry.



Newton, a Texan and son of a Baptist minister turned attorney, attended the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He studied at Harvard and held three doctoral degrees and was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church in 1926. In 1914, he became the first editor of *The Builder Magazine*, a publication that is today considered by many to be the best Masonic periodical ever published.

Newton speaks to the rough and rocky road that Masons will travel in their laudable pursuit by exploring the Thomas Huxley quote: “It does not take much of a man to be a Christian, but it takes all there is of him.” Newton said that Huxley might have added that it also takes all his time. He goes on to point out that if one would be a Master Mason “in very truth, and not in name only or the wearing of a pin, he will find that it asks of all that he has of wisdom, and of wit, while he divides his time into labor, rest, and the service of his kind.”

In Chapter XII, “Masonry in American History,” he asks the question, What of the present and the future? Seeing the scale of change in America in just the first two decades of the 20th century, living through and serving in a world war, the emerging differences between rural and urban America, along with racial tensions, and the rise of Creationists arguing against evolution, Newton saw the changes that were taking place as an opportunity for Masonry to contribute to the continued building of America. In his view, Masonry’s mission was the building of men in spiritual faith and character enabling them to endure the “shocks of time: and create a nobler structure.” He wrote that what America needed “more than all else is better character, born of a sense of duties as well of rights; vigilance on behalf of liberty without holiday.” In a corresponding and foretelling closing, he wrote: “If America is ever injured, it will be by American’s themselves – by their ignorance, their indifference, their neglect – and here again, Masonry can do fundamental work in quickening the sense of citizenship.” Newton’s prescription is as applicable today as it was in the 1920s.

The Men’s House explores the genius of Masonry differently than Newton’s 1914 work, *The Builders*, and it is clear that in the decade between that writing and *The Men’s House*, he had further developed in his keen writing an even deeper appreciation for the power of Masonry. He sees the uniqueness of America in bringing all races and creeds together under one flag to learn fraternity and fellowship, and cautions that the country must not repeat “on a giant scale the blunders of the past” and do something that has never been done before by “creating a spirit free, friendly, and fraternal, to sweeten the bitterness of the world and heal its ancient hates.”

Reading *The Men’s House* makes it clear, too, that only Newton could write what has become one of the most revered and cited passages in Masonry. We find it as part of an address he gave in 1913 to the Grand Lodge of Iowa at its 70th Annual Communication. The passage appears in Chapter III “The Ministry of Masonry,” and today it is best known as, “When is a Man a Mason?” (Visit <https://bit.ly/WhenIsAManAMason> for a 2-minute moving film account and recitation of “When is a Man a Mason” that was created and produced by WB Brian T. Evans for The Rubicon Masonic Society’s Virtual Education Series.)

Appreciating the life-long work of Joseph Fort Newton as a Mason cannot be done by separating his religious ministry from his commitment to the principles of the Craft. Nor can reading his contributions to Masonry be studied with the bias of presentism. We must see Newton as a man produced and influenced by the period in which he lived. Doing so produces a new value to his works that are now over 100 years old, yet continue to ring true and stirring for serious Masons.

In the early pages of his work, Newton conveys the old story of the gods, who, having stolen from man his divinity, meet in counsel to discuss where they should hide it. One suggested that it should be carried to the other side of the earth and buried; but it was pointed out that man is a great wanderer and that he might find the lost treasure on the other side of the earth. Another proposed that it be dropped in the depths of the sea; but the same fear was expressed – that a man in his curiosity might dive deep enough to find it even there. Finally, after a space of silence,

the oldest and the wisest of the gods said; "Hide it in man himself, as that is the last place, he will ever think to look for it."

As Newton says, man has wandered all over the world for ages searching in all the places before he thought to look within himself. A man can look within himself without Masonry, of course, but the path, when conveyed and instructed properly, is found readily in the principles and tenets of our Craft.

The story corresponds with something else relative to Masonry.

Many Masonic books, although Newton's are in the top portion of most serious lists, hold the key to exploring Masonry so that its noble ideas can be best understood, then applied to a practical life. We continue to find unfortunate the many members who choose not to read, study, and engage in serious reflection about Masonry, for in the unread books like *The Men's House*, lie hidden the answers to questions about how we can become better men through Freemasonry.

The Men's House is available through on-line booksellers

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT FREEMASONRY

A CANDLE IN THE DARK

John W. Bizzack and Dan M. Kemble

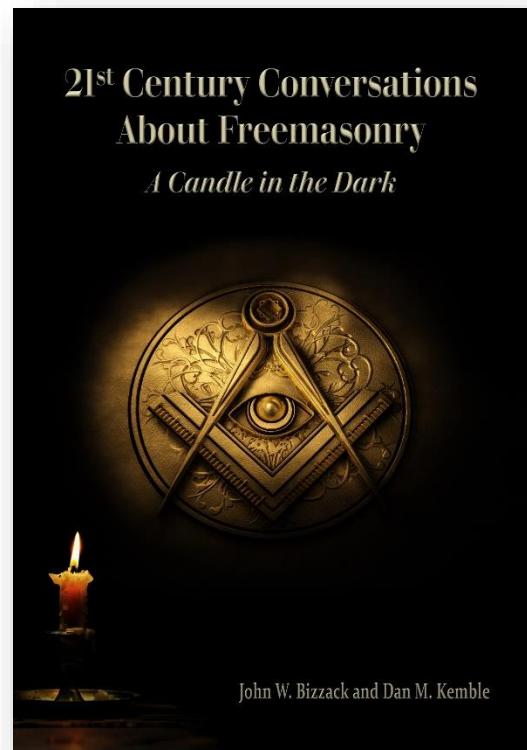
Reviewed by Bill Lorenz PM and Research Fellow, William O. Ware Lodge Research

21st Century Conversations About Freemasonry: A Candle in the Dark is presented as a discussion of active Masons, friends from across the nation, who miss attending their lodge meetings due to the pandemic. The characters in the book, Entered Apprentice to Past Grand Masters, are fictional. By no means, however, is this a book of fiction. The discussions are real. Well researched, authors John W. Bizzack and Dan Kemble, team together to make one very worthwhile book. The numerous “call-outs” are a nice addition. The division between the “conversations” makes it easy to lay the book down and pick it up at a later time and quickly fall back into the theme of the discussion.

This is a powerful Masonic book. It reflects what Masons are saying to themselves, or to a few close friends. “What happened to the great years of Freemasonry and what will Freemasonry become in future?” It demonstrates that it has been many years since we implemented “rational thinking and dialogue” (Enlightenment ideals), in our important decisions for the direction of our lodges and their activities.

When one thinks of the Enlightenment, he must not consider it as a single movement. It appears at different times and in different countries, with varying ideas and different approaches. There is the English Enlightenment, the French, the German, Scottish, Swiss and our own, American Enlightenment. Although the great thinkers of the Enlightenment period, David Hume, John Locke, Frederick the Great, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Thomas Jefferson would present different concerns, each believed that “rational thinking and dialogue” could resolve any and all questions before them. The literal interpretation of the Bible itself was questioned, and yet God, morality and education of man was held in high esteem.

It was a time when Freemasonry and other groups flourished, with men coming together in coffee houses and taverns across Europe and the thirteen American Colonies, to present and discuss meaningful ideas of immediate interest and importance, as well as practicing their private ceremonies.



The first Grand Lodge of Freemasonry was born in London in 1717, and, within a few years, Freemasonry came to the American colonies.

Perhaps John Locke was the most influential philosopher of the Enlightenment. Locke's "Two Treatises of Government" (1690) and three natural rights 'life, liberty and property,' would find its way into Thomas Jefferson's thinking in his preparation for the Declaration of Independence.

It is through this premise, "rational thinking and dialogue" that co-authors John W. Bizzack and Dan Kemble have nineteen fellow Masons come to together to discuss Freemasonry. The brothers choose a "virtual" environment as the nineteen fictitious friends from across the country share their thoughts, and experiences in Freemasonry.

The *conversations* flow easily from one brother to another, each adding something of their own observations. Although the characters are fictitious, anyone who travels in Masonic circles will recognize the characters' questioning thoughts, opinions, and concerns, in brothers they know. In fact, through introspection, one may find a piece of himself in at least some of the characters.

As Freemasonry is a product of the Enlightenment, two topics were agreed upon by the nineteen friends to set the stage for discussion. First, the philosophies of the Enlightenment "learning, science and reason," formed the way that Freemasonry was intended to be practiced. Second, the principles of the Enlightenment nourished "the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity," which were instrumental in both American Freemasonry and bringing the American colonies together.

Following the agreement, the first question is addressed. "Does contemporary American culture still value the ideals that characterized the Age of Enlightenment?" Discussion leads to other questions, and later to the thought that there are two types of active lodge members, "Mainstream Masonic Community" and the "Heritage Seekers."

The Mainstream Masonic Community, by far the larger of the two, practices their Freemasonry by doing good deeds for the community, including fund raisers for various charities, or honoring police, firemen or the military, thereby putting themselves favorably before the public eye. Although this can be done by any service group, or other fraternity, it does bring Masons together, building fellowship by working for a common goal. Anyone who flips a pancake, stirs the spaghetti sauce, or throws battered fish into the fryer, can be proud of doing something for a good cause, for "charity for all mankind" is a Masonic ideal. The Mainstream Masonic Community loves their Freemasonry. But is that what Freemasonry is all about?

The Heritage Seekers believe that today, Americans seemingly have drifted far from Enlightenment practice. As evidenced by our political system, we can no longer hold civil discussions. Learning, political science, and reason just do not exist. American Masonry also has drifted. It tends to come up with a "quick fix" approach to problems, just "kick the can down the road" or does not discuss the situation at all. The Heritage Seekers question how Freemasonry, a product of the Enlightenment, has drifted so far from Enlightenment philosophy. Their hope is to re-connect Freemasonry with the philosophy of the Enlightenment era. The Heritage Seekers also love Masonic fellowship and what they feel Freemasonry could and should be.

Both groups agree that Freemasonry has relaxed its standards in dress code, ritual expectations, and requirements for membership. Is it a good thing or is it bad? Complacency is rampant in a large

number of lodges. Protocol and Masonic etiquette barely exist. The lack of Masonic education is definitely a major problem. So why aren't lodges talking about this?

A new member receives his Entered Apprentice Degree and receives handshakes and congratulations. He presents his catechism and receives pats on the back. He is passed to a Fellowcraft, and later presents his catechism, again congratulations. And finally, he is a Master Mason, more pats on the back and then nothing.

All through the degrees he is told he will learn about Freemasonry; however, he finds that, except for the ritual, he must learn on his own. "What came ye here to do?" – 1) to learn, 2) to subdue my passions (a moral compass), and 3) improve myself. So why aren't lodges talking about this?

The American Masonic Order, along with our nation, has over a period of many years slowly walked away from the Enlightenment era, but a candle in the dark is still held by the Heritage Seekers. Through education, Freemasonry will make good men, better men as promised. It is up to the lodge. Today's Masons must decide what their lodge is willing to do, and hopefully those decisions will be well thought out and practiced. Good intentions without thought will not work. Change is not sufficient; it must be wise change. This will only be accomplished through "rational thinking and dialogue." Why isn't your lodge talking about this?

21st Century Conversations About Freemasonry: A Candle in the Dark is an outstanding book. Space does not allow this brief review to do it justice. There is so much more to the book than shown on these pages. It is a book that needed to be written and should be reviewed by every lodge. Anyone who reads "21st Century Conversations" will be enlightened. The Brothers willing, any lodge could quickly be improved. My hope is the collaboration between these two authors continues.

John W. Bizzack, Ph.D., a William O. Ware Research Fellow, is a noted Masonic researcher and popular lecturer across the nation. He has authored several significant books including ***Island Masonry – The Final Bastion of the Observant Lodge***, which was considered by the Southern California Research Lodge, to be one of the most important Masonic books in the last twenty years. A Past Master of Lexington Lodge No. 1 and the current Vice-Chairman of The Rubicon Masonic Society, John is heavily involved in Masonic Research groups, and feels Masonic education of the lodge and its members is of prime necessity.

Dan Kemble is an avid researcher who has presented numerous Masonic papers on multiple subjects. He is a Past Master of William O. Ware Lodge of Research and currently serves as Recorder for The Rubicon Masonic Society. He also holds membership in Hays Lodge No. 517, Indiana's Dwight Smith Lodge of Research and has served as Chairman of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky's Committee on Masonic Education.

A Candle In the Dark

Jeriel Smith, OM, Southern California Lodge of Research

I read *A Candle In The Dark: 21st Century Conversations About Freemasonry* with great interest. and the dramatic device of Zoom conversations among 18 quasi-fictional modern Masons is quite effective. Of course, I'm familiar with the topic, in no small part due to other writings by the authors and talks at Masonic Restoration Foundation symposiums; and I'm in agreement with the premises, arguments and conclusions.

I think there are a lot of Masons who will be offended by this book; or who would be if they should depart from their usual practices and read a serious book about Freemasonry. That so many Masons today neither study the Craft, contemplate its symbolic philosophy, nor practice its tenets, is proof enough of the need for these "conversations." And what better time to begin them than during this hiatus in Masonic activity; and how providential that modern technology has given us platforms like Zoom to allow socially distanced conversations among men (anywhere on the planet) who would otherwise forever remain at a distance?

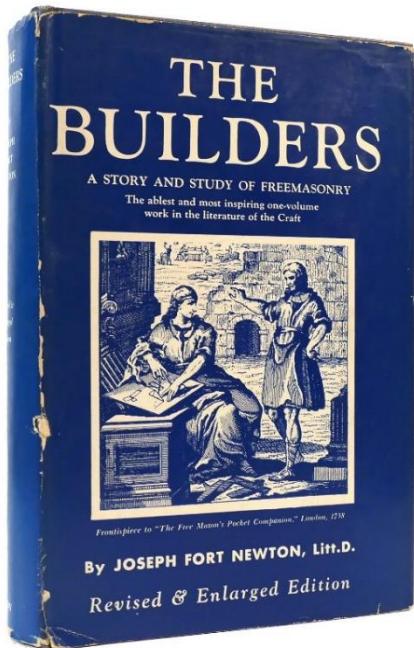
Regardless of those who will complain, this kind of conversation must be had, and written about, and discussed; as any problem of such magnitude must be recognized before it can be addressed, let alone be solved. The idealist in me thinks it can be solved; the skeptical lawyer in me doubts I will live to see it solved; but my Masonic heart and soul tells me that we Seekers of the Light must continue to labor in the quarry of Masonic Restoration Movement(s).

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE BUILDERS A STORY AND STUDY OF MASONRY

Joseph Fort Newton, Litt. D.

Reviewed by Bill Lorenz, P.M., Research Fellow, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

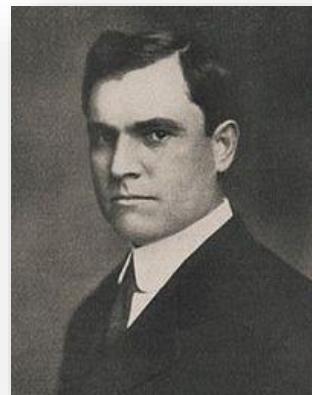


The beautiful and true story of a Confederate civil war soldier taken captive by Union forces only to become seriously ill, then removed to the Union Commander's home to be cared for until the soldier could return home, would eventually lead to the writing of what many feel is the greatest Masonic book of all time. Such is the story of Lee Newton, minister, lawyer and father of Reverend Joseph Fort Newton (1880-1950) the author of ***The Builders: A Story and Study of Masonry***. Lee Newton was made a Mason in a Confederate Military Lodge, and after capture and becoming deathly sick, was taken to the home of the Union Commander, a Brother Mason. The story is detailed in Allen E. Roberts's 1996 book ***House Undivided: The Story of Freemasonry and the Civil War*** and can be found in other books as well. Joseph Fort Newton would later state, "The fact that such a fraternity of men could exist, mitigating the harshness of war and remain unbroken, when states and churches were torn in two, became a wonder, and it is not strange, I tried for years to repay my debt to it."

Joseph Fort Newton's most famous Masonic work, ***The Builders:***

A Story and Study of Masonry, authorized by the Grand Lodge of Iowa, was printed in 1914, and reprinted twelve times before his death. It has been translated into languages around the world. Shortly before Newton's death, he added a new chapter, "The Unknown Builders," and turned over the copyright to *Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Co., Inc.*, who began publishing the book with the new chapter in 1951. What makes ***The Builders*** so unique is that it is the first of its kind, and the author, Joseph Fort Newton was, himself, a brilliant man, Mason and minister. He was once named as one of the "top five protestant ministers in the world." This gave him an insight into Freemasonry that few can accomplish. His genuine love for Freemasonry permeates the book throughout, as he paints a picture with words like no other Masonic author. Although the book was originally authored in 1914, very little would need to be altered to bring it current. It is from Macoy's 1951 edition that this review is made.

The Builders begins with the dedication, "To all my Brethren of the gentle Craft of Freemasonry, of every race and rite, who have been the inspiration of my research, and whose fellowship is a



consecration, I inscribe this final edition of my book, with love, honor and gratitude.” Throughout the book, the reader will find Joseph Fort Newton’s belief that Freemasonry’s role is to unite men of every country, sect and opinion; and the Freemason’s duty is to be gentle in controversy as well as harmony, to display brotherly love and honor to those around him, and then be grateful to God for the opportunity to do so.

The 1951 Macoy edition contains three ‘Forwards’ (two from previous editions). “The Anteroom,” from the 1914 original, states in 1900, upon the author being raised a Master Mason (one of the “most significant days” in his life), he inquired if there was a “little book to tell a young man the things he would like to know about Freemasonry -- what it was, whence it came, what it teaches and what it was trying to do for the world?” No one knew of such a book and, fourteen years later, it would fall upon him to be the first to author one.

The main text is divided into three parts. The first part, **“Prophecy,”** has five chapters. In Chapter 1, “*The Foundations*,” Newton observes how primitive man’s thought process centered on agriculture and architecture, the most important of man’s needs. Gathering and building would become associated with a religious experience for man, thanking the reasons behind his bounty and shelter, and the beauty of his stone monuments. Next, “*The Working Tools*” traces symbolism back to near prehistoric times. He describes man’s need for symbolism throughout history in a descriptive and captivating manner, and discovers to us that the working tools, and other symbols from the distant past, “were used as emblems of the very truths which they teach today.” As one of the many examples, Newton quotes Confucius, “A Master Mason, in teaching apprentices, makes use of the compass and square. Ye who are engaged in the pursuit of wisdom, must also make use of the compass and square.”

The third chapter, “*The Drama of Faith,*” deals with man’s obsession with death and gives several accounts of early religious practices concerning faith and death. He surmises that “the Greater Ancient Mysteries were prophetic of Masonry whose drama is an epitome of universal initiation.” Much of the fourth chapter, “*The Secret Doctrine*” is dedicated to gifted Masonic author and metaphysicist Arthur E. Waite. Newton observes the so-called “secret doctrine” isn’t secret at all, but is readily available for those who seek it. The “search for truth,” the search for the “holy grail,” the search for the “secret doctrine;” and the search for the “lost word” are all a search for a better relationship and understanding of God. One must seek it. He quotes Christ’s remark, “He that has an ear to hear, let him hear.”

“*The Collegia,*” the last chapter in this grouping, describes the many ancient societies akin to Freemasonry, including the Knights of the Crusades and the Comacine Masters. Not that Freemasonry is a direct descendent of any of the above, but there is an uncanny resemblance to many of their manners and thought processes.

The second section, **“History,”** also has five Chapters titled: “*Freemasons*,” “*Fellowcraft*,” “*Accepted Masons*,” “*Grand Lodge of England*,” and “*Universal Masonry*.” Here the author continues the story of the Comacine Masters in far greater detail, and leads into operative Masonry, first covering much of the old Manuscripts. The ancient charges defined how a Mason should live, act and perform his duties, and includes the story of Athelstan and the Assembly of 926 in York. Newton then writes of the guild era and the Church confirming the rights of Masons and also granting them privileges. Newton finds this the beginnings of today’s Freemasons love of liberty. During the decline of architecture, we are told, Masonry likewise declined, the advent of notable men who were accepted into the Masons lodge, however, helped to sustain it, albeit in a different form.

There is no doubt that the author believed that operative Masonry contained much of the same that speculative Masonry of today holds. Newton quotes the Regius Poem (circa 1390) "Of speculative he was a master." He adds Gould's remarks in ***History of Freemasonry*** on the Regius manuscript and the Cooke manuscript. Both contain "intimations of thoughts above the heads of many to whom it was read." Newton adds to his proof the Limerick brass square of 1517 engraved, "strive to live with love and care – Upon the Level and by the Square," and follows with even more evidence. Perhaps one of the many ancient Masonic manuscripts, describing the operative masonry's long and elaborate history, would be the interest for men - not of the trade - to join or be "accepted."

From the Accepted Masons, the Grand Lodge of England was formed in 1717, by four old lodges. ***The Builders*** includes Newton's thoughts on those who made it happen, the conversion of two degrees into three degrees, and the accomplishments therein contained. He then adds to this section, a description of the spread of Freemasonry and Grand Lodges into countries around the world. He discusses the Gormogons and other antagonistic groups, ritual exposures, the "Ancients" and the "Modernes" and the 1738 Bull against Freemasonry by Pope Clement XII. He notes the work of Laurence Dermott, William Preston, Thomas Smith Webb, and others. Newton then enters into the Revolutionary War era with a discussion of George Washington and other American heroes.

On the subject of religion, Newton finds fault with sectarianism. He asks, "Where else, except in a Masonic lodge, could men of many religions meet, each praying for all and all for each one. It has taught me one Lesson: If ever there is to be a Religion of Brotherhood on earth, it must begin with a Brotherhood of Religions." He concludes poetically, "Truth will triumph; God's dreams will come true. Justice will reign from sun to sun, victorious over cruelty and evil."

The third and final section, "***Interpretation***," contains four chapters. The first is "*What is Masonry.*" "A system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols," perhaps is the most popular response, but brief and varied answers are as plentiful as there are Masonic authors. Newton prefers the definition from ***The Handbuch***, an encyclopedia printed in 1900, as the best: "*Masonry is the activity of closely united men who, employing symbolic forms borrowed principally from the masonic trade and from architecture, work for the welfare of mankind, striving morally to enoble themselves and others, and thereby to bring about a universal league of mankind, which they aspire to exhibit even now on a small scale.*" Newton utilizes this chapter to expound upon this interpretation.

The second chapter is titled "*The Masonic Philosophy.*" Although I find it most interesting, it would be undesirable and unworthy to discuss Newton's philosophy on Masonry in this brief paragraph. Newton attempted to set the matter of his philosophy in his short poem:

No deep is deep enough to show – The springs whence being start to flow.
No fastness of the soul reveals – Life's subtlest impulse and appeals.
We seem to come, we seem to go; - But whence or wither who can know?
 Unemptiable, unfillable, - It's all in one syllable
God! Only God. God first, God last. - God, infinitesimally vast;
 God who is love, love which is God, - The rootless, everflowing rod!

He also covers the difference between "faith" and "deep faith," and expounds on atheism as an unrealistic alternative. So much more is in this chapter – too much to present here in a rational mode.

“*The Spirit of Masonry*,” the third chapter, defines Masonry as “friendship.” First, friendship with God, our companion, to help us through life, and friendship with all men that we may help each other through life, is not to be taken lightly. All mankind is included. This, Newton believes, is the true spirit of Masonry. He ends this chapter with “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.” This touching and expressive composition continues to the end of the chapter, the original end of the book.

“*The Unknown Builders*” is found in revised editions from 1951 forward. A little over two pages, it features the need for lodges to set a “Day of Celebration” to honor those brothers from the past, who have given so much to Freemasonry, but whose names may well be forgotten. These are the real heroes, the real builders of Freemasonry. Joseph Fort Newton does an excellent job eulogizing them.

This is a superb book, containing the history, philosophy and meaning of Masonry. The wisdom of the author, and the beauty of his expression, will motivate and strengthen the reader’s resolve to become closer to his God, and to love his fellow man, in other words, a better Mason. ***The Builders: A Story and Study of Freemasonry***, is a book that should be read by every Mason. I heartily recommend it.

The Builders: A Story and Study of Freemasonry, is available through on-line book sellers, or at any good bookstore.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

PRACTICAL FREEMASONRY

Matt Gallagher

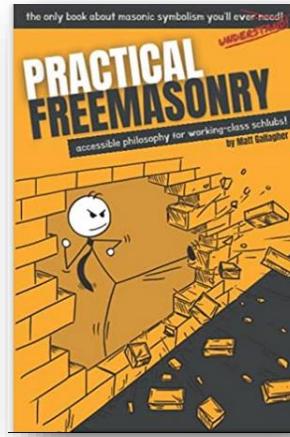
Reviewed by: Keith W. Gunkel, Past Master, Orion Lodge No. 222

I have to say that reading Matt Gallagher's ***Practical Freemasonry*** opened my eyes to the symbols of Freemasonry. Symbols that I have taken for granted over my 11-year experience in being a Free and Accepted Mason.

I have a better appreciation for the tools and implements of the craft and their use, as each are highlighted to the degrees. This book would be enjoyable for the Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason.

As Matt Gallagher described his experience with his travels, it was, for me, like looking in a mirror. I felt like I had followed in his footsteps. Going to lodge month after month, seeking answers to my personal questions only to return home or reflecting back during the drive home and wondering what just happened in the hour to hour and a half meeting that would answer my questions – questions as to *why* we do *what* we do in ritual and degree work to make a man better.

The author describes the three levels of understanding as Axiomatic, the Practical, and the Esoteric, and how they are used and how they differ. He illustrates them in a simple manner and uses perfect examples to form a better understanding.



Practical Freemasonry is about practicing Freemasonry, but if you don't have the knowledge of the tools and symbols and how to use them, it's all for naught. We need to find out what the meanings of our symbols are, so that we can better ourselves and shine brightly.

The twenty pages dedicated to the 24" gauge are loaded with useful information that should be followed by all Masons and taught to every Entered Apprentice, carefully.

Next is the Common Gavel and its uses, made known to us in a contemporary time. Gallagher explains how to use the gavel, not only on ourselves, but also on other brothers to shape us as living stones and also our lodge as a Temple.

We move on to the section of the Fellowcraft and the three tools assigned to this degree. These tools are not used to measure or chip away. These are building tools – designing tools. The square measures right and wrong. The author gives great examples comparing universal morality, relative morality and their meaning.

Brother Gallagher gives simple and clear examples of how to define a man of moral character in the ways needed. The plumb is described as man's narrative path through life, and the three stages we each Travel

as a child, adult and aged man approaching the end of our travels. Included is the wonderful exercise in self betterment that we can use weekly for a month or year to report to ourselves our progress. Maybe our family and friends or co-workers will notice.

The section on the level gave me some interesting new insight. Not only about time (I was aware of that), but that we are all equal in one aspect – the inevitability of death!

Part three of ***Practical Freemasonry*** discusses the Master's tools and what a true Master Mason is and seeks to be come. We are building the walls to make a Temple, not to separate, but to unite and strengthen to hold together. In today's times there are so many different Masonic Lodges. There are ones that have a regular business meeting, research lodges, and lodges for ritual. Brothers, our Craft is in dire need of reflection on who we are, why we do the things we do in degree work and how to be a positive leader in Lodge. To apply the mortar of brotherhood, set clear goals, lead from the front, be decisive and show positive behavior so fellow brothers will want to be at Lodge.

I will quote Brother Gallagher in his own definition, "Freemasonry is merely a philosophy of morality, ethics, and living. Wisdom and philosophy is in the doing and not the knowing."

Please keep searching.

Published in 2021, ***Practical Freemasonry*** is available through online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE ETHICS OF FREEMASONRY

Dudley Wright

Reviewed by Brian T. Evans Jr., PM, Lexington Lodge No. 1

Few books less than one hundred pages can make such an impact on so many levels to the reader. Dudley Wright's *The Ethics of Freemasonry*, which consists of a mere eighty-eight pages and is slightly larger than the average smartphone, does just that.

The book's title caught my attention and reminded me of a college course that I took called "Business Ethics." That course was for a full semester and had dozens of assignments and tests, yet the core lesson can be summarized in one simple statement, "there is no such thing as business ethics; there is just ethics." The lessons of that course, however, were in the implementation of ethics, which is much easier said than done unless one commits consistent time and energy to study and understand ethical practices.

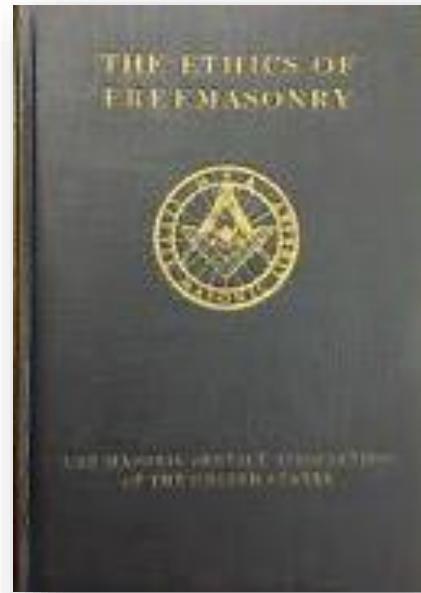
Could a similar statement be made for Freemasonry, "there is no such thing as ethics of Freemasonry; there is just ethics?" I was soon to find out.

Ethics is a guiding philosophy defined as moral principles that govern an individual or group's behavior or the conduct of an activity. It is founded on standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually regarding rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues.

The Ethics of Freemasonry was published in 1924, and Dudley Wright wastes no time helping Masons better understand the answer to the question, "why are we Freemasons?" This question may seem obvious and trivial to many Masons as we often hear responses such as: "I want to be a better person, a better husband, a better father, etc." But do we, as Masons, really know *how* to do this? And perhaps a better question is, "are we honestly implementing the lessons of Freemasonry in our daily lives, as we obligate ourselves to do?"

I would challenge most Mason's affirmative responses to that question, including myself. If we're being completely honest with ourselves, we know that the implementation of ethics is much more difficult than the attempted belief and understanding of it.

Wright says, "Masonry is a deep unfathomable mine. For the candidate to fully comprehend the magnificence and utility of Freemasonry, he must become a plodding and diligent student of the hidden mysteries of nature and of science. Freemasonry is ever new, and it responds today to the call of human nature and the needs of the heart just as readily as it did centuries ago."



Too often, we as humans feel the need to display a perception of ourselves to the world that lacks the genuineness of our private lives. Wright says, “until the tenants of the Craft are demonstrated in our daily life, we are but Ritualists only and not real Masons; honorary or passive members instead of honorable and active workers of the world’s history. Our tenants have ever been a response to the world’s needs because Freemasonry stands for the things that are eternal.”

Wright also occasionally addresses the opponents of Freemasonry throughout this book. To the claims of Freemasonry being anti-Christian or setting plots against the government, he says, “one’s ignorance could easily have been overcome by a brief survey of Freemasonry’s achievements. It is clear that Freemasonry is working for the friendship of the whole human family and is not only bringing man nearer to man, but it is bringing man nearer to God without the aid or hindrance of sectarianism.”

As the book continues, Wright makes some very direct statements about the members of our Craft, stating, “every member of the Craft is either an asset or a liability. Every lodge member who is not a real benefit to his fellow man is a liability and not an asset, and if the majority of members in any lodge answer to that description, then the lodge itself becomes a drag on the community and prevents progress.”

Now that’s a statement that will either motivate you or upset you as a Freemason. If it upsets you, then I challenge you to ask yourself why you feel offended or defensive toward such a statement. Would you not agree that some men make our lodges better and others make our lodges worse? Do you know by name and face all the men in your lodge? If not, is that because you don’t attend regularly or because they don’t? If your lodge’s attendance has faded, why? Has the quality of the men in your lodge been watered down because the West Gate has been weakened?

Wright continues, “If the lessons of Freemasonry are not being used, then it is being wasted; the liabilities within are increasing at a rapid rate. Strength or weaknesses, solvency or bankruptcy, will be the fate of Freemasonry.”

Keep in mind that this book was written in 1924. Clearly, the problems that face our Craft today were present even one hundred years ago. Which begs the question, how will Freemasonry fare with the passing of another century?

Despite directly pointing the finger at the primary problems of Freemasonry - its members, Wright doesn’t harp on this for the sake of creating drama or creating feelings of guilt within the Masonic reader about the Fraternity. Quite the contrary. Wright remains extremely positive throughout the book. He reminds us that we are all ambassadors of the Craft, saying, “if every member of the Craft would regard himself as its Ambassador, or Apostle, and live accordingly, the slurs and aspersions against the institution would fade away entirely.”

Wright reminds us that Freemasons should constantly ask ourselves: “What have I done for Freemasonry?” He states that the strength and greatness of Freemasonry lays within our intelligence, our service to others, the practice of our tenants, the remembrance of our landmarks, and the benevolence and love we share with society. According to Wright, “Freemasonry is a great University where men come together on the common ground of mutual esteem, respect, and fraternity. There the minor differences of creed and opinion are forgotten: hand clasps hand, eye greets eye, and hearts thrill and throb in unison.”

The first question all Masons are asked when being initiated into Freemasonry is, “where did you first become a Mason?” The answer is, “in my heart.” Wright’s book, *The Ethics of Freemasonry*, does a

superb job of reminding the reader of the natural and unbreakable connection between ethics and Freemasonry. The connection is so obvious, that a Mason could easily argue that ethics is a characteristic planted in all our hearts when we are born.

The Ethics of Freemasonry is available in print-on-demand editions from online book sellers. Original copies are occasionally found in antiquarian bookstores.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

IN SEARCH OF LIGHT A COURSE OF HIEROGLYPHIC AND MORAL INSTRUCTION FOR THE SYMBOLIC LODGE

Robert G Davis

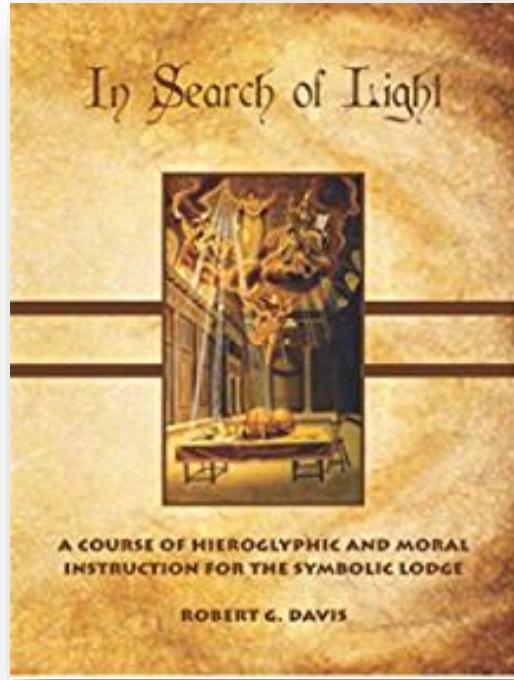
Reviewed by: Keith W. Gunkel, Past Master, Orion Lodge No. 222

The most recent book by M. W. Brother Robert W. Davis, Past Grand Master of Oklahoma, *In Search of Light: A Course of Hieroglyphic and Moral Instruction for the Symbolic Lodge*, is a must read for those brothers who are seeking the answers to the question of why we do what we do. In this excellent work, M. W. Brother Davis explains in detail the purpose and the meaning of each of the Degrees of the Symbolic Lodge.

Organized in separate sections for each of the three Degrees that we perform, *In Search of Light* illustrates the actions, working tools and symbols involved. M. W. Brother Davis shares the real purpose for a rite of initiation, which is to put closure on the process of becoming a man.

The journey from adulthood to maturity is one wherein we must convert the child within each of us into our broader and overall sense of self. The Entered Apprentice Degree is described completely in detail from the history of how this Degree originated, and who was involved and why. The rituals of opening and closing a Lodge, the qualifications needed for genuinely experiencing Freemasonry, preparation (in all senses), and why a Lodge is laid out the way it is are fully explained.

The Fellow Craft Degree is also described, and particularly how it differs from the first Degree, as it is particularly devoted to science, nature, and art. The different working tools are shown and explained as they are in the Entered Apprentice Degree, devoting great detail as to their use and meaning. Also described are the pillars representing Portals of Transformation, and the steps of the winding stairs, including what each step represents to a Mason. As a Fellow Craft, we receive Divine Truth, and as a Fellow Craft we represent the world of the soul.



As Master Mason, we have gained great progress in our search of oneness with our soul. M. W. Brother Davis makes clear how we discover ourselves and who we are, and what will be required of each Brother in his quest for self-affirmation as a man, role model, and an example to his peers.

As in the previous sections, he describes the working tools of the Degree, and how and why we use them. He explains the nature of the Third Degree of Freemasonry, and how it follows a different path than the earlier degrees. He explains in detail why, in large part, the Master's Degree (the "Legend of the Temple") is a mystery play.

In Search of Light is roughly 145 pages in length, and is well illustrated with photographs and symbols familiar to Freemasons. Despite its seeming brevity, it is exceptionally comprehensive in its treatment of the process of passing through the Degrees. Many Lodges have adopted ***In Search of Light*** as the basis for a structured education program, used to augment the existing proficiency examinations that are currently in place. ***In Search of Light*** goes far beyond mere rote learning of the proficiencies, however. It offers a path to understanding the meaning behind each one. Further, it leaves the reader with the clear realization that passing through the Degrees is only the beginning of one's Masonic journey. The Degrees equip men with the tools essential to lead fulfilling lives, but it is up to each Mason to fully engage in the practice of Freemasonry.

In ending this review, it is my finding that Lodges should indulge in the information presented so well within these pages. Use all of the contents as educational lessons to better the Craft and the Lodge. Freemasonry is concerned with the journey of a man's life, and this excellent work provides a clear roadmap for such journey.

In Search of Light is likely to become a work that will continue to be in use long after this present generation of Freemasons has passed. Like Freemasonry itself, it has a certain timeless quality. It would not at all be surprising to learn that ***In Search of Light*** is eventually considered one of the most significant books about Freemasonry published in the 21st century.

In Search of Light: A Course of Hieroglyphic and Moral Instruction for the Symbolic Lodge, published in 2021, is available from online booksellers, or may be purchased directly from the author at www.robertgdavis.net. Other works by M. W. Brother Davis are available at this site, as well.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE MASTER'S BOOK

Carl H. Claudy

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

In many ways, a man's Masonic journey seems to proceed along two parallel tracks. One track follows the intellectual and spiritual paths offered by Freemasonry. The other track follows the organizational rules and regulations that are necessary for the orderly transaction of business and the management of the administration of the Lodge. In recent years, American Freemasonry has taken on a decidedly mechanical approach, emphasizing the latter path at the expense of the former.

In *The Master's Book*, legendary Masonic writer Carl H. Claudy demonstrates that the two tracks are not mutually exclusive.

Carl H. Claudy (1879 – 1957) was one of American Freemasonry's most prolific and influential writers.

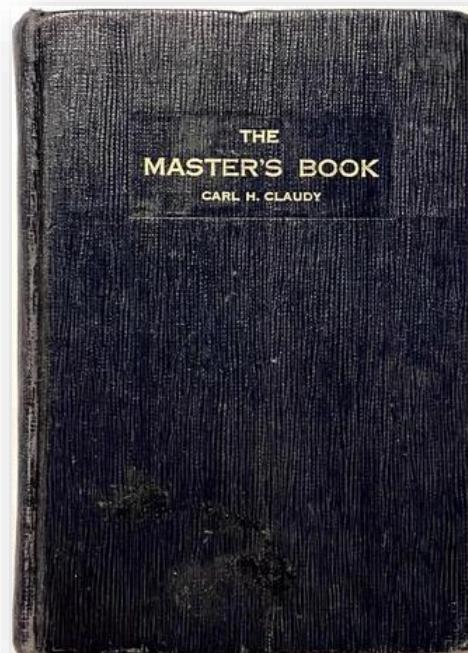
A native of the District of Columbia, he became a member of Washington, D. C.'s Harmony Lodge No. 17 in 1908. He served as Master of the Lodge in 1932, and in 1943 was installed as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia. M. W. Brother Claudy was perhaps best known for his work as writer and editor of "The Short Talk Bulletin" distributed by the Masonic Service Association.

The author of numerous articles, plays and books about Freemasonry, most of which are still widely circulated, M. W. Brother Claudy used *The Master's Book* to provide incoming Lodge Masters with a roadmap to a successful term in office.

Brief, and to the point, The Master's Book consists of ten chapters, each of which address a specific aspect of the leadership required to successfully man the helm of a Masonic Lodge.

Fittingly, M. W. Claudy begins with a chapter called, "Preparing To Be Master." He encourages incoming Masters to use their time wisely to lay a proper foundation for the year in which they will occupy the Oriental Chair. He cites the necessity of becoming familiar with Masonic law and ritual as the cornerstones on which the Master's term will rest. Brother Claudy also directs his readers to spend time reviewing the annual proceedings of the Grand Lodge of their respective jurisdictions. He points out that a study of the proceedings gives the incoming Master a perspective not to be found elsewhere. This perspective allows him to evaluate the challenges that he will face in the year that he serves as Master of his Lodge in the context needed to make the decisions necessary to carry out the mission of the Lodge.

The second chapter is captioned, "Powers of A Master." Here, Brother Claudy carefully distinguishes the powers inherent in the Master's chair with those found in leadership positions in other organizations. While it is well



recognized that there are but few limits on the powers of the Master of a Masonic Lodge, Brother Claudy presciently writes, "Power is constructive only when used with knowledge." The knowledge to which Brother Claudy is referring is the knowledge of Freemasonry as a whole, and not merely its mechanical aspects.

Chapter three is titled, "Duties of A Master." In this chapter, M. W. Claudy includes a discussion of how to motivate men to come to Lodge. While he concedes the allure of many things that may distract men from attendance at Lodge (activities such as movies, sports, concerts or dining out), he points out that there is one item available in Masonic Lodges that is unavailable anywhere else. That one thing is Freemasonry! Brother Claudy urges his readers to focus on the delivery of Freemasonry at Lodge meetings, and makes the convincing argument that the Master who does so will capture the interest of the members of his Lodge, thereby generating greater attendance.

The fourth chapter discusses Masonic law, and here Brother Claudy encourages his readers to not only be familiar with the Constitution of their various jurisdictions, but to also develop a working knowledge of Anderson's Constitutions and the Old Charges. Again, this knowledge provides a foundation and a perspective that a Master will need in deciding questions of Masonic law within his Lodge.

M. W. Brother Claudy called the fifth chapter, "The Art of Presiding," and he makes a forceful case that the act of presiding over a Masonic Lodge is, indeed, an art. A Master of a Lodge has something of a balancing act before him. He must be attentive and respectful to the officers and members of his Lodge, but, at the same time, must retain a firm control over the proceedings. Brother Claudy offers that the Master who is respectful to the institution of Freemasonry is likely to receive respect in return from his Brethren.

Chapter six is quaintly titled, "Entertainment and Attendance." Here, Brother Claudy writes that if men feel that attendance at Lodge is entertaining, they are more apt to be regular in their presence. It is important to understand, however, that Brother Claudy uses the word "entertainment" in its broadest sense. Each of the examples of "entertainment" that he cites are what Masons of the 21st century would likely refer to as "education." Brother Claudy writes, "But attendance, in itself, is of no value if nothing is given to those who attend." He cites the incorporation of Masonic debates, the inclusion of outside speakers and the utilization of music as ways to capture the interest of members, promote attendance, and advance the aim and purpose of the Lodge.

In Chapter seven, "Set the Craft to Labor," M. W. Brother Claudy discusses the importance of directing the labors of the Lodge, both inside and outside its walls. He encourages Masters to approach their duties with enthusiasm, with the result being that it will be met with a corresponding enthusiasm from the Lodge.

Chapter eight is titled, "Secretary, Wardens, Past Masters." In this chapter, M. W. Brother Claudy discusses the relationship that the Master should have with each of these Brothers. Stressing the need for tact and diplomacy in developing relationships with these men, he points out the obvious advantages that a Master may realize from winning their support during the year he is in office. Brother Claudy also takes time to discuss the responsibility of the Master to use his term in office to mentor and develop the Wardens who may eventually succeed to the East.

The ninth chapter, "Lodge Finances," is exactly what its title implies, and addresses the need for fiscal responsibility and accountability within the Lodge.

Chapter ten, the final chapter, is titled, "The Ideal." In it, Brother Claudy writes:

"An ideal is the perfection towards which we stretch eager hands – but never grasp.

"The ideal Master has never presided in any East, for the ideal Master would be perfect and perfection is not given to human beings.

"But the clearer and more attractive is the ideal before us, the more strenuously we may strive towards it, and the nearer we may approach it."

Brother Claudy's point is simple. The ideal Master is a philosopher, a judge, a guide and a friend. While perfection is not to be found among men, and, therefore, not among Masters, it is no less the goal for which we should aim.

The Master's Book offers sound instruction and imparts wisdom to those who would be Masters of their Lodge. It is as relevant today as it was when first published. M. W. Brother Carl H. Claudy left Freemasonry with a significant body of meaningful works. ***The Master's Book*** is numbered among those works, and illustrates that the approach to leadership in Masonic Lodges both can, and should, incorporate the intellectual and spiritual qualities of Freemasonry along with the administrative skills needed to manage the organization.

The Master's Book, originally published in 1935, remains available from online booksellers and Masonic supply companies.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THOMAS SMITH WEBB

FREEMASON – MUSICIAN – ENTREPRENEUR

Herbert T. Leyland

Reviewed By Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge Of Research

Thomas Smith Webb (1771 – 1819) left an indelible mark on American Freemasonry and remains one of the most influential men in the history of the Craft in this country.

Dayton, Ohio attorney Herbert T. Leyland, in *Thomas Webb Smith: Freemason – Musician – Entrepreneur*, gives a revealing account of Webb's life, which began in colonial America, and ended in the uncertain years of the early republic. After reading Leland's work, one is left to contemplate what might have been had Webb's circumstances been more stable throughout his life. Leyland's work is as much a glimpse into life in the early days of the United States, as it is a useful biography of the father of American Masonic ritual.

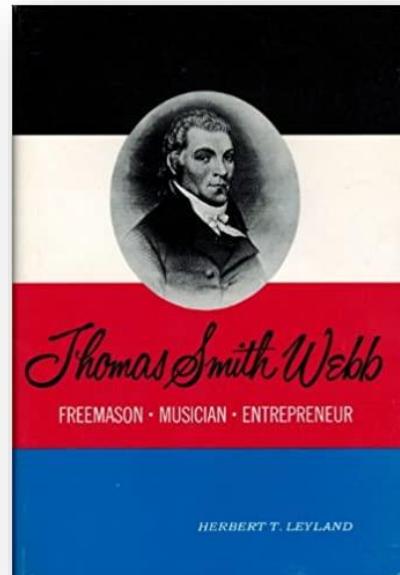
Webb was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1771. The sixth child of Samuel and Margaret Webb, Thomas was named after a maternal great-uncle. His father, Samuel, was a shopkeeper and a bookbinder. Samuel Webb experienced very little success in his business ventures. Leyland posits that available records indicate that Samuel actually put very little effort into his businesses. As a result, the Webb family was frequently in dire financial straits.

As a boy, young Thomas had a front row seat from which to observe the American Revolution. As Boston occupied center stage of the early scenes of the War for Independence, news and conversations about the war and the fledgling nation would have been all around him.

At an early age, Thomas began to help in his father's shop. The bookbinding business appealed to him, and, between the time set aside for his schooling and attending to other chores, he began to learn the rudiments of the trade.

In 1790, Webb, at the tender age of 19, set out for Keene, New Hampshire, where he opened his first bookbindery. That same year, he became a member of Rising Sun Lodge No. 3 in Keene, being raised as a Master Mason on December 27, St. John the Evangelist's Day.

The year 1793 found Webb in Hartford, Connecticut. It was in this city that he became engaged in the manufacturing of wallpaper, which became his primary trade for the remainder of his life. Wallpaper manufacturing melded nicely with bookbinding, and Webb was able to merge his artistic inclinations with his business aspirations. His sojourn in Hartford, however, was quite brief; and he moved to Albany, New York at the end of the year.



In Albany, he affiliated with Union Lodge, and became Secretary of the Lodge in 1794. Webb later was a charter member of Temple Lodge in Albany, eventually serving as Master of that Lodge, and in 1796 he became a Royal Arch Mason during a visit to Philadelphia.

Leyland recounts that 1797 was a pivotal year in Webb's life. In that year, he published the first edition of his *Freemason's Monitor, or Illustrations of Masonry*. Webb edited and revised the ritual compiled by English Freemason William Preston. Webb's *Monitor* included the three Craft Degrees, plus the four degrees of the Royal Arch.

Notoriety from the publication of the *Monitor* added credibility to Webb's involvement in the organization of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, also founded in 1797. Webb served as the first Grand Scribe of that body.

By 1799, Webb had again moved, this time to Providence, Rhode Island. It was during his years in Providence, 1799 to around 1815, that he experienced the most stable period of his life. Again engaged in the business of manufacturing wallpaper and selling books, Webb achieved a degree of financial success, which enabled him to own his own home and start a family. Webb actively participated in the civic life of Providence, and his business interests expanded to include insurance and milling. Unfortunately, the financial crisis that followed the War of 1812 crushed Webb's several ventures and reduced him to a state of genteel poverty.

One of the more interesting features of Leyland's work is the story of Webb's interest in music, and his efforts as a composer and arranger of music. As a regular churchman in Providence, Webb organized a choir and wrote and directed several musical programs performed for both church and community. Records indicate that Webb also wrote and performed music for Masonic Lodges of the era.

In 1801, Webb became a member of St. John's Lodge in Providence. It was during his time as a Rhode Island Freemason that he lent his name and prestige to the unsuccessful efforts to form a General Grand Lodge of the United States. While in Rhode Island, subsequent editions of the *Monitor* were published, adding to Webb's renown. In 1813, and again in 1814, he was elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island. Offered re-election in 1815, he declined, as efforts to revive a failing investment in a grist mill caused him to leave Providence for Walpole, Massachusetts.

Following the ultimate failure of the mill, Webb, like many financially distressed Americans following the War of 1812, looked to the west to resuscitate his fortunes. In 1816, he set out for Ohio, scouting the frontier for business opportunities, as well as enjoying Masonic fellowship in newly established Lodges in the west. His travels also brought him to Kentucky, where he visited both Louisville and Lexington. Interestingly, Leyland recounts that while in Lexington, Webb spent a week as a guest at the inn operated by Samuel Postlethwait, an early member of Lexington Lodge No. 1. During his visit, he installed the officers of three Royal Arch Chapters at the Masonic Hall in Lexington.

Webb's visit to Kentucky also had a Masonic purpose. At the time, the Grand Lodge of Kentucky assumed jurisdiction over chartering Royal Arch Chapters. Webb was able to convince the Kentucky Grand Lodge, along with others engaged in a similar practice, to allow the General Grand Chapter to charter Royal Arch Chapters.

During this period Webb was also engaged in the formation of a General Grand Encampment of Knights Templar. Instituted in 1816 in New York City, Webb was named Deputy Grand Master – a position that he held until his death.

Leyland recounts an important story about Jeremy Cross's relationship with Webb. An itinerant Masonic lecturer, Cross sought Webb's stamp of approval as a reliable source of Masonic work. After spending several days with Webb in August of 1817, Cross eventually received the desired certification that he was, in fact, a capable instructor in the Craft and Capitular Degrees of Freemasonry. Cross traded on this brief, but critical, encounter with Webb for the remainder of his life.

Again traveling west in search of business prospects, Webb was stricken by a cerebral hemorrhage and died on July 6, 1819 in Cleveland, Ohio. Webb was interred with Masonic honors in Cleveland. His body was exhumed and reinterred in Providence, Rhode Island later that year.

By the time of Webb's death, his ***Monitor*** was in its seventh edition, and included a brief history of Freemasonry in America, the monitorial parts of the "Ineffable Degrees," and several Masonic songs and odes. Following his death, new editions of the ***Monitor*** continued to be reprinted, until finally falling into the public domain. While a founding father of both the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons and the General Grand Encampment of the Knights Templar, it is Webb's restatement of William Preston's ritual that is his most lasting contribution to Freemasonry.

Although an iconic figure in Freemasonry, Thomas Smith Webb remains something of a mystery to most of the Craft. Herbert T. Leyland's work brings Webb into focus and provides a much-needed record of his life and work. After reading Leyland's biography of Webb, one has a sense of a life interrupted.

Thomas Smith Webb: Freemason – Musician - Entrepreneur was published in 1965 by the Chapter of Research of the Grand Chapter R. A. M. of Ohio. Although now out of print, it remains available from online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

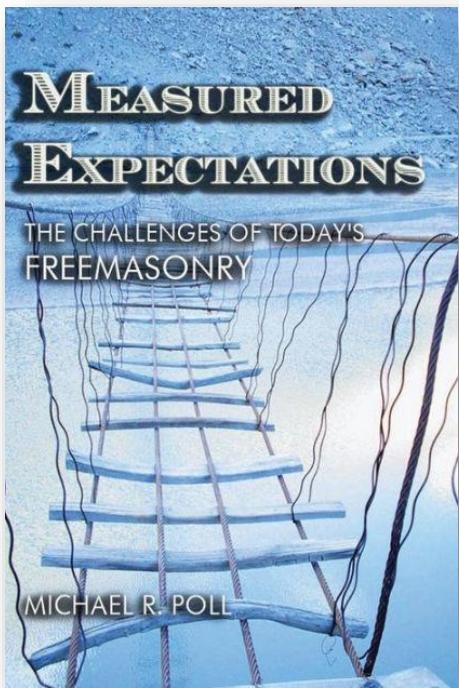
MEASURED EXPECTATIONS

THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY'S FREEMASONRY

Michael R. Poll

Reviewed by Dr. Michael Bronner, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Michael R. Poll's book, *Measured Expectations: The Challenges of Today's Freemasonry*, published by Cornerstone Book Publishers of New Orleans, LA, in 2017, and reprinted in 2022, is a valuable collection of nearly two dozen wide ranging Masonic papers that direct the reader's attention to essential Craft tools that can enhance all Masonic experience. Indeed, at the outset of this review, my first—and lasting—impression was ‘This is such an informative and helpful piece of literature that it should be in every Mason’s library.’ Yes, it is that good and serves as a guide when traveling our Masonic road. It reminds me of *The New Yorker* magazine format with separate—and captivating—articles, which encourages us to read every one of them.



To begin with, the following—only slightly edited—is a summary from the back cover of his publication:

“This down to earth book by Bro. Poll provides suggestions and advice on dealing with Lodge and Scottish Rite issues such as Masonic law, Lodge operation(s), visitors, poor degrees, meals, officer roles, poor attendance, Masonic philosophy and history, the future of Freemasonry, and so much more. It is written in an easy-to-read style with the goal of providing the new or seasoned Mason with useful information to help make their Lodge experience of greater value.” In its opening pages, it soon becomes obvious why this informative book was honored as the **Book of the Year for Illinois Masonry** by that state’s Grand Master in 2017.

The articles here, separate ideas as distinguished from linked chapters that I call essays, are wide-ranging and together provide an informative guide for both new and experienced Masons. The book leads off with a thoughtful *Introduction* that responds to the oft-mentioned complaint that ‘. . . everyone

knows the basics of lodge operation, . . . either the books assume

too much or are written in such a ‘highbrow’ manner that no one can understand them. The collection is designed to be something of a beginner’s guide to ‘doing things’ in Masonry as well as a bit of plain talk regarding some of our teachings. Included are thoughts that touch on the basics of lodge operation, laws, practices, and the nature of Freemasonry. I comment here on a selected few essays with brief comments added.

The first topic selected, each one identified by an asterisk (*), is entitled *A Young Man Joins a Masonic Lodge*. This essay covers—rather extensively--what an initiate experience when he proposes to enter our Craft. The essay concludes with the question, is Freemasonry of value? Value is a perception, and if you do not treat something as if it is special or valuable, it is not. This lead-off discussion establishes Poll's philosophy, and another entire book could be written on this single topic alone.

Another important discussion follows. (*) *Masonic Ritual in the United States*. The nature of this topic—ritual—scares many Masons; however, this topic focuses more on the history of Freemasonry and on the AASR, Bro. Poll's special focus, rather than on specific details of our Masonic ritual. As such, an understanding of our history and its development is important to all Freemasons.

Knowing from whence we came and our rich history—from the early 1700s to multiple Grand Lodges and a variety of Masonic rites—the Order of the Royal Secret, the French or Modern Rite, and the Egyptian Rite of Memphis, among others—is also important. Early Masonic organizations: the United Grand Lodge of England—the Moderns and the Ancients, for example—did merge in 1813 but, until then, both—like many other lodges—were highly competitive and tended to believe their rituals were superior to the others.

Returning to our history, Poll writes that Freemasonry, as best as we can tell, had existed in New Orleans since 1752. The population and inhabitants' disposition via the French language matched the composition of its members, but not everyone was French! Of course, the expansion of the country after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, created even more confusion and the possibility of having one Grand Lodge for the entire country was of concern and had been under heated discussion for years. When the dust finally settled, however, there was to be one Grand Lodge per state with one primary Craft ritual per state as well. It was important for every state to be considered independent, yet maintain a mirror image of its colleagues in organization and structure. While there are several rituals that can be used in lodge activities, there was one generally accepted Craft ritual, largely ascribed to Thomas Smith Webb and originally termed, of course, as the 'Webb Ritual.' This ritual, which was developed in the late 1700s, is also known as the 'American Rite' and was practiced as the primary Craft ritual; however, the Webb Ritual prevailed and is now known as such. Poll raises an interesting point when he states: "With different rituals stemming from the French influence in Louisiana, since we also know that more than one Masonic ritual exists in the world, does it matter at all if we limit our lodges to only one ritual? In my (Poll's) opinion, and from the standpoint of initiation it doesn't matter at all. The differences in rituals are all a matter of choice, a matter of preference, or even just what is available in the area. At best, it's all a matter of taste." Poll argues "The fact that Masonry in the U.S. does not utilize all of the different rituals available, can be viewed as a missed opportunity for variety in lodge meetings, but really, in itself, that is only a minor inconvenience." One may not agree with the author's position, but it certainly provides a variety of options and points of discussion and is a highly debatable point from some corners.

We are then introduced briefly to 'Allied Organizations,' described on the informative art diagram presented in the Masonic Ritual essay, which includes the Shrine, Grotto, the Eastern Star, and others. Allied Organizations are outside the craft lodge, as Poll notes, and outside of the actual rites of Freemasonry, but are still affiliated with them.

The author then moves us to two separate Masonic Rites, which are dominant in the U.S.—the York Rite and the Scottish Rite (Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite)—both of which reflect continued degree-level Masonic Systems. The York Rite is often considered to be the very much older such rite, having roots in AD 923 in York, England, but more commonly recognized as being organized in the late 1700s in New

York. The AASR was, according to Poll, created in Charleston, S.C. in 1801. These two Rites illustrate these systems via a wonderful diagram/artwork showing both as ‘complete systems,’ each with their own unique craft lodge steps, rituals and characteristics; the York Rite leading to the degree of Knight Templar; the AASR leading to the degree of Sovereign Grand Inspector General (33rd degree).

The ‘steps of Freemasonry,’ is a valuable tool that illustrates what can be a confounding series of degrees within Freemasonry by providing a wonderful visual map (albeit with very small print) that illustrates the various steps within each system. It is also important to realize that all stages of each Rite must begin after the Master Mason degree. This graphic work alone is worthy of acquisition!

Finally, while our history is long, deep and varied, this underlying understanding, provides us with the working concepts essential for self-improvement. The ritual gives us the tools with which we can work to this end.

Moving on, the following summary will give the reader an idea of the wide scope of Poll’s essays. Specific points with a brief discussion for selected topics are identified by an asterisk and the selection of these comes from this reviewer’s likes and perspectives:

1. *A Young Man Joins a Masonic Lodge* * (text presented earlier);
2. *Masonic Ritual in the United States* * (text presented earlier);
3. *With the Goal of Helping the Masonic Legend of Hiram – Another Look* (This is a symbolic story worth retelling);
4. *The Scottish Rite Double Headed Eagle (Phoenix?)* (An examination of the AASR symbol);
5. *The Tactics of the Anti-Masons* * (Clever salesmen and con artists whose time hopefully seems to have passed) ;
6. *The Ritual Trap* * (It is essential to elect content-competent officers and not just those with long service);
7. *Burning the Candle at Both Masonic Ends* (Focus needed on the ability and the understanding of when to say ‘no’);
8. *Should we Allow EA’s in the Lodge Business Meetings?* * (This is one of the more interesting and debated topics concerning Lodge participation);
9. *When Masons Come Knocking - Visiting Masons* (A brief primer on attending to speakers and visitors);
10. *Who are you? Who am I?* (Electronic communications – think carefully before you hit ‘send’);
11. *When the Best Help is to Walk Away* (Sometimes Lodge and individual help is neither required nor necessary and may in fact result in doing more harm than good);
12. *Be the Scottish Rite* (A Southern Jurisdiction look at Scottish Rite symbolism);
13. *The Lodge Meal* (Food for thought and other cautions);
14. *Masonic Jurisprudence - the Laws of Freemasonry* (A thoughtful discussion of Masonic philosophy, laws and behavior for the individual Mason, through the Worshipful Master to the Grand Lodge);
15. *The ‘Four’ Bodies of the Scottish Rite* (In the Southern Jurisdiction: Lodge of Perfection, Chapter Rose Croix, Council of Kadosh, and the Consistory);
16. *The New Atlantis and Freemasonry* (A discussion of the terms: religion, spirituality, religious, and spiritual in the Masonic context);
17. *Words to the New Mason* (Three critical elements: desire to be initiated; the desire to initiate; and the proper setting);
18. *We Need Someone to Speak!* (A roadmap for (outside) Lodge speakers from the invitation to the final thank you);

19. *The Role of Music in Freemasonry* (Music in the Lodge from Mozart and Haydn to Jerome Kern and John Philip Sousa—one of the seven liberal arts in Masonry);
20. *The Cause and Effect of Freemasonry* (Masonic teamwork and coaching is critical; also know when to double back when you're on the wrong path);
21. *Esoteric Initiation* (Masonry and the Rosicrucians--first cousins?); and
22. *About the Author* (A brief biography)

Of the many pertinent essays presented, these five attracted my attention; two of them have been discussed previously:

*A Young Man Joins a Masonic Lodge;

*Masonic Ritual in the United States;

*The Tactics of the Anti-Masons;

*Should We Allow EAs in Lodge Business Meetings; and

*The Ritual Trap

While our Craft history is long, deep and varied, the underlying philosophy and its understanding, provides us with the working tools to improve ourselves. The ritual gives us the blueprint, which guides our work. It is not without criticisms though, as there will always be a few attacks on our work.

The Tactics of the Anti-Masons. While anti-Mason attacks have diminished over the past two or three decades, the ‘internet age’ has provided conspiracy theorists with a vehicle available to anti-Masons everywhere; thus, it is wise to be alert and aware of these concerns. Of course, this technology also provides intelligent defenses to be used as well.

As Poll notes in this essay, there is an ‘absolute gold mine of information on anti-Masons, their techniques and the charges that are commonly put forward by them. The following is an extremely helpful website for obtaining verifiable information and clearing up the smoke created by the anti-Mason crowd. It was developed by Worshipful Brother Ed King of Maine and is entitled ‘Anti-Masonry: Points of View.’ (<http://www.masonicinfo.com>). The website was last updated in 2014; however, the reader may find useful and more current updates.

Fortunately, anti-Mason numbers seemed to have shrunk over the past decade, and part of the reason of course may be due to the current COVID-19 problems or to the pandemic (among others). But ‘real Masons’ should still be aware of this issue and be prepared to deal with it should it reoccur.

While the author spends a good deal of time on his work with the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (AASR)--with five separate references plus additional content, the value of our ritual cannot—or should not be—underestimated. And therein lies the problem. Much of our ritual has been structured primarily in memory work and thus tends to lose emotion and spontaneity when working with the initiate. The feeling and intent of our lectures should be both emotional as well as specific. As a colleague stressed, ‘it’s the emotion you put into your comments that carries the meaning; not just the words used.’ The words themselves are critical, of course, and have been long distilled from ancient wisdom. However, it is the true and deep meaning of the lecture that is essential. When all is said and done, we will long remember the emotion and content of the lecture when it is given with fire and passion. Let us err on the side of enthusiasm rather than on exactness and still retain the essence of the lecture.

Should We Allow EA's in Lodge Business Meetings? The first degree of any Masonic initiation must be at the Entered Apprentice level. But including the Entered Apprentice Mason at the lodge business meetings, traditionally held on the Master Mason level, is a cause of debate with two points of view—would their presence, even passive, provide them with an extensive learning experience for future lodge effectiveness or would their activities at this level muddy the lodge waters by their physical presence? A review of the effectiveness of this activity is yet to be definitively measured and evaluated, but controls on participation have been instituted where this decision has been implemented.

Poll's essays also include a discussion of Masonic structure, introduced earlier. While there are many modifications to the traditional degree structure, most have similar characteristics. For example, the two Masonic Rites, which are dominant in the U.S., are the York Rite and the Scottish Rite. Mentioned previously the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (AASR), is a 33-degree Masonic system, having its roots at the turn of the 19th century in South Carolina. The rituals used by this Rite come from older systems and rituals via France. The other major Masonic rite in the U.S. is commonly known as the York Rite and concludes with the degree of Knight Templar. Albert Mackey earlier used the term 'American Rite' rather than 'York Rite' as he felt the system was distinctly an American creation and to avoid confusion with systems and degrees of a similar name in the UK. Mackey was not successful in affecting this change and York Rite has become the accepted name. The author has been deeply involved in the Scottish Rite over the years, thus one of the foci of his book leads the reader in this direction.

The Ritual Trap. This final segment is often viewed with mixed emotions as many Masons internalize the concept of 'ritual' very differently; some focusing on various approaches to this topic while others shy away from it as esoteric or meaningless. As Poll points out, "I have long believed that within our ritual is the core of our Masonic teachings." I think that for most of us, this position is quite accurate. Generally, the experiences of our Masonic ritual fall into three broad categories:

1. I care about the ritual as I believe it's the cornerstone of our Craft and is deeply meaningful. It's appreciated and worthy of study.
2. The ritual is an OK vehicle in our lodge meetings, and I often learn something from each presentation. However, I can take it or leave it.
3. The ritual gets in the way of our social gatherings at lodge meetings.

Obviously in this reviewer's opinion the first option should be our primary objective but how do we make it so for all? Raising the quality level of lodge performance through our officers' attention to involving our ritual content in their work would certainly help. Our membership would mimic effective performance and making the ritual 'second nature' and a matter of course in lodge work—even a bit at a time--would probably go a long way in removing potential objections to memorization issues.

In addition to the importance of member attire and 'dressing the part' where ritual and lodge participation is involved is also the attitude toward ritual. He says, "In my experience, a common thread in all casual or social club lodges is the apparent disregard (or fear) that they have for learning the ritual." Especially important is his instance that "On the other end of this spectrum is where the ritual is viewed as the cornerstone of the lodge." Thus, the ritual is not only practiced by the officers, but its meaning is also taught in the lodge via a variety of methods: by mimicking leadership practices, providing guest lectures, offering current and retired officer presentations, essays for distribution (as with his book), and even prepared or 'canned PowerPoint lectures' as examples. Within our ritual are very important symbolic teachings and these teachings should be stressed and passed on to all of the membership."

Poll summarizes his writings with his reference to *The Old Charges of a Mason*, which reinforces ritual competence as an honored requirement by citing that “. . .no Master or Warden is chosen by seniority, but for his merit.” Merit is earned by performance, and we understand that the ritual is an essential component of that performance. He reinforces this by stating bluntly that “. . . not everyone has to be a lodge officer.”

While providing these essays and in his conclusion, Poll also acknowledges that “. . . not every lodge can be, wants to be, or needs to be, a highly structured and formal Masonic lodge. A successful lodge can be one where its members simply enjoy each other’s company. Everyone needs to be completely honest with themselves in order to get the most out of every Masonic experience. We need to know ourselves, know who we are, what we are and always strive to be better tomorrow than we are today—by whatever standard we use.” This is our Masonic cornerstone by which to live.

I heartedly recommend Poll’s book! It is full of useful, thought-provoking, and philosophical insights that will make novice through senior Masons think. And isn’t that what we’re all about?

Measured Expectations: The Challenges of Today’s Freemasonry is available from online booksellers and through the author. It is 166 pages, softcover, one black & white illustration; ISBN: 9781613422946, published by Cornerstone Book Publishers, New Orleans, LA

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WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

HOW & WHY FREEMASONRY CAME TO KENTUCKY THE BACKSTORY

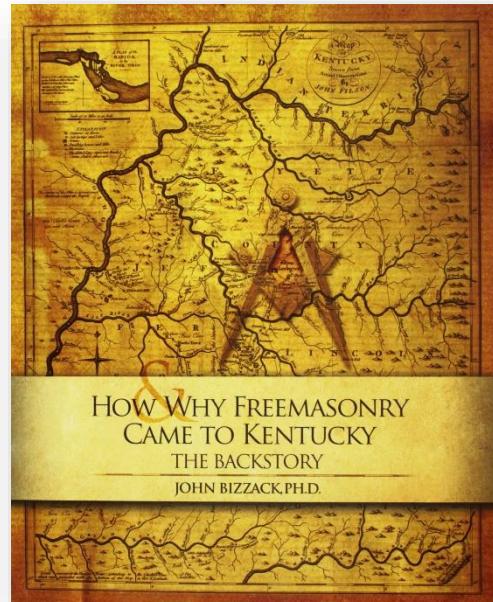
John W. Bizzack, Ph.D.

Reviewed by Michael Bronner, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Whatever its imprecise and intriguing meaning, history begins where you want it to and John W. Bizzack's account of Freemasonry's establishment in Kentucky is a delightful read, full of historical commentary, good research, and many fresh insights. And like a good story, there are many twists and turns that the reader can ponder along the way. Bizzack is a prolific Masonic author and accordingly knows his subject well.

This brief book of about 60 pages is divided into four parts including an Introduction and Prologue. Part I provides the orientation and context as well as the background of 'When Did Kentucky Become Kentucky?' Part II discusses the role of the Craft as Kentucky moved toward statehood with the first officially constituted Lodge. Part III focuses on the interesting role that Major John Belli played during this early period. Part IV provides illustrations and lists prominent Masons of this period and those more recently. Conclusions and an Epilogue summarize the text materials at the end of Parts II and III.

Bizzack begins by describing an early hunting expedition in June of 1775, consisting of a 'small group of men, most of who were Masons' (p. 15), which explored the territory and at one camping site, led to the establishment of the village of McConnell Springs, named for one of the hunting parties. The name of the area around McConnell Springs later evolved into Lexington; however, the recounting of this early history is not without some confusion as various publications did not agree on either the rationale or the name, or the individuals involved in establishing it, or even the precise dates involved. Such is the case of many early history reviews. The author cites a range of plausible research and identifies members of this



hunting party as Masons, and one member, John Maxwell (also called Maxell), was earlier credited with providing the name, ‘Lexington.’

Since the present-day Kentucky was actually a western part of the State of Virginia in 1772—extending west all the way to the Mississippi River—the territory evolved and in 1776 became Kentucky County and 16 years later, in 1792, became a state, now divided into 120 counties, the fourth most numerous in the current U. S. At that point it was called the District of Kentucky, running through various other distinctions prior to statehood.

Responding to a felt need for men to gather and discuss subjects of interest, a Political Club was formed in Danville in 1786 consisting of 35 ‘distinguished men,’ predating the first Kentucky Masonic Lodge. Twelve of these men were known to be Freemasons who had become members earlier through their military and/or political associations. The club served, according to Bizzack, as a ‘training ground’ for the State’s future leadership requirements. While apparently not intentional, little written notice was taken of those individuals and their meetings, which existed from 1786 to 1878, a remarkably long period of time.

This lack of documentation may have been intentional or accidental but since one of the many topics discussed involved Spain’s interest in becoming an ally of a Kentucky secession, a low-key approach would have been critical.

Earlier in 1773 in Williamsburg, Virginia a ‘philosophical society’ had been formed, which provided a similar function later adopted by the Danville Political Club. Such a society had been organized by Benjamin Franklin as early as 1743 in the form of The American Philosophical Society, and a number of the membership of both organizations were similar. It

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was noted by Bizzack that John Adams and John Hancock were among the founding members of the Massachusetts branch in 1748.

The alumni of the Danville Political Club and at least a dozen relatives served in highly placed political and influential positions during this period and as later noted, at least half of their members were Freemasons. Indeed, the Political Club served as a ‘training ground’ for future Masonic lodge officers and political leaders.

The Political Club of Danville operated in association with The Kentucky Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge. This society largely mirrored the membership of the former and often debated the same subjects. It was organized in Williamsburg, Virginia in 1773 with the Political Club following by 13 years. Benjamin Franklin was credited with the concept and the formation of the group—the called the American Philosophical Society—as early as 1748. The organization moved from Virginia to New York City and in 1780 gravitated to Massachusetts.

Members of one society also found homes with another like-minded group and similar organizations cropped up with many having common membership and overlapping agendas. Many discussions focused on similar issues of the associated groups. When the Philosophic Society moved from Williamsburg to Philadelphia and merged with the Political Club, among others, Franklin became the president of the combined societies, serving until his death in 1790. However, that may be, Kentucky still did not have a dedicated Lodge.

While assembling a Masonic Lodge in Kentucky could only be granted by a petition to the Grand Lodge in Virginia, which allowed it to be recognized by other duly constituted lodges, work had to be done. And since the closest lodge in Virginia was more than 250 miles from Kentucky, the need was obvious and Lexington, being in the center of the new State was another obvious choice.

Thus, a formal petition to establish a Kentucky Lodge was created with well-connected leaders including Richard Anderson, Green Clay and John Fowler. These three men, while not comprising the entire list of signers of the petition carried to Richmond, were all Freemasons, and all had military backgrounds. Bizzack credits them as being the prime movers for the establishment of the first Grand Lodge in Kentucky, called Lexington Lodge No. 25. Lexington was the geographic center of the territory and had an expanding business center as well. All three men were well known in Virginia and all three served as early Kentucky Lodge Masters once their petition had been accepted by the Virginia Grand Lodge. Clay, however, was the only one present at Richmond’s petition review. An interesting side note was that there was no agreement that these three men ever travelled together to serve the petition in Virginia, so Clay was the only one of the three present at that time. The territory/terrain and harsh environment were certainly sufficient to create the many hazards serving to make their combined trek extremely difficult.

Bizzack continued to expand on Lexington Lodge No. 25’s contributions and encouragement of other chartered lodges, notably in Paris, Georgetown, Frankfort and Shelbyville. He also

confirmed that Lexington Lodge No. 25 was named as the result that it was the 25th such lodge chartered in Virginia; however, a dozen years later, in 1800 when the Lodge finally received its charter in Kentucky, it was redesignated and renamed Lexington Lodge No. 1, an important distinction today.

In his Conclusions section Bizzack suggests that ‘The importance and role Freemasonry played in the lives of early colonialists cannot be discounted.’ (p. 35) and further relates that ‘. . . when history is examined in context with the times and facts are gathered to support the non-romantic versions offered by early historians, it is clear that Masons in Kentucky without a lodge to attend, the Danville Political Club and the Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge both played key roles, albeit behind the scenes, which led to the charter of Lexington Lodge No. 25 in 1788.’ (p. 36)

Finally, Bizzack provides an interesting Addendum to his book, a section entitled the ‘Enigmatic Life of Major John Belli.’ Only a snippet is included here; however, it was evident that this European-born patrician and ‘gentleman from the old school, and ‘of broad intelligence and of great influence’ was a ‘man of much learning and very influential in Masonic circles.’ (p. 41) It is also interesting to note that Belli was deeply involved in the Political Club as well as the Society, writing the former’s constitution and by-laws and serving as a member of the ten constitutional conventions held in Danville, leading to Kentucky statehood. There is evidence that Belli was a Freemason and a ‘charter member’ of Lexington Lodge No. 25, which was formed in 1788. Belli arrived in Virginia in 1783 from France; he held English, Dutch, and U.S. citizenship and was well recommended to George Washington, Henry Knox and John Jay—among others, most likely through letters through his profitable mercantile business dealings and by influential people in Europe.

Belli was also in service as an ‘agent’ (some say ‘spy’) for George Washington and Secretary of War, Henry Knox, serving as a Quartermaster and Paymaster respectively in Ohio. During the era of Indian uprisings, Belli served under Washington’s ‘confidential mission’ assignment leading to the Battle of Fallen Timbers in mid-1794 against the Western Indian Confederacy of the Ohio Valley under General (‘Mad’) Anthony Wayne.

The issue of Spain’s involvement and intent in Kentucky politics was of great concern at the time and it was hard to dismiss what might have been a potential alliance with Spain, which controlled land on both sides of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. This effectively separated Kentucky from the existing states, possibly forever. Fortunately, the efforts and resolve of the new territory and the effort required changed Spain’s mind and she departed the scene without new territory in hand or on the table.

Belli’s work was effectively done in Kentucky, and he demitted from Lexington Lodge No. 25 in 1796 and appeared to drop out of Masonic life. He retired to his large Ohio estate where he died in 1809. And as Bizzack wryly noted, ‘Belli arrived in Kentucky with little fanfare. He left the same way.’ (p. 42)

Bizzack also includes another story of an intriguing Freemason, General James Wilkinson, who was an active participant in two Danville conventions calling for statehood as well as closer ties with Spain. Wilkinson was not well treated in historical records, citing his 'lack of moral character' and who 'remained a paid secret agent of the Spanish government, a devious, untrustworthy, and corrupt man" (p. 43) Certainly not a friend of Kentucky!

Finally, in conclusion and to provide helpful illustrations to his book, Bizzack included a section called Images for Posterity, which included the names and dates of the Masters of Lexington Lodges Nos. 25 and 1; a map of lodge locations and early Masonic Temple sites; the names of prominent and pioneer Masons; accomplished members and officers; the current lodge room; and the 2015 Officers.

In all Bizzack provides a very interesting book, a fascinating read, and a review of the complex history of the early Freemasons in Kentucky.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE BEGINNINGS OF FREEMASONRY IN AMERICA

CONTAINING A REFERENCE TO ALL THAT IS KNOWN OF FREEMASONRY IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE PRIOR TO 1750, AND SHORT SKETCHES OF THE LIVES OF SOME OF THE PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTERS

Melvin M. Johnson

Review by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

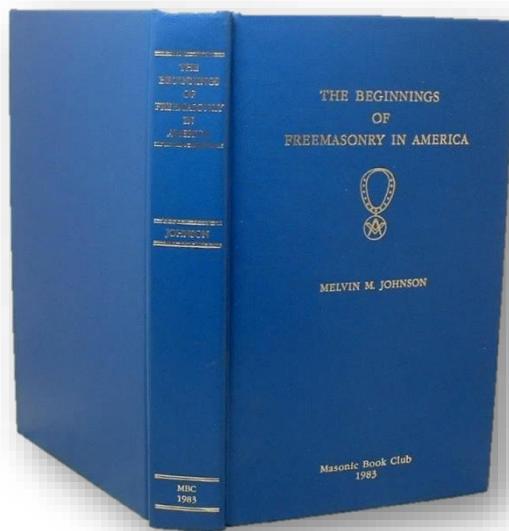
American history and the history of Freemasonry in America are virtually parallel paths. In *The Beginnings of Freemasonry in America*, M. W. Bro. Melvin M. Johnson, PGM of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, provided what is perhaps the first scholarly treatment of when and where Freemasonry came to America, along with who constituted its early leadership.

M. W. Bro. Johnson begins with reviewing the earliest evidences of Freemasons having arrived on the North American continent. In Johnson's account, Jonathan Belcher, a Boston merchant who was made a Mason in England in 1705, became the first Freemason in America. Belcher was appointed to serve as Governor of Massachusetts and New Hampshire and served in that office from 1730 to 1741. In 1730, the Grand Lodge of England claimed jurisdiction over the American colonies. The Grand Master serving at that time, the Duke of Norfolk, appointed Daniel Coxe as Provincial Grand Master for New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Despite his appointment, Coxe, apparently, never actually served as Provincial Grand Master, and in 1733 a new Grand Master, the Duke of Montague, appointed Henry Price as Provincial Grand Master for

"New England, the Dominions and the Territories belonging thereto."

M. W. Bro. Johnson identifies Price as "the founder of Freemasonry" in America.

M. W. Bro. Johnson's narrative begins in earnest, however, with the formation of the first lodges. He reviews the claims of the lodges in Philadelphia and Boston as to which is actually oldest. He points to the existence of a ledger book designated "Lieber B," which appears to substantiate the claim that the lodge is Philadelphia may have been meeting as a "time immemorial" lodge in its earliest period. The Lodge established in Boston, which Johnson refers to as, "First Lodge," was the first American Lodge formally chartered by the Grand Lodge of England.



The Boston Lodge adopted its first set of by-laws in October of 1733. It may be amusing for 21st Century Masons to see that much of the first set of by-laws was devoted to the payment of dues and the necessity of collecting the appropriate fees from newly made Masons before their admittance into the lodge. M. W. Bro. Johnson also recounts the example of the first instance of an American lodge establishing a charity fund to be used for the relief of its members.

Taking the period from 1733 to 1750 on a year-by-year basis, M. W. Bro. Johnson recounts Benjamin Franklin's printing of *Anderson's Constitutions* in 1734, marking the first printing of Masonic material on American soil. In the same year, Henry Price's authority was extended to include all of North America. Freemasonry rapidly found footholds in Georgia (a lodge in Savannah "meeting according to the old customs" in 1734) and South Carolina (1735).

By the middle 1730s, colonial newspapers were regularly reporting accounts of Masonic meetings and publishing articles of particular interest to Masons. One such article appeared in the "Boston Evening Post" in 1736, which reported the persecution of Freemasons in Holland.

Freemasonry's ability to attract ridicule and derision was apparent in the colonies as early as 1738. In that year, the "Boston Evening Post" published two accounts in that reveal the extent to which the Fraternity generated antipathy. The first article was reprinted from a London magazine. It was a parody of a Masonic procession by a group calling themselves "Scald Miserable Masons."

The second article was far more tragic in nature. Apparently, a young Philadelphian, identified only as, "D. R.," desired to become a Freemason. Apprenticed in a Philadelphia shop, he informed his master of his wishes. His master, who was not a Freemason, falsely told "D. R." that he was a Mason and that he would arrange for his entry into the Fraternity. Intending to play a practical joke on his apprentice, the Masonic imposter organized an "initiation" that consisted of hazing and rude jokes. "D. R.," who was blindfolded during the ceremony, had a pan of "burning spirits (alcohol)" thrown on him. The burns were severe and "D. R." subsequently died from them. The imposter and his companions were later tried, but not convicted for "D. R.'s" death. For a time, at least, sympathy was aroused on behalf of the Fraternity.

Included in *The Beginnings of Freemasonry in America* are several sketches of the lives of prominent Americans who were active in Freemasonry and who were early leaders of the Craft in America. Jonathan Belcher, Henry Price, Thomas Oxnard, Robert Tomlinson and Richard Gridley are among the notable Americans whose biographies are included.

When reading *The Beginnings of Freemasonry in America*, one cannot help but come to an appreciation of the extent to which the development of American Freemasonry was a significant part of the development of American communities. Masons met, processed, prayed and dined; and did so all under the watchful gaze of the public eye. The American public, at the time, was quite aware of the existence of Freemasonry, and, generally, approved of its presence. While detractors were, in fact, present, the institution of Freemasonry was generally appealing to the upwardly mobile men of the 18th Century. Its attractiveness brought to it the men who were colonial leaders, and who would go on to become leaders in the fledgling nation.

Written in almost a diary format, *The Beginnings of Freemasonry in America* follows a very linear path in describing the events that occurred in Freemasonry in the years between 1730 and 1750. M. W. Bro. Johnson meticulously researched and reviewed the records available to him at the time of his writing, and organized the information contained therein in a very logical and easy to follow fashion. The result is a very scholarly work, whose sources and citations are carefully noted. In short, this is a very reliable addition to the field of Masonic research.

For the Mason, or other historian, who wants an accurate and accessible study in the origins of American Freemasonry, *The Beginnings of Freemasonry in America* is an excellent place to start.

Throughout his heralded Masonic career, Melvin M. Johnson contributed to the advancement of Freemasonry in almost every way imaginable. A noted Boston attorney, and later the Dean of Boston University's College of Law, Johnson was a friend and colleague of noted jurist Roscoe Pound. M. W. Bro. Johnson served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in 1914, 1915, and 1916. He served as Sovereign Grand Commander, Supreme Council, A. A. S. R., Northern Jurisdiction, from 1933 to 1953.

The Beginnings of Freemasonry in America was first published in 1924 by Southern Publishers, Inc., Masonic Publications Division. ***The Beginnings of Freemasonry in America***, though long out of print, is available from online booksellers. While an original copy may occasionally be found, it is largely available in print on demand editions.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

SHIBBOLETH A PRIMER ON THE MIDDLE CHAMBER

Charles Matulewicz

Reviewed by Dan Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Reviewing Charles Matulewicz's *Shibboleth: A Primer on the Middle Chamber* is simultaneously rewarding and exasperating. It is rewarding because it is a thoughtful and thought-provoking treatment of the Fellow Craft Degree. It is exasperating because it is so poorly presented and edited.

Let us dispose of the negatives first: released in 2021, *Shibboleth* appears to be self-published. Although an editor is identified, the number of misspellings, grammatical errors, and misused words serves to detract from the otherwise well thought out ideas expressed by Worshipful Brother Matulewicz. Annoyingly, there are no page numbers, nor are there separately identified chapters (although there are distinct topic headings). There appear to be roughly 106 pages, from the title page to the bibliography.

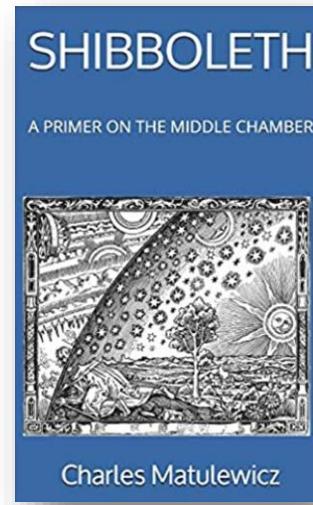
Assuming that the reader can get past the grammatical and spelling challenges, the substance of the book is worth the effort required to read it.

One of the first sections, "What a Fellowcraft Should Know," is an insightful reminder of how Freemasonry unites men across time and distance. It also illustrates the importance of mentorship, and that the teaching found within Freemasonry is as valuable to the teacher as to the student.

Of particular interest is a brief paragraph titled, "Nullius in Verba," or, "take nobody's word for it." It is an admonition to verify all statements by examining available facts. This simple phrase could have been the motto of the Enlightenment Era, and counsels the Fellow Craft to look beyond the superficial and the obvious in his quest for knowledge.

Worshipful Bro. Matulewicz devotes several headings to the physical construction of King Solomon's Temple, reviewing the Old Testament story of its construction, providing some contemporary explanation of archaic measurement terms, and furnishing explanation of artisanal terms whose meanings have changed over the course of three millennia.

Several further headings are devoted to the story of Demeter and Persephone. While this at first may seem a curiosity, Worshipful Bro. Matulewicz points out that the significance of the pomegranate on the



columns through which the Fellow Craft passes would, to the classically educated man of the 18th Century, immediately call to mind the Eleusinian Mysteries. Bro. Matulewicz's point is that, like the ancient mysteries, the Fellow Craft Degree seeks to understand and explain the secrets of the universe, but in the context of reason, rather than in terms of the supernatural.

In the heading, "Memories from the Future," Worshipful Bro. Matulewicz posits that "learning is remembering." Citing Plato, and other ancient philosophers, he writes that people are born with certain innate knowledge and throughout life are challenged to remember that knowledge. In the realm of Freemasonry, he argues that moving through the degrees is a similar experience. Matulewicz states, "by socializing with your older Brethren you are being invested with life lessons and ideas that normally take a lifetime to develop." This also relates back to his previous assertion that Freemasonry unites men across time and space.

After a review of the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences, and after hearing the story of Jephthah and the Ephraimites, Bro. Matulewicz brings his reader to the Middle Chamber, where there is a discourse on the lecture related to geometry and the divine reason found in nature.

Worshipful Bro. Matulewicz draws heavily on Duncan's Monitor, an early exposé of Freemasonry. The back cover of the book contains a suggestion to read Duncan's along with Shibboleth. Its poor editing notwithstanding, *Shibboleth: A Primer on the Middle Chamber* contains many ideas worthy of contemplation and further exploration. Perhaps future editions will be more reader friendly.

Worshipful Brother Charles Matulewicz is a Past Master of Palestine Lodge No. 189 in Catonsville, Maryland, and is a Past Master of Maryland Masonic Lodge of Research No. 239.

Shibboleth: A Primer on the Middle Chamber is available from online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

YORK MYSTERIES REVEALED UNDERSTANDING AN OLD ENGLISH TRADITION

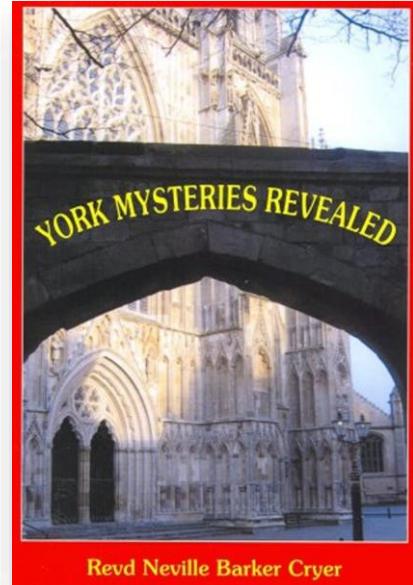
Reverend Neville Barker Cryer

Reviewed by William J. Lorenz, Past Master and Research Fellow

York *Rite Mysteries Revealed* is more than a good book. It is a great book! Jam-packed with information on the ancient City of York and its surroundings, the 484-page book is nearly everything anyone ever wanted to know about Northern England and its relationship to Freemasonry. This multifaceted book contains an in-depth study of the magnificent Gothic architecture in York and the surrounding area, including the less prominent, but historically important, building designs of the almshouses and hospitals. Early records of the famous York Minster are revealed. Building on G. Y. Johnson's records, it is a "who's who" of Masonic families of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including their involvement in the lodges in West Riding, York and East Riding.

The book travels back to the early York legends as are found in Anderson's Constitutions, and previously in the early Masonic manuscripts. It adds formerly unknown references and facts to bolster the legend's actuality, and discards the probable corruptions that have been added or misinterpreted. These legends are found in the Cooke Manuscript (circa 1440). The traditional stories of St. Amphibalus bringing the Masonic craft into England and communicating it to St. Alban; as well as how King Athelstan and Prince Edwin held meetings in the years 925 and 926, resulting in the installation of Prince Edwin as Grand Master of Masons, are both covered. Brother Cryer does all this by asking simple questions, and then seeking out the facts and then, with reason, addressing them. This he does very well.

The book also rewrites history, with respect to the belief that symbolic Masonry began in Scotland, basing a portion of the evidence on the fact that the first non-operative Masons were found in Scotland around the year 1600. Antiquarian Elias Ashmole was thought to be the first initiate in England at the Lodge of Warrington in 1646, as was recorded in his diary. How long the lodge existed before that date is unknown. Neville Cryer's research has pushed that date back, and dispelled part of the Scottish claim, with the



Revd Neville Barker Cryer

discovery of at least two non-operatives that were initiated in a Masonic Lodge in York, England prior to Scotland's assertion, *viz*, a furrier in 1569 and, in 1571, a fishmonger.

Drama as presented in today's Masonic degrees is a teaching element carried over from "The Mystery Plays" according to Neville Cryer's research. It is very well known that the Masons, as well as other guilds, took part in the Corpus Christi pageants at York, Beverley, Coventry and other cities. The pageants were popular between the 14th and 16th centuries. The various guilds were referred to as the "mysteries," thus the name "mystery plays." The public plays were almost always processional, that is six wheeled wagons carrying certain scenes would roll in front of the audience. There were many different plays presented in and around York, and it appears that the guilds would select one of particular interest to them.

One humorous event led the Masons to complain and request a different play. They were in charge of presenting "Fergus." The play detailed the bier of Mother Mary, the principal saint of the Mason's company, being carried by the Four Apostles. There were also roles depicting two Jewish attackers and an angel. Fergus attempts to upset the bier with his hands. The hands dry up to the elbows and come away sticking to the bier. The Apostle Peter asks if Fergus believes that the body (*corpus*) of Mary is the Mother of Christ (*Christi*), and if so, to show his belief by embracing the body. This he does, and, miraculously, Fergus has his hands and arms restored. Dramatics and costuming being what they will, unfortunately, laughter seemed to be the end result. The Masons were involved in several religious/symbolic plays.

The Rev'd Cryer discusses the five-degree system used by the operatives in an attempt to make a connection with modern Masonic ritual. The operatives existed into the 20th century, so some of their practices can still be found. The question is of course, "When did the operatives adopt the 5-degree system?"

Cryer's in-depth examination of the ceremonies used by the Masonic guild and their contribution to the "Old York Working" and in turn the "Old York Working's" contribution to the London's early eighteenth-century degrees, the York Grand Lodge and later American ritual, is provided. How Ancient Masonry and the "Moderno" of London differed in ritual and operation is thoroughly reviewed, including how each organization was favored in the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) union of 1813.

Personally, I find most fascinating the extraordinary differences in the ritual of Ancient York Masonry compared to the Moderns before the union of 1813. There is just too much to cover in this limited space. I do recommend reading this book. You will be far more knowledgeable in Masonry for having done so.

The Rev'd Neville Barker Cryer was no stranger to York Masonry, having authored many books on the development of the ceremonies and their meanings, including ***The Arch & the Rainbow, Masonic Halls of England and Wales, I Just Didn't Know That, The Royal Arch Journey*** and numerous others. His credentials consist of Past Grand Chaplain of the United Grand Lodge of England, Past

Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge of Research and then its secretary and editor of "Transactions" for a number of years. He was named Prestonian Lecturer in 1974, and Batham Lecturer in 1996-98. Neville Cryer was a member of the oldest Lodge in York and very active in the SRIA. He certainly was the right person to author this book. His death on July 2, 2013, was certainly a great loss to the fraternity.

York Mysteries Revealed – Understanding an Old English Tradition is available to purchase on-line, both new and used, or at any good bookstore. It is also available for reading at the Covington, KY Masonic Library as are many of Rev'd Cryer's books.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

MANAGING THE FUTURE OF FREEMASONRY THE BOOK OF OPTIMISM

Dr. David J. West

Review by John W. Bizzack, PM, Lexington Lodge No. 1

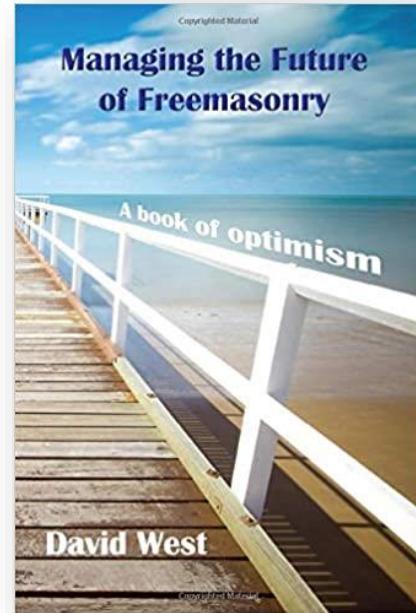
While there's a surplus of contemporary Masonic writings available today, precious few delve as thoughtfully and thoroughly as Dr. West does into the critical issues surrounding the management of the future of Freemasonry.

As he points out in *Managing the Future of Freemasonry*, "The golden years of the fraternity have passed with the departure of a world never likely to return" and then follows up by contributing toward the understanding of why those golden years existed in the first place.

His examination also helps us understand why Freemasonry continues in attempting to behave as if it were still in that golden era even though our membership has steadily declined: the appearance of our lodges are in a state of decay; Masonic education sorely lacking; and the proficiency of ritual work is commonly described as slovenly, among other reasons he offers.

West presents the facts of how Freemasonry has increasingly become a reflection of the society around us instead of an example against which society may find useful today in gauging its decency, values, and behavior. He lays out his arguments in a logical, accurate, and sometimes humorous manner. His optimism about how all of this this can be turned around is contagious.

West chronicles the social change that has taken place - social change that has directly and adversely affected our fraternity since the early 1800s not just since membership sharply declined in the mid-1900s. His analysis of what he classifies as social "phases" from the period of 1950 to the present, however, most aptly summarizes how and why Freemasonry slowly began to lose its once wide appeal, and even took on the appearance of a counter-culture. Importantly, West shows how our institution walked blindfolded in this perfect storm because of an "almost complete lack of leadership" as the old source for candidates dramatically shifted. He argues confidently how society now may seem less than welcoming to



the ideals of Freemasonry today, yet there is ample audience of men who are hungry for the fellowship and moral meaning the fraternity offers.

West's writing rings of the tone set by Andrew Hammer's work *Observing the Craft*, and Kirk White's, *Operative Freemasonry: A Manual for Restoring Light and Vitality to the Fraternity*. He underscores throughout his work that the revitalization of Masonry is not a matter of tinkering with the periphery but requires a focus on the meaning of Freemasonry to reverse its course.

It is clear from this book that whatever course is taken by Freemasonry in the future will be guided by men who have become Masons - not just those who were made members.

Masons should add *Managing the Future of Freemasonry* to their list of books most often recommended to members of the Craft.

This book is available from Amazon and other online booksellers.

About the Author

Dr David West is a graduate of the University of Exeter. His doctorate work was at the University of Leicester. He taught at universities in England and Canada and his later business career included Ford and Xerox. He served on government committees on the future of work, was an adviser to a Cabinet Minister and founded The Working Manager Ltd, creating the core content of its management education process. An active Freemason, he is a member of four lodges and four chapters under the English Constitution. His mother lodge is St Laurence No. 5511.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE MASONIC CONSERVATORS

Ray V. Denslow

Reviewed by: Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

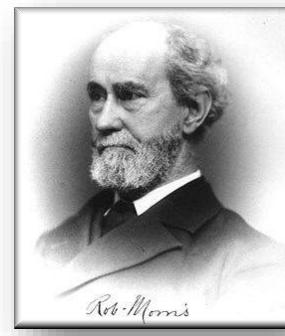
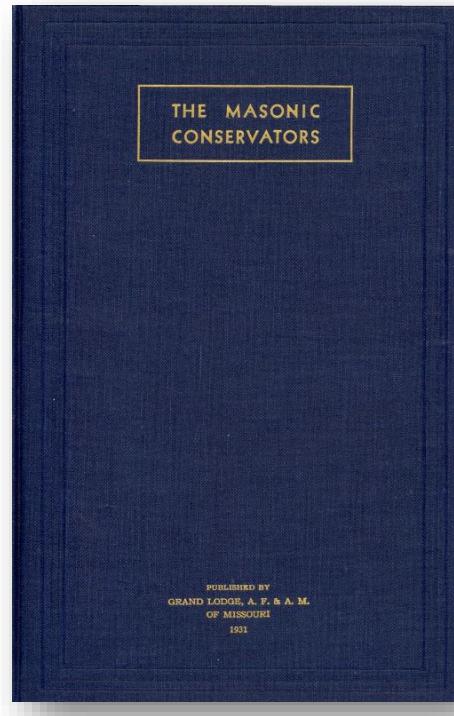
Ray V. Denslow, who served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, A. F. & A. M. of Missouri in 1931-1932, offers in *The Masonic Conservators* a rare review and critique of the work of another Past Grand Master, Rob Morris, who served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, F. & A. M. in 1858-59.

Rob Morris made himself well-known in many ways over the course of his Masonic career. In addition to presiding over the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, he is credited with founding the Order of the Eastern Star, as well as holding the title of "Poet Laureate of Freemasonry." A frequent author, and more frequent lecturer, he wrote as if with authority on topics about which he actually knew very little (the Morgan Affair) and those about which his store of knowledge was quite large (ritual). It was his knowledge of the Masonic ritual that led to his denunciation by practically every Grand Lodge in the United States; and that is the story that Ray Denslow tells in *The Masonic Conservators*.

Rob Morris was born Robert Williams Peckham on August 31, 1818, in New York City. His parents separated in 1821 and young Rob and his brother continued to live with their father. Following his father's death 1825, he went to live with his mother, and, before finishing school, for reasons that are unclear, assumed the surname of Morris. (Morris was purportedly the surname of a foster parent with whom he lived.)

Rob Morris moved to Mississippi, where he married and settled in Oxford. It was in Oxford, Mississippi that Morris joined the Masonic Order. Later moving to Kentucky, he affiliated with Neville Lodge No. 200 in Moscow (Hickman County). It was out of this Lodge that he was subsequently elected Grand Master.

In the late 1850s Morris moved to Louisville, where he published and edited a Masonic newspaper, "The American Freemason." Morris's writings, including his 1859 work, *The History of Freemasonry in Kentucky* (reviewed elsewhere on this site), along with available Grand Lodge proceedings, consistently reflect Morris's concerns about the quality of the ritual being performed



(to which he commonly referred as “the Work”). Generally critical of the poor quality of ritual performance, Morris, as a Past Grand Master, resolved to take action to improve the quality and uniformity of the Work. This brings us to the point where Past Grand Master Denslow takes up the narrative in *The Masonic Conservators*.

Denslow uses Morris’s correspondence to describe and explain the brief life span of the Conservator movement. Morris began by soliciting those whom he believed to be like minded to join with him in an effort teach what he deemed to be “the true Webb-Preston Work,” first in individual Lodges, and then at the Grand Lodge level. In his view, such a plan would establish a uniformity in the manner in which ritual was delivered, nationwide, and would further serve to properly instruct men in how to deliver such ritual.

Morris’s letters reveal a complex, grandiose, and, ultimately, delusional plan (closely corresponding to his own personality). His initial letters went to those men whom he believed would be receptive to the idea of a uniform and improved ritual. By his own account, the recipients of those letters eventually numbered more than three thousand men. Naively, Morris insisted on absolute secrecy from the recipients of the letters, directing them not to discuss the matter with anyone else. One is tempted to think that anyone familiar with the behavior of Masons would find this an unlikely proposition at best. Morris went on to describe an organization, national in scope, that he designated as “The Conservator Association,” with himself as “Chief Conservator.”

Morris’s initial letters, posted in June of 1860, contained several key points. First, Morris identified ten objectives of the Conservator Association. After establishing the ten objectives, Morris then posed seven questions to each recipient, each of which required an answer in the affirmative. He then insisted that, to become a member of the Conservator Association, each prospective member return their letters, indicating their intent to join the movement, within ten days.

For those who returned their letters, Morris promised the conferral of a new degree (the “Conservator Degree,” complete with grips and signs, and fully described by Denslow), and a special monitor that he titled, “Mnemonics.” Mnemonics was, actually, a coded monitor of the first three degrees of Freemasonry. To decipher Mnemonics, one also had to have possession of a separately provided spelling book. As Denslow points out, to master Mnemonics required a great deal of time and patience.

Morris envisioned a movement that would rapidly change the course of American Freemasonry. By his own timetable, the Conservator Association would complete its work and dissolve itself by June of 1865.

By 1862, any secrecy that may have surrounded the Conservators had evaporated. Morris was under fire from several Grand Lodges for effectively attempting to usurp the prerogatives of the Grand Lodges in establishing their own standards for the performance of ritual in their respective jurisdictions. Prickly, priggish, and self-righteous, Morris engaged in lengthy correspondence with the various Grand Lodge officers who were critical of the Conservator Association. He also posted several “open letters” defending his actions to the Brethren in various states, which served only to further open him to criticism from Grand Lodges. Denslow faithfully reproduces Morris’s correspondence in such instances.

In answering the criticisms, Morris used certain tactics that he would later employ when writing his history of the Morgan Affair. First, he claimed that he had been searching for the “true work,” as arranged by William Preston and taught by Thomas Smith Webb, for over twenty years. For that to be true, he would have had to begin his search shortly after becoming a Freemason. While that is theoretically possible, it is unlikely that one with so little grounding in Freemasonry would quickly realize the deficiencies in the ritual, much less know where or how to look for the “true” work.

Morris claimed that having found the “true work,” he reviewed it with New Hampshire Past Grand Master Philip C. Tucker, who confirmed its authenticity. Morris does not explain what would have made Tucker competent to issue such a confirmation, and, conveniently, Tucker had died by the time that Morris was citing him in his defense.

As the year 1863 passed, Grand Lodges began to ban membership in the Conservator Association. Some required that those men who had become Conservators take an oath renouncing their membership. By the end of 1863, Morris was engaged in vitriolic correspondence with a number of Grand Lodge officers in different states who opposed the Conservator movement.

In what must have been a painful moment for Morris, in 1864 the Grand Lodge of Kentucky passed a resolution “banishing” the Conservator Association from the state. The Grand Lodge published a list of members who renounced their support of it. Heading the list was Past Grand Master Hiram Bassett, an early supporter and member of the Association.

In June of 1865, Morris, in accordance with his own timetable, formally dissolved the Conservator Association and defiantly declared the movement to have been a success.

The Masonic Conservators describes a movement that, while likely well-intentioned, failed to take into consideration the obstacles it would naturally face in such an endeavor. Rob Morris was, in all likelihood, factually correct in his analysis of the flaws that existed in the determination and delivery of Masonic ritual at that time. His personality and his thought processes, however, were too rigid to allow for the debate and compromises that would have been necessary for his proposed system to have had even a chance of implementation.

Ray V. Denslow rendered Freemasonry a valuable service by offering a candid and revealing window into American Freemasonry in the middle of the 19th Century. The Conservator Association was a brief, but momentous, period in the history of American Freemasonry. **The Masonic Conservators** conscientiously and reliably brings that era into focus for us.

The Masonic Conservators, published in 1931, is available from on-line booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

CONTEMPLATIVE MASONRY

C.R. Dunning Jr.

Reviewed by: Keith W. Gunkel, Past Master, Orion Lodge No. 222

Worshipful Brother C. R. "Chuck" Dunning openly describes the three degrees, their true meaning and what a Brother Mason should focus on while we travel through our life.

As Speculative Masons, we are taught to admire the wonderful works of creation, and we are to be more reverent and inspired than one might otherwise be. There are four (4) topics focused on in his book – the Spiritual, Mental, Emotional, and Physical aspects of Freemasonry.

Physically, we see symbols, hear statements, and move our bodies to continue the practice of our obligation to God, our country, family, and our brotherhood.

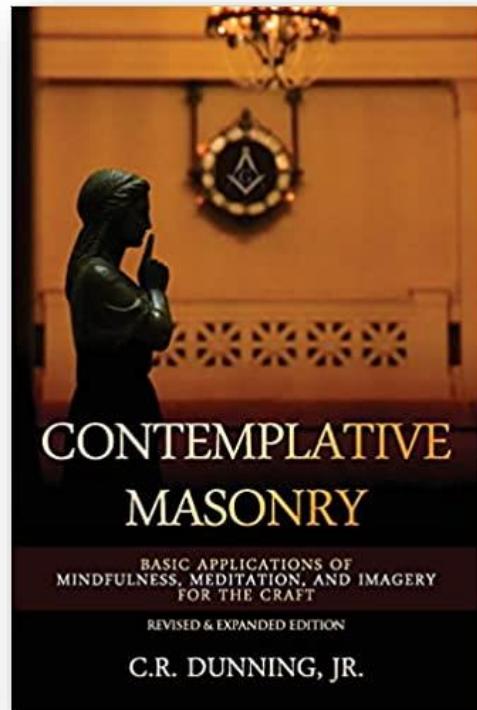
Emotional health teaches us to subdue our passions, which to us is a degree of complete mastery.

Mentally we are taught to improve our minds and consciences with the study of the arts and science.

Spirituality lets us recognize and acknowledge a belief in Deeds. We maintain faith and hope in our eternal life.

As speculative Masons, we need to look into ourselves from a conscious and unconscious perspective to shed more light on our daily lives.

Health and Disease are discussed as the equilibrium on balance and harmony, or the lack thereof, in our lives and in our Lodges. Masonry becomes an intentional part of a brother's spiritual life and creates a hunger in oneself to pursue wisdom, strength, and beauties in others.



W. B. Dunning illustrates the three common aspects of our Ritual which are Initiation, Instruction, and Membership. Masons mentor in ways to support one another in all three of these areas. This teaching is important in our temples, as well as in society.

Contemplative Masonry brings to light the importance of study and meditation, and references numerous ways prior to lodge meetings to focus on why we are there, and what we take away from our time there. I thought it was interesting that he advises not get to lodge too early, or stay late, but to enter Lodge and then leave immediately when lodge is closed. Meditate on the workings of the Lodge and write it down. In doing this reflection, future ways to improve yourself and your Lodge may appear.

W. B. Dunning describes the three degrees and their inner workings, and how important it is to practice mindful and prayerful behavior. The exercises listed in each degree will help any Mason or Lodge focus on the true goal to be better men. As Entered Apprentices, one of our primary concerns is in learning how to work in the quarries of life.

As a Fellow Craft we learn the study of the seven (7) liberal arts and science and to polish and adorn the mind.

As a Fellow Craft in the book it notes, your conscious mind is in the seat of authority with regard to your behavior. You were created for it to be so, and you should respect and maintain that arrangement.

Lastly, the Master Mason is a man at one with both Nature and Divinity, who teaches and records for future generations of men. One reflects on the experiences of the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft, and builds further on the preparation of the degree and final raising. His task now is to realize an integration of the spirit as fully as possible.

As a Master Mason, we say we are seeking a Master's Wage, and some may think of a monetary aspect. It was brought to my attention through ***Contemplative Masonry***, that these treasures are light and the Lost Word -- the greatest wages for a Master Mason.

In closing, W. B. Dunning's work opened my eyes to the worthiest product of our work as Masons, and that is Love

Contemplative Masonry, named by the **Southern California Research Lodge** as the third most popular book on Freemasonry published since the year 2000, is available from most online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE LOST WORD OF FREEMASONRY

Henry Pirtle

Reviewed by: Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

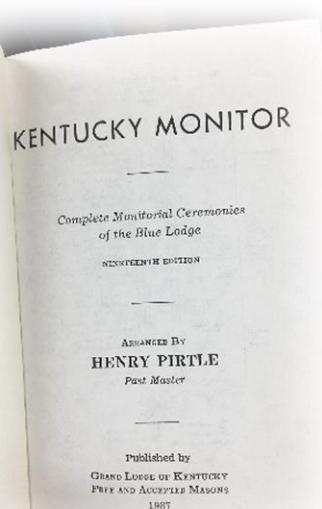
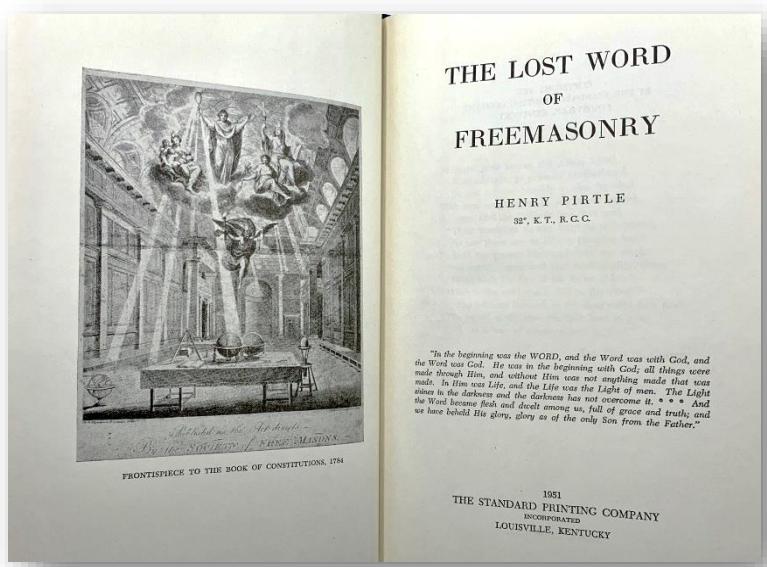
Henry Pirtle is known chiefly among Kentucky Freemasons as the author of the **Kentucky Monitor**, one of the ritual guides approved by the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, F. & A. M.

Worshipful Brother Pirtle had a distinguished Masonic career, having authored a version of the constitution of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, and later serving as editor of "The Masonic Home Journal."

In 1951, only four years prior to his death, W. B. Pirtle published **The Lost Word of Freemasonry**. One is left with the impression that, after publishing the **Kentucky Monitor** in 1921, W. B. Pirtle spent the next thirty years in contemplation of the deeper meaning of the rituals he had previously arranged. This book, largely lost to history, should easily be the work for which he is best known.

Both accessible and skillfully written, **The Lost Word of Freemasonry**

is a brilliant exploration of the ultimate quest of each Mason, which, as defined by W. B. Pirtle, "is that of the soul after God."



Drawing on examples from folklore, religious traditions and several different schools of philosophy, Pirtle demonstrates how Freemasonry incorporates a "Quest-formula" into its mysteries. For the Freemason, the quest is the recovery of the "lost word," which, according to Pirtle, is the name of God.

In much the same vein as Albert Pike and Albert Mackey, both of whom

are frequently cited, Pirtle depicts the manner in which the religions of the world, whether ancient or contemporary, share common elements. Many of those same elements have found their way into Freemasonry, and now form a part of our traditions, especially the legend of Hiram Abif.

In Pirtle's analysis of the "Quest-formula," he explains to the reader that the similarities in the world's various religions and traditions are evidence of the universality of man's innate desire to understand the identity and nature of his Creator. The parallels between ancient and contemporary religions are clearly drawn and give rich context to Pirtle's narrative.

Pirtle asserts that the search for the Lost Word and the search for light in Masonry are one and the same. In his analysis, the Lost Word is eternal, creative, redemptive and illuminative. Describing the immediate presence of God within our ceremonies, he writes that when a Master declares a Lodge to be open, "In the Name of God and the Holy Saints John," then "Truly the Spirit of Masonry descends upon that Lodge and the True Word is in the midst of them to bless them."

In his chapter titled, "Magic in Names," W. B. Pirtle recounts examples from various cultures that ascribe unique powers to the true names of persons and things. It is believed in such cultures that to know the true name of a person or thing is to possess power over them or it. In certain societies, an individual may be given a "true" name at birth, which is never (or at least rarely) ever spoken again. Pirtle recites certain scriptures and other traditions that explain, in part, that man's quest to learn the true name of Deity is at least partially an effort to access and invoke the power of the Deity.

Pirtle asserts that the search for the Lost Word and the search for light in Masonry are one and the same.

His chapter on the Jewish Cabala contains many interesting allusions, especially his commentary on that most familiar Masonic symbol, the point within a circle. W. B. Pirtle's interpretation of what (or who) the point represents is somewhat of a departure from the usual teachings of Freemasonry (even from the lectures that appear in his **Kentucky Monitor**). It is, however, an absolutely plausible interpretation and should be given serious consideration.

Perhaps the most intriguing chapter in **The Lost Word of Freemasonry** is "Whom the Candidate Represents." Continuing with the symbol of the point within the circle, W. B. Pirtle takes the reader on a journey through astronomy (the signs of the Zodiac), the science of geometry (as an ancient mystery school), and comparative religion. It should be noted that nowhere in this work does Pirtle suggest or otherwise assert that Freemasonry is a religion. He does, however, effectively demonstrate the extent to which the religions of the world, to some extent, emulate each other; and how those similar traditions have been woven into the fabric of Freemasonry.

In the final chapter, "Hiram Rises As Christ," W. B. Pirtle examines the death and resurrection myths of each of the great world religions and compares them to the Masonic legend of Hiram. It is in this chapter that W. B. Pirtle delivers his conclusions as to the essence of "The Lost Word of Freemasonry."

It seems safe to say that **The Lost Word of Freemasonry** takes some of the themes expressed in the **Kentucky Monitor** and more fully develops them. Pirtle frequently uses the work of Arthur Edward

Waite to buttress his positions. Like Waite, Pirtle reveals himself to be very much a man in search of a mystical spiritual illumination.

Pirtle wrote that man's ability to understand Deity is limited because man is a creature of finite capacity, while Deity is infinite in all respects. Yet, man engages in the quest to understand Deity, and Freemasonry is one avenue in which to do so. **The Lost Word of Freemasonry** does much to provide necessary historical and spiritual context for the Mason's quest.

The greatest accomplishment of **The Lost Word of Freemasonry** is the manner in which it synthesizes the myths of world religions and illustrates how those myths were incorporated into Masonic tradition. Through the explanation of many Masonic symbols, it becomes clear that the Mason's quest is identical to mankind's ancient quest for understanding of the Creator, and his place within the Creation.

The Lost Word of Freemasonry is a well-crafted, well organized and logical effort to address the ultimate Masonic quest – an understanding of the nature of Deity. Throughout the book, Pirtle demonstrates his mastery of Masonic texts and the work of Masonic scholars of previous centuries. Based on this volume, Henry Pirtle is entitled to take his place along those scholars. To say that W. B. Pirtle's work should be better known is an understatement.

The Lost Word of Freemasonry is for the contemplative Freemason who is willing to invest the time and mental energy needed to process Pirtle's persuasive arguments. For those who are willing to examine W. B. Pirtle's work, Masonic light can be found within its pages.

The Lost Word of Freemasonry is long out of print. Copies are quite rare and should be preserved carefully. It remains available from online booksellers in print-on-demand editions.

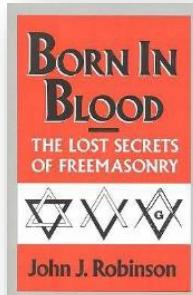
WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

A PILGRIM'S PATH

John J. Robinson

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

John Robinson is best known for his first book about Freemasonry: *Born in Blood – The Lost Secrets of Freemasonry*. Although a Masonic best-seller, *Born in Blood* only served to reinforce the myth of Freemasonry having originated from the Knights Templar of the Middle Ages. Robinson, a successful Cincinnati businessman, was at best an amateur historian. While an entertaining tale, *Born in Blood* made no factual contribution to the story of Freemasonry's origin. Many Masons, unfortunately, accepted the fanciful theories found in Robinson's work as fact, and, without further exploration, added to the already distorted view of the Craft's history. *Born in Blood*, while attracting attention to Freemasonry, further obscured its actual history.



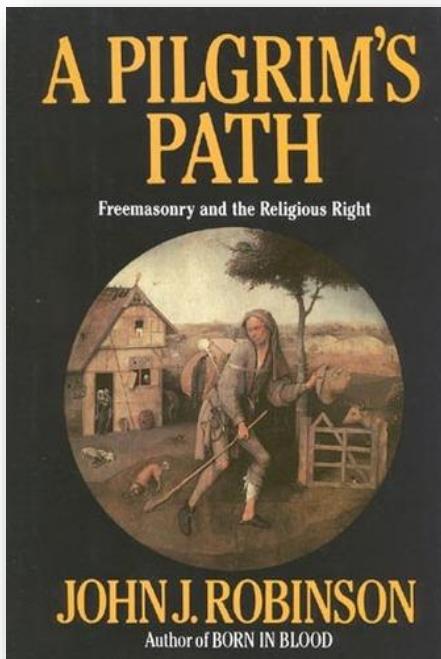
The response to *Born in Blood*, both within and without Freemasonry, so surprised Robinson that he was motivated to write a second book about Freemasonry, *A Pilgrim's Path*, the subject of this review.

In this work, Robinson atoned for whatever deficiencies may be found to exist in *Born in Blood*. *A Pilgrim's Path* is an excellent outsider's perspective of what Freemasonry is, and equally important, what it is not.

A Pilgrim's Path is divided into two sections, the first of which is by far the most important. In the first section of the book, Robinson takes dead aim at criticisms of Freemasonry by religious leaders of all stripes, but most especially fundamentalist Christians. Robinson begins by re-examining the Taxil Hoax and relating how, despite its having been exposed as a fraud over a century ago, religious demagogues still cite it as conclusive proof that Freemasonry is ultimately incompatible with religion, and, in fact, is a religion unto itself.

Robinson devotes a chapter to the writings of Albert Pike, and does a commendable job of putting Pike's words into context as they relate to both time and meaning. Pike's inclination to grandiosity has made him a popular whipping-boy for anti-Masonic zealots, and Robinson does a good job of bringing both Pike and his critics into focus.

Robinson's most effective writing is his dismantling of the claims of Pat Robertson and James Holly. Robertson used his platform as a prominent religious broadcaster, and Holly took advantage of his



standing in the Southern Baptist Convention, to issue broad condemnations of Freemasonry. As Robinson clearly demonstrates, the claims of these two religious firebrands are without foundation or factual support.

Robinson also debunks the charges made by religious publisher Jack Chick, who distributed at least two cartoon-like tracts luridly claiming that Freemasonry was equivalent to witchcraft, sorcery and, ultimately, Satanism.

Robinson is equally effective in his explanation of how Freemasonry, while requiring a belief in God, is not a religion. He includes quotes from respected religious leaders who acknowledge that Freemasonry, while perhaps a friend of religion, is not a religion itself. Robinson points out that by having no specific dogma other than a belief in God, Freemasonry is able to unite men of all religions, whose goodwill towards each other is thus unconstrained.

The second section of *A Pilgrim's Path* is devoted to certain issues that Robinson found to be intriguing with respect to contemporary Freemasonry. One such issue is Freemasonry's preoccupation with secrecy. Robinson aptly points out that many Freemasons have taken the obligation of secrecy to such an extreme that even their closest family members are either unaware that they are Masons, or have no idea of what Freemasonry is. He correctly makes the point that in an era of shrinking membership, Freemasonry's obsession with secrecy has diminished the public's awareness of its existence.

In a chapter titled, "Don't Talk To Me About Change," Robinson again delivers a compelling outsider's perspective about the lack of cohesion among Grand Lodges, and within the Grand Lodge of individual jurisdictions. The lack of united leadership among Grand Lodges has resulted in, at best, mixed messages as to the aim and purpose of Freemasonry, and, in some instances, outright hostility between jurisdictions. Specific to individual Grand Lodges, Robinson points out that the governance structure is designed to hinder both the effective administration of the bureaucracy, as well as limiting the long-range planning necessary for implementation of strategic goals on other than a year-to-year basis.

In "A Masonic Idea File," Robinson includes a list of Masonic principles that it would be well for all Masonic Lodges to review and discuss. Nothing in his list of principles is foreign, or even new to Freemasonry, but serve as valuable reminders to the Craft as to Freemasonry's identity.

There are some troubling aspects to the second section of *A Pilgrim's Path*. Robinson returns to the same themes about the origins of Freemasonry that he first espoused in *Born in Blood*. This work would have been better had those themes not been included. He also inserts a chapter about Masonic charity, further entrenching the misconception that public charity is a part of Freemasonry's core mission. Since institutional Freemasonry trumpets its charitable works, it is no surprise that Robinson, a non-Mason, would echo those sentiments.

One of the more interesting aspects of *A Pilgrim's Path* is found at the close of the book. Robinson informed his readers that, after years of studying and writing about Freemasonry, he had decided to petition a Lodge and become a Freemason. Joining Cincinnati's Nova Caesarea Harmony Lodge No. 2, his declining health allowed him to be active only for a brief time prior to his death in 1996.

While *A Pilgrim's Path* is worthwhile reading material for Masons at all stages of their Masonic journey, it is an especially good book for newer Masons, or those who are contemplating becoming a Mason. It is an especially good recommendation for those who are currently in the process of receiving the Degrees of

Freemasonry, as it complements the information presented to the candidate inside the Lodge. A copy of ***A Pilgrim's Path*** should be a part of any creditable Masonic library.

A Pilgrim's Path, first published in 1993, is still in print and remains available from most online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

KEY TO FREEMASONRY'S GROWTH

Allen E. Roberts

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Allen E. Roberts (1917 – 1997) was a prolific writer who wrote on a wide variety of topics related to Freemasonry. Although perhaps best known for his works in the areas of biography and history, he also wrote extensively and regularly about issues related to leadership in Freemasonry. One of his earliest books, fourth of the roughly twenty-five that he published, was **Key to Freemasonry's Growth**. This groundbreaking work may have been the first instance in which business management principles were applied to Freemasonry.

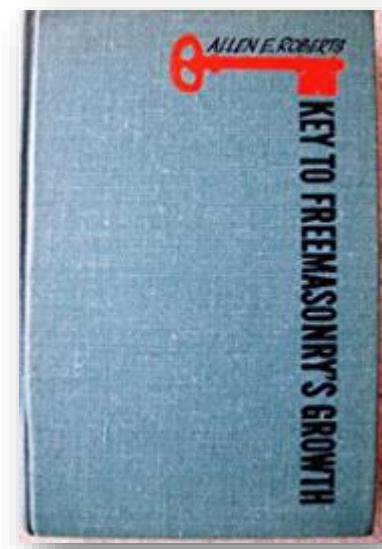
Don't be fooled by the title to this book. **Key to Freemasonry's Growth** is not about adding numbers to the Fraternity's membership rolls, at least not directly. The growth to which Roberts refers is spiritual and intellectual growth, which, if actually occurring within the body of Freemasonry, may, in fact, lead to a numerical increase as well.

The Foreword to **Key to Freemasonry's Growth** was written by Dwight L. Smith, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Indiana. M. W. Bro. Smith established the tone for this work by writing:

“Usages that our early Masonic fathers in America would not have tolerated for one moment stifle good leadership and discourage membership participation.”

From that point, Roberts describes Smith's criticism in detail, and offers a definite path to good leadership practices and increased member involvement.

Ultimately, **Key to Freemasonry's Growth** is a book about leadership, and the importance of effective leadership in the local Lodge and at the Grand Lodge level. Roberts may be the first Masonic writer to incorporate ideas from well-known business leaders, as well as suggestions from articles found in the *Harvard Business Journal*, into a plan to rejuvenate leadership in Freemasonry. Roberts makes a convincing case that sound business principles, as applied in Masonic settings, can lead to desirable results.



In the book's Prologue, Roberts sets the stage by describing the current condition of many American Lodges (recall that he wrote this book in 1969). He describes Lodges where the typical meeting consists of reading minutes and treasurer's reports, and paying bills. In such Lodges, there is no education provided for members other than recitations of ritual. Members are generally unable to answer questions that go beyond a mechanical understanding of Freemasonry, and which address the substance of its nature.

In Chapter 1, “Freemasonry in Perspective,” Roberts attempts to define Freemasonry. He cites a number of definitions, from those adopted by certain Grand Lodges and the Conference of Grand Masters in North America to passages from the writings of Henry W. Coil and Ray V. Denslow. Roberts then goes beyond Grand Lodge Masonry to look at the meaning of Freemasonry as found in the 14th century’s Regius Poem. He then moves into a review of Anderson’s Constitutions of 1723 and 1738, and discussed the “Old Charges” and the regulations contained therein.

Throughout ***Key to Freemasonry’s Growth***, Roberts uses charts, or “Guides,” as he refers to them, to amplify his key points. The first such “Guide” is found following his discussion of Anderson’s Constitutions, and Roberts uses it to compare and contrast the emphasis on different elements of importance in Freemasonry in the pre-Grand Lodge era and in the contemporary Grand Lodge era.

Chapter 2, “Recognizing and ‘Growing’ the Leader,” begins his analysis of the failings of leadership in Freemasonry, and addresses his plan for improvement. Relying on articles in the *Harvard Business Journal*, Roberts identifies two distinct types of leadership – constructive and obstructive. As may be imagined, constructive leadership is a characteristic of a healthy and successful organization, while obstructive leadership is unproductive. The theme of constructive leadership versus obstructive leadership continues throughout the book.

Chapter 3, “The Purpose for Existence,” explores the reasons that men assemble as Freemasons. While it may be generally agreed that our purpose is “to make good men better,” there is longstanding debate as to how to accomplish that. In this chapter, Roberts leans heavily on examples from the business world, and concludes that Freemasonry should formulate and adopt a plan defining general steps leading to self-improvement.

Chapter 4, “Planning Turns the Key,” may represent the heart of Roberts’s work. Clearly, he is passionate about the need for planning, and he makes a clear case for the necessity of both short-term and long-term planning. He writes that planning in a Masonic setting must provide for balance, flexibility and accountability.

Chapter 5, “Organizing the Organization,” discusses the need for delegation of both responsibility and authority within the group. He emphasizes the need for members at all levels to ask why,” and questions the “that’s the way we’ve always done it” mentality. Roberts writes at length about the benefits of seeing that all members have a role, thereby becoming invested in the overall success of the Lodge. He quotes the work of M. Valliant Higginson, ***Management Policies I***, with respect to the achievement of goals through the technique of management through the establishment of policies, as opposed to management through the issuance of rules and regulations. He asserts that policies are less rigid and more likely to lead to the desired outcome.

Chapter 6, “Good Communication Removes Barriers,” includes a discussion of good listening skills. Roberts writes that obstacles to effective communication include a perception that leadership is removed from the reality of what is happening within the group, poor morale existing within the group, and a lack of motivation among group members.

Roberts quotes from David K. Berlo’s ***The Process of Communication*** by including a specific exercise designed to create an understanding of the dynamics of communication.

Chapter 7, “Controlling the Action,” is a contrast of approaches to group leadership. Roberts writes about the need to “control” as opposed to the desire to “direct” the behavior of the group. Roberts indicates that “direction” is ultimately a more positive, and likely more productive, approach. In this chapter, Roberts cites the need for supportive leadership, a “team” spirit and trust at all levels. He relies on the article, “Measuring Organization Performance,” written by Rensis Likert for the April 1958 edition of Harvard Business Review. In this discussion, Roberts examines the need for self-control, in both leadership and among the membership, and returns to his theme of constructive versus obstructive leadership.

In this Epilogue, Roberts writes,

“Where there has been good management, Freemasons have worked gladly and wholeheartedly for the Fraternity.”

Compare that statement with the phrase,

“...among whom there should be no contention, except that most noble contention of who can best work, and who can best agree,”

Clearly, it appears that Roberts believes that good management skills, as applied to Freemasonry, would cause Lodges, whether subordinate or Grand, to achieve the harmonious and successful state contemplated in our ritual.

Roberts concludes with an exhortation to “remove the blindfold,” and take a new look at how institutional Freemasonry would benefit from the practices of sound business management. Roberts asserts that just as the business world develops successful leaders, Freemasonry can employ such a model to successfully do the same.

Key to Freemasonry’s Growth includes two Appendices, the first of which is an article written by Roberts titled, “We Can Do It.” This article appeared in *The Short Talk Bulletin*, Volume XLVI, October 1968. The second is “The Ten Commandments of Good Communication,” published in 1955 by the American Management Association, Inc.

In **Key to Freemasonry’s Growth**, Allen E. Roberts likely produced the first book length treatment of business and leadership practices applied to Freemasonry. That the issues that he so clearly identified in 1969 still plague the Fraternity today is a stinging indictment of Freemasonry’s unwillingness to engage in any meaningful self-examination of its practices. Although some of Roberts’s examples seem a bit dated now, the several arguments that he makes retain their original force.

Key to Freemasonry’s Growth is an honest assessment of the leadership styles found within Freemasonry (and other organizations), and offers a path to improvement of the group egregore and a more likely path to the achievement of its goals. Applied to Freemasonry, it can serve to reinvigorate a lackluster and decidedly ordinary Masonic experience. This book is just as relevant today, as when it was first published over fifty years ago. Any engaged member of a Masonic Lodge, especially anyone who aspires to positions of leadership, would be well advised to read this book.

Key to Freemasonry’s Growth is cleverly illustrated by Chick Larsen, cartoonist for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Larsen’s drawings evoke an immediate response from anyone who has been actively involved in Masonic or leadership activities.

Key to Freemasonry’s Growth, first published in 1969, remains available from most online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE BETTER ANGELS OF OUR NATURE

FREEMASONRY AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Michael A. Halleran

Reviewed by Ryan A. Clendenin, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Michael Halleran's book, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, is an excellent piece of work for those who are interested in a detailed description of the impact of the Craft during the American Civil War. He lays the work out in seven chapters that will be detailed in this review.

PROLOGUE

The Author wastes no time in examining what was one of the famous Masonic tales of the War, Lewis Armistead's request for Fraternal assistance at the Angle during Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. Halleran dissects numerous firsthand accounts and finds no evidence that this was the case. The book, however, does present credible data of numerous acts of brotherly love and affection detailed herein.

Chapter 1: Masters and Fellows

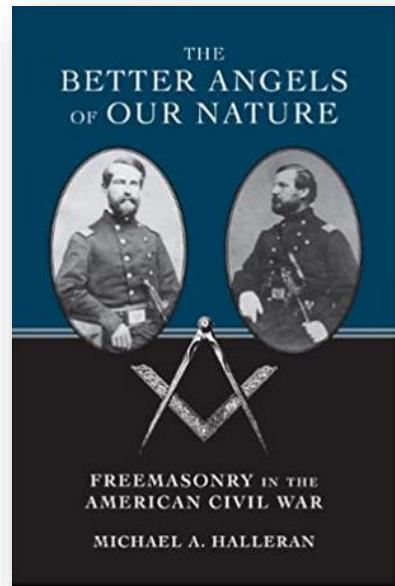
The chapter outlines the state of Masonry in the early part of the 19th century and into the years of the War. There had been a large decline in membership due to the Morgan Affair and he details the revived interest in the Craft at the onset of the Conflict. The total number of Masons was 3.75% of the population per the 1860 census. Halleran articulates how Masonic ties would be extended to a scale likely never seen before under the circumstances of War.

Chapter 2: *Plures Ex Uno*

This chapter explains the complexities of a divided Nation and its brethren. Masonic Grand Lodges from the North and the South held official communications to try to diffuse the Rebellion. The Grand Lodge of Kentucky was part of that effort. This obviously did not stop the drums of War. Once conflict began, Halleran's notes on page 53, "Let us agree to separate amicably," summed up the situation perfectly. As casualties began to mount, Grand Lodges in the South agreed that their allegiance was to their home state and not to the United States.

Chapter 3: "If That Is Masonry, I Will Take Some of It Myself"

In this chapter, Halleran showcases some of the lesser-known acts that created a lasting impression on those who later became distinguished Masons. One example was from the Grand Master of New York, Finlay M. King, who wanted more Masonic participation. He is quoted as saying, "The light of Masonic charity and mercy shed forth



their cheering beams, bringing balm to the sufferer, comfort to the sorrowing and sustenance to the poor and hungry.” Another intriguing example involved General Albert Pike who later served as the Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, Scottish Rite. His home was in Little Rock, AK and the Federals were intent on burning it to the ground until Colonel Thomas Hart Benton, Jr. (Grand Master of Iowa) stepped in and prevented its razing by way of making it his headquarters. This act saved Pike’s large Masonic library, which became the Supreme Council (Southern Jurisdiction) of the Scottish Rite’s library. Another example offered by Halleran involves a Union Staff Officer, William McKinley (future President of the USA), who saw Masonic relief by a Federal surgeon towards Confederate prisoners of war. He was quoted as saying “If that is Masonry, I will take some of it myself.” Following the surrender at Appomattox, McKinley petitioned a Southern Lodge in Winchester, VA and was made a Mason.

Chapter 4: Saving the Life of the Enemy

The brethren of the time period placed importance of outward signs of the Craft, such as watch fobs, pins and drawings of Masonic symbols on pieces of equipment. An excellent example cited by Halleran was by a Union Lt. Matthew J. Borland of the 10th Ohio Volunteer Calvary, who was captured by the Confederates. Borland recounts: “I make the following statement, as much to combat the impression that Masons in the rebel army would not recognize ‘the Yankee masons’ (as they call them,) as to show the benefits of Masonry under certain circumstances. While out on a scouting party on the 3rd day of August, 1864, I was surprised and attacked by four times our number, and myself and two men taken as prisoners. I expected to receive very severe treatment, as our captors were a roving band, and not under very good discipline. The private soldiers had taken from me all my valuables before the commanding officer made his appearance. When he came up (it was a Col. Andrew Young) he recognized me at once as a Mason, secured and returned to me all my personal effects that could be found, and allowed me to ride in his company and share his rations. When we reached Gainesville, GA, he introduced me to prominent Masons-among others the D. G. Master of South Carolina... I am glad to say that I received very kind treatment from every Mason I met.”

The last example that I found striking occurred after the War. A Union Veteran placed a newspaper advertisement which reads as follows, “If the Confederate soldier belonging to company A of the 15th TX, who gave a wounded Federal soldier a canteen of water during the battle of Chickamauga, will write me at --Hotel, New Orleans, he will learn something of interest to him.” John Randolph. The two men met in New Orleans and the canteen from the battle was returned to the elderly Confederate Mason.

Chapter 5: Gentlemen of the White Apron

This chapter elaborates on Masonic ties in POW camps. The first example that I found curious was from a Union prisoner of war named John Ransom. He was captured and transferred to Belle Island prison near Richmond, VA. He was greatly assisted by his fraternal ties in the way of food and shelter. One of his captors recognized him to be a Mason and let him escape at his first chance. Another illustration occurred at the infamous Andersonville prison in Georgia, which had a “Masonic” tent inside the prison walls. They were never interfered with and seemed to be better fed and sheltered than the rest of the prisoners. Halleran makes clear that if a man was a Mason and in a POW camp, his Masonic identity could mean the difference between life or death.

Chapter 6: A More Decent Interment

The beginning of the chapter quotes Albert Mackey, “When a Mason has reached the third degree, he becomes entitled to all the rights and privileges of Ancient Craft Masonry... These are the rights of membership, of visitation, of relief, and of burial.” The obligations we take in solemnity were extended on the battlefield with the objective of a

decent burial. Several of the burials described by Halleran happened hastily on the field of battle with an abridged funeral rite. The book cites examples of wounded brethren placing Masonic diplomas near themselves with the hope of a proper interment. Halleran details a firsthand account of Union and Confederate soldiers and sailors meeting on the level to conduct Masonic funeral rites. Interestingly enough, a Union Captain was buried at Grace Church Cemetery in St. Francisville, LA. The odd burial of a Federal Boat Captain in a Southern cemetery is still celebrated by townspeople today. Road trip, anyone?

Chapter 7: All Passions Laid Aside? Freemasonry in the Army

Army lodges were not new at the time of the American Civil War. British Military lodges are credited with having played a small part in dispensing Masonry into the New World. During the War Between the States, Halleran noted that there were 98 Union Army lodges and 153 Confederate lodges which were under dispensation of a Grand Lodge. The photo section of the book provides an example of a beautiful Federal field lodge with all the accoutrements of their Home Lodge. Men had an interest in keeping the Masonic traditions of home in the field.

Conclusion

In closing, the book was a fascinating read for those with a deep curiosity in the American Civil War coupled with Freemasonry. The use of our modes of recognition is a recurring theme, whether it be on the battlefield interactions with the enemy, POWs or civilians. I have not read elsewhere of this many instances of the mystic tie being stretched thin, but never breaking. Lastly, the book made me pause to reflect on my own knowledge of the ancient landmarks that we take for granted. Every time that I place a Masonic pin on my lapel, it will truly inspire me to honor the great tenets of our gentle Craft.

The Better Angels of Our Nature remains in print and is available from online booksellers.

The Better Angels of Our Nature, University of Alabama Press, 2010, 248 pages.

W. B. Ryan A. Clendenin is a member and Past Master of Boone-Union Lodge No. 304, Union, Kentucky, and is a member of William O. Ware Lodge of Research. He has participated in living history events all over the country in an attempt to mimic the life of the common soldier.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF FREEMASONRY

Delmar D. Darrah

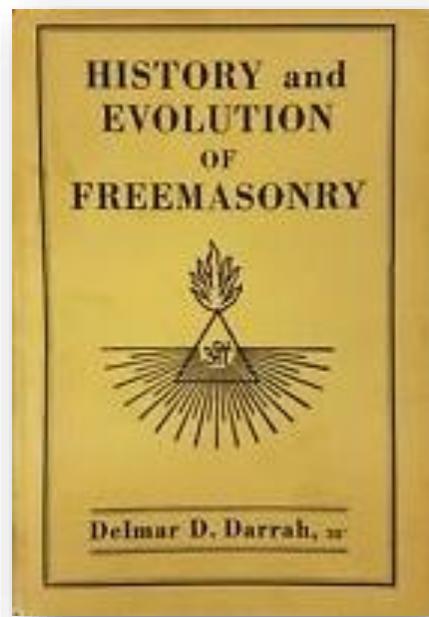
Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Delmar D. Darrah's *The History and Evolution of Freemasonry* is a gem that should be much better known than it is.

Written in 1915, *The History and Evolution of Freemasonry* traces the development of the Craft from its earliest emergence through the early years of the Twentieth Century. Although the book is now over one hundred years old, and consequently is dated, it remains an excellent account of the story of Freemasonry through the time at which it was written.

M. W. Bro. Darrah uses a fact-based approach to the history of the Fraternity seldom found among Masonic historians, particularly those of his era. Darrah wrote, "Masons have believed the things concerning the origin of the institution that they wanted to believe and have gone forth and told them as facts. When links were missing, they have been supplied by drawing upon fertile imaginations." Darrah cites the works of Robert Freke Gould and William James Hughan as his primary influences in setting about the task of recording the history of Freemasonry. He is highly critical of James Anderson and George Oliver as historians of Freemasonry, while recognizing their other contributions to the Craft. In his excellent chapter on Anderson's Constitutions, Darrah includes the "Old Charges" in their entirety.

Perhaps one of the most significant aspects of Darrah's work is his consistent theme regarding the evolution of Freemasonry over the centuries. He painstakingly points out the incongruities between common practices in the 18th Century and those present in the early years of the 20th Century. Darrah attributes such to the evolving nature of Freemasonry, taking care to assert that while specific practices (and rituals) change over the years, it is the underlying nature of the philosophy of Freemasonry that remains constant. One of the most significant examples given in the book is the evolution of the current Third, or Master Mason, Degree. Darrah cites this occurrence as proof that our ritual has evolved from its original form and continues to evolve. Darrah asserts that when Freemasonry ceases to evolve it is "finished" and being "finished" is tantamount to a death sentence.



The History and Evolution of Freemasonry includes the account of Freemasonry in Europe and in the United States. His account of the Morgan Affair and the period of anti-Masonry that followed is the book's weakest section. M. W. Bro. Darrah takes the account of an Ohio Mason who claimed to have known one of the men accused of kidnapping Morgan as proof that Morgan was not murdered by Masons. In this instance, Bro. Darrah strayed from his own insistence on the application of strict academic standards of research.

Other notable chapters in the book review the Roman Catholic Church's opposition to Freemasonry (the tone of this chapter is less than conciliatory), the proliferation of Landmarks (Bro. Darrah finds them confusing and the invention of Albert Mackey) and the symbolism of the Order.

His chapter on Prince Hall Masonry reflects the tenor of the time in which it was written. Darrah states that the separation of Prince Hall Masonry from mainstream Grand Lodge Masonry will continue to exist "as long as human prejudice separates the white man and the black man."

An especially interesting chapter is entitled "Masonic Economics." In this chapter, he writes, "The sum total of human happiness is expressed in the wages of a Fellowcraft – plenty, health and peace. If a man has plenty – which means bread and water – health and peace, he has drawn the wages of life according to the standards of Masonry." Darrah goes on in this chapter to discuss the wisdom of knowing when one has "enough."

M. W. Bro. Darrah also includes a brief history of the York Rite and Scottish Rite Degrees. In his discussion of the York Rite, he addresses the notion that Freemasonry has its roots among the Knight Templars but dismisses such a theory as being wholly without foundation.

M. W. Bro. Darrah's ***The History and Evolution of Freemasonry*** is extremely accessible and is appropriate for Masons of all Degrees. It is enlightening to the new Mason as well as the more seasoned Brother.

The History and Evolution of Freemasonry is available through amazon.com or from other booksellers.

Most Worshipful Bro. Darrah was a professor of elocution and a basketball coach (both men's and women's teams) at Illinois Wesleyan University. He served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois in 1912-1913.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE GENESIS OF FREEMASONRY

David Harrison

Reviewed by Keith W. Gunkel, P. M., Orion Lodge No. 222

This book, *The Genesis of Freemasonry*, is a wonderful read for all Masons, and especially those that seek answers as to why, as present-day Masons, we do what we do.

The book is divided into three parts. The ritual of Freemasonry, the architecture of Freemasonry, and the politics of Freemasonry.

The ritual of Freemasonry describes the origins of English Freemasonry and the men involved. It reveals documented evidence of early Freemasonry in Scotland, as well as in England. In the 16th century, the Scottish lodges, such as Edinburgh and Kilwinning, were permanent; whereas the English Lodges, held in taverns and coffee houses, were temporary.

In addition, the book clearly explains that there were only two degrees, the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft, until approximately 1728. It shows the timetable of where Operative Masons transformed over to Speculative membership in the early 18th century.

Dr. Harrison's references to James Anderson's Constitution of the Freemasons in 1723 are used to present the regulations of the Premier Grand Lodge in London. The ritual of Freemasonry is part of the moral code, symbols of silence and secrecy.

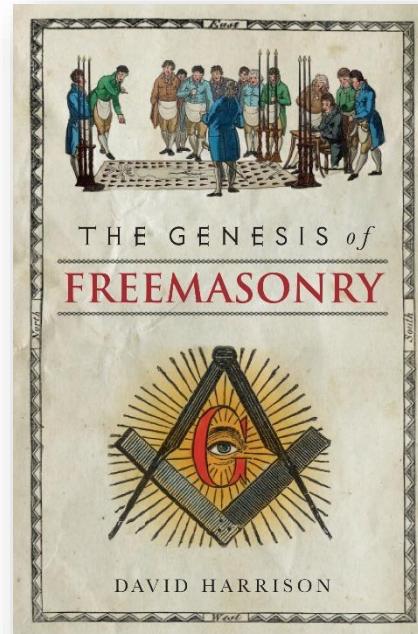
Solomon's Temple, including the furnishings and the décor, is described in detail. Mr. Harrison sheds light that we, as Masons, may interpret to build God's world through the promotion of natural philosophy, love, education, moralistic attitudes.

The history of the third degree ritual includes, to my surprise, mention of Noah and the Ark, as well as Jesus's resurrection and the story of Hiram Abiff. The degree of Master Mason symbolizes death, and the awareness of mortality to all.

Part two refers to the architecture of Freemasonry. Its focus is on King Solomon's Temple and, for example, Sir Isaac Newton's obsession with the Biblical dimensions of Solomon's creation.

Sir Christopher Wren used ideas from Solomon's Temple in rebuilding St. Paul's Cathedral. Other Masons introduced carvings and figures in their personal private lodges.

In addition, part two explains the beginning of the Enlightenment Era and the birth of modern Freemasonry. Dr. John Desaguliers, James Anderson and Isaac Newton set in place the rejuvenation of the Craft, and published in



1723 a new book of constitutions. In 1738, a new edition appeared in which the regulations note the new third degree and the offices of Treasurer, Secretary, and a Tyler to look after the door.

Part three, as mentioned, describes the politics of Freemasonry, delving into the personalities of the people in leadership and their relationships. The first Grand Master of the Premier or Modern Grand Lodge, Anthony Sayre, was a bookseller.

Connecting or linking religion, politics, and education, Freemasonry bridged all men to obtain insight into accessing divine knowledge and sharing in society all rights and privileges to all members. This chapter also mentions conflicts at the time between the Whig and Tory parties, and how their differences were settled over time. Freemasonry had established boundaries for a non-political space within the closed lodge doors; peace and harmony were present for all brothers.

In closing on my review of this book, I find Freemasonry a brotherhood of like-minded men, seeking to improve one's-self and seeking to be better one day at a time. Our purpose is to spread the cement of brotherly love to hold and unite one another through time immortal.

The Genesis of Freemasonry is available from online booksellers, as well as on the author's website, www.dr-david-harrison.com.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

NORTH AMERICAN FREEMASONRY IDEALISM & REALISM

Thomas W. Jackson

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Master William O. Ware Lodge of Research

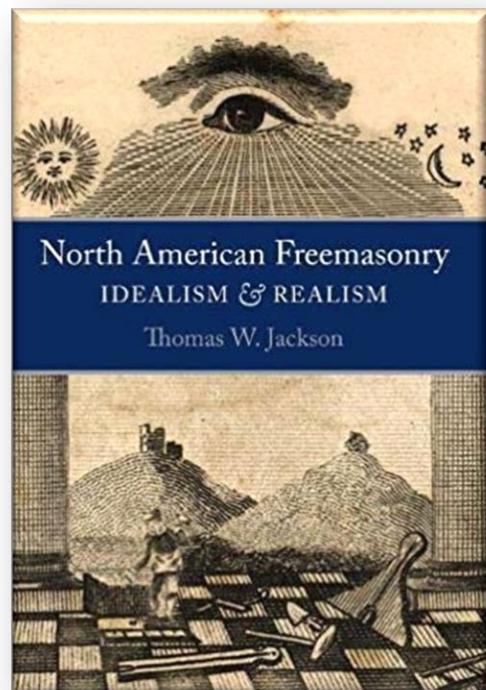
If Freemasonry has a voice, especially North American Freemasonry, it is the voice of R. W. Bro. Thomas W. Jackson, the renowned Past Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

R. W. Bro. Jackson's new book, *North American Freemasonry: Idealism & Realism*, is a collection of presentations that he has made over the course of his many years as a Masonic writer and lecturer. The title of the book is a bit misleading. R. W. Bro. Jackson has plenty to say about Freemasonry outside of North America, but his basic theme is an admonition to North American Freemasons concerning the condition of the Fraternity.

North American Freemasonry: Idealism & Realism describes the idealism that is at the heart of Freemasonry. The intellectual and philosophical tenets of the Craft are designed to enable good men to unlock their greatest potential. By the practice of Freemasonry, men can reach levels of self-fulfillment that they scarcely imagined. The realism portrayed in the book is a snapshot of the extent to which so few contemporary North American Freemasons even understand the fundamental nature of Freemasonry, much less actually practice it.

North American Freemasonry: Idealism & Realism is divided into sections representing the audiences to whom R. W. Bro. Jackson was speaking. There are sections dedicated to Idealism and to Realism, where the audiences were composed largely of North American Freemasons. There are other sections that include presentations made to international groups of Freemasons, non-Masons and the family and friends of Freemasonry.

Throughout *North American Freemasonry: Idealism & Realism*, R. W. Bro. Jackson makes three major points:



First, outside of religion, Freemasonry has been the greatest source for good in the history of the world and it played a significant role in the formation and evolution of North American society as we know it, including our form of government.

Second, North American Freemasonry has ceased to acknowledge and practice the intellectual and philosophical standards that once characterized it. In too many instances, North American Freemasonry has become little more than a collection agency for public charities. Inexplicably, American Masons have raised and given away huge sums of money, while its own infrastructure is in decay.

Third, North American Freemasonry has been its own worst enemy by lowering its standards for admission. In a futile effort to stem the loss of membership, men have been admitted as members who, only a few decades ago, would have been acknowledged as unfit for consideration as members of a Masonic Lodge. In the pursuit of quantity, North American Freemasonry has sacrificed quality.

R. W. Bro. Jackson points out that North American Freemasonry stands in stark contrast to the rest of the world. Freemasonry is growing everywhere except in North America. R. W. Bro. Jackson credits this phenomenon as existing because institutional Freemasonry outside of North America has retained its intellectual and philosophical underpinnings.

In “The History of the Future of Freemasonry” give at a conference of The Masonic Society, R. W. Bro. Jackson writes:

I have observed Brothers sitting in chairs that not too many years ago would have been beyond their wildest dreams. Just because we are given the title does not inoculate us with the wisdom of former leaders or the knowledge of the past. There must be an effort exerted to learn and programs to teach. Therein has become one of the greatest failures of North American Freemasonry. There is very little effort required to reach ‘exalted’ positions in Freemasonry today and there exists almost a total failure to teach. There are Past Masters today who reached that lofty position with just a few years of membership and though they may possess the ability to lead, most lack the knowledge of what they are leading and there are very few grand lodges in North America today supporting any viable education program to teach them. That is unfair to them and possibly destructive to their future. My Brothers, there has never been as osmotic process developed whereby, we could sit and absorb knowledge as too many tend to rely upon on our Lodges today.

R. W. Bro. Jackson is equally critical of the trend among North American Lodges to take on the trappings of service clubs and focus their efforts on fundraising for public charities. He correctly notes that Freemasonry cannot buy respect and that the Fraternity receives very little, if any, credit for its fundraising. While acknowledging charity as a core component of Freemasonry, he distinguishes between the charity shown among Freemasons to each other and the frenzied efforts to engage in what previous generations of Freemasons would have referred to as “alms-giving.”

R. W. Bro. Jackson writes that the purpose of Freemasonry is to make good men better, one man at a time. These good men, in turn, make society better. It is important to note that R. W. Bro. Jackson does

not condemn Freemasonry's involvement with charitable works. It is the fact that it has become the focus (and the identity) of the Craft, to the exclusion of the practice of its genuine aim and purpose, that he laments.

R. W. Brother Jackson's observations are, unfortunately, entirely accurate and serve to effectively illustrate the wasted state of contemporary North American Freemasonry.

North American Freemasonry: Idealism & Realism is a candid look at Freemasonry from the perspective of a man who recognizes what Freemasonry actually is and is intended to be, and who also realizes that it has dangerously strayed from its original purpose.

North American Freemasonry: Idealism & Realism is available through amazon.com or from other booksellers.

R. W. Bro. Thomas W. Jackson is an eminent Freemason, recognized around the world for his work encouraging and supporting the Masonic Fraternity. Bro. Jackson was made a Mason in Cumberland Valley Lodge No. 315 of Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, and served as its Worshipful master in 1969. He went on to serve a twenty-year tenure as the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, retiring in 1999.

He was the first Executive Secretary of the World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges, serving from 1998 to 2014. He is now honorary President ad Vitam of that organization.

R. W. Bro. Jackson is a strong supporter of Masonic education and research, serving as the Warrant Master of the Pennsylvania Lodge of Research, a Fellow of the Philalethes Society, a Founding Fellow of the Masonic Society, a member of the Board of Directors of Scottish Rite Research Society and a member of the exclusive Society of Blue Friars.

He has also held leadership positions in many other organizations concerned with the culture of the Craft, including his service as president of the Conference of Grand Secretaries of North America, board member of the Masonic Information Center of North America, the Masonic Restoration Foundation, the Masonic Relief Association of North America and chairman of the board of directors of the Association of Masonic Arts.

He holds honorary membership in 111 Grand Lodges throughout the world. He is the only American Freemasonry holding Grand Rank in the United Grand Lodge of England and holds honorary Grand Rank in 42 Grand Lodges, including honorary Grand Master in 16 jurisdictions.

R. W. Bro. Jackson has presided over 18 local, state, nation, and world Masonic bodies. He has spoken in over 40 countries and had articles published in educational, scientific, and Masonic journals, newspapers and publications in more than thirty countries. His papers have been translated into more than a dozen languages.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

EXPLORING EARLY GRAND LODGE FREEMASONRY

STUDIES IN HONOR OF THE TRICENTENNIAL OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND

Christopher B. Murphy, Editor; Shawn Eyer, Executive Editor

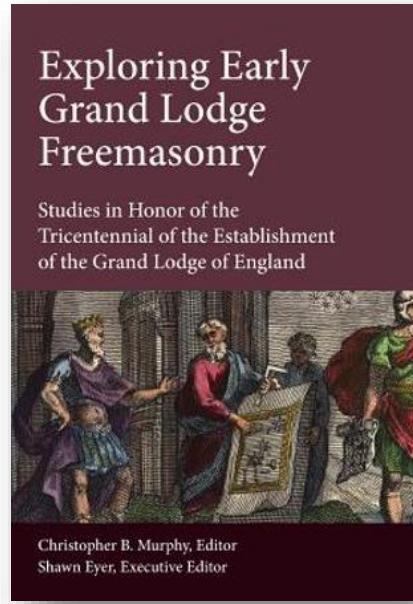
Reviewed by William J. Lorenz, PM, Research Fellow, William O. Ware Lodge off Research

When an anniversary of a special event occurs, it almost always requires a new look at that noteworthy happening with a correlation of newer information concerning the event and the thoughts of the men who participated then and in the following years. And so it is, in this collection of scholarly presentations: *Exploring Early Grand Lodge Freemasonry – Studies in Honor of the Tricentennial of the Establishment of the Grand Lodge of England.*

As a fresh review at previously researched material, this book presents a clear and concise understanding of the thoughts of the men who lived it, concerning such things as religion and science, the true secrets of Freemasonry, what actually happened within the Lodges, and what the Masons of that era truthfully thought and felt about their Lodges and themselves as Freemasons. This study enables the reader to grasp “the cultural realities of Masonic life and thought” in the early years of the first Grand Lodge.

Editor Christopher M. Murphy, who lectured at the 10th annual Masonic Restoration Foundation’s Symposium held in Lexington, Kentucky (2019), offers the “Introduction” to the book. Murphy also presents two brilliant articles: “A Just and Exact Account of Freemasonry - A Survey of the Constitutions and Pocket Companions of 1723 to 1756;” and “Assessing Authentic Lodge Culture: Moving Beyond the Tavern Myth.”

The ninety-eight page “Just and Exact Account” article examines James Anderson’s Constitutions, with eight other early works presented within a period of forty years, all of which were Grand Lodge publications, and puts forth the practices and the beliefs of early Grand Lodge Masonry, which enables the student to identify the essential themes presented, and in the words of H. L. Haywood, “think Masonry out for himself.” Murphy also suggests that the mythical history of Freemasonry was for years important



enough to be presented to each new brother at his initiation. So should it be reviewed with the same importance by the Masonic student.

In his second presentation, “Assessing Authentic Lodge Culture,” author Murphy states that the fact Lodges met in taverns has given rise to the notion that Lodge meetings consisted of eating, drinking and singing a few songs. The mysteries were only what stonemasons practiced, and “the only secret is there is no secret.” Masons should of course, keep the only secrets, the grips and words, private. Murphy unequivocally rejects this notion, and through thorough research, presents a convincing case for a far more spiritual society, one that will “unfold the Mysteries of Godliness” to those who search its truth. Perhaps this is the most important lecture in the series.

The “Foreword” of the book is offered by the renowned Masonic scholar and Executive Editor of the book, Shawn Eyer, who adds his article, “The Essential Secrets of Masonry – Insight from an American Masonic Oration of 1734.” This “Dissertation upon Freemasonry” is remarkable for several reasons. It is the first known American Lodge oration and the third oldest surviving Masonic oration in the world. Eyer states the oration was not intended to be published but was intended for Lodge presentation only. It deals with the Master Mason degree, proving that the third degree was available soon after Masonry arrived in the colonies. It reflects that “the harmony of the tiled Lodge reflects the harmony of heaven”, and adds that hidden knowledge was available through Masonry, to those who wished to pursue it. This thought pattern is found among several other early Masonic sources.

“Genius of Masonry – The Preservation of Masonic Tradition in the Songs of Freemasons,” by Nathan A. St. Pierre, offers a look at music, one of the seven liberal sciences, that is today often ignored. While there are some American Lodges who are currently reviving the practice of the singing of the songs that appeared in Anderson’s Constitutions (and elsewhere), music is mostly ignored by the majority of American Lodges. However, these songs reflect the culture of the era and how Masons felt about their Masonry. More Masonic related studies should be done on this subject. St. Pierre says that music is not so much listening to a famous singer but should be sung or played for the joy it provides to one’s self, and it offers additional comradery when singing or playing an instrument as a group.

“John Desaguliers – The Balance of Religion and Science,” by researcher Jedediah French, is an interesting look at the third Grand Master, John Desaguliers, and his obsession in promoting Newtonian philosophy in early Masonry. Desaguliers was a close associate with Isaac Newton through the Royal Society. Much research by Brother French brings forth new information on Desaguliers, who guided the Grand Lodge in the early years.

Other presentations included in *Exploring Early Grand Lodge Freemasonry* include two very popular authors: Ric Berman, who contributed “Freemasonry, the London Irish, and the Antients Grand Lodge” and David Harrison, who offered “The Grand Lodge of All England Held at York – An Independent Grand Lodge in England in the Eighteenth Century.” Dana Scofield’s “Spiritual and Heavenly People in the Corners – Embracing Masonic Ethos through the Eyes of James Anderson” rounds out the series of presentations. Each of these articles display considerable reference to Rev. James Anderson’s “Traditional History of Freemasonry” which is also included in this book. Reading the complete series of the above research papers, leaves a far more favorable opinion of James Anderson than previously held and definitely a better understanding of early Grand Lodge Freemasonry and the culture behind it. If one thinks that

Freemasonry in its Grand Lodge beginnings was shallow, and its secrets minimal, then he who reads “Exploring Early Grand Lodge Freemasonry” will have a broader understanding of the complexity of Freemasonry in its early Grand Lodge years.

This book is certainly one of the most important books on the subject of the early Grand Lodge and was written by new Masonic researchers and well-known Masonic scholars alike. If you want to know what early eighteenth-century Freemasonry really was and what it truly meant to Freemasons, “Exploring Early Grand Lodge Freemasonry” is a must read. It was certainly will be studied by Masonic students for years to come. I highly recommend it.

Exploring Early Grand Lodge Freemasonry – Studies in Honor of the Tricentennial of the Establishment of the Grand Lodge of England, Christopher B. Murphy, Editor; Shawn Eyer, Executive Editor is available online or through any good bookseller. A copy is also available at the Covington Masonic Library.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE AGE OF UNREASON DISSECTING THE INFAMY OF THE MORGAN AFFAIR AND ITS AFTERMATH

John W. Bizzack

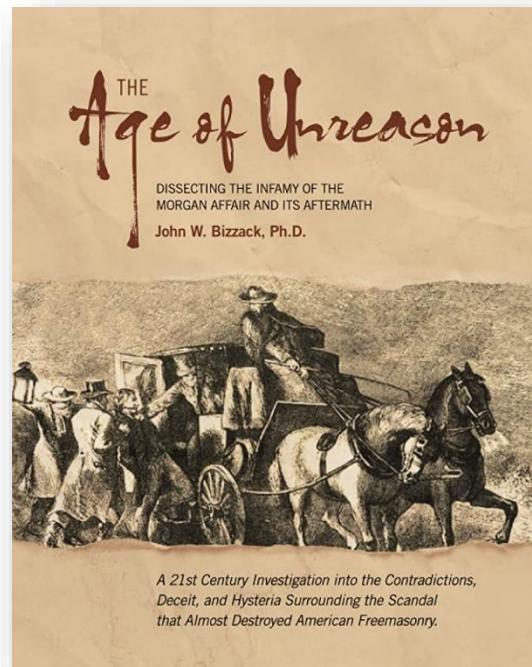
Past Master, Lexington Lodge No. 1 and William O. Ware Research Fellow

Reviewed by: Thomas L. Nitschke II, Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

I thought I knew the story of William Morgan and his disappearance in 1826 from a town in upstate New York. But like any good story, the truth can be muddled with deception, personal gain, and the unwillingness to face the underlying cause of an issue. Brother John Bizzack was challenged with finding the truth behind the William Morgan Affair, but, in typical fashion by this author, he found so much more than the superficial facts of the story. The reader will be taken beyond the basic history of the incident. A historical dissection of the events that led up to the Morgan Affair, and its aftermath, which still haunts American Freemasonry, is examined.

The story began in early 1826, with William Morgan preparing to write an exposé of the rituals of Freemasonry. It should be noted that exposés of Freemasonry had already been written, but, nevertheless, this was just going to be one more book that would “reveal all the secrets.” The Brothers of Batavia Lodge in New York, however, thought differently, and prior to Morgan’s abduction tried in multiple ways to sabotage the book so these “secrets” would not be revealed. On September 11, 1826, Morgan was arrested on nonpayment of a loan and theft and incarcerated at the Canandaigua Jail. By 9:00 p.m. that night, Morgan had been abducted from the jail by Freemasons and was never to be heard from again. In the end, no person was ever charged with the murder of Morgan, and the charges that were brought against persons involved carried little punitive weight.

It is almost impossible to relay all the literary components of this book for the reader to digest in a timely manner. I will attempt to break it down to three major areas that include anti-Freemasonry hysteria and the defense of Freemasonry, the fact that Freemasonry had nobody at its helm, and the consequences of the events.



Brother Bizzack details the stories of those who came to the defense of Freemasonry and those who very much would like to have seen its ultimate demise. In the midst of this back and forth, two men spent a lifetime proclaiming their version of the “true story” and end of William Morgan: Thurlow Weed and Rob Morris. Weed was the editor of the *Rochester Daily Telegraph* and a leader of the Anti-Masonic Party. Rob Morris was a nationally known Freemason and Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky. Both men wrote extensively on the subject and authored many publications and books, each defined by their personal stance on Freemasonry. Each used uncorroborated information or testimony from a myriad of personalities that either proved the fact that the Freemasons killed Morgan shortly after his abduction, or that Morgan lived on in faraway places. It becomes very apparent that both men were not interested in the truth, but, rather, creating a narrative that best suited their intended target audience. Unless blindly taking their written word as fact, which most did, a simple verification of the facts would have easily shown that most of the claims could not be authenticated or could not have physically occurred due to time and place. In the end, Morris and Tweed created a false sense of truth that galvanized their respective audiences and created myths and legends that can still be seen today.

Even though the focus of this book is on the Morgan Affair, an underlying truth comes out as you read each page. The truth is that American Freemasonry lost its way shortly after being introduced into the colonies (and subsequently the newly created United States of America). Across the country, countless lodges were being created and were taking in new members at an alarming rate. New York, by 1825, counted over 400 lodges and 20,000 members. Any historian can tell you that America in that time was still isolated; and communication was rudimentary in its ability to inform the general public, let alone lodge members. As a result, Grand Lodges were unable, even in their best efforts, to ensure that lodges were conducting Freemasonry as it was intended to be practiced. This inability led to lodges acting on their own and creating what they thought Freemasonry was supposed to be, but unfortunately, they only created traditions that lacked the fundamentals of true Freemasonry. Adding to this calamity, the anti-Masonic era depleted what was left of the members that held much of the genuine Masonic knowledge. Both issues led to a lack of leadership and understanding of the true aim and purpose of Freemasonry. As stated before, no one was at the helm to guide the fraternity, and, as a result, it wandered in darkness trying to find its true self.

Finally, we are faced with the consequences of it all. After decades and centuries of both sides arguing, for and against Freemasonry, squabbling over the value and relevance of the fraternity to society, we can only conclude that everyone has their own opinion. As for American Freemasonry, we have a habit of shooting ourselves in the foot as Brother Bizzack is known to say in his speaking engagements and writings. Examples of this are found in the Baltimore Convention of 1843, where we put restrictions on the fraternity that haunt us to this day; and in our failure to realize that we have a lot of members, as Brother Bizzack states, who are more interested in the *idea* of Freemasonry, rather than becoming the kind of man that Freemasonry was designed to influence and produce.

American Freemasonry needs to, and should, take a hard look at itself. In my humble opinion, I really don’t think we would recognize ourselves. Through factually understanding where we came from and learning the lessons that history has given us, there is hope, however, that we will again know who we are and act appropriately to the betterment of society and to ourselves.

I highly encourage all that read this review to pick up a copy of Brother Bizzack’s book, ***The Age of Unreason: Dissecting the Infamy of the Morgan Affair and Its Aftermath***. You will not be disappointed, and you will be very impressed with the amount of documentation he accumulated in

it. This book will leave you looking for more, and, perhaps, taking a hard look at American Freemasonry and what we need to do to be relevant not only to society, but, more importantly, enhancing your personal journey of self-improvement.

The Age of Unreason: Dissecting the Infamy of the Morgan Affair and Its Aftermath is available from the author at www.thecraftsman.org, at Amazon, or from other online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

DOINGS OF THE GRAND LODGE OF KENTUCKY 1800 – 1900

H. B. Grant - Grand Secretary, Grand Lodge of Kentucky

Publisher: Masonic Home Book and Job Office, 1900, 427 pages

Reviewed by William J. Lorenz, P. M. William O. Ware Lodge of Research

"Under the instructions of the Most Worshipful Grand Master, I have entered upon the duties assigned me, but too late to hope the result will be much more than a compendium of the doings of the Grand Lodge. To give it a personal interest and relieve it, somewhat, of a stiffness of unadorned facts, a few extra copies will be bound separately. The written instructions of the Grand Master are as follows:

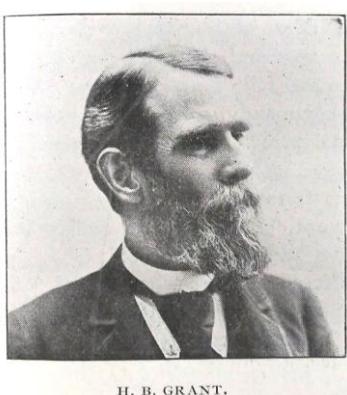
Owingsville, Ky., March 3, 1900

H. B. Grant, Grand Secretary, Louisville,

R. W. Sir and Dear Brother:

Something ought to be done to appropriately notice the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Organization of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky. The committee failed to report on the motion to publish a history. I, therefore, appointed you to prepare a history of our Grand Lodge, to be published by the Grand Secretary, with the Proceedings of 1900. You say truly that the time is short for such work, but I cannot relieve you of this task (and I realize it is a heavy one). Therefore, you will please prepare the matter and have it printed as an addenda, to be bound with the regular Proceedings, Halftone portraits of the Past Grand Masters, with suitable sketches and illustrations, you are authorized to cause to be printed in the history.

*As ever your friend and brother,
John A. Ramsey, Grand Master"*



Thus, the introduction page, in Henry Bannister Grant's own words, with the instructions from Grand Master Ramsey, tells how, when, where and why, *Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, 1800 to 1900* came about. H. B. Grant's history first appeared by sections, in the 1901, 1902, 1903 and 1904 issues of Grand Lodge of Kentucky Proceedings while also being published in a book form.

H. B. Grant complemented his "history" with photos (sometimes drawings) of distinguished Kentucky Masons, along with other pictures. His brief biography of the Grand Masters would prove valuable for future research, by presenting an understanding of each of the men who served in that office.

The first section of his “**Doings**” included several parts, including: “Early Masonic History,” “The Grand Lodge Preliminary Convention” and “Organization of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky,” which are then followed by interesting excerpts compiled from the Annual proceedings in a year by year fashion, ending October 1900.

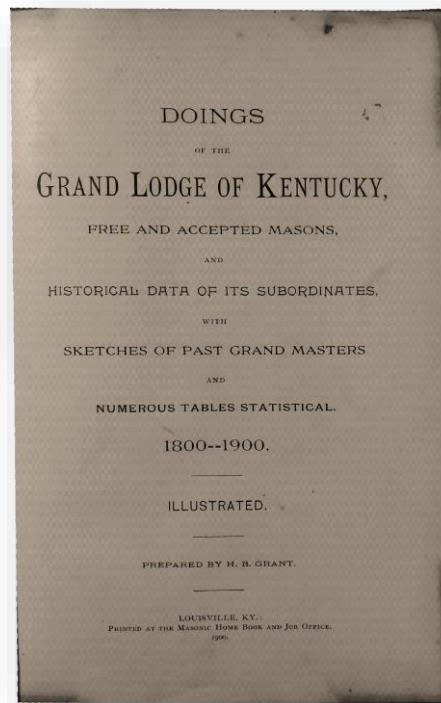
Rob Morris, PGM had published his *History of Freemasonry in Kentucky* in 1859 but his history had sold poorly, and the Grand Lodge voted to purchase the remainder of his “**History**” and send the books to the various Kentucky lodges. This, along with the Proceedings of 1901 through 1904 issues, already containing Grant’s history, may be the reason so few copies of *Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky* were printed. Certainly, the book is rare but can be readily found in the existing Grand Lodge proceedings listed above.

I was pleasantly surprised by Grant’s “Early Masonic History.” If it had been dated 2000, instead of 1900, few students of Masonry, 100 years later, would have found fault with it. H.B. Grant was an early member of the Realistic School. He gives a very thoughtful definition of “Freemasonry” as well as “Free and Accepted Masons,” stating that it was the “first given as a name to the fraternity in the second edition of the Book of Constitutions, published by Rev. James Anderson, D.D. in 1738.”

On discussing the origins of Freemasonry, Grant notes the lacking of Masonic education throughout the Craft: “Tradition informs us that Freemasonry originated with the builders of King Solomon’s Temple, and a very large number of brethren, amounting almost to unanimity, give this unwritten history the fullest credence.”

Grant found fault with the Grand Lodge of Kentucky’s claim to be “Ancient York Masons,” as “a misnomer and misleading.” Kentucky issued charters with A.Y.M. while the by-laws used F. and A. M. He points out that Kentucky supported the Grand Lodge of A.Y.M. of South Carolina over the Grand Lodge of South Carolina in their dispute, through Kentucky’s refusal to “acknowledge or hold communication with any Grand Lodge in South Carolina, but the Grand Lodge of *Ancient York Masons*,” in disregard to Kentucky’s own by-laws. He did not object to Kentucky’s York Rite degrees, but since they differed from England’s degrees, Grant felt that the degrees of the Lodge, Chapter, Council and Commandery should be known as the American Rite.

Following his “Early Masonic History,” Grant gives a most interesting and detailed report on the organization of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, as formed by Lexington, Paris, Georgetown, Hiram (Frankfort), and Solomon U.D. (Shelbyville) Lodges and its election of Wm. Murray as Grand Master. He includes the letter written by William Murray requesting permission for the five Kentucky lodges to separate from the Grand Lodge of Virginia to form their own Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge of



Virginia's response. The announcement letter written to other Grand Lodges, as well as other several other items of interest are also included.

The bulk of ***Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky 1800 – 1900*** is an abbreviated compilation of the Annual Proceedings for the first 100 years of Kentucky Masonry, and is ideal for research. The casual reader will be most interested in Grant's commentary in the book. During this 100-year period a total of 730 lodges, plus 4 lodges U.D., would be chartered by the Grand Lodge of Kentucky!

Something should be said about the author and compiler. H. B. Grant was a very important member of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky. He served as Grand Secretary from 1877, until his death in September 1912. Besides his compiling the 100-year history, he wrote about Masonic trials, and Landmarks for the Grand Lodge and as part of the committee, revised the Grand Lodge Constitution on several occasions. He also was the first editor of "The Masonic Home Journal." As Grand Secretary, the closing, "Fraternally Thine" always preceded his signature. After his death, this phrase was adopted to be used on all Grand Lodge correspondence. H. B. Grant Lodge No. 610, at Etoile (Barren County), Kentucky, was named for him. H. B. Grant, in his 35 years as Grand Secretary, significantly influenced the character and machinations of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky.

Grant also authored "Tactic and Manual for Knights Templar;" "Drill Tactics for Patriarchs Militant, I.O.O.F., (Odd Fellows); and "Drill Tactics for Select Knights, A.O.U.M., (United Workman); in addition to his Grand Lodge writings. Today, H. B. Grant is best remembered as the author of the ***Vest Pocket Trestle-Board***, an authorized ritual still in use by Kentucky Lodges.

H. B. Grant's ***Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, 1800 – 1900*** is an important book written during the centennial period, to preserve the Grand Lodge's heritage and the brief biographies of the men who served as Grand Masters; as well as a quick reference book to the most important 'doings' gleaned from first 100 years of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky.

Long out of print, copies of ***Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, 1800 – 1900*** are quite rare and are to be treated with great care when found. As noted above, the work can be found in installment form in the Proceedings of The Grand Lodge of Kentucky for the years 1901 through 1904. An original copy of ***Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, 1800 – 1900***, along with the installments contained in the proceedings, may be found in the William O. Ware Library, Covington, Kentucky.

William J. Lorenz is a Past Master of Henry Barnes Lodge No. 607 (now Trinity Lodge No. 163). He is also a Past Master of William O. Ware Lodge of Research, Covington, Kentucky, and in 2018, Lorenz was named to the initial class of William O. Ware Research Fellows.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

KENTUCKY FREEMASONRY – 1788-1978 THE GRAND LODGE AND THE MEN WHO MADE IT

Charles Snow Guthrie

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master William O. Ware Lodge of Research

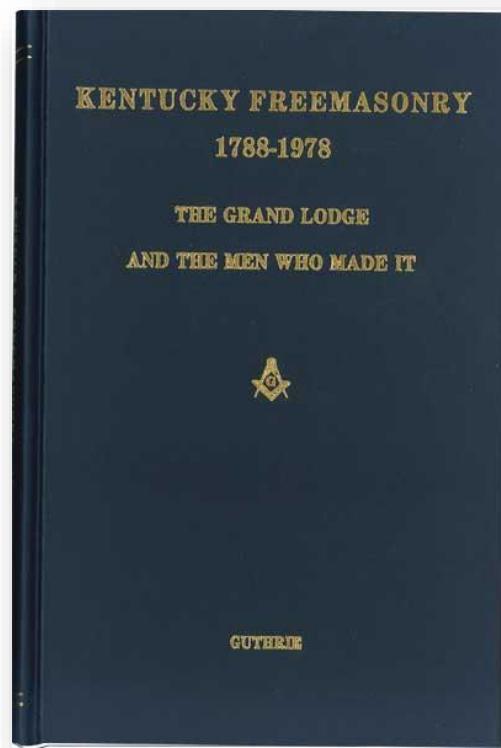
Professor Charles Snow Guthrie's *Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978 The Grand Lodge and the Men Who Made It* is the most recent and the most comprehensive study of Kentucky Freemasonry currently available. Prior to the 1981 publication of Worshipful Bro. Guthrie's work, the most recent book that addressed the history of Kentucky Freemasonry was Bro. J. Winston Coleman's Masonry in the Bluegrass, which was published in 1933. Fittingly, Bro.

Coleman wrote the introduction for *Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978*.

Bro. Guthrie's work is unique in that while it addresses specific historical eras in Kentucky Freemasonry, it also provides previously unavailable biographical sketches of several of the legendary men who influenced the course of Freemasonry in Kentucky.

The first three chapters of *Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978* describe the foundation on which Kentucky Freemasonry was built. Worshipful Bro. Guthrie faithfully traces the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, the spread of Freemasonry to the American Colonies, the establishment of the Grand Lodge of Virginia and the path of the pioneers who brought Freemasonry into present day Kentucky. Recognizing Kentucky's prominent role in the expansion of Freemasonry into the American West, Worshipful Bro. Guthrie titled his chapter on the foundation of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, "The Premier Grand Lodge of the West."

Worshipful Bro. Guthrie devotes an entire chapter to the towering influence of M. W. P. G. M. Rob Morris and gives perhaps the most complete portrait of Morris available. Most students of Freemasonry



instantly recognize M. W. P. G. M. Morris as the Poet Laureate of Freemasonry and credit him with the founding of the Order of the Eastern Star. Worshipful Bro. Guthrie examines the life of Morris in more detail and describes the ill-fated Conservator movement, his travels abroad and his involvement with Kentucky's Masonic University. Placed in his proper historical context, Morris becomes a much more accessible figure. Perhaps the most telling shortcoming of ***Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978*** is the failure to hold M. W. P. G. M. Morris accountable for his publication in 1883 of ***William Morgan: Or Political Anti-Masonry, Its Rise, Growth, And Decadence***, in which Morris stated that Morgan had not been abducted and murdered by Masons, but had been deported to Canada. Morris's work, a fanciful bit of conjecture at best, is not directly mentioned by Worshipful Bro. Guthrie.

Other notable Kentucky Freemasons who receive attention in ***Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978*** include M. W. P. G. M. John Henry Cowles, who has his own chapter detailing his service to Freemasonry and especially to the Scottish Rite, R. W. Past Grand Secretary H. B. Grant, M. W. P. G. M. Henry Clay, Bro. John Cabell Breckinridge and M. W. P. G. M. Joseph H. Daviess.

One of the more intriguing chapters in ***Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978*** is the chapter titled, "Masonic University," which details the Grand Lodge's lone foray into the realm of public education. Originally envisioned as a school for the orphans of Masons, the institution at LaGrange struggled for identity and served as a primary and secondary school for boys and also awarded a handful of college degrees. In an effort to re-energize the institution, it briefly became affiliated with the Kentucky School of Medicine. Low enrollment, the Civil War and the costs of maintenance all doomed the Masonic University to a relatively brief existence.

Perhaps the ideological successors to the Masonic University are Kentucky's two Masonic homes, which are the subject of another one of Professor Guthrie's chapters. More focused in purpose (the support and education of Masonic widows and orphans following the Civil War), the Masonic Homes received more widespread support than did the Masonic University. Worshipful Bro. Guthrie describes the Widows and Orphans Home in Louisville, and later the Old Masons Home located in Shelbyville, as objects of pride for Kentucky Masons.

Professor Guthrie also devotes several chapters to the roller coaster years of the 20th Century, noting the rapid increase of membership in Kentucky Lodges, the devastating effect of the Great Depression and the last great increase in membership following World War II. Much of Professor Guthrie's work on the 20th Century provides background for the organizational structure of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky as we know it today. His work includes a discussion of the several editions of the Constitution, the rise of the concept of District Deputies (originally known as "Key Men") and, of course, the endless debates over which version of ritual should be used.

Worshipful Bro. Guthrie published ***Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978*** at a time when Kentucky Freemasonry had experienced nearly twenty consecutive years of membership losses. He notes those losses in his work and speculates briefly as to the reasons that men are no longer attracted to, and remain active in, their respective Lodges. Worshipful Bro. Guthrie does not speculate on the continuance of such membership trends (after another forty years, we now know that membership has continued to steeply decline), nor does he offer any commentary as to the long-term future of Kentucky Freemasonry.

Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978 The Grand Lodge and the Men Who Made It is exactly what it advertises itself to be. It is a factual account of Freemasonry in Kentucky from its earliest days to the last quarter of the 20th Century. It draws heavily on the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky and the prior works of J. Winston Coleman, R. W. Grand Secretary H. B. Grant and M. W. P. G. M. Rob Morris.

Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978 is a scholarly work, well organized, and written in very accessible language. Providing necessary detail and placing important issues in proper historical context, it is an absolute necessity for any serious student of Kentucky Freemasonry.

Kentucky Freemasonry – 1788-1978 is available through amazon.com or from other online booksellers.

Charles Snow Guthrie Jr, February 15, 1922 – December 24, 2000 was a member and Past Master of Cumberland Lodge No. 413 in Burkesville, Kentucky, and a dual member at Bowling Green Lodge No. 73, Bowling Green, Kentucky. Worshipful Bro. Guthrie was a retired professor of English at Western Kentucky University and a retired teacher at Cumberland County High School. He was the editor of the Kentucky Folklore Record. Worshipful Bro. Guthrie was raised to the sublime Degree of a Master Mason on August 27, 1943, in Cumberland Lodge No. 413. He was a recipient of the Thirty-Third Degree of Scottish Rite Freemasonry, the Allied Masonic Degrees, and the Red Cross of Constantine. In 1993, in recognition of his contributions to Freemasonry, he was named to the Society of Blue Friars.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

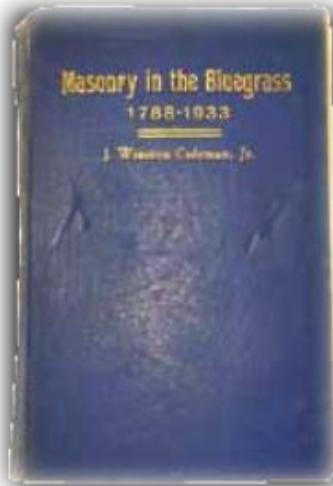
MASONRY IN THE BLUEGRASS – 1788-1933

J. Winston Coleman

Reviewed By: John W. Bizzack, Past Master, Lexington Lodge No. 1,
William O. Ware Lodge of Research Fellow

In 1933 *Masonry in the Bluegrass* became the third book published about the history of Freemasonry in Kentucky. The first was Rob Morris's History of Freemasonry in 1859. Although mostly about the history of one lodge, the second book was J.W. Norwood's, *A Concise History of Lexington Lodge No. 1, 1788-1913*. A fourth book, published nearly fifty years after Coleman's work, was Charles Snow Guthrie's, *The History of the Grand Lodge and the Men who Made It*, released in 1981.

While Morris's compilation required more than 500 pages and chronicled his research about the origins of Freemasonry and appendant bodies, the work was largely a summary of the first 59 years of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky Proceedings accompanied by Morris's editorializing. Regardless, Morris captured and centralized invaluable information for historians about how Freemasonry unfolded in Kentucky in its first half-century.



Norwood's book was written the year Lexington Lodge No. 1 celebrated its 125th anniversary. Enough was written in the book to consider it a history of Freemasonry in Kentucky, however, its focus was clearly on Lexington Lodge No. 1, and its early leaders and Masters.

Guthrie's work was a significant contribution. His personable style of writing provided a comprehensive look at the 47 years since Coleman's, 1933 *Masonry in the Bluegrass*, and reflected the approach used in writing histories about Freemasonry in other jurisdictions in America at the time.

All three books constructively contribute to historiography of Freemasonry in Kentucky. Supplementing those formal works, we find *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky: 1800-1814*, published in 1884 (and possibly again in 1909) by the Masonic Home Journal, H.B. Grant's, *Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky: 1800-1900*, published in 1900, and *History of Freemasonry in Kentucky from 1900-1935*, compiled by the Masonic Home Journal in 1935. Aside from personal comments made by Grant in his compilation, these publications are mostly a reprinting of Proceedings from Annual Communications of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, including in some cases, extended biographies of Past Grand Masters and more detailed information about the Masonic Homes of Kentucky.

Coleman's 1933 book is often considered by historians more engaging than the other works listed in this review because he was a prolific local historian with several writings already to his credit and he knew how to tell a story without bogging it down with broad details that could be found elsewhere. Coleman, a member of Lexington Lodge No. 1, never promoted himself as a Masonic scholar and approached Freemasonry and its history in Kentucky until 1933 as a subject of interest to all, not just members of the fraternity.

Coleman documents bits and pieces of some important, often neglected, facts in the long history of Kentucky Masonry that help historians today see other aspects of what was going on inside the fraternity at the time in relationship to societal evolution. His observations and commentary reflect a typical representation of men of the times who were Masons and wrote about the fraternity, but he was able to keep his perspective and subtly connect changes in society and their effect on the ongoing development of Freemasonry.

Masonry in the Bluegrass offers a series of backstories and sidebars about events and happenings not found in previous or later works. For example, in early 1898, at the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, a petition to the Kentucky Grand Lodge was received from a body of Masons stationed at Camp Bradley in Woodland Park in Lexington who were members of the 1st Kentucky Infantry U.S. Volunteers. At a joint meeting of Lexington Lodge No. 1, Devotion Lodge No. 160, and the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, the petition was presented. On the collective opinion that a new lodge was "both desirable and necessary," the Kentucky Army Lodge No. 1 U.D. was authorized by the Grand Lodge. There were 18 members. When the war was over, the lodge was mustered out of military service in Louisville where the last two meetings of this lodge were held in 1899, and thus passed out of existence. That was the last time two lodges in Kentucky were designated the same number.

Masonry in the Bluegrass has long been out of print, but sections have been used for the past 87 years in telling the story of how Freemasonry not only came to Kentucky but how it unfolded in its first 145 years. Originals can be found in used and antique bookstores across the nation, and the work can be found in many of the special collections departments of university libraries along with the libraries of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, William O. Ware Lodge of Research Library, and the Lyle Van Outer Masonic Library at Lexington Lodge No. 1. *Masonry in the Bluegrass* is also available in "print on demand" versions from various online book sellers.

ABOUT J. WINSTON COLEMAN

J. Winston Coleman, Jr. (1898-1983), was a native of Lexington, Ky. He received degrees in mechanical engineering from the University of Kentucky (Lexington, Ky.) and was president of the general contracting firm of Coleman & Davis, Inc. In the 1930s his interest turned toward Kentucky history. His first book, *MASONRY IN THE BLUEGRASS*, was published in 1933. In 1936 Coleman retired to Winburn, his Lexington farm, in order to devote time to historic research and writing. He wrote more than a dozen books and pamphlets, including *Stagecoach Days in The Bluegrass* (1935), *Slavery Times in Kentucky* (1940), *A Bibliography Of Kentucky History* (1940), *Lexington During The Civil War* (1968), and *Historic Kentucky* (1967). His books, articles, and materials on the lives of Kentuckians, was one of the largest in private hands in Kentucky. His Kentucky library features more than 3,500 books and pamphlets, many of which are rare and valuable items.



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WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

OBSERVING THE CRAFT

THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE IN MASONIC LABOUR AND OBSERVANCE

Andrew Hammer

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master William O. Ware Lodge of Research

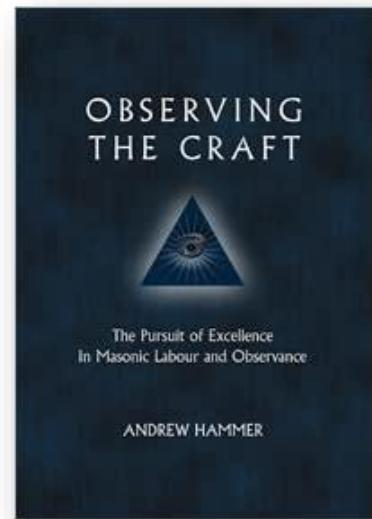
Worshipful Brother Andrew Hammer's *Observing the Craft*, first published in 2010 by Mindhive Books, is unquestionably the most significant book of the 21st Century written for Freemasons. While the non-Mason may be able to gain some knowledge of Freemasonry from the book, it should be clearly understood that this book was written as a tool whereby Freemasons could assess their own understanding of Freemasonry and the extent to which their experience in Freemasonry has fulfilled their expectations. The best understanding of the book is found in its title, in the phrase, "the Pursuit of Excellence."

Many Freemasons have often been frustrated by their Lodge's failure to deliver anything more than monthly meetings where the reading of minutes, payment of bills and stumbling through opening and closing ritual ceremonies constitute the vast bulk of the activity. Such Masons are seeking to reconcile how it is that Freemasonry, which promises an extraordinary experience, has become an ordinary experience (or less). "Surely there must be something more than this," is the common refrain among such men.

In *Observing the Craft*, Andrew Hammer defines exactly what that "something" is, and demonstrates how, to our own detriment, we have been ignoring that "something" for decades. The missing "something" is the pursuit of excellence. Bro. Hammer points out that, within the context of Freemasonry, settling for anything less than excellence is to abandon our mission as Freemasons.

Bro. Hammer defines "observance" as follows:

"In Masonic terms, observance means seeing to it that certain methods and characteristics of Masonic labour are carried out to the highest standard that can possibly be attained by a Lodge."



In subsequent chapters on dress and ritual, Bro. Hammer reveals the extent to which careful attention to personal appearance and the execution of ritual is essential to the observant Mason. In both instances, Bro. Hammer illustrates that a casual approach to Masonry produces something less than Masonry.

Bro. Hammer's chapter on "Distractions" is especially telling. Reviewing the several appendant bodies, Bro. Hammer offers an incisive analysis as to whether involvement in any of them offers any enhancement to one's Masonic experience. Most tellingly, Bro. Hammer argues that a completely fulfilling and rewarding Masonic experience may be found entirely in the Symbolic Lodge. He forcefully makes the point that if the Symbolic Lodge was delivering on its promise to provide a truly extraordinary experience for its members, there would be no need for the appendant bodies.

Bro. Hammer's chapter on Festive Boards directs attention to an often-overlooked aspect of Freemasonry. The Festive Board adds greatly to the overall Masonic experience – offering an opportunity for fellowship as well as education. The Festive Board returns Freemasonry to its origins and connects men in Masonic brotherhood both in real time and across the centuries.

In plain language, Bro. Hammer describes the observant Lodge in this fashion, "An observant Lodge is a Lodge that seeks to uphold the highest standards of the Craft." Does this describe your Lodge? If so, how? If it does not, why doesn't it?

Ultimately, *Observing the Craft* is about one's understanding of the purpose of Freemasonry and one's vision for how the promise of Freemasonry is best delivered. It is a clarion call for engagement in the pursuit of excellence. Bro. Hammer's work forces the Mason to carefully examine his own commitment to the ideals and principles of the Order. It is impossible to read *Observing the Craft* without being confronted with the need to reevaluate one's own commitment to excellence.

Freemasonry is an individual journey. One Freemason, committed to excellence and possessing the will to journey alone, if necessary, can experience the transformational power in daily living that the Fraternity offers. When united with like-minded Brothers in an observant Lodge there is potential for exceptionalism in every respect. *Observing the Craft* reminds of that promise and calls us out of the ordinary into a genuinely extraordinary experience.

Observing the Craft is available through amazon.com or from other Masonic booksellers.

Bro. Hammer is the President of the Masonic Restoration Foundation. He is a Past Master of Alexandria Lodge No. 22 in Alexandria, Virginia, and currently serves as Secretary of Fiat Lux Lodge No. 1717 in Washington, D. C. He is a Royal Arch Mason, a Companion of the Allied Masonic Degrees and a 32nd degree Scottish Rite Mason. Bro. Hammer is the President of The Masonic Restoration Foundation, a member of the Quatuor Coronati Correspondence Circle, the Philalethes Society the Masonic Society, and Honorary Member of The Rubicon Masonic Society.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

AMERICAN FREEMASONS THREE CENTURIES OF BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Mark A. Tabbert

Reviewed by: Dan M. Kemble, Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

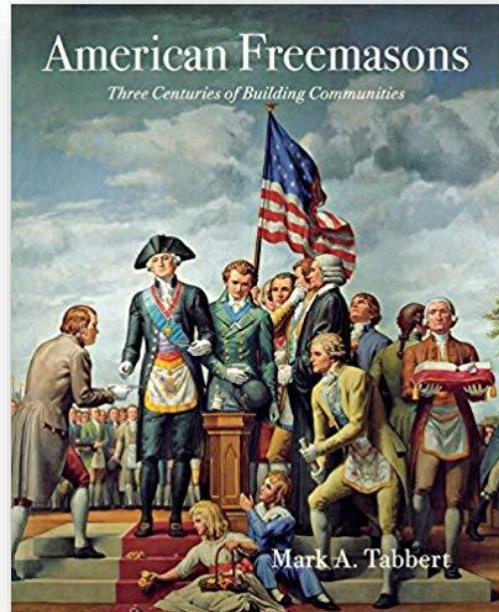
Mark A. Tabbert's, *American Freemasons: Three Centuries of Building Communities*, is a comprehensive survey of the history of American Freemasonry. Attractively presented with a wide array of rich illustrations, *American Freemasons* traces the ebb and flow of American Freemasonry from the colonial era to the 21st century. Worshipful Bro. Tabbert has included chapters on the Golden Age of Fraternalism, the appendant bodies and youth organizations.

Bro. Tabbert takes great care to explain the titles, symbols and pageantry of Freemasonry, making this work very accessible to non-Masons as well as Masons. Members who have been Freemasons only a few years will find this book an extremely valuable tool for placing many of our contemporary practices in historic context.

American Freemasons contains a refreshingly honest analysis of the great events affecting the growth and development of Freemasonry in the United States: the anti-Masonic hysteria resulting from the Morgan affair, the interruption of Lodge life caused by the Civil War and the 20th century membership boom and decline. It also includes a penetrating look at mainstream Freemasonry's darkest stain – it's troubled relationship with Prince Hall Masonry.

American Freemasons seeks to explore how generations of Freemasons have been exposed to the tenets of Masonic philosophy, and have then practiced those tenets, with varying degrees of success, in the full view of the public. In its earliest American period, Freemasonry served as a forum for the ideas of liberty and equality. The political and social elite were attracted to its promise of self-improvement.

In each period of American history (at least through the 1960s), Freemasonry adapted itself to meet the challenges of that particular era. Taking on the vestiges of a service organization, a family



pastime or a source of entertainment, Freemasonry has offered (or at least attempted to offer) different appearances at different times, while retaining its core values. A central theme of the book is the manner in which Freemasonry became interwoven into the fabric of American communities, many times to the extent that the story of a given community was also, in large measure, the story of Freemasonry.

One of the more intriguing chapters is titled, “*Relieve the Distressed*,” which details how Americans in the period following the Civil War looked to Freemasonry for material aid and assistance. This era saw the beginnings of Masonic orphanages, homes for widows and the aged and the massive fundraising campaigns that it took to support such institutions. Much of the current emphasis we place on charity and fund raising comes this point in history. This same time period also saw the rise of other unrelated fraternal organizations (many of which copied Masonic forms and ceremonies) that offered more explicit financial incentives to its members.

American Freemasons makes no predictions about the future of the fraternity in the United States. It does acknowledge the steep decline in membership from the 1960s forward but does not attempt to address or analyze the reasons for the decline.

If your Lodge or study group is looking for a text to use as the basis for an in-depth study of Freemasonry in the United States, **American Freemasons** is exactly the book that you should choose for that purpose. Carefully footnoted (some of which make very interesting reading) and adhering to the strictest standards of academic research, **American Freemasons** is a valuable addition to the Masonic library of any Lodge or individual Mason.

American Freemasons is available through amazon.com or from other Masonic booksellers.

Bro. Tabbert is the Director of Museum and Library Collections for the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia. He is a Past Master of Mystic Valley Lodge in Arlington, Massachusetts, a 33rd Degree Scottish Rite Mason (Northern Jurisdiction) and a member of the Society of Blue Friars.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

ARE WE MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER? A QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Jorge L. Aladro, P. G. M., Grand Lodge of Florida

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, PM, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

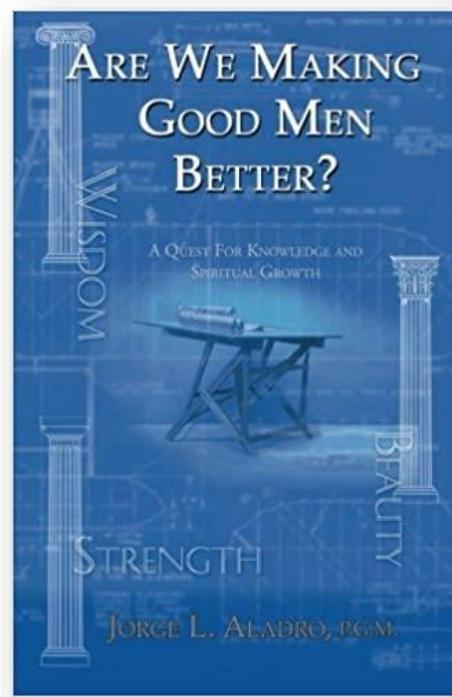
Most Worshipful Bro. Jorge Aladro's 2015 work, *Are We Making Good Men Better? A Quest For Knowledge and Spiritual Growth* is remarkable in that it is a stinging indictment of the practices of mainstream contemporary American Freemasonry delivered from the heart of institutional Freemasonry. M. W. Bro. Aladro, who served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Florida in the 2012-2013 Masonic year, methodically and honestly confronts the issues that have been so long neglected by the vast majority of Lodges and Grand Lodges in American Freemasonry. Identifying both individual and organizational weaknesses, M. W. Bro.

Aladro offers a prescription for the ills that have weakened our Fraternity over the last century. That prescription is, simply put, to demand excellence in all things Masonic and to not accept anything less. The first part of the prescription is often recommended. The last portion is rarely found.

M. W. Bro. Aladro writes passionately about the exclusion of Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts from our stated meetings. He points out the inconsistency of repeatedly calling these men "Brother" and telling them that they are bound to us by ties that can never be broken, then denying them admission to our business meetings. M. W. Bro. Aladro identifies this practice as being a primary contributor of Freemasonry's low retention rate. He also cites this practice as fueling the custom of rushing men through the Degrees without laying the proper educational foundation for each.

The need for foundational Masonic education is a recurring theme throughout the book. M. W. Bro. Aladro points out that our Craft is generally uniformed as to our history and philosophy. Only by rectifying this deficiency can contemporary Masons be set on the path to self-improvement. M. W. Bro.

Aladro correctly points out that good cannot become better without first understanding that that, in fact, is their mission, and then having effective instruction as to how to accomplish their goals. With no little sadness, M. W. Bro. Aladro answers his title question in the negative. Contemporary American Freemasonry generally does little to make good men better because that to be our primary aim and



purpose. M. W. Bro. Aladro urges thoughtful introspection on the threshold question, what came you here to do?

The heart of M. W. Aladro's book is found where he describes the Masonry's path to self-improvement. He writes that Masonic education leads to enlightenment. Enlightenment, in turn, leads to the quest for self-fulfillment. The quest for self-fulfillment leads to a closer relationship with The Grand Architect of the Universe. The result of a closer relationship with the Grand Architect of the Universe is a good man having been made better.

Interestingly, M. W. Bro. Aladro observes that highest level of Masonic education should be found in the Symbolic Lodge. In his view, if Lodges were accurately and fully teaching the lessons of the first three Degrees of Masonry, there would be no need for appendant bodies who claim to "complete" the story and lessons of the Degrees found in the Symbolic Lodge. It is a reflection on both the Craft and its leadership that the duty to provide suitable education has been surrendered to the appendant bodies. The result is the perception that the Symbolic Lodge does not have a responsibility to provide for the ongoing education of its members. M. W. Bro. Aladro asserts that nothing could be farther from the truth.

American Freemasonry has lost roughly 75% of its members over the last sixty years. As a result, most American Grand Lodges have focused their energies on making new members. M. W. Bro. Aladro warns of the mistake of sacrificing quality for quantity. As a counterbalance to the desire for more members, he quotes M. W. Bro. LaMoine Langston, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New Mexico, who observed, "Yes, we can increase our numbers in Masonry, but we can lose Masonry while we are doing it." Such penetrating wisdom, coming from within the core of institutional Freemasonry is both rare and compelling. M. W. Bro. Aladro addresses the negative consequences of the periods of rapid expansion in American Freemasonry. Perhaps the most intriguing question in the book appears in his discussion of Lodges that formed in those periods and whose existence now is tenuous at best. M. W. Bro. Aladro asks of such Lodges, if they were forming in the present time, would they qualify for a charter? If the answer to that is no, one wonders why such Lodges are allowed to exist, other than to inflate membership rolls and contribute their yearly payment of Grand Lodge assessments.

Other chapters in

Are We Making Good Men Better? include discussions of the need for mentoring programs, festive boards and competent ritual performance. Additionally, M. W. Bro. Aladro writes about the inherent problems attached to the use of the progressive line to fill Lodge offices. He warns about the misunderstanding of the concept of charity, and how such misunderstanding has served to divert the nature of American Freemasonry from its original aim and purpose. He writes with equal force about the need for investigation committees to be thorough in their vetting of candidates for admission in the Order. His advice is, that whenever there is doubt about the suitability of a candidate for the Degrees or for affiliation, err on the side of the Fraternity. M. W. Bro. Aladro notes that the ranks of Freemasonry include many men who are just, moral and upright men, yet whom should have never been accepted into Freemasonry because they have no desire to improve themselves. M. W. Bro. Aladro offers the insight that since we do not teach self-improvement as our primary aim and purpose, investigation committees are not inclined to ever inquire about the candidate's inclinations in such matter.

In M. W. Bro. Aladro's closing thoughts, he urges the Craft to follow the advice of M. W. Bro. Dwight L. Smith, Past Grand Master of Indiana, who wrote that the solution to Freemasonry's problems is to practice Freemasonry. M. W. Bro. Aladro suggests that we do just that.

If there is a negative element to M. W. Bro. Aladro's book it is that it contains many misspellings and grammatical errors. Unfortunately, these are so many in number that they distract from the book's

otherwise powerful message. M. W. Bro. Aladro would have been better served had he sought the services of a professional editor.

Are We Making Good Men Better? A Quest for Knowledge and Spiritual Growth represents M. W. Bro. Jorge L. Aladro's honest assessment of the state of American Freemasonry. M. W. Bro. Aladro has been privileged to view Freemasonry at all levels and from the highest leadership positions. His perspective is an important one and American Freemasonry should take note. M. W. Bro. Aladro is to be congratulated for his candor and his vision.

Are We Making Good Men Better? A Quest for Knowledge and Spiritual Growth remains in print and is available from on-line booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

The History of Freemasonry in Kentucky in its Relations to the Symbolic Degrees

Robert Morris PGM – Kentucky, 1858

Published in Louisville, by Rob Morris 1859, 542 pages

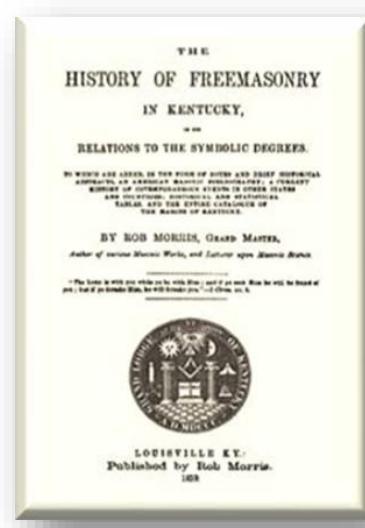
Review by Cameron C. Poe, PM, Lexington Lodge No. 1

In the libraries of masonic scholars across the world, there are likely countless versions of Masonic histories. A compilation of history by Past Grand Master (KY) and Poet Laureate Robert Morris is no exception. Perhaps a more appropriate, although impractical, title could have been “The History of Freemasonry in Kentucky until 1858”.

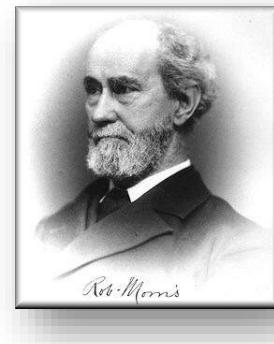
As Kentucky Masons know, Freemasonry came to Kentucky in 1788 by way of the Grand Lodge of Virginia through Lexington, the most western frontier settlement at the time, consisting of about fifty log cabins according to contemporary sources.

The work itself is comprehensive, rather extensive in some areas and occasionally, oddly lacking in others. Some of the more famous Masonic events in America (Morgan Affair, Anti-Masonic Party platform) from 1800-1850 were not recorded as in-depth as this reader would have liked. But it is the only account of Kentucky Masonic history for the first 70 years compiled in one book, and it is a microcosm into the thoughts of the day regarding where Freemasonry came from and where it was going. With this in mind, Morris points out immediately that he had no predecessor. And he almost apologizes for the excessive references in the preface stating, “*If the work appears overloaded with references, it must be attributed to an anxiety to leave a clear path in which future historians may walk with certainty.*” From an amateur historian’s perspective, the candor with which he presents the history is appreciated.

Morris begins with a history of Freemasonry in England (it arrived in America around 1733) and outlines the expected confusion pertaining to whom or what exactly was in charge. The Grand Lodge of England, Grand Lodge of Scotland (after 1734), and the Grand Lodge of Ireland all played a role in the establishment of Lodges in America even prior to 1733. Morris also describes the lack of historical records by all these organizations when it comes to cataloging the foundation of Freemasonry in America.



Several pages are spent carefully listing in chronological detail the various Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland and their Grand Masters, and even some notable events (the birth of George Washington, for example) occurring in America. The United States history begins with the 1st provincial Grand Lodge in North America in Boston in 1777. Listed as the 2nd provincial Grand Lodge formed, Morris references a detailed account of the Grand Lodge of Virginia in 1793 contained in the *Ahimim Rezon*. He refers to a nine-page explanation of the who, what, when, and where a convention of delegates gathered in 1776 to elect a Grand Master to preside over all Lodges then in the Virginia colony.



Morris continues with a listing of what appears to be all significant events in recorded Masonic history involving Kentucky including the proceedings, ceremonies, adoptions, and even military actions that were relevant at the time. Beginning in 1750 a monthly account of events is detailed. Following this is an extensive history including the names of those individuals involved, letters, and minutes of meetings surrounding the formation of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky in 1800 that are fascinating in content and historical value.

Once again, Morris puts the information in chronological order by decade beginning with the proceedings from 1800-1809 of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, with references including the reasons they decided to split from Virginia, and Virginia's response to the request.

Morris continues with the establishment of the adopted lectures and ritual presenting evidence that "the first knowledge of Masonry in Kentucky was brought from Virginia, that everything Masonic, printed and unprinted which emanated from Virginia was adopted without question, as the law of Kentucky." Morris also takes this opportunity to point out that the quality of work in Kentucky had declined since its inception.

Morris details for the remainder of the work the proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky with "Contemporary Events" also a part of the record. Many of these are fascinating to read if one has even the slightest interest in Masonic history. One of the largest events covered in depth is the death of Col. Joseph Hamilton Daviess, sitting Grand Master of Kentucky in 1812. A lengthy account of the events leading up to and including the Battle of Tippecanoe is explained, as well as the reaction across the country to the news. The Grand Lodge of Indiana had not yet been established so it is pointed out that Daviess was also Grand Master in the Indiana territory at the time. His heroic actions on the battlefield were echoed throughout the fraternity in many jurisdictions.

Morris also points out important events in other Grand Lodge jurisdictions including some disciplinary actions of Masons, explanations of un-Masonic conduct, and other rulings made by Grand Lodges etc. These accounts lead right up to his election as Grand Master of Kentucky in 1858.

The "Historical Register" of Lodges in Kentucky begins on page 455 of the work. Some more notable members of particular Lodges are given a brief biography. The roster of Lodges begins with Lexington Lodge No. 1 and ends with Baltimore Lodge No. 360. An additional five Lodges listed as under dispensation.

Also included is the "Jurisprudence of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky" showing when each clause and constitutional rule was adopted for the government of subordinate Lodges up to and including the year 1858. He concludes with "Rules of Order" which should be required reading for most Masons of today

as it is still applicable to the conduct of a Masonic lodge. Morris capstones the work with resolutions adopted in 1858 and a catalog of membership in alphabetical order and the Lodge to which they belonged. I am certain this was included for reference only.

As a historical work, this is an invaluable resource for any Masonic historian, more especially one interested specifically in Kentucky Freemasonry. The detail in which Morris also addresses the formation and proceedings of other Grand Jurisdictions cannot be understated.

Ironically, the original publication was not well received and sold very few copies, I suspect due to its lack of a “story,” and perhaps due to its size (over 500 pages). Morris presents factual evidence, not a running commentary on those facts. In a few areas, though, he cannot help himself and interjects his own thoughts on some topics.

Also, to take into consideration is that perhaps the general level of education at the time prevented it from being widely distributed. At any rate, relevant occurrences in the formation of Freemasonry in Kentucky are prevalent throughout the work and Morris references that he hoped this compilation would inspire other Grand Lodges to record their histories. If this is an example of what a history can be from the time, I sincerely hope they considered his advice.

Overall, *The History of Freemasonry in Kentucky in its Relations to the Symbolic Degrees* is an excellent reference for the Masonic historian as well as the curious non-Mason.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

MODERN FREEMASONRY

Joseph Fort Newton

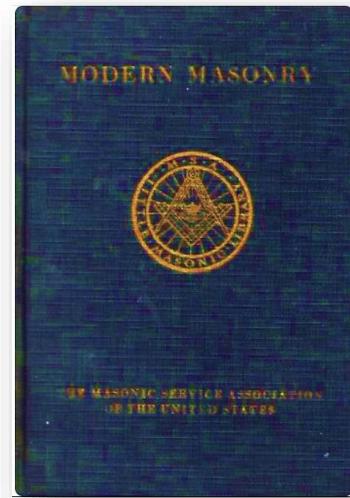
Book Review by Thomas L. Nitschke, II, PM William O. Ware Lodge of Research

In a world that goes by so fast, and which takes little time to seek the wisdom of yesteryears, it is refreshing to find a Masonic literary gem, *Modern Freemasonry*, by Joseph Fort Newton. First released in 1924 in a series of books written by various Masonic authors, and published by the Masonic Service Association, the book contains a mere 92 pages. As we will see in this book review, however, there is more than enough to entertain and stimulate historical curiosity.

Newton begins the book with the origins of Freemasonry. His scholarly insights into the early days of the Craft are well founded and have withstood the test of time. This includes topics such as the movement from operative to speculative Masonry, early references to Freemasons, the creation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, and so much more.

As Newton progresses through the years of Masonic history, he devotes some time to the schism between the Ancients and Moderns, with their eventual unification and how it shaped Masonry. The offices of the deacons within the lodge may have not been around had it not been for this dramatic and complex set of events. The expansion of Freemasonry to other parts of the world is examined. It provides a unique look into many regions such as Europe, Asia, and the American colonies which later became the United States. Newton describes how many areas were granted warrants to work and the issues that were spurred by multiple Masonic jurisdictions operating in the same area. He also expounds on the early development and current conditions of the Craft around the time of his writing. This is especially important to any Masonic historian who is researching the beginnings of many of the world's grand lodges.

Near the end of the book, Newton focuses on Freemasonry in the United States and its beginnings, along with its current condition circa 1924. He discusses the Ancient and Modern lodges being developed in the colonies and makes a very compelling argument as to the Craft's ability to have possibly tempered tensions before a war of independence took hold. This theory will have you contemplating "what if," and thinking about what kind of Masonry we would have today in an America still a part of the United Kingdom, and whether our country would have existed at all without influence of Freemasonry. We can only imagine.



As the reader continues, Newton explores the Morgan Affair and the Anti-Masonry movement and its effects on the Craft. Following the Civil War, the Craft in America once again gained prosperity and expansion. In ending ***Modern Freemasonry***, Newton speaks of an ever-growing craft and warns with the following, “Meantime it grows almost too fast for assimilation, and the problems of prosperity are well-nigh as difficult as the problems of adversity.” One can only speculate that had this dire warning been heeded by generations of Masons before us, and subsequently, what our current condition would be. We can only wonder.

I highly recommend this book for any Mason looking for the true history of the Craft. Do not be fooled by its small size, as it contains a wealth of information.

First editions of the book from 1924 can still be found, but they are rare items. Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply later created its own “Little Masonic Library” series that contains all the Masonic Service Association books, including ***Modern Freemasonry***.

Modern Freemasonry is available from online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

Notable Men in Kentucky History

Who Happened to be Freemasons

John W. Bizzack

Introduction, Afterword, and Chapters Contributed by Dan M. Kemble

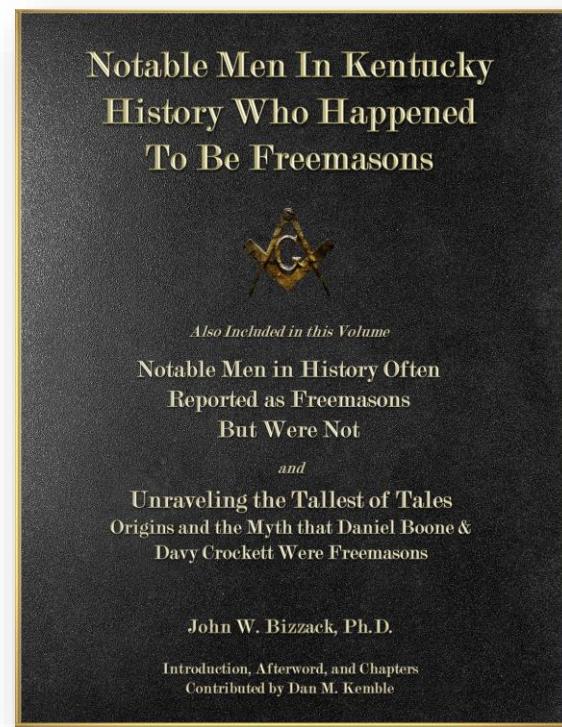
Reviewed by Brian J. Waldorf, Orion Lodge #222, Falmouth, Kentucky, Member, William O. Ware Lodge of Research, Covington, Kentucky

Freemasonry, and specifically Kentucky Freemasonry, is blessed to have yet another well-developed book by Masonic scholar Dr. John W. Bizzack. *Notable Men in Kentucky History Who Happened to be Freemasons* is Bizzack's twelfth book who, besides Freemasonry, also has written books and essays on leadership, criminal investigation, police standards, the behavior of organizations and their management.

This book though is only partially about Freemasonry. Freemasonry is the binding to the story line rather than the total substance. *Notable Men in Kentucky History Who Happened to be Freemasons* is divided into three separate parts, each with a distinct thesis and direction. Part One detailed the stories of twenty-six men from, or who immigrated to, Kentucky generally during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Part Two explain how some men, specifically the five discussed, were thought to be Freemasons when little to no proof of their membership was discovered. Part Three analyzed the evidence at hand disproving the myth that Daniel Boone and David Crockett were ever Freemasons.

The combined purpose of the book was in "introduce you to some of the colorful and significant men who shaped the fabric of the Commonwealth from its early years of discovery through the end of the 19th century."

Each section of the book is governed by the principle of rigid academic investigation of the evidence



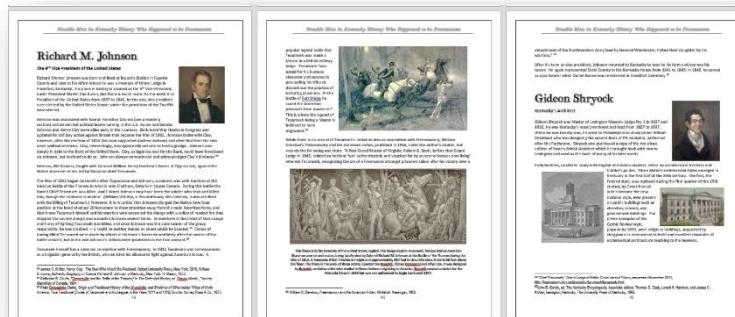
rather than relying on hearsay testimony. In the Foreword, Dan Kemble, William O. Ware Lodge of Research Past Master, explained that “historians of Freemasonry have not always been meticulous in researching the claims that specific individuals were Freemasons. Too often, the writers of Masonic history have relied on hearsay, faulty recollections, and unsubstantiated assertions in promoting legendary tales of membership in the Masonic Fraternity by some of history’s greatest men.” Many past writers have collected information regarding lists of famous Masons based on lore and legend.

Legends are said to be folklore that consists of a narrative featuring human actions perceived or believed both by teller and listeners to have taken place within human history. Narratives in this genre may demonstrate human values and possess certain qualities that give the tale life. Legends have a place in Freemasonry and teach core values of the craft. Legends,

though, do not have a place in the exploration of evidence regarding the factual history of the craft and its members. Bizzack’s approach to history is one based upon the due trial and strict examination of evidence. He adapted our Masonic examination of a man’s membership to the craft to that of primary and secondary sources regarding the departed and their possible affiliation to the craft. Bizzack explained that this process is all too often not followed by Masonic writers in reference to lists of “Famous Masons.” Instead, other writers have been “rooted in faulty sources and information.” This

wishful thinking mindset only diminishes the value of the craft by subpar research. Bizzack stated that blindly accepting the information on Famous Mason’s lists makes us look “naïve, gullible, and under-informed.”

Bizzack has followed the rigid academic investigation of evidence. He has kept to the standards set forth by other researchers, such as Anthony Brundage, author of *Going to the Sources: A Guide to Historical Research and Writing*. Brundage described how the writing of these histories requires satisfying the same demanding criteria regarding the evaluation of sources, the marshaling of evidence, and the deployment of literary skill upon which all histories rely. This takes a blend of diligence, skepticism, imagination, judiciousness, and humor that pays big dividends to historians in any field. Bizzack cited each of his sources in hundreds of footnotes, adequately defending his work.



Richard M. Johnson

George Washington

Gideon Shryock

John Belli

A Guild to Historical Research and Writing. Brundage described how the writing of these histories requires satisfying the same demanding criteria regarding the evaluation of sources, the marshaling of evidence, and the deployment of literary skill upon which all histories rely. This takes a blend of diligence, skepticism, imagination, judiciousness, and humor that pays big dividends to historians in any field. Bizzack cited each of his sources in hundreds of footnotes, adequately defending his work.

The entries about the individuals are encyclopedic in nature, briefly describing the importance of the individual and then highlighting any pertinent Masonic information. These entries vary in nature due to the circumstances of each individual. These men

include famous names, such as the statesmen Henry Clay, the explorer Kit Carson, and the Confederate raider John Hunt Morgan. Other lesser-known men, such as the formerly enslaved Josiah Henson are included. Henson's section was short as the information was limited. Bizzack stated that Henson's name was synonymous with the Uncle Tom character in Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Although

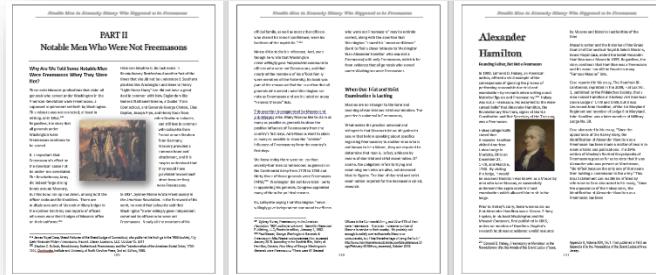
Henson was born in Maryland, he was sold several times and eventually sold to a farm in Lewisport, Kentucky. Henson eventually escaped to Canada on October 28, 1829. Bizzack located a 2003 Proceedings of the Grand Historian Report from the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario which stated that Henson was made a Mason in Boston during his travels north. Upon reaching Canada, Henson joined Mount Moriah Lodge No.11 and became the secretary in 1866. This is an example of the type of entry included for all of the listed men.

Part three diverges from the entries of the previous two sections as it analyzes the myth behind the legend that Daniel Boone and David Crockett were Masons. This section includes an overview of the men's lives, the facts that are known about their affiliation, how the myths were created, and a conclusion statement. As an example, a large portion concerning David Crockett was related to a Masonic apron claimed to be his. Bizzack included photographs of the Tennessee Centennial celebration program book, souvenir book, map of the event, and newspaper article where the apron was placed on display in 1897. The apron was on loan to the Tennessee Historical Society from E. M. Taylor of Paducah, Kentucky. Through newspapers, Texas Grand Lodge documents, phone conversations with Masonic historians, government documents (death records, census data, etc.), and several books, Bizzack pieced together the puzzle of this apron to create a fascinating conclusion.

Notable Men in Kentucky History Who Happened to be Freemasons is a representation of an in-depth investigation to confirm or override previous historical analysis of men claimed to be Freemasons.

Bizzack used his lengthy law enforcement experience to analyze the claims in previous historical work in a methodical manner. This work is truly a fascinating read for the layman or Mason as it isn't specifically Masonic in composure.

Notable Men in Kentucky History Who Happened to be Freemasons is available through thecraftsman.org and other online booksellers.



WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

THE CRAFT DRIVEN LODGE

Daniel D. Hrinko

Book Review By David V. Cassesa, Past Master of Robert Burns Lodge No. 163 and William O. Ware Lodge of Research.

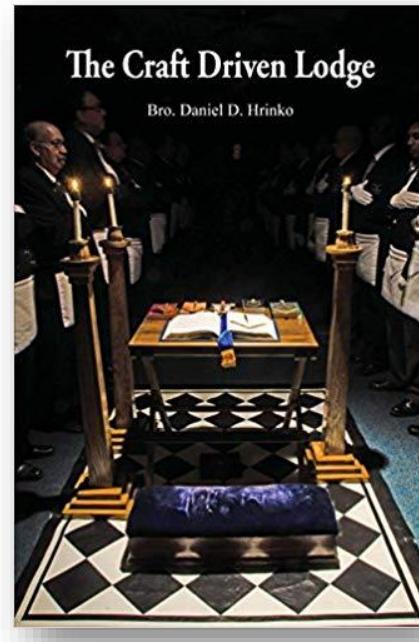
The *Craft Driven Lodge*, by W. Bro. Dan Hrinko, is a blueprint of the formation of Arts and Sciences Lodge No.792, chartered by the Grand Lodge of Ohio. Arts and Sciences is unique in that their primary emphasis is on “education through discussion,” rather than education through regurgitation of ritual.

Author Dan Hrinko was inspired to write *The Craft Driven Lodge* as a result of a rising feeling among the Craft, that institutional Freemasonry was falling short of its purpose in teaching the deeper meanings of the symbolism represented in the Masonic ritual. Dan Hrinko is quick to point out that meetings consisting only of the reading of minutes or general “cajoling,” do little to persuade anyone to return to their Lodge.

The first section of the book contains an introduction to the concept and the four key principles of a Craft-driven Lodge. First, every Mason has a voice within his Lodge; second, every Mason has a vision of where his Lodge should be headed; third, every Mason has a role, and fourth, the Lodge leadership should be what the author refers to as “servant leadership.” The second section is a discussion of the journey that lead Brother Hrinko and other Masons from Central Ohio to form Arts & Sciences Lodge No. 792.

The Craft Driven Lodge is extremely positive, well written, and motivating. The book offers sympathetic insights into the typical listless meetings that have become synonymous with American Freemasonry and gives a detailed account as how to reinvent one’s Lodge.

The Craft Driven Lodge is deeply thought provoking. This book begs the question as to whether all American Freemasonry is being practiced “wrongly.” The practice of Masonry is an extremely personal journey. No one man’s challenge is the same as that of another. Masonry at its core, is man’s continuous pursuit for self-improvement. Not all men need to smooth out the same surfaces. The idea is, as part of my journey to self-improvement, I’m also able act as wise council, and charitable friend to my brothers who are also on their own journeys. This is what comprises Freemasonry -- Men improving themselves, better enabling them to assist each other’s pursuits, and thus making society a better place.



Brother Hrinko points out that Freemasonry has had numerous manifested practices through the ages, and that the whole of a Lodge should be allowed to basically practice Freemasonry as they wish, as each member is viewed as an equal partner. That blueprint, as good as it sounds, cannot be sustainable, unless it is constantly evolving to satisfy the varying wills of changing membership.

During a man's Masonic journey, he needs to be challenged. Typically, part of that challenge is performing ritual. What if the Lodge membership decides they no longer like to memorize ritual, as it is too challenging? Diminishing membership begets less conversation, begets watering down requirements, begets a dead Lodge.

I love the enthusiasm that started Arts and Sciences #792. I love the optimism, and I pray for their continued success. My fear, however, is that less learned Masons, the lazy members of the Craft, will follow this blueprint and just become a more efficient fish fry, pancake breakfast Lodge, because that is the will of their Lodge.

Freemasonry deserves a more rigid structure. It needs to be challenging, but it should not change to the will of every member of every Lodge. Earlier, I stated that maybe, American Freemasonry is being practiced incorrectly. Maybe we should not be regurgitating 300-year-old rituals and, instead, contemporize our ritual. Modernize it using common language and a more relatable allegory. Maybe that would spark a new interest in the fundamental lessons that Masonry has to offer.

The Craft Driven Lodge is available through Amazon and other Masonic booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

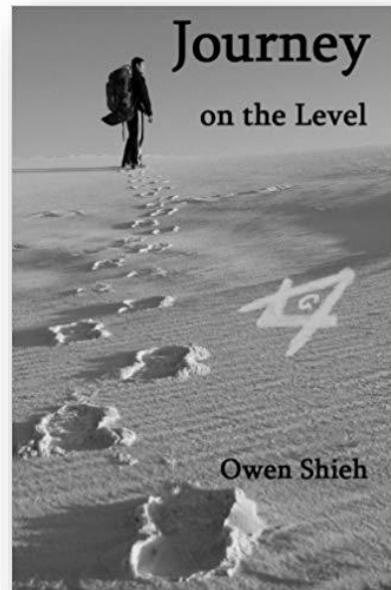
JOURNEY ON THE LEVEL

Owen Shieh

Book Review by Thomas L. Nitschke II, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

In Freemasonry, brothers are exposed to a multitude of allegorical rituals that contain symbols and moral lessons. These symbols and moral lessons are the catalyst for the discovery of the hidden mysteries of Freemasonry; but more importantly, the pathway for us to discover ourselves and in time, create a closer relationship with our God. Many books cite the history, explanation of symbols, and the philosophies of Freemasonry, but fall short in the daily application of these items to our lives. Owen Shieh, in his book, *Journey on the Level*, masterfully takes what we have been taught in Freemasonry and shows how it can be applied, as we journey in life, to make ourselves better men.

The book begins with a short history of Freemasonry and the discussion of the philosophies as a foundation. The foundation lays the groundwork for the reader to understand the beginnings of Freemasonry and to understand how and why we do what we do today. Owen Shieh then begins to take the reader through a well-developed series of stages beginning with darkness and the recount of Plato's "The Cave". The reader is then taken through the three degrees of Freemasonry with a discussion of the tenets of each and what can be done to apply them to ourselves in an easy and understandable way all why being relevant to our current societal norms. As you begin to immerse yourself in the book, you begin to understand Freemasonry not as a simple organization, but as a way of life that makes you question yourself in a deeper way and to constantly question your thoughts, habits, and interactions with others. This book has so much rich information for thought and inner contemplation that the reviewer cannot possibly discuss all the ideas contained within; however, one portion of the book really stands out as it pertains to our emotions, poor thoughts, and our own mortality that leads to much strife and unsureness in our daily lives. Shieh discusses three challenges. He identifies the first as being our own evil passions, bad habits, and negative thoughts. With the "practice" of the tenets and philosophies of Freemasonry we can work on our rough ashlar and eventually overcome this negativity. The second challenge is events that we cannot control. We will all have things in life that test us such as finances, illness, death and other adversities; but will you have the fortitude to overcome these obstacles or fall to them. Our final challenge is impermanence. We are only given so much time



on earth and one day all will come to an end. We must learn to accept that reality and value each day and use to the best of our abilities.

I highly recommend this book for the Freemason who is searching for more meaning in his daily life. *Journey on the Level* provides an insightful way of applying the tenets of Freemasonry in the real world; so that we truly can turn our rough ashlar into smooth ones and make ourselves better men. As a bonus, the book contains a section called reflections. This section allows the reader to document portions of the book that they find most interesting and write their thoughts. *Journey on the Level* is a good read and well worth your time.

Journey on the Level is available through most major booksellers or through the author's webpage at www.journeyonthellevel.com.

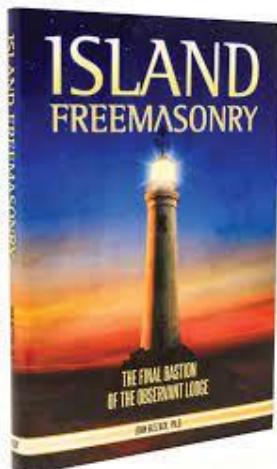
WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

ISLAND FREEMASONRY THE FINAL BASTION OF THE OBSERVANCE LODGE

John W. Bizzack

Reviewed by Christopher L. Hodapp⁸

The best book of the year over on the history side of the shelf for me has been John W. Bizzack's *Island Freemasonry: The Final Bastion of the Observant Lodge* (published by Macoy). John's book is a unique take on explaining the very real history and philosophy that has driven frustrated Masons for 25 years to find a way to return even just a handful of American lodges to the traditions and visions Masons first had when the fraternity began to spread westward across the wilderness after the Revolution.



He makes the case that Freemasonry's first big burst of growth around the turn of the 19th century was too much, too fast, and too far for its own good. It's a convincing argument that the Morgan incident may very well have been a result of new, unsupervised Masons on the frontier who weren't properly instructed about the fraternity, and too uneducated in general, who might have taken the "ancient penalties" to be the legitimate way to truly handle squealers.

John is physically in a unique place to research his thesis. He is a Past Master of Kentucky's Lexington Lodge 1, which was originally chartered out of Virginia in 1788 as the first Masonic lodge west of the Appalachian Mountains. From that single lodge, Masonry quickly expanded into more than what would be nine new states (my own included). There were political calculations wrapped up with that expansion, and Island Freemasonry (together with Steven Bullock's seminal 1998 work, Revolutionary

Brotherhood) examines who was where, and why they may have been selected to simultaneously expand the fraternity along with pushing the frontier farther and farther into the frontier. Bizzack's case study of Lexington Lodge takes up the middle of his book, and it maddeningly arrived at the end of the summer, giving Alice and me just enough time to cram together a chapter in my own new book, but not enough time to do it all justice before the deadline.

Bizzack's ultimate aim is to make the case for "observant" styled lodges, while perhaps removing the two decades of baggage that has been attached to the terms like "traditional observance," "European concept," or "best practices." Misunderstandings, egos, and hubris over the years have tainted those brands in various parts of the country, to the ultimate detriment of the American fraternity. John sees such lodges as "islands," of different ways of thinking about Masonic lodge practices, about what Masonic "education"

⁸ Hodapp's review appears on Freemasons for Dummies, <https://freemasonsfordummies.blogspot.com>, December 19, 2017.

was intended to be by the founders versus what it became before dying out altogether, and how and why it's so important at this moment in time to look to these original ideas as one path to the future.

I place Island Freemasonry at the co-equal top of my best-of list this year.

ISLAND FREEMASONRY THE FINAL BASTION OF THE OBSERVANCE LODGE

John W. Bizzack

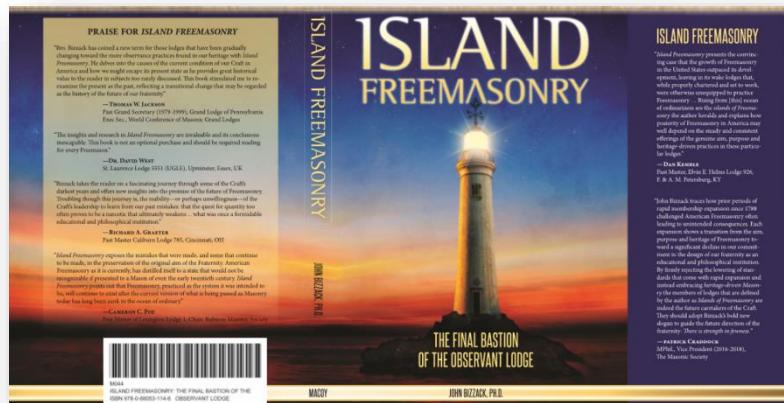
Reviewed by Richard A. Graeter, Past Master and Charter Junior Warden, Caliburn Lodge No. 785, Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio, Honorary Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the 33° Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.

For years, many in the fraternity have obsessed over Freemasonry's membership loss "problem." Now, in *Island Freemasonry*, John Bizzack builds a convincing case that the real danger that threatens the future of Freemasonry is not membership loss, but the loss of Masonic heritage.

For the first time, Brother Bizzack traces how prior periods of rapid membership expansion challenged the Craft, often leading to unintended consequences. He advises today's Masonic leaders to learn from our fraternity's past experiences, which serve as a cautionary tale that we should be careful for what we wish, as bigger is not always better. This is especially true in the case of Freemasonry, which can no longer offer what it did when it was a smaller and more manageable body.

As Bizzack writes, "The missing ingredient that has been neglected in the quest for more and more members. Consistent education about the aim, purpose, design, and heritage of the Craft is long-neglected." Along the way, Bizzack takes the reader on a fascinating journey through some of the Craft's darkest years, offering new insights into the Morgan Affair and the resulting anti-Masonic fervor that almost swept Freemasonry into oblivion.

New for many readers is Bizzack's well-researched insight on the Kentucky Experience during this critical time period, which culminated with the Baltimore Convention in 1843, when Kentucky stood second only to New York in the number of lodges. Unfortunately, while it ostensibly paved the way for the next period of expansion, the Baltimore Convention also sacrificed critical Masonic heritage, planting seeds that still produce a bitter harvest in over half of the Masonic jurisdictions to this day.



Bizzack next examines the third expansion during the golden era of fraternalism, followed by the great expansion of the post-World War II years, ultimately ending with the latest attempts at rapid expansion, which brings new threats to our precious Masonic heritage. Troubling though this journey is the inability—or perhaps unwillingness—of the Craft’s leadership to learn from our past mistakes: that the quest for quantity too often proves to be a narcotic that ultimately weakens the quality and exclusivity of what was once a formidable educational and philosophical institution.

While much of this tale is sad, made all the more so due to the fact that many of Freemasonry’s injuries have been self-inflicted, Brother Bizzack closes on a hopeful note. American Freemasonry rests in the hands of “bright” Masons “who understand the hard-learned lessons from rapid expansions and more clearly see the paradigm shift in which the fraternity today exists.”

By firmly rejecting the lowering of standards that come with rapid expansion and instead embracing “heritage-driven Masonry” these future caretakers of the Craft will serve the Fraternity well by adopting a bold new slogan to guide the future direction of the fraternity – one that Bizzack repeats: *There is strength in fewness!*

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

BATTLING THE RUFFIANS IN AMERICAN FREEMASONRY

Review and Commentary on the Past Grand Master Robert G. Davis Presentation to the William O. Ware Lodge of Research

John W. Bizzack

In October 1859, Past Grand Master of Kentucky, Rob Morris, asked whether Masonry will survive the causes at work to deteriorate it. He also expressed the view that it was the Masonic knowledge in *the few* that sustained the Institution when the Masonic knowledge of *the many* brought it down.⁹

In November 2022, Robert G. Davis, Past Grand Master of Oklahoma, delivered a dynamic and timely presentation as guest speaker at a dinner event in Northern Kentucky sponsored by the William O. Ware Lodge of Research. The title of his presentation was, “It’s Time to Cross the Rubicon and Battle Our 20th Century Ruffians.” His entire presentation may be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmMEJErvexU>.



He began with the story of Julius Caesar marching a single legion to the boundary between Gaul and Italy in 49 BC that was marked by a shallow river known as the Rubicon. Caesar faced a choice. If he remained in Gaul, he would forfeit his power to his enemies in Rome. Crossing the Rubicon into Italy would be a declaration of war. Caesar chose war. He marched his legion across the Rubicon and changed Rome forever. He presided over the end of the Roman Republic and the start of the Roman Empire.

The phrase “crossing the Rubicon” became an expression that meant “passing a point of no return”—to make a decision, or take a step that commits one to a specific course of action from which there is no turning back.¹⁰

Past Grand Master Davis went on to say that today, “Our American Grand Lodges are literally standing on the threshold between a renaissance and a demise of our fraternity at this point in our history. American Freemasonry may be at a bridge or point of crossing at this moment of our organizational history and

⁹ Rob Morris, *The History of Freemasonry in Kentucky*, Louisville, Morris, 1859.

¹⁰ Mary Beard, Senatus Populus Que Romanus (SPQR), *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome*, 1st edition, New York, Liveright Publishing, 2015, Victor Duruy, “Suetonius Life of Julius Caesar,” 1883, in Davis William Stearns, *History of Rome vol. V, Readings in Ancient History*, 1912.

there is concern that if we do not cross the Rubicon and start doing battle with ourselves – that is our organizational paradigms that are now harming us – we might end up a tiny cabal of old men who are of no significance to Freemasonry and the outside world.”¹¹

The entire presentation should be eye-opening to Masons who have paid little to no attention to what has happened over the past eight decades, and continues to occur, in American Freemasonry. As Davis pointed out, this characterizes the bulk of the Fraternity and its leadership.

He noted that one of the Ruffians confronting Masonry is the mediocrity that has been brought into the practice of the Craft over the past 80 years. Moreover, that Masons were not taught the purpose of, the reason for, and profound significance of the initiatic experience: they have failed to focus on how Masonry actually informs the transformation of the individual.

Davis made the case for why Freemasonry is not served when lodges merely go through the motions of being part of the Fraternity in name only, without offering members a quality Masonic experience or an understanding of what Masonry is designed to do. That circumstance was described as offering only “a pretend experience” and identified a second Ruffian, which he labeled, “fake authenticity.”¹² In balance, he noted that it may be argued by some that going through the motions, or embracing the unexceptional, is an authentic Masonic experience, at least to them, but he also pointed out that the past 80 years created a Fraternity that is passive and content to sustain that brand of Masonry and experience, so what else but the customs of the past would the mass follow?

He noted that American Freemasonry is the only Freemasonry in the world that ever adopted the model under which it has underperformed — a model that embraces the notion that every seemingly good man is fit for Freemasonry.

The third Ruffian he identified is that most Masons, Masonic leaders and Lodges are currently unaware of the profound significance of the moment. He suggested that if they were to undertake a significant analysis of Grand Jurisdictions, they would come to the realization that if some substantial changes are not made soon, Freemasonry will, in fifteen to twenty years, be where the Oddfellows are today. Davis explained that by the end of the current decade, we will know if American Freemasonry will thrive or die, and “that phenomenon exists only in North American Freemasonry while all Freemasonry in the rest of the world is growing.”¹³

This presentation is not the first time Davis has given his warranted and well-founded analysis of the problems that continue to face the Fraternity. Always a vocal advocate for Masonic education and appropriately conveyed instruction, he begins his scolding 2015 brief essay, *Mediocrity in Masonry...Shame on Us!* with an observation and a penetrating question: “One of the questions that occasionally eats at me when I am driving home from a Masonic event, degree, or function that has been woefully mediocre is

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¹¹ Robert G. Davis, “It’s Time to Cross the Rubicon and Battle our 20th Century Ruffians,” William O. Ware Lodge of Research Private Dining Meeting, November 3, 2020, Fort Wright, Kentucky, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmMEJErvexU>.

¹² *IBID.*

¹³ *IBID.*

how our members can sit through such Masonic happenings month after month and still believe our fraternity is relevant and meaningful to men's lives?"¹⁴

Most Worshipful Brother Davis's thirty-eight-minute presentation in November affirms the forecasts made by many Masonic scholars, small groups of Masons and leaders since the mid-1850s. His forty years of labor and service to the Craft, including several books, other writings, presentations, and consistent leadership gives Masons today, and historians in the future, a clear picture of how and why the American Fraternity ended up on a path that would inevitably lead to its own Rubicon.

The question of whether the Fraternity will cross the Rubicon, or sit idly on the banks allowing the wreckage of the Ruffians that Davis identifies to continue and consume it, is close to an answer.

BATTLING RUFFIANS

The Great Schism from 1753 through 1813, where a deep division within the Fraternity from opposing factions given the names of "The Moderns" and "The Antients," qualifies as an early battle with Ruffians. The Anti-Masonic sentiment and movement that brewed from 1798, and was later accentuated by The Morgan Affair in 1826, arose as a result of Ruffian thinking that rapid expansion of a lesser-well-instructed

Craft was a sound strategy. The conflicts of this era left lasting battle scars. The rapid and unbridled expansion of lesser-instructed members again in the 1840s through the 1870s were also battles fought. The effects of the Age of Fraternalism on Freemasonry in the latter years of the 19th century through the early years of the next must be listed on the battle map. The anomalies of the explosive expansion of members and Lodges following both World Wars and the effect of those years cannot be overlooked. In point of fact, it is the aftershock of the post Word War II massive influx of members, and their influence, on Masonic cultural thinking, that continues to ripple through the Fraternity.

The battle today to which Davis calls attention is even more serious since it emerges at a time when the general culture, from which membership must be drawn, is largely unattached and distracted from the values and principles on which Freemasonry is grounded. In itself, this produces an interesting irony since it is those values and principles society most needs to revisit and embrace.

The battles against the Ruffian concepts in American Freemasonry, as Davis so aptly points out, cannot afford today to be a Pyrrhic victory - winning the battle but losing the war.¹⁵ We have reached the banks of the Rubicon.

¹⁴ Robert G. Davis, "Mediocrity in Freemasonry...Shame on Us!", *The Laudable Pursuit*, August 3, 2014, <https://www.thelaudablepursuit.com/articles/2015/8/2/mediocrity-in-masonry-shame-on-us>, accessed 2022.

¹⁵ Jeff Champion, *Pyrrhus of Epirus*, Pen & Sword Books, 2009 (A pyrrhic victory is a victory that comes at a great cost. The term relates to Pyrrhus, a king of Epirus who defeated the Romans in 279 BCE but lost many of his troops).

POSTSCRIPT

Recalling the reference Most Worshipful Brother Davis makes to the Rubicon in his presentation, The Rubicon Masonic Society (TRMS) is a group worthy of specific mention.

Formed in 2013, membership is by invitation only for Master Masons who are actively engaged in their Lodges. Membership in TRMS does not exist as a substitute for Lodge. Now a 501(c)(3) organization, TRMS uses, as a guiding principle, the Latin phrase, *Irrevocabilis se Comittet* (committing oneself irrevocably) in the pursuit of the exploration of Freemasonry. In the decade since its inception, TRMS has been instrumental in advancing Masonic education and elevating the Masonic experience by sponsoring and hosting national Masonic conferences and symposiums, coordinating Festive Boards and producing the popular documentary, “The Masonic Table,” publishing its Transactions and making other Masonic writings available for review. Since 2020, the Society (later including the William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1 as co-producers) has produced over forty-five monthly episodes on a virtual platform titled, *21st Century Conversations About Freemasonry*.

As of February 2023, this series has become well-known in not only in the Masonic jurisdictions of the United States, but twelve other countries.¹⁶ These live Masonic education productions showcase nationally-known presenters, fundamental, historical, and philosophical topics, and have been viewed over 90,000 times on Rubicon’s video sharing and social media platform, YouTube channel with over 19,000 hours of watch time. The series will continue through 2023.

The Rubicon Masonic Society is hardly the only Masonic related group, association, foundation, society, Lodge or research Lodge devoting labor to the exploration of Freemasonry. When many of the participants, subscribers, and followers of these organizations are closely examined, however, we find it is not they who tell the tale, but, rather, the bulk of the members who are not interested or involved.

The battles against the Ruffian concepts in American Freemasonry, as Davis so aptly points out, cannot afford today to be a Pyrrhic victory - winning the battle but losing the war.¹⁷ We have reached the banks of the Rubicon.

¹⁶ Google/YouTube Analytics, The Rubicon Masonic Society Channel, March 2023, The Entered Apprentice Degree, the Fellow Craft Degree, The Master Mason Degree, The Path to becoming a Freemason, How Freemasonry Made the Modern World, Living as a Freemason.

¹⁷ Jeff Champion, *Pyrrhus of Epirus*, Pen & Sword Books, 2009 (A pyrrhic victory is a victory that comes at a great cost. The term relates to Pyrrhus, a king of Epirus who defeated the Romans in 279 BCE but lost many of his troops).

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

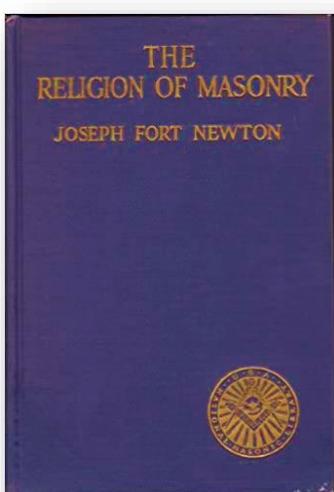
THE RELIGION OF MASONRY

Joseph Fort Newson

Reviewed By: Warren Heaton, Lexington Lodge No. 1

The title of Joseph Fort Newton's work, *The Religion of Masonry*, itself encompasses the conflict in the minds and beliefs of many. That is certainly relevant today as in the early years of Masonry. The book is not designed to deal with religious thought, but with true religion. Faith and acknowledgment of the love and power of the Great Architect of all that exists is of necessary focus to all.

As Newton points out, in the year 1390 Masons were, definitely and exclusively Catholic. In 1723, just as in the Reformation, Masonry severed its connection from the Catholic Church. Afterward, there were born two Grand Lodges. They called themselves "Ancient" and "Modern" Masons. The "Moderns" finally won, disengaging Masonry from specific allegiance to any one religion. In 1813, the Universal Charter of the Craft was affirmed. No longer included was the urging that Jews, Hindus, and Mohammedans might be allowed to have Lodges of their own, if they wished, though not within (or, at least, not entirely within), the regular fellowship of the Fraternity. There came to be, "the center of union, and the means of conciliating true friendships. Not only among persons but among faiths."



Newton's *The Religion of Masonry*, though written in 1927, is as fresh today as then. So let us start with the basics of why this is timely by gleaning from what is considered religion as defined in this writing, refuting Cultism and without being irreligious.

There is a clear separation of definition between religion and being religious. If I say the words "deer" and "dear," they sound the same, but one is animate and the other inanimate or abstract. Quoting Newton, "Religion is no abstract thing; it is a life by itself, the life of God in the soul of man." Newton went on to write, "The Church has no monopoly of Religion, nor did the Bible create it. Instead, it was a religion that created the Bible and Church."

Often "religious" people, as in the earliest years, separate themselves by theology and not by religion. One is the truth of life in its warmth and joy. The other is a system of reasoning. Practicing religion is taking the lessons given and having a life of

forgiveness, love, service, and endeavoring to overcome oneself and grow daily. Temples, altars, creeds, feasts, and solemn ritual words are not religion. They are theological beliefs.

The religion of Masonry is not a defiance of our Masonic belief, or how we need to view Masons, Christians, or any other religious belief. It is pure religion undefiled.

As we progress through the book, we continue to be challenged to understand that Masonry is not designed to deal with religious thought, but with true religion. Newton writes of faith and acknowledgment of the love and power of the Great Architect of all that exists. One is free to glean what is applicable to each individual.

Newton begins the book with the most legitimate question, “What is Religion and what is Masonry?” He addresses, essentially, the noble practice of its faith and obligations, and answers the question of what the Great Light is. He asserts that Masonry will never again be the servant of one religious dogma or creed – its aim is expressing faith in God and becoming a better man.

Next, he addressed the Mystic ties. This is drawing the line between religion and theology, or substance rather than a system of reasoning. Even in scripture we can eliminate details by human reasoning and draw many conclusions that become apparent in the many splits among religious institutions.

Now we are introduced to the Builders. Newton does not deal with the attitude of Masonry toward organized religion, but as a study of the Craft as itself an expression of faith, life, and hope – a kindred life, as it were. There is then a Religion of Masonry – old, simple, wise, and profound as it is practical. Such religion allows each man to read and interpret those truths as his heart elects. Each of us has a particular path and each path is different from another’s.

Last, as we progress through this understanding of Masonic Religion, we come to our foundation in beginnings – the Corner Stone. Just as the corner stone is worked and shaped for the foundational start of a building, the Bible lies open as every Mason takes vows of chastity and charity. The Great Light is the cornerstone of the will of God. Newton’s faith is not the fruit of logic, but of the experience of life. Truth is not a theory, but freedom and meaning of life.

Expanding next on, “The Book of the Holy Law,” we are reminded that the Holy Book is the wisest teacher and best friend of man. It is our guide to brotherly love, relief, and truth. We learn that a Mason knows a certain secret almost too easy to be found. The Holy Book is light and power; and it encompasses moral law. It has to do with realities, not dogmas. It is a symbol of truth, the will of God and faith being hope in things not seen.

Character is a result of bringing together the symbols exhibited to our personal life – as Newton call it, “the geometry of character.” As in all creation, geometry is present everywhere in nature. Life comes, not by chance, but by design of the Great Eternal Designer. You are not an accident. We learn, through our Degrees, morality, then the great freedom of mind and, from there, other great lessons. We are only scratching the surface of the knowledge to come. We are only *becoming* Freemasons.

We speak of the Temple of Brotherhood. The Masonic view of life means that we are here in this world to build something – to become something – to build on the will of the Eternal. We can’t know His will without His help. Now, we learn that we build with the unity of Brotherhood. Forgiveness, and ridding ourselves of selfishness and vanity are essential. By doing so, we concede that each brother has something special to give.

Moving on we arrive at “The Last Landmark.” It is the Temple, and its rituals are not ends in themselves, but a divine means to the end that every workman, however humble, may be a sanctuary of faith, and a shrine of love – an altar of purity, and truth. We all share in the beauty and the raising of the symbolic building. We toil now for the real promise of eternity.

The commitment and work to which we are obligated is to become a Freemason – to grow in knowledge and understanding. As Newton puts it, “Happy is the man who has learned the truth, not so a petty theory but as the meaning of light - he is free indeed.”

We all struggle to reform our paradigm of thought because we have learned our personal beliefs from youth. Change and acceptance of new direction and understanding is refreshing and important.

We are rough stones being shaped and smoothed to a usable and beautiful part of an eternal plan. We are part of the Temple of the spiritual building. As Newton summarizes simply, “The Religion of a Mason is to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with God.”

Our rituals begin with invoking the Great Architect to guide us and be present in our meetings. In our Holy Book, we are told that where two or three are joined together in His name He is present as well. So mote it be!

First Published in 1927 by the Masonic Service Association of the United States, later editions and re-prints of ***The Religion of Masonry*** are available through online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

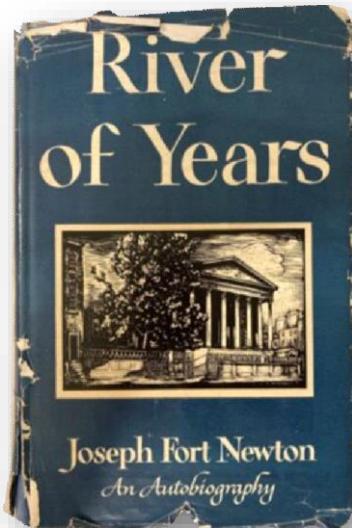
RIVER OF YEARS

Joseph Fort Newton

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

From 1914 to 1928, a span of roughly fifteen years, the Rev. Joseph Fort Newton produced some of the most lasting literary works on Freemasonry.

In 1946, Newton published his autobiography, *River of Years*. It is easy to conclude, after reading his autobiography, that if any man could be said to have Freemasonry hard-wired into his being, that man would surely be Joseph Fort Newton.



Written in chronological fashion, *River of Years* provides deep and clear insights into Newton's development as a man, a Mason and a theologian.

Newton was born on July 21, 1876, in Decatur, Texas. (His year of birth is often erroneously reported as being 1880.) His father was Lee Newton, and his mother was Sue Battle Green Newton. Lee Newton served as a Confederate soldier in the Civil War. Taken captive during the War, Lee Newton became gravely ill while interned in a Union prison camp. Upon learning that Lee Newton was a Mason, the commanding officer of the camp ordered the apparently dying soldier removed from the prison and transferred to his own quarters. In more comfortable surroundings, and benefiting from

effective medical care, Lee Newton recovered his health. At the end of the War, the camp commander furnished the elder Newton with the funds necessary to return to his Texas home.

In *River of Years*, Joseph Fort Newton wrote of how, as a boy, he would listen as if mesmerized to the story of his father's illness and recovery while a prisoner of war. Always, the point of the story was the heroic action of a Brother-Mason who acted to save his father's life.



Sadly, in 1883, Lee Newton died at a relatively young age, and the image of Masons gathered around his father's open grave was burned deeply into six-year-old Joseph's mind. Joseph later recounted how the local Masons quietly rendered aid to his widowed mother following Lee Newton's death.

Lee Newton had been a Baptist minister but left the ministry and became a lawyer. In 1890, fourteen-year-old Joseph also felt the call of the divine, and, in 1895, at the age of nineteen, was ordained as a Baptist minister. Newton recounts feeling conflicted at the time of his ordination, due to his inability to accept Baptist doctrine as being authentically scriptural. Immediately after his ordination, he accepted the pastorate of a small, rural Baptist Church. He quickly came into conflict with members of his congregation for not being, in his words, a "damnationist."

In examining Newton's later career as a Freemason, it is important to remember this example of Newton's general outlook. Newton's orientation was one of conciliation and reconciliation. He viewed Freemasonry as a vehicle to promote friendship among men; or, if you will, the restoration of friendship among men. That attitude was replicated in the theological course that he followed. As Newton tells his life story in *River of Years*, the threads of his theological journey, as well as the threads of his Masonic journey, become inseparably interwoven.

He relates that although he had little formal schooling, in 1895, at the age of 19, he enrolled as a student in Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Four things occurred while Newton was at Southern that had profound effect on his life.

First, and most obviously, he met his future wife, Jennie Mai Deatherage, of Sanders, Kentucky (to whom he referred as "Lady Brown-Eyes").

Next, he served as an associate chaplain for a state prison in Indiana, just across the Ohio River from Louisville. This was Newton's first intimate exposure to men convicted of criminal behavior. No bleeding heart, Newton described the prisoners as being "not immoral, but amoral," and as being exactly where they needed to be.

Third, he worked for a brief period of time for the "Courier-Journal," the Louisville newspaper edited by the renowned Henry Watterson. Newton was the paper's reporter for religious news. He recounted several conversations that he had with Watterson, and credited Watterson with helping him develop his style of writing and speaking. Watterson told him, "A minister is often content to get ideas out of his own mind. A journalist must them into the minds of others."

Finally, as a result of theological disagreement between a faculty member and the administration at Southern, Newton began to seriously question his own understanding of God, and started on the path that would eventually re-define his own theological beliefs.

In 1897, Newton left Southern Seminary without having graduated, and made his way back to Paris, Texas, where he became pastor of First Baptist Church. His theological differences with rigidly sectarian Baptist doctrine finally became too much, and in 1899, he resigned his pastorate, left the Baptist Church, and moved to St. Louis where he became affiliated with the Non-Sectarian Church of St. Louis. He maintained a long-distance romance with Jennie, and the two of them were married in Louisville on June 14, 1900.

After serving for a brief period of time as an itinerant preacher in New England, Newton and Jennie headed for Dixon, Illinois, where in 1902 he became pastor of People's Church. As pastor of People's Church, Newton distinguished himself.

He began a series of Sunday night talks called "Great Men and Great Books." These proved to be very popular and attracted large crowds to People's Church. Newton was clearly nurturing what would prove to be his life-long love for the written word.

While in Dixon, Newton became a somewhat controversial figure when he was denounced by evangelist Billy Sunday, who came to town for a revival. Sunday announced that there was one pastor in Dixon for whom he would not pray, and went on to say, "The doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is an infernal lie." This was a contradiction and a condemnation of the core of Newton's religious beliefs. Newton wrote that Sunday's pulpit theatrics were "a ghastly caricature of religion."

While in Dixon, Newton became a Mason, being initiated passed, and raised in Friendship Lodge No. 7.

In 1908, Newton moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he became pastor of Liberal Christian Church (Universalist). While in Cedar Rapids, he affiliated with Mt. Hermon Lodge No. 263.

In Cedar Rapids, Newton published his first two books. The first of these was a biography of Chicago preacher David Swing (1909). The second was the product of Newton's tremendous admiration for Abraham Lincoln. Newton was able to make the acquaintance of the personal physician for William Herndon, Lincoln's former law partner. The young pastor was able to obtain original source documents related to Lincoln and his early law practice. Newton's book, *Lincoln and Herndon*, was published in 1910.

The success of these two books, coupled with Newton's growing notoriety as a preacher, indirectly led to his next book, *The Builders, A Story and Study of Masonry*, which, although published in 1914, is still considered a classic Masonic text.

Newton told the story of how he began to ruminate on whether there was a "little book" that newly made Masons could be given to help acquaint them with the history and philosophy of the Order. Hearing Newton's questions about such a book, Iowa Grand Master Louis Block suggested that Newton, himself, was the right man to write such a book.

In 1915, Newton became the first editor of “The Builder” magazine, widely believed to be the best Masonic publication of all-time. His editorship of “The Builder” was short lived, however, because in 1916 he accepted the pastorate of City Temple in London (Anglican, Non-Conformist). Newton was the first American to be called to the pastorate of the church.

Newton went to London in the midst of the horrors of World War I. In **River of Years**, he recounts his experiences as a wartime pastor, and as an American sojourning in Europe.

While pastoring in London, the call of Freemasonry continued to prove irresistible to Newton. Upon the invitation of Scots Mason, Andrew Sommerville MacBride, Newton went to speak to Lodge Progress in Glasgow. Although Newton and MacBride likely met in person only the one time, MacBride’s influence on Newton was significant. MacBride had recently published his renowned work, **Speculative Masonry**. Newton later caused it to be reprinted in the United States (he wrote the Foreword for the American version) and frequently referred to MacBride in his later writings.

While in England, he wrote **Modern Masonry**, published in 1917. **Modern Masonry** was a very brief restatement of the salient facts as set forth in **The Builders**. **Modern Masonry** was published as a part of The Masonic Service Association’s “Little Library Series.”

In 1919, following the end of World War I, Newton, returned to the United States to become pastor of the Church of the Divine Paternity (Universalist) in New York City.

His Masonic writing continued during this time, as he published **The Men’s House (1923)** and **The Great Light in Masonry (1924)**.

In 1925, Newton moved to Philadelphia to become pastor of Memorial Church St. Paul (Episcopal). He would spend the remainder of his life in Philadelphia.

In 1926, Newton was ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Church.

Newton’s writing was not limited to Freemasonry. He published several volumes of his own sermons and edited various editions of **Best Sermons of the Year**. His personal notoriety increased when he was named as one of the top five protestant preachers in America.

His Masonic writing continued apace, with the publication of **The Religion of Masonry** in 1927, and **Short Talks on Masonry** in 1928.

In 1930 he became the rector of St. James Church in Philadelphia, where he remained for five years.

From 1935 to 1938, he was a Special Preacher to the Associated Churches of Philadelphia.

In 1938 he accepted the rectorship of the Church of St. Luke and the Epiphany in Philadelphia. He remained in this position until his death from a heart attack on January 24, 1950, at the age of 73 $\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Among the many interesting aspects of **River of Years** are Newton's sketches of leaders and prominent figures of his time with whom he had contact. Occasionally revealing a very dry wit, and always urbane, his writing is filled with references to both classical and modern literary works.

The story of the Reverend Joseph Fort Newton is especially compelling when considered in context. His professional career began on the eve of World War I, continued through the great depression and World War II and ended in the early years of the atomic era. Through tragedy, horror and upheaval, Newton never lost the confidence and joy of his faith, nor did his positive and optimistic outlook waver.

River of Years is a rare glimpse into the spirit of a man who believed in the goodness of God, the brotherhood of man and the usefulness of Freemasonry to promote conciliation and friendship among men throughout the world. In this respect, his theology and his understanding of Freemasonry were mirror images of each other.

River of Years, originally published in 1946 by J. P. Lippincott Co., remains available from online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

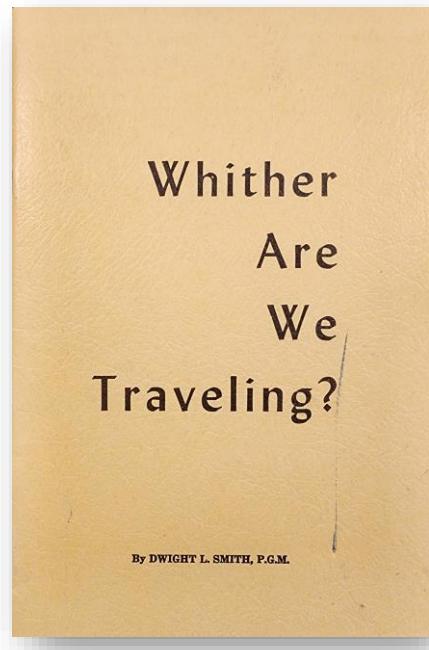
WHITHER ARE WE TRAVELING

Dwight L. Smith, PGM

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

In February 1962, Dwight L. Smith, Past Grand Master of Indiana (1945-1946), was serving the Grand Lodge of Indiana in the dual capacity of Grand Secretary and Editor of *The Indiana Freemason*, the monthly publication of the Grand Lodge. That month, Most Worshipful Brother Smith published the first of a series of eleven articles which were later published collectively under the title, *Whither Are We Traveling?* Although the entire collection of articles is relatively brief – only 46 pages – and despite the fact that it was written some sixty years ago, it is, unquestionably, one of the most powerful, provocative, and, indeed, prescient works ever written about 20th century American Freemasonry.

In *Whither Are We Traveling?*, Most Worshipful Brother Smith posed ten questions, and devotes a chapter of his book to each question. Smith's ten questions are:



1. Can we expect Freemasonry to retain its past glory and prestige unless the level of leadership is raised above its present position?
2. How well are we guarding the West Gate?
3. Has Freemasonry become too easy to obtain?
4. Are we not worshiping at the altar of bigness?
5. What can we expect when we have permitted Freemasonry to become subdivided into a score of organizations?
6. Has the American passion for bigness and efficiency dulled the spirit of Masonic charity?
7. Do we pay enough attention to the Festive Board?
8. What has become of that "course of moral instruction, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols," that Freemasonry is supposed to be?

9. Hasn't the so-called Century of the Common Man contributed to making our Fraternity a little too common?
10. Are there not too many well-meaning Brethren who are working overtime to make Freemasonry something other than Freemasonry?

Smith addressed each of those questions in detail in the subsequent chapters of his book, and did so in the plain language of the newspaperman that he was. The immediate conclusion, after reviewing Smith's ten questions, is that American Freemasonry has been struggling with the same issues for over six decades.

The idea of a Grand Master raising any of Smith's questions in the climate of contemporary Freemasonry is almost unimaginable. The same questions, if posed by a 21st century rank-and-file Freemason, would be considered revolutionary, if not downright heretical.

Smith writes, "Freemasonry has not been tried in the balance and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried." Those words contain an undeniable truth about the mindset of the men who make up the mainstream of 21st century American Freemasonry. They are the culmination of all of Smith's earlier warnings: That Freemasonry has become too easily obtained, that we are negligent in guarding the West Gate, that we have ignored our ancient traditions etc. Freemasonry, when practiced as intended, is far more than a social club. It asks men to undertake the most difficult labor in which they will ever engage – that of conducting an honest evaluation of themselves, and based on their findings, to construct within their hearts a spiritual temple equal in magnificence to the celebrated Temple of Solomon. Flipping pancakes and donating money to charitable causes are each infinitely easier (and less intellectually uncomfortable) than the difficult and daily work of self-improvement.

One of the most important aspects of Smith's work is the tone in which it is written. Although it is nothing less than a stinging indictment of 20th century American Freemasonry, its tone is not accusatory or adversarial. *Whither Are We Traveling?* uses a matter-of-fact, common sense approach to deliver its message. Smith's observations are not argumentative. His approach is that of a newspaperman reporting fact. Smith realized that, in this instance, the facts were so clear that they needed no embellishment, and he wisely refrained from such an attempt. Smith characterized his own writing in this manner, "Hard words, perhaps, but they need to be spoken."

Dwight Smith clearly recognized that the success or failure of American Freemasonry could not be measured by the number of names on membership rosters. Make no mistake, Smith had no objection to having large numbers of men practicing Freemasonry. His concerns were about the quality of the men, rather than the quantity. Smith said (and, again, remember that this was in 1962), "We are accepting too many petitioners who can pay the fee, and little else; too many men who have no conception of what Freemasonry is or what it seeks to do, and who care not one whit about increasing their moral stature; too many men who look upon Ancient Craft Freemasonry with contempt – who are interested in using it only as a springboard from which to gain a prestige symbol." Smith's remarks would be echoed decades later by Right Worshipful Thomas W. Jackson, Past Grand Secretary of Pennsylvania, who warned that was impossible to "make fine porcelain from bad clay."

His unerring criticism of mid-20th century Freemasonry notwithstanding, Smith never lost faith in the ultimate power of Freemasonry to elevate the moral quality of a man's life, and bring about an internal transformation of character.

Most Worshipful Brother Smith advocated the exploration of the substance of Freemasonry. He explicitly rejected the use of gimmicks designed to increase membership in the Fraternity and increased attendance at Lodge meetings. Instead, he posed one additional question: Why does not someone suggest that we try Freemasonry?

In presenting that simple question, Smith reveals the answer to each of the questions that had posed: Try Freemasonry. Smith's point is that Freemasonry's adoption of community service projects, lowering of standards and its lust for "bigness" only served to undermine its fundamental aim and purpose.

In closing ***Whither Are We Traveling?***, Smith wrote, "I come to the conclusion of this booklet with my faith in the basic worth of our ancient Craft unshaken, convinced that the solutions to Freemasonry's problems is Freemasonry. Why do we not try it?"

Most Worshipful Dwight L. Smith's ***Whither Are We Traveling?*** is a powerful punch. The issues that Smith identified over sixty years ago continue to exist, only they are now more deeply entrenched and institutionalized. American Freemasonry failed to address the issues identified by Most Worshipful Brother Smith in a timely manner. As a result, the Fraternity has paid a steep price for deliberately ignoring the elements that have contributed to its steady decline.

Through ***Whither Are We Traveling?***, Most Worshipful Dwight L. Smith continues to speak to American Freemasonry despite the passage of time. One can only hope that Smith's questions, and his ultimate prescription – **Try Freemasonry** – become the topic of discussion throughout American Freemasonry in the 21st century.

Whither Are We Traveling? was published by The Indiana Freemason in 1962. It is long out of print, but copies can occasionally be found through online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

SAMUEL PRICHARD's MASONRY DISSECTED – 1730

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master and Fellow, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Exposures of Freemasonry predate the founding of the Grand Lodge of England. Early Masonic catechisms made their way into private collections in the late 17th century. With the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, though, and in the years following in which Freemasonry grew in popularity among the populace of London, the floodgates for exposures opened.

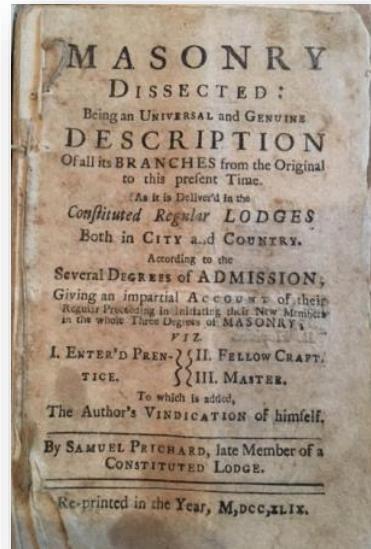
The year 1723, a mere six years after the founding of the Grand Lodge of England, saw the publication of *A Mason's Examination*, in which some snippets of early Masonic ritual appeared.

In 1730, an author known only to posterity as Samuel Prichard, published *Masonry Dissected*, which, among exposures, remains of great interest to contemporary Freemasons. The study of Prichard's *Masonry Dissected* has its own history.

In 1970, two Illinois Freemasons, Alphonse Cerza and Louis Williams, founded The Masonic Book Club. Over the next forty years, The Masonic Book Club would reprint many significant historical Masonic works which otherwise would have been unavailable to the modern Masonic scholar. The Masonic Book Club disbanded in 2010, to be reconstituted in 2017 by The Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction.

In 1977, The Masonic Book Club published *Masonry Dissected, by Samuel Prichard, 1730*, a reprint of the original 1730 exposure, edited by Harry Carr. In 2021, The Masonic Book Club, as resurrected, reprinted Carr's edition, with additional editorial comments by Arturo de Hoyos and S. Brent Morris. Once again, Samuel Prichard's historic publication is available for review by students of Freemasonry.

Masonry Dissected is of intense interest to the student of Freemasonry far more for contextual reasons than for its actual content. The proliferation of the Master Mason Degree did not arise from an act of the Grand Lodge of England. It did not exist at the founding of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, or at the time of the publication of Anderson's Constitutions in 1723. Sometime in the middle 1720s, the degree was introduced to English Freemasonry and its acceptance was widespread and immediate. By 1738, Anderson's Constitutions needed to be revised to include the Master Mason Degree. *Masonry Dissected* was the first Masonic exposure which included the Master Mason Degree. It is the fact that



Masonry Dissected provides some otherwise absent information as to when the Master Mason Degree began to be a part of the degree system of Freemasonry that causes it to retain its interest to the Masonic researcher.

To say that **Masonry Dissected** was a best seller is an understatement. An advertisement for its sale was first printed in London's "The Daily Journal" on October 20, 1730. The small book, only 32 pages and measuring roughly 7 x 4 1/2 inches, sold out entirely in one day. A second edition was printed on October 21, 1730 and a third edition was in print by October 31, 1730. By 1800, there had been at least thirty-eight different printings of **Masonry Dissected**. Ironically, Prichard's work became popular, in part, as a result of its use by Masons during a time when printed monitors and other study guides approved by Grand Lodges were either non-existent or unavailable.

The text of **Masonry Dissected** consists of what contemporary Masons would think of as the proficiency work of each of the three degrees of Masonry. It includes the oath and obligation of the Entered Apprentice Degree, but not those of the Fellow Craft or Master Mason Degrees.

But who was Samuel Prichard? The identity of the author, beyond the name given, remains unknown. A man named Samuel Pritchard was on the rolls of King Henry VIII Head Lodge in London, but all mention of that Lodge (and Pritchard) disappears after the annual returns of 1730. The names Prichard and Pritchard could be easily confused, but regardless of the spelling of the name, there is nothing to suggest that Prichard (or Pritchard) would have been in a position to write an exposure of Freemasonry that captured so much of its essence as did **Masonry Dissected**.

As the editors point out, the writer of **Masonry Dissected** made references to Freemasonry in such a manner as to indicate that he would have had access to, or been in correspondence with, the highest leadership of the Grand Lodge of England. Prichard, whoever he was, possessed a level of information not readily available to the average Freemason or 1730.

Prichard included in **Masonry Dissected** an oath that the contents of the publication were accurate, and that the description of the Masonic ceremonies contained therein reflected what could be found in the English Masonic Lodges of the time. Curiously, Prichard dedicated his work to the Craft. In the final pages of the book, which he styled as "The Author's Vindication of himself from the prejudiced Part of Mankind," he provided what may be the greatest clue as to his motivation for publishing an exposure, complaining that the right of visitation had been denied in certain Lodges.

Was Prichard the pseudonym for a Mason who had been offended by being denied admission as a visitor to one of London's Masonic Lodges? In all likelihood, we will never know. But his work immediately caught the attention of the Grand Lodge of England, whose minutes from December of 1730 include the following language:

"The Deputy Grand Master took notice of a Pamphlet lately published by one Pritchard who pretends to have been made a regular Mason: In Violation of the Obligation of a Mason wch he swears he has broke in order to do hurt to Masonry and expressing himself with the utmost Indignation against both him (stiling him an Impostor) and of his Book as a foolish thing not to be regarded. But in order to prevent the Lodges being imposed upon by false Brethren or Impostors: Proposed till otherwise Ordered by the Grand Lodge,

that no Person whatsoever should be admitted into Lodges unless some Member of the Lodge then present would vouch for such visiting Brothers being a regular Mason, and the Member's Name to be entered against the Visitor's Name in the Lodge Book, which Proposal was unanimously agreed to."

On December 15, 1730, the "*Daily Post*" announced the publication of a reply to Prichard titled "A Defence of Masonry, occasioned by a Pamphlet called *Masonry Dissected*." Noting the sting of ***Masonry Dissected***, this rejoinder was actually included and reprinted in Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1738.

It is unlikely that Samuel Prichard, whatever his identity, had any conception of the manner in which his exposure, ***Masonry Dissected***, would have lasting impact on the Masonic Fraternity. First as an item of curiosity, later as a study guide, and, finally, as a key element in the story of the historical evolution and development of Freemasonry, ***Masonry Dissected*** has been of significant interest to successive generations of Freemasons, as well as the merely curious.

The Masonic Book Club editors, both in 1977 and 2021, have rendered valuable service to the student of Freemasonry by again making Samuel Prichard's ***Masonry Dissected*** widely available.

The 2021 edition of ***Masonry Dissected*** is available through The Masonic Book Club and through other on-line booksellers. Older versions may be found on-line as well.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

INVENTING THE FUTURE

Dr. Ric Berman

Review by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master and Fellow, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

The year 2023 marks the 300th anniversary of the publication of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723. Dr. Ric Berman, a distinguished Masonic author and Past Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, has produced a work that introduces the reader not only to the contents of the Constitutions of 1723, but also to the consequences of their appearance in Freemasonry six years after the founding of the premier Grand Lodge. *Inventing the Future* leads the reader through the historical setting for the publication of Anderson's and illustrates just how radical the underlying ideology of the Age of Enlightenment appeared in early 18th Century England.

Dr. Berman sets the stage by describing the religious and political chaos that existed in England at the end of the 17th Century. With the English king being head of church as well as head of state, political and religious differences were both intensified and inseparable. The coronation of George I as King in 1714, and the resulting Jacobite Insurrection, settled the question of whether the monarchy would be Protestant rather than Catholic, but the social atmosphere of the time remained highly charged.

In that climate of division and dissent, The Grand Lodge of England, formed on St. John the Baptist's Day, June 24, 1717, provided a haven of respite and civility from the rough and overheated rhetoric of sectarian dispute.

Dr. Berman enumerates the five radical concepts that were found in the philosophies of the Enlightenment Era, and which were incorporated into the fabric of the premier Grand Lodge. Those five ideas are:

1. Religious tolerance;
2. Leadership by meritocracy;
3. Civility;
4. Scientific and artistic education; and



5. Societal and personal self-improvement.

Each of those concepts made its way into the Constitutions of 1723.

One of the most important features of *Inventing the Future* is the manner in which it introduces the reader to the men who were responsible for the founding of the premier Grand Lodge, and who, ultimately, were responsible for the publication of the Constitutions of 1723.

Most prominent among these men was Jean Theophilus Desaguliers. A Fellow of the Royal Society, and a well-known scientist and lecturer, Desaguliers was the intellectual force behind the newly constituted Grand Lodge, and, largely, behind the Constitutions of 1723.

Other men who played a significant role in the advancement of early Grand Lodge Freemasonry were George Payne, a prominent civil servant in London at the time, and John, Duke of Montagu, Freemasonry's first "celebrity" Grand Master. Dr. Berman points out that Montagu's involvement with Freemasonry signaled that it was, "acceptable morally, intellectually and politically, and that it could be fashionable and fun."

Included in this list of men, of course, is the Rev. James Anderson, whose name is forever attached to the Constitutions of 1723. Dr. Berman asserts that, ironically, the most probable scenario is that the Constitutions of 1723 are likely the work of Desaguliers and Payne, and that the Rev. Anderson was in all likelihood a "hired pen" who contributed little to the substance of the work. Anderson, somewhat impoverished by bad investments, likely hired his services to his friends, Desaguliers and Payne. He inserted his name as author of the Constitutions on page 74 of the document (somewhat "offhandedly," as Dr. Berman notes), and has since been given perhaps too much credit for his actual role in the production of the document.

Inventing the Future goes on to describe the lasting influence of the Constitutions of 1723. They formed a model for the Constitutions later adopted by the Grand Lodge of Ireland, the several Grand Lodges organized in the emergent United States, and even for the Antient Grand Lodge's *Ahimon Rezon*.

One topic on which *Inventing the Future* has very little to say is the history of Freemasonry as presented in the Constitutions of 1723. Here, Dr. Berman merely points out that it was fashionable, at the time, to be able to present an antiquarian history, whether for one's family or one's affiliations, including Freemasonry. Dr. Berman's conclusion is that the "history" contained in the Constitutions of 1723 should be viewed as "literary hyperbole."

The Constitutions of 1723, though revised a mere 15 years later to include the adoption of the Master Mason Degree as a part of Freemasonry's System of Degrees, gave Freemasonry its foundational structure and governing law. To say that the Constitutions of 1723 "invented the future" is markedly not hyperbole. It is a completely valid and accurate analysis of the impact that the work of Desaguliers, Payne, Montagu and Anderson had on Freemasonry, both at the time, and to be found in future generations.

Dr. Berman is to be commended for seizing the opportunity to bring the Constitutions of 1723 to the forefront of attention in contemporary Freemasonry. The contributions of Desaguliers, Payne, Montagu, Anderson, and other influential Masons of the period provide a window into Enlightenment Era thinking, and demonstrate how such thinking was incorporated into the structure of Freemasonry.

Inventing the Future is a useful guide to the Constitutions of 1723. It places the events of the time in their proper context, and demonstrates to the reader that as an institution, Freemasonry sought as its purpose to be a place where men of different religious and political persuasions could meet in a spirit of tolerance and good will.

Inventing the Future is a necessary addition to the library of any serious student of Freemasonry.

Inventing the Future, published in 2022 by The Old Stables Press, Oxfordshire, is available through online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

Short Talks on Masonry

Joseph Fort Newton

Reviewed by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

A compelling case may be made that the Rev. Joseph Fort Newton was the most significant writer in American Freemasonry in the first three decades of the 20th Century.

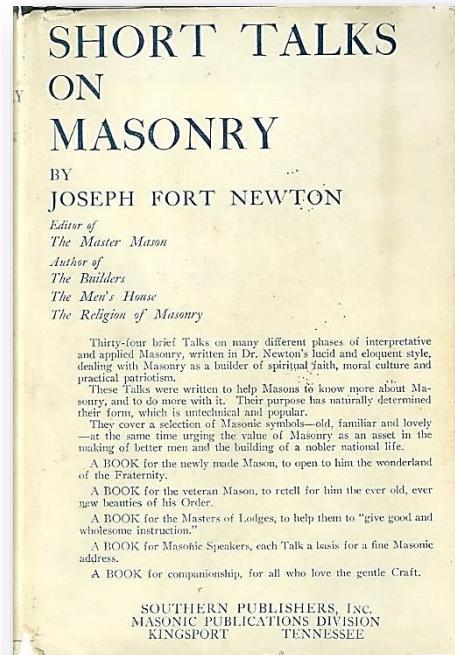
His works of that era include *The Builders: A Story and Study of Masonry* (1914) and *The Men's House* (1923). In 1928, he published the subject of this review, *Short Talks on Masonry*. *Short Talks* is a *tour de force* of Newton's understanding of, and vision for, Freemasonry.

Short Talks is exactly what its title implies. It is a collection of 34 essays written by Newton, divided into two sections. The first section, given the heading, "Symbolism," consists of 20 essays which can best be described as "good and wholesome instruction" related to the most elemental symbols of Freemasonry. The second section, labeled, "Service," is an exploration of the mission of Masonry. In a slightly off-topic sketch, Newton included in this section a brief review of the life of American actor and Freemason Edwin Booth.

Newton, whose theological journey led him to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church, wrote eloquently of the Masonic altar. After quoting the portion of the Old Charges related to Freemasonry and religion, Newton, a universalist at heart, wrote, "...the Altar of Masonry is an Altar of Freedom – not freedom from faith, but freedom of faith. Beyond the fact of the reality of God it does not go, allowing every man to think of God according to his experience of life and his vision of truth." In the context of the largely Christian and Protestant Freemasonry found in the United States in the 1920s, Newton took a firm stance in proclaiming the inclusiveness that Freemasonry offered.

Newton devotes several of his essays to an explanation of the working tools of the symbolic lodge. He writes of square, level and plumb as being representative of absolute truths. These working tools remind us of the necessity of recognizing and following standards of conduct consistent with their use. Newton wrote, "...inevitably, a society without standards will be a society without stability, and it will one day go down." Although written nearly 100 years ago, Newton's words carry a clear resonance in the 21st century.

Newton recognized that the lesson of the level was misunderstood, even in his era. In writing about the level, he wrote, "What, then, is the equality of which the Level is the symbol? Clearly it is not identity, or even similarity of gift and endowment. No, it is something better; it is the equal right of each man to the full use and development of such power as he has, whatever it may be, unhindered by injustice or oppression." The key to successfully understanding Newton here is his use of the word, "development." He believed that lodges were places where men



were free to develop such skills as their abilities permitted. While that places an obligation on the part of the lodge to provide such an environment, it also implies an obligation on the part of the individual Mason to utilize the lodge in such a manner. Newton never deviated from the idea of merit being the ultimate measure of advancement in Freemasonry. He did, however, clearly advocate that the lodge should be a place that nurtured individual growth and development, and thereby identified and rewarded merit.

In his essay, “The Rite of Destitution,” Newton reminds his readers that Masonic charity is not a question of alms-giving, but a matter of tending to the needs of our Brothers (and their families) who may be in need. He writes quite movingly that the greatest destitution that a man may face may be the absence of faith, hope or courage. Newton encourages Masons to be charitable with their time, to share their faith and hope for the future, and to stand in unison in the face of uncertainty and doubt.

Newton returns to the theme of Masonic charity in his essay, “An Erring Brother.” He recognizes the fact that humans, even Masons, continue to be fallible. He writes that a fallen Brother should be treated with “pity, patience and loving kindness.” Newton, ever the pastor, sought ways to restore the errant Brother to fellowship within the lodge. The spirit of Masonry, he wrote, “softens what is hard and strengthens what is weak.”

Newton closes the first section of the book, “Symbolism,” with an essay title, “So Mote It Be.” Much like the title phrase, the essay is a benediction on instruction in Freemasonry’s most recognizable symbols.

Among the 14 essays that comprise the second section of the book, “Service,” there is one that shines far more brightly than the others, and, which, is perhaps the most valuable of all of Newton’s writings. The essay, “Masonic Education,” is a call for structured orientation and education as a candidate moves through the Degrees of Masonry.

Newton related his own frustration with being inadequately instructed as he progressed through the Degrees, and after he had completed the three Degrees of Masonry. He then recounted his visit to the home of Scots Mason Andrew Sommerville MacBride, which occurred while Newton was pastoring London. MacBride shared with Newton the Scots tradition of appointing intenders to instruct new Masons not only in the required memory work, but in the meanings of the Craft’s rituals and symbols. Based on Newton’s understanding of his conversation with MacBride, he began to seek ways to instruct men in the meaning of Masonry, going beyond the mere delivery of ritual.

Of a structured education program, Newton wrote, “It takes a young man at the time when he is ready and eager to know; it links the study of Masonry with the Ritual, as it should be; and it is done in an atmosphere in which not only the facts, but the spirit, the ‘feel’ of Masonry, can be communicated.” He went on to say, “Surely a Grand Lodge ought to be as eager to have at least an elementary knowledge of what Masonry is imparted to its young men, as it is to have them know the Ritual.” Newton concluded his remarks by saying, “Such a plan is neither impossible nor impractical, if we really mean business in the matter of Masonic Education.”

Newton’s final essay included in ***Short Talks*** is titled, “The Opportunity for Brotherhood.” To Newton, Masonry was synonymous with brotherhood and friendship. In this last essay, Newton called for an end to parochial thinking, stating that we are all “citizens of the world.” Recall that ***Short Talks***, and this particular essay, was written in the turbulent period between World Wars I and II. It is in that context that Newton poses his final three questions: “How will Masonry meet this marvelous age and measure up to its opportunity? Is it a progressive science as it claims to be? Can Masonry itself unite in a common undertaking for the common good, in service to mankind?”

The most striking quality of Joseph Fort Newton's Short Talks on Masonry is the fact that a book written nearly a century ago remains so timely in its message to contemporary Freemasonry. In ***Short Talks***, Newton reveals the fullness of his understanding of Freemasonry. Although written in prose, there is a poetic tone to ***Short Talks***, attributable to Newton's mastery of language and the subject about which he wrote. Short Talks on Masonry speaks to Freemasons in the 21st century as clearly and eloquently as it did when first published. It is a work both inspired and inspirational.

Short Talks on Masonry, first published by the Masonic Service Association of the United States, remains available from online booksellers.

WILLIAM O. WARE LODGE OF RESEARCH BOOK REVIEW

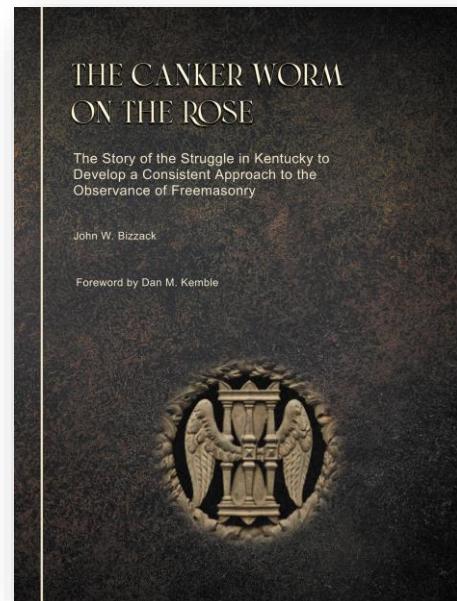
THE CANKER WORM ON THE ROSE

The Story of the Struggle in Kentucky
to Develop a Consistent Approach to the Observance of Freemasonry

Dr. John W. Bizzack

Reviewed by William J. Lorenz, Past Master and Fellow, William O. Ware Lodge of Research

The *Canker Worm on the Rose: The Story of Struggle in Kentucky to Develop a Consistent Approach to the Observance of Freemasonry*, authored by nationally recognized Masonic author and Past Master of Lexington Lodge #1, Dr. John W. Bizzack, employs the words of approximately forty Grand Masters to reveal a pattern of ills that have plagued the Grand Lodge of Kentucky from its very beginning. These warnings have mostly gone unheeded. It is difficult to fault Researcher Bizzack on his findings, as they are meticulously gleaned from the Grand Lodge Proceedings, as described in the Committee on Education reports and other like committees, but more particularly taken from the “Grand Master’s Address,” first found in the Grand Lodge Proceedings of 1843, and soon afterwards becoming an annual commentary. Utilizing much of his research from the above, W. B. Bizzack brilliantly weaves the Grand Masters’ concerns for Kentucky Freemasonry into a methodical narrative, a narrative that could be told about most any Masonic Jurisdiction across the United States, with conceivably few Grand Jurisdictions concluding with varying results. This is John W. Bizzack at his best.



ANNEX A (1843 – 1889)

THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY

*TO RECEIVE AND IMPART INSTRUCTION SHOULD BE PARAMOUNT AND PRIMARY OBJECT IN ALL OF OUR MEETINGS**

In 1843 Grand Master Henry Wiggin, captain in the War of 1812, justice and post and book printer from Danville, Kentucky was the first Grand Master to have an Address published in the Proceedings.

His remarks became the framework for later addresses by Grand Masters, which included expressing appreciation for the opportunity to serve and thanking those who served in the official capacity of Master. He reviewed the year, which included the time for lodges, detailing the kind of dispensation issued, lodges chartered, the general state of the fraternity and their recommendation to the Craft to constructively advance Freemasonry in Kentucky.

Wiggin's Address came on the heels of the worst period of American Freemasonry: the crusade of an anti-Masonic sentiment from the late 1790s through the early 1840s.

Rebounding from the loss of half its lodges and members during the worse years of the Anti-Masonic Movement, by 1842 Kentucky lodges and lodges had begun to swell again without regard to consequences, like growth and expansion. In 1842, the Proceedings list seventy-four chartered lodges, up from forty-three lodges in 1839.

In his address, Wiggin said:

The history of Freemasonry, like human life, has ever been characterized by alternations of good and evil, prosperity and adversity. And even in our own day, and in our own nests, we have seen these periods strongly marking the career prospect of the fraternity with light or shade.

Under the perils in previous attendant on the border of life of our pioneer fathers, Masonry struck root early, and grew in our fertile soil basically as the native products of our country plants for the growth was, perhaps two rank and unpruned for the best interest of the craft. The entrance was not guarded with proper vigilance.

The elevated standard of Masonic morality was, in many instances, practically lowered. Many of the members were deficient in the various forms of Masonry and soon not at all.

* Stephen Dulan Morgan, *The Second and Third Freemasonry Committees, 1809; John W. Bizzack, *The Age of Uncertainty: Drawing the Inquiry of the Morgan Affair and its Aftermath*, BIF Foundation, 2021.*

Henry Wiggin

It appears to me that at least one week should be spent in our annual meetings, and a greater portion of that time dedicated to the several degrees, and lectures on each degree. It is the duty of every body to derive and design plans, problems, and exercises for the present Lodge to execute. To receive and impart instruction should be paramount and primary object in all of our meetings. The first effect of this arrangement would be, to afford time for funeral attention to be given to the dead, and to give us time to meet and to instruct the young ones coming under our jurisdiction. To this manner of accuracy and uniformity, we can hardly attain at no such length of time, and though the Grand Lodge has a standing committee to direct and regulate the same, yet it is to be hoped that they will be so successful as to adopt the system which shall not require all the auxiliary of which they may be able to avail themselves.

Another master of serious importance as to demand our serious attention here, is in all of the subordinate lodges, in the absolute necessity of having a Master admitted into the fraternal fold, in the same manner as effect in all the lodges, and the effect of the admission of each degree, before they are permitted to advance to higher orders without this too much neglected precaution, our lodges will be filled up with men who do not properly understand, cannot appreciate, and will not do honor to Masonry.

In 1846 Kentucky Grand Master William Halloway became the second Grand Master to have an Address published in the Proceedings in Lexington, Kentucky. That year, the number of chartered lodges in Kentucky were noted in the Proceedings as ninety-one — a twenty-four percent increase in two years.

Halloway, a leading dry goods merchant in Central Kentucky was then, and remains today, the youngest member of the Jurisdiction elected to the Grand East. He later served in the Union Army during the Civil War, and was a member of Richardson No. 1 and Lexington No. 1.

William Halloway

It is clear that the Craft took little to no notice of Past Grand Master Henry Wiggin's 1843 address, which he mainly worried about the problem of hastily admitted members and ill-prepared Masons. Halloway, in turn, did not reiterate what he said.

In the mat, the practice of advancing members too rapidly through the degrees, causes no much contention, and is an abuse to the Institution. They pass through the degrees hasty.

* Annual Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, October 1843, Grand Master's Address.

* Grand Lodge of Kentucky, Annual Proceedings, October 1843.

35 36

The “Foreword” to the book, by Dan M. Kemble, Past Master and Research Fellow of William O. Ware Lodge of Research, is pleasant and enlightening reading, setting the stage for the main body of the book. It demonstrates how the ceremonies and customs of the fraternity have been passed down orally, thereby lending itself to error. In a time when travel was slow, the Grand Lodge, located in Lexington, proved too distant from many lodges to properly instruct and correct

the increasing irregularities and the deviations from the accepted procedures. Ironically, the same reason, in part, was given to the Grand Lodge of Virginia by the five original Kentucky lodges in forming the Grand Lodge of Kentucky.

Author Bizzack points out that in 1800, the Grand Lodge of Kentucky was born through the efforts of a total of approximately one hundred and fifty members in the five lodges originally chartered through the

THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY

Masonry is increasing very fast in Kentucky, too fast we fear for the good of the Order. Too many Lodges, from the best information we can get, being anxious to increase its [sic] numbers and funds to the neglect of the proper investigation into the quality of the material.¹⁸

The report was largely based on findings referred to in the Proceedings as “Attachment D,” wherein it was reported “discrepancies in the work as being numerous and dangerous” and that “lodges were without a system,” and there existed “irreconcilable differences from the ‘pure and ancient text.’” The report declared it was an “absolute necessity” to arrest the progress of “so alarming an evil.” Lecturers for each district were recommended and a resolution was passed to appoint them.¹⁹

This report not only carried with it the clue that Morris was using the findings from the Committee to point the way toward the upcoming Conservator movement that he would announce eight months later, but conveniently corresponded with the admonitions from six previous Grand Masters since 1843 about the consequences of rushing candidates through the degrees, poorly instructing them and the rapid expansion of membership and lodges.

The immediate controversial Conservator movement failed as the Civil War consumed the attention Grand Lodge and their subordinate lodges in the work of surviving the War.

“WE ARE MAKING MEMBERS OF THE ORDER FAR MORE RAPIDLY THAN WE ARE MAKING MASON!”²⁰

Morris’s “new era” did not come to pass. Every lodge did not end up with a library and the Conservator movement not only failed, but failed spectacularly, even in Kentucky. What did not fail was the persistence of the idea that the influx of many new members during the War, and the further swelling of the ranks into the 1870s, was a good thing, and the practice of hastily advancing candidates through degrees again commenced.

Kentucky found itself experiencing what 1848 Grand Master James H. Daviss described as happening a generation before: members never learning the object or purpose of Masonry, going forth into the world, representing themselves as “perfect ashars,” who remain as a rough and unpolished as they were before being admitted—with too many scoundrels, though unfit for positions of leadership.

Barely sixteen months after the War ended, the serious concern of rapid expansion and poorly instructed Masons emerged and was voiced again by seven Grand Masters through the end of the century.

By 1866 Kentucky had over 380 lodges chartered or operating under dispensation with a total of 15,157 members.²¹ This represents an over 500 percent increase in the number of lodges in the early 1840s.

That year, Grand Master Myrix J. Williams, state legislator, dry-goods merchant, and district magistrate from Dry Ridge, Kentucky, seeing the dispensation of thirty more lodges in the state said in his address

That the Order of Freemasonry in Kentucky is becoming popularized to such an extent as to place it in imminent peril by the rapid and unnatural increase of the number of Lodges; and that, in the opinion of this Grand Lodge it becomes the imperative duty of the Grand Master to guard with all diligence against granting any Dispensations to establish new Lodges within our border, unless under circumstances of the most imperative nature.²²

Williams further cautioned the Craft as seven of his predecessors had, then gave the return to rapid expansion and the rushing of candidates through degrees its most harsh description:

I feel it my duty to urge them [Lodges and members] to exercise great and increased caution in the reception of candidates for initiation. A want of care in this important particular though it may, by increasing the number of members, be looked upon as evidence of prosperity, will in the end prove to be highly deleterious; it will be the cancer within the rose, that seems outwardly so fair and flourishing, but bearing in its bosom the cause of its decay. Let me then urge you to guard well the outward door of the sanctuary.²³

In 1867, Grand Master Isaac T. Martin, from Cynthiana, Kentucky, also expressed his concern that “the rapid and unnatural” expansion in the number of lodges was increasing with “fearful rapidity” concluding that “Masonry was not intended for the million, but for a select few.”²⁴ No matter, by 1869 the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, with its 20,000 members, stood third in the United States in members and financial wealth.²⁵

In 1868 Grand Master Eliza S. Fitch, state legislator and attorney in the Henry Clay Law Offices, stated in his address to the Craft that it was his “conviction that we are multiplying lodges too rapidly in this jurisdiction.” He proposed that before a charter was issued for any new proposed lodge, the principle officers of the new lodge, in all cases, undergo a satisfactory examination in open lodge before the Grand Lodge issued a new charter. He refused to shorten the time for conferring degrees as had been requested of him during his term just to “expedite the manufacture of Masons.”

He elaborated by saying that:

¹⁸ Grand Lodge of Kentucky Annual Proceedings, Report from the Committee on Works, 1859
¹⁹ H.B. Grant, *Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky 1800-1900*, Masonic Home Book and Job Office, 1900.
²⁰ Annual Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, October 1868, Grand Master's Address, Eliza S. Fitch.
²¹ Annual Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, October 1866, Grand Master's Address.

Myrix J. Williams

Isaac T. Martin

Eliza S. Fitch

²² *IBID.*
²³ *IBID.*
²⁴ Grand Lodge of Kentucky Proceedings, Grand Master's Address, 1867, H.B. Grant, *Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky Annual Communication 1867*.
²⁵ Charles Snow Guthrie, *Kentucky Freemasonry 1798-1978: The Grand Lodge and the Men Who Made It*, Lexington, KY: Grand Lodge of Kentucky, 1981.

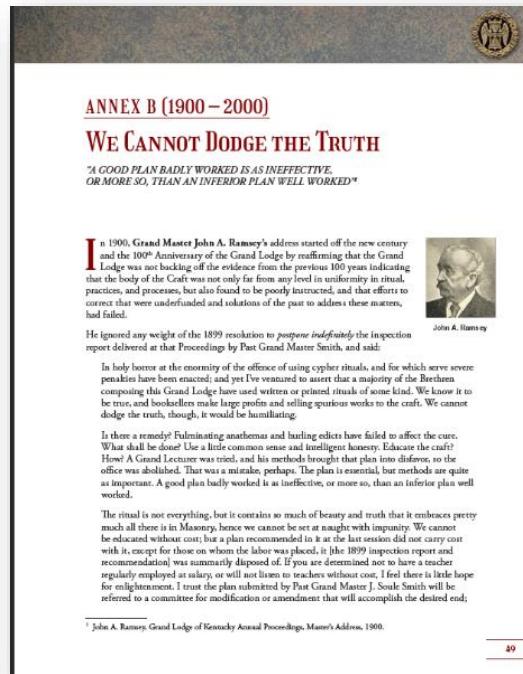
Grand Lodge of Virginia. The new Grand Lodge of Kentucky, the twelfth Grand Lodge in the then sixteen States, immediately began to grant charters for more lodges within and without the Kentucky borders. Within ten years, the five lodges tripled to fifteen and membership doubled to three hundred. By 1814, nine more lodges were chartered and eight years later, by 1822, another thirty-eight lodges had been added, bringing the total to sixty-eight lodges in just twenty-two years. Many of the new members had been previously made Masons in other jurisdictions, bringing varied ritual and operational procedures with them.

By 1866, the Grand Lodge of Kentucky had grown to 380 lodges and over fifteen thousand members. As previous Grand Masters may have surmised, Grand Master Myrix J. Williams then stated, "... *the Order of Freemasonry in Kentucky is becoming popularized to such an extent as to place it in imminent peril by the rapid and unnatural increase of the number of Lodges...*" adding, "it may, by increasing the number of members, be looked upon as evidence of prosperity, will in the end prove to be highly deleterious; it will be the canker worm on the rose, that seems outwardly so fair and flourishing, but bearing in its bosom the cause of decay," thus, the suggestion for the title of the book.

W. B. Bizzack points to four factors that contributed to this result. "The first, factor, already existing in 1800 when the Grand Lodge of Kentucky was established, was a lack of a clear, institution-wide agreement on a certain direction or way of administrating the fraternity or ensuring that all new and veteran members received proper instructions.¹ The second, beginning in 1800, as well, was the absence of a regular ritual from which the consistent practices and protocols may be derived. The third, in 1833, was the abolishment of the 1802 Grand Lodge By-Law requiring that, In all subordinate lodges it shall be the duty of the Master or presiding officer, at their respective stated meetings, to deliver a lecture on one of the three first degrees in Masonry.² The fourth, first noted in 1843 and after, is the failure to heed the assessments and warnings of Grand Masters about the consequences of what had happened (and continued to happen) to Kentucky Freemasonry as a result of unbridled rapid expansion of membership and lodges, non-compliance with the Book of Constitution, and the hasty advancement of poorly instructed candidates through the degrees before achieving proficiency in the preceding degrees."

(Footnote ¹ and Footnote ² cites, "By Laws of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, paragraph 5, 1802. Rob Morris, *History of Freemasonry in Kentucky*, 1859. Grand Lodge of Kentucky Annual Proceedings 1802, 1832, 1833. H.B. Grant, *Doings of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky* 1800, 1900")

Undeterred by the Anti-Masonic movement, the Civil War and World Wars I and II, and the Great Depression, this early period of rapid growth extended well into the twentieth century. There is little doubt that Masonry's incredible expansion placed a heavy burden in many adverse ways, on both the individual lodges as well as the Grand Lodge, a burden that could not be harnessed, the results of which continue into the present day. Quite simply, the practice of too many lodges became "making members but not making Masons."



The rushing of candidates through the degrees spawned members who were taught the “words” of Masonry, but not the meaning behind the words, what Masonry truly is, or what it means to be a Mason. Eventually, the number of members grew larger than the number of Masons who truly understood the ceremonies, causing Past Grand Master Rob Morris to decry that we are “creating semi-manufactured Masons in semi-Masonic Lodges.” Eventually, the well-informed Mason became in short supply and the less schooled member became the instructor of new members, resulting in less understanding of the principles of Masonry and, in turn, lack of interest.

Bizzack demonstrates that many attempts were made to educate both the lodge and the new member. During the early days, the appointment of both instructors and lecturers for lodges, the printing of educational materials for the new candidates, and the outlining of programs to teach the officers good practices for the benefit of the Lodge and the members, were tried. These efforts, however, were short-lived and fell by the wayside.

Immediately before the 100th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, in 1899, the “Report from the Committee on the Visitation and Inspection” was presented to the Grand Lodge. It was the most extensive report thus far, with a critical view of Freemasonry in Kentucky. It did, though, offer solutions through instruction to the lodges and members on Freemasonry, with no expense to the Grand Lodge. The full five-page report can be found under the “Appendix A” section of the book. The Proceedings reflect that immediately following the report, a motion was made and passed to indefinitely postpone the adoption the recommendations of the report.

Other less aggressive attempts to relieve the situation were either rejected or only temporary. Three Past Grand Masters, however, would present the “1965 Committee on Masonic Education Report.” Although less complex, it was in agreement with much of the 1899 report. The first page of the report states what Freemasonry truly is. The second page offers a way to accomplish making Kentucky Masonry the best it could be. This report was adopted, but after a brief acceptance, like previous attempts, this was also short-lived and fell by the wayside. The complete report is found in the “Appendix B” section of the book.

Moving into the 21st Century, in 2006, Grand Master Patton R. Hart offered his “Recommendation No. 3” in an attempt to enhance leadership skills. Grand Master Hart recommended that the Master of a lodge, and future Masters, should attend and graduate from a Kentucky Grand Lodge Masonic Educational Conference prior to serving or completing their term of office as Master. The Jurisprudence Committee, however, opposed the Recommendation and it was defeated.

The Canker Worm on the Rose is a powerful, thought-provoking book, delivered impressively by John W. Bizzack, who leaves no stone unturned in his exhaustive research. It finds much in the very words of the Grand Masters -- words of good intentions that went unheeded and were soon forgotten, words that offered correction to problems but were simply ignored, and words that were necessary to be said, but were rebuked. Thus the original four problems as identified earlier, remain. I find myself agreeing with the remarks of Geary F. Laird while serving as Grand Master in 2020, “It is insanity to believe we can continue doing what we have always done and expect to get better results.”

Perhaps *The Canker Worm on the Rose, The Story of the Struggles in Kentucky to Develop a Consistent Approach to the Observance of Freemasonry* is author John W. Bizzack's best book to date. I loved this book and highly recommend it!

ANNEX C

THE THIRD CENTURY

A previously noted, in 2006 Grand Master Patton R. Hart, Director of Human Resources for Three Rivers Medical Center, Louisa, Kentucky, recommended future Masters of Subordinate Lodges attend an entire Masonic Leaders Educational Conference and or graduate from the Grand Lodge of Kentucky Masonic Leadership Academy prior to serving their term as Master. There is no explanation in the Proceedings as to why the motion to approve this recommendation was not approved.

Recommendation No. 3
 "It is recommended that the Master and Future Masters of our Subordinate Lodges to attend an entire Masonic Leaders Educational Conference and/or graduate from the Masonic Leadership Academy with the Grand Lodge of Kentucky prior to serving or completing their term of office as Master. These essential programs are geared to educate our future administrative and educational leaders of lodges in Kentucky."¹

Recommendation No. 3
 (Chairman, Committee on Autographs)
 "It is the opinion of the Jurisprudence Committee that each newly installed Grand Master has his own plans for Education during his term in office. The Committee on Education was comprised from members from all five Districts. The 2011 Annual Conference will have a newly installed Grand Master and a committee of five Brothers each year, it is the opinion of this Committee not to adopt this Recommendation.
 I make the motion to adopt Recommendation No. 3."
The motion was duly seconded and adopted. The recommended was not approved.

The Committee on Education, not the Grand Master in his address, encouraged lodges to "take seriously the teachings of our proficiencies and rituals."

In the 2011 Proceedings, Section 1, The Keeper of the Work Committee Report offers a glimpse into a circumstance that is also a consequence of the lack of uniformity and ancillary matters of concern.

The report notes that the committee was assigned the task of assisting lodges in finding finalists to perform the various sections and lectures of our degree work, and to encourage Lodges to confer all sections and lectures of each degree.² That charge makes it clear there were lodges that could not perform their own degree work and some lodges that did not confer all sections and lectures of each degree.

¹ Grand Lodge of Kentucky Annual Proceedings, Grand Masters Address, 2006.
² Grand Lodge of Kentucky Annual Proceedings, Section 1, The Keeper of the Work Committee Report and Grand Master's Address, 2011.

THE THIRD CENTURY



Patton R. Hart

The report also notes the continued resistance by some lodges to transition to what the report called the "Old Work," as found in the Kentucky Ritual, although that particular ritual was not officially declared the ritual of the jurisdiction. The Grand Master that year also formally recommended that "the craft of Kentucky adopt The TkRd [The Kentucky Ritual] version 3 as the standard ritual for the Commonwealth of Kentucky." Interestingly a second recommendation by the Grand Master that year affirmed another ongoing problem: "Whereas the Grand Lodge Officers have had to resolve many problems of men being received into our Lodges that should not have been allowed. The investigation committee not having the information needed, I recommend that the INFO Check USA be Reinstated, and required for all incoming petitions. That the candidate be charged for the service."³

The report from the Keepers of the Work recommended terminating the committee and using the words "until such time this Grand Body recognizes the need and takes steps to adopting a single uniform ritual," indicates that the resistance by the Craft itself to the idea of uniformity that was present in the 1800s through 1900s, persisted.

Another interesting finding is that although reports from the Committee on Education were consistent from 1990s through the next twenty years of Proceedings in their reference to successful educational conferences around the state each year, none of the reports mentioned specifically the topics and subject matters used at for these conferences. Some of the later presentations at these conferences were, however, posted on the Grand Lodge website.

As previously noted in 2020, Grand Master Geary F. Laird, paraphrasing a well-known quote, declared said: "It is insanity to believe we can continue doing what we have always done and expect to get better results."⁴

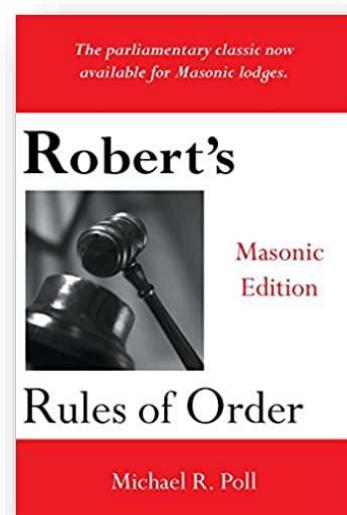
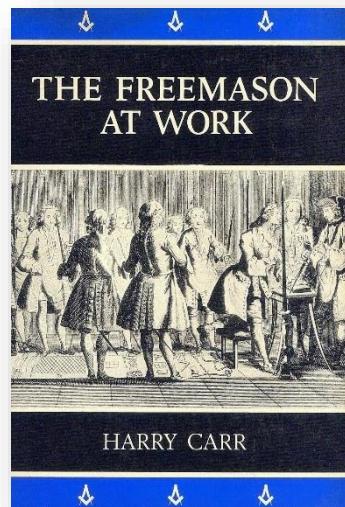
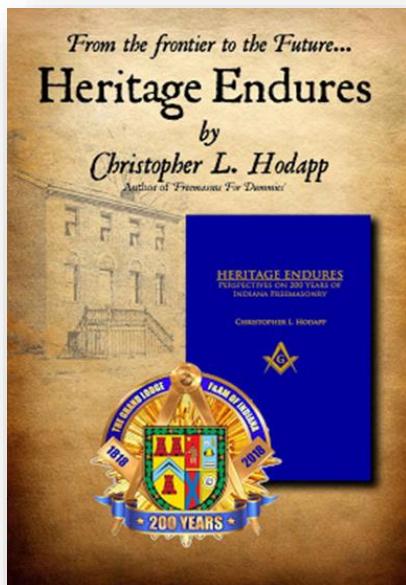
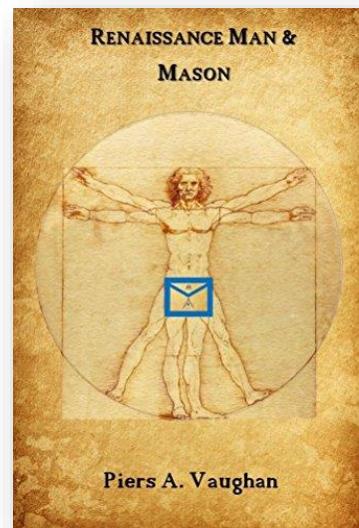
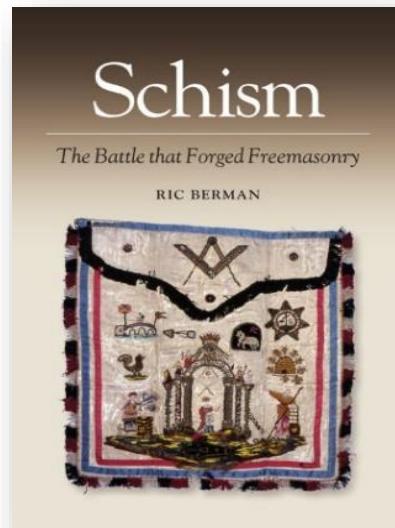
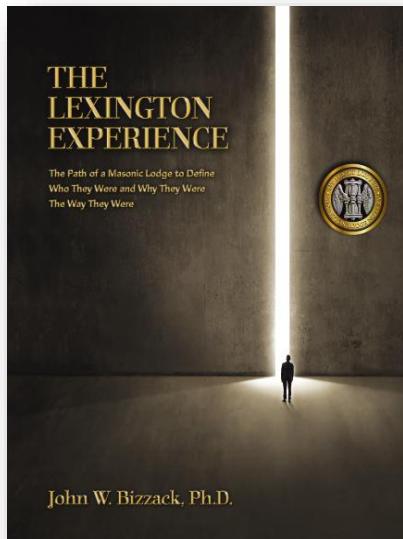
He was referring to the twenty-plus decades that the Grand Lodge of Kentucky had been searching for ways to effectively bring solutions to the issues surrounding the

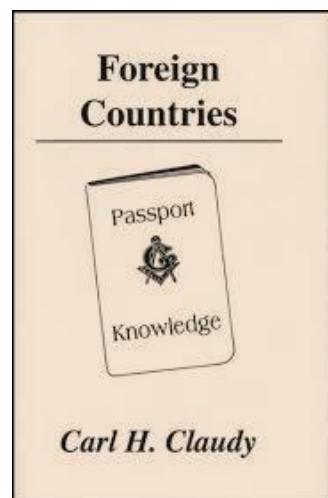
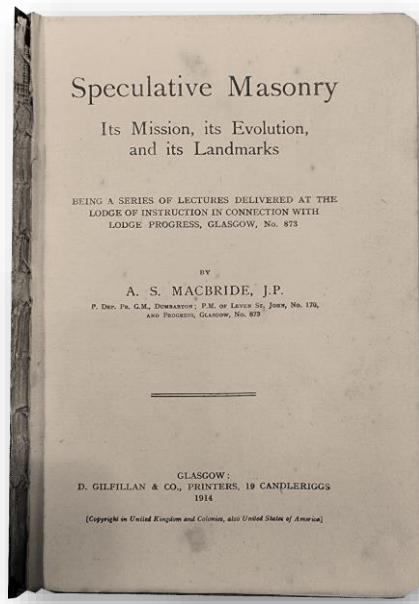
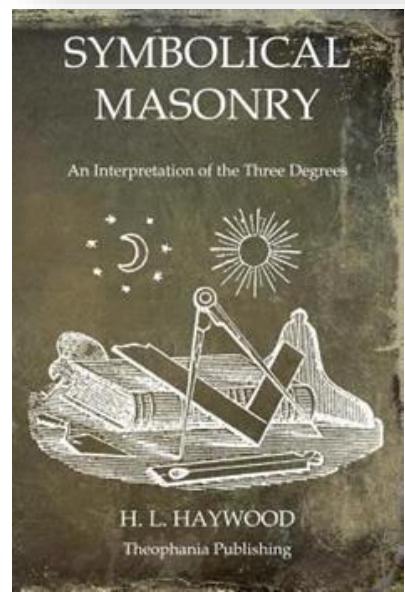
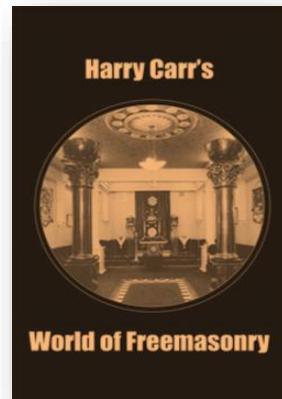
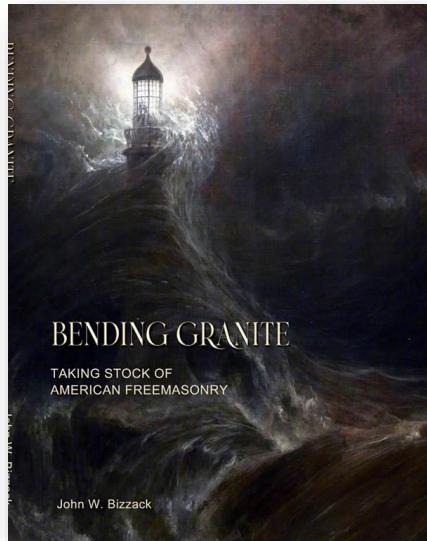
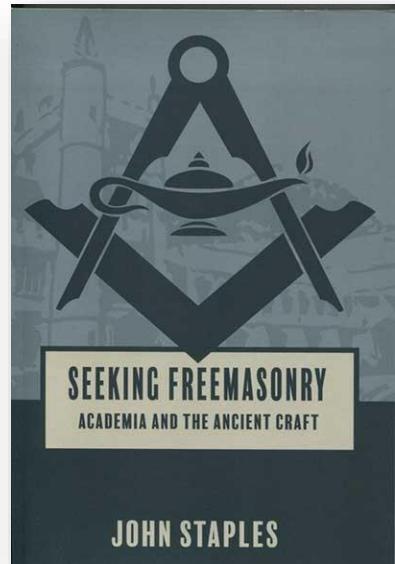
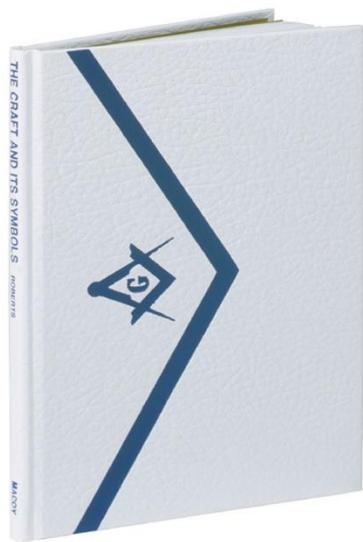
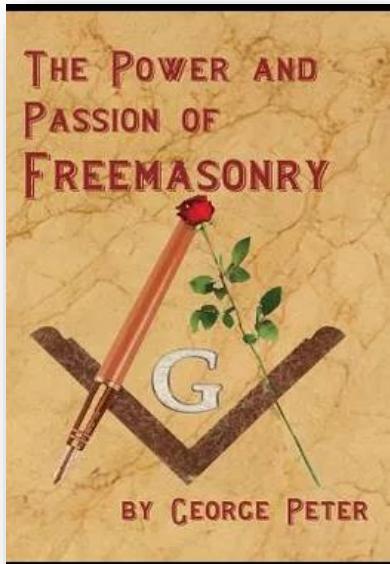
³ From 2014 through 2021 the annual education conferences were posted in the Members Only page of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky website in Power Point format and or video recording.
⁴ Grand Lodge of Kentucky Annual Proceedings, Grand Master's Address, 2011.

Characteristics of an Ideal Lodge, Survey Report and Recommendations from the William O. Ware Lodge of Research, Covington, KY 2019 (The same sentiment was expressed my Past Grand Secretary of Pennsylvania, Thomas W. Jackson, in his 2015 presentation, What Do We Want to Be? presentation to The Rubicon Masonic Society, Masonic Education Series, Lexington, Kentucky, Spalding Hall, March 25, 2015. Jackson said: *There are three in leadership positions today realizing that we cannot continue to practice failed procedures and expect them to succeed. There is a beginning of acknowledgement that what we have been doing for the past decade has been a failure.*)

The Rubicon Masonic Society

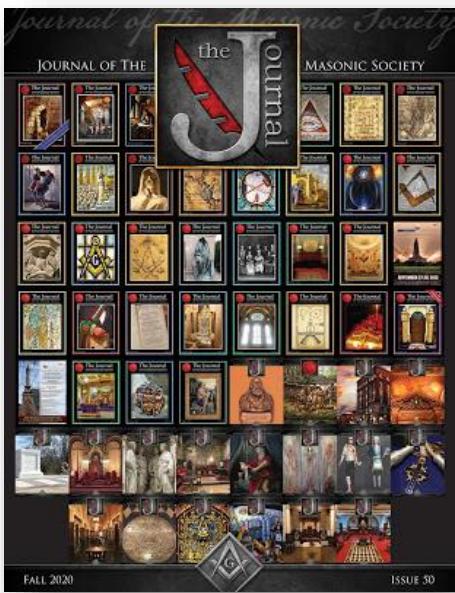
Additions for Future Reviews and Summaries





MASONIC JOURNALS – MAGAZINES

Journal of the Masonic Society



The quarterly *Journal of The Masonic Society* contains articles that enlighten our past and explore solutions to the challenges facing Freemasonry today. The Masonic Society was conceived with an eye on the thousands of dedicated Masons who read and write about Masonic history, symbolism, philosophy and more, but are never heard from outside of their local area. The Society wanted publications and programs that featured the best from the world's numerous Masonic research lodges and groups that would otherwise vanish into obscurity after being read at one of their too infrequent meetings, or possibly printed in some collection of papers no one would ever open again. Too much great, interesting, insightful, inspirational work is done locally that deserves a larger audience.

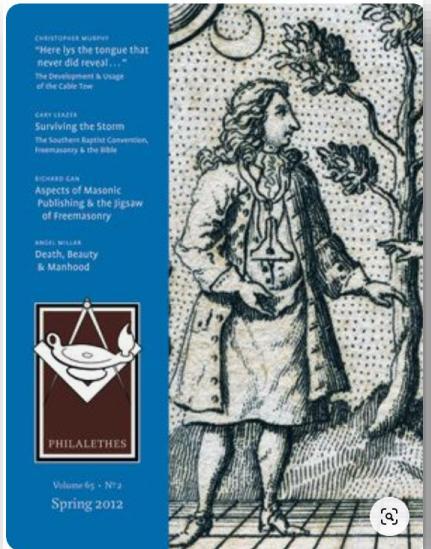
Additionally, the Society wanted to create a magazine that had at least three articles or features in every issue that interested all levels of leadership as well as new and veteran Masons. <https://themasonicociety.com/content/the-journal-of-the-masonic-society/>



The Scottish Rite Journal

The Scottish Rite Journal is the bimonthly magazine for members of the Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction. It is published by the Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction in Washington, DC.

<https://scottishrite.org/media-publications/scottish-rite-journal/the-scottish-rite-journal/>



Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research & Letters

Since 1946, *Philalethes* has provided Masonic light to generations of Freemasons presenting thought-provoking articles on Masonic symbolism, ritual, history, art and philosophy, as well as careful book reviews and insightful editorial content. This scholarly, independent journal of Masonic studies is devoted to exploring the history, ritual, art, symbolism and the enduring practice and application of Freemasonry. Each quarterly edition features the latest research and ideas, presented in contemporary and colorful design. <https://philalethes.myshopify.com/pages/journal>



Northern Light: The Magazine of the Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction

Published since 1970, *The Northern Light* is a premier magazine of the Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. The magazine is delivered quarterly to every member of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction and distributed across the country and worldwide to other Supreme Councils and subscribers. Archives dating back to our inaugural issue in January 1970 are available. <https://scottishritenmj.org/the-northern-light>



The Southern California Research Lodge Fraternal Review

The Southern California Research Lodge is dedicated to Masonic education and information, offering enlightenment to Masons and Lodges with their monthly publication, the *Fraternal Review* magazine. Each issue is dedicated to a specific topic such as Masonic symbols, lore, and history. You do not need to be a Mason to subscribe. The Southern California Research Lodge has published the *Fraternal Review* for over six decades.

<https://www.theresearchlodge.com/store>



Freemasonry Today The Official Journal of the United Grand Lodge of England

Quarterly *magazine* of the United Grand Lodge of England, featuring Freemasons' news, interviews, and features. Free to view online.

<https://www.freemasonrytoday.com/magazine>



The Square

Published independently of all Grand Lodges, *The Square* Magazine offers in-depth and thought-provoking articles on all aspects of Freemasonry written by the leading Masonic writers from around the world.

<https://www.thesquaremagazine.com/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Along with The William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

INVITES YOU TO ATTEND

21st Century Conversations on Freemasonry

Following the success of the previous thirteen virtual education series initiated by Lexington Lodge No.1 in May 2020, and the subsequent success of the Rubicon Masonic Society's extension of the series with eight additional episodes, the series continued through 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Due to demand, the monthly episodes will continue through 2025.

Each episode is scheduled for the fourth Monday of each month (excluding holidays) at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time. These live presentations are open to Masons of all degrees, as well as those interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.

Preferred Attire is Coat and Tie. Gentlemanly Manners Expected An
RSVP is required to attend. To Register and RSVP: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

Previous episodes of the
series may be found on Rubicon Masonic Society's YouTube channel.

ABOUT THE SERIES

When the pandemic caused Lodges to shutter in early 2020, the men of The Rubicon Masonic Society, like many other Masons around the world, recognized that offering non-tyled assemblies through a virtual technology platform was a constructive approach to assembling Masons for the express purpose of exploring Freemasonry.

Since May 2020, Rubicon, later joined by The William O. Ware Lodge of Research in Northern Kentucky and Lexington Lodge No. 1, has through December 2023, produced 55 episodes on a virtual platform titled, "21st Century Conversations About Freemasonry." As a result of the response to these productions, and at the urgings of Masons around the world, the programs continued even when meeting restrictions due to the pandemic began to be lifted and will continue through 2025.

The virtual education series has become well-known in not only in the Masonic jurisdictions of the United States, but in Masonic jurisdictions abroad as well.

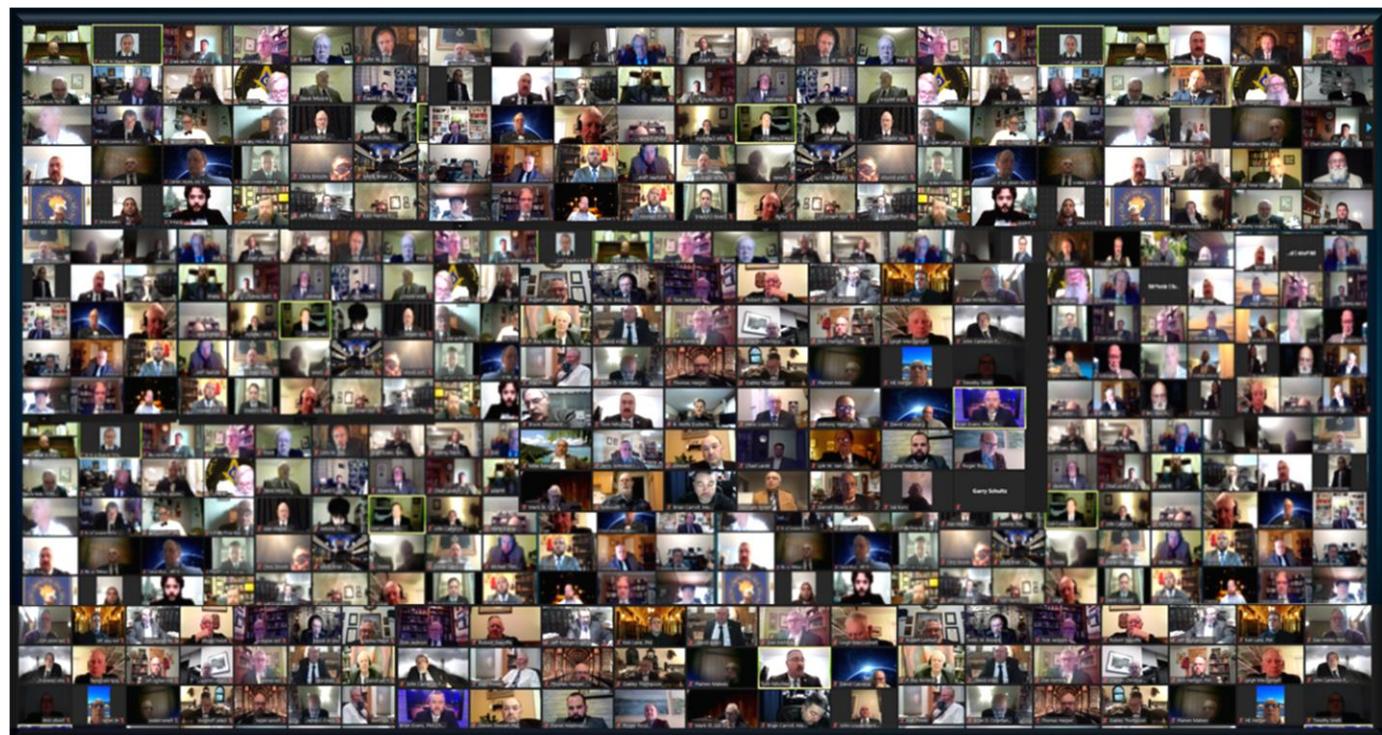
These live Masonic education productions showcase both nationally and internationally known presenters, speaking on the fundamentals and historical and philosophical topics involving Masonry. Although formal in setting, these meetings are, of course, not tyled. Gentlemanly protocol and attire are asked of attendees and expected at every meeting. And, without exception, all meetings are professionally moderated, and discussions are expertly facilitated.

The average attendance to the live monthly meeting is forty-one. Data analysis collected since 2020 speaks for itself.

As of February 2023, fifty-five episodes have been viewed 115,860 times on Rubicon's video sharing and social media platform, YouTube Channel. All episodes are now also available on Rumble.com, a similar media platform that expands exposure to the work.

With a contact list of over 5,000, and more than 3,200 regular subscribers to the free content of the monthly episodes the episodes have logged over 31,000 hours of watch time, thus TRMS has established a consistent audience through these platforms that continue to expand.

Episodes noted in the below images may be found on Rubicon's You Tube Channel.



Virtual Masonic Education

- Part 3 of 10
By Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM and Rubicon Masonic Society
Guest Speaker: Bill Morris, Past Master
"27 Freemasons and New Living Leader of The Confusion About Freemasonry"
- Presentation Topic: *Sherlock Holmes and Freemasonry* 3:15:28

Virtual Masonic Education

- Part 1 of 10
By Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM and Rubicon Masonic Society
Guest Speaker: Bill Morris, Past Master
"Our Relativity in the Age of Pandemic"
- Presentation Topic: *Our Relativity in the Age of Pandemic* 3:15:50

Virtual Masonic Education

- Part 6 of 10
By Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM and Rubicon Masonic Society
Guest Speaker: Bill Morris, Past Master
"William O'Neil Lodge of Research"
- Presentation Topic: *What's Left Standing: Freemasonry After Covid* 3:20:19

Virtual Masonic Education

- Part 2 of 10
By Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM and Rubicon Masonic Society
Guest Speaker: Bill Morris, Past Master
"27 Freemasons and New Living Leader of The Confusion About Freemasonry"
- Presentation Topic: *Masonic Observations and Insights* 3:22:37

Virtual Masonic Education

- Part 12
By Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM and Rubicon Masonic Society
Guest Speaker: George Rodriguez and Eric Lutzenkirchen
"The Mystery Behind Brother Mark Lutzenkirchen, VA"
- Presentation Topic: *Brother Rodriguez and Eric Lutzenkirchen* 3:40:45

Virtual Masonic Education

- Part 11
By Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM and Rubicon Masonic Society
Guest Speaker: Wardigold Brother, Past Master
"High Hill and Low Valley - A Non Traditional Way to Live"
- Presentation Topic: *High Hill and Low Valley - A Non Traditional Way to Live*

DISCOVERING FREEMASONRY

- A PART EDUCATIONAL SERIES PRESENTED BY THE RUBICON MASONIC SOCIETY

DISCOVERING FREEMASONRY

- A PART EDUCATIONAL SERIES PRESENTED BY THE RUBICON MASONIC SOCIETY

DISCOVERING FREEMASONRY

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DISCOVERING FREEMASONRY

- A PART EDUCATIONAL SERIES PRESENTED BY THE RUBICON MASONIC SOCIETY

Living as a Freemason

The Entered Apprentice Degree

The True Commitment of a Freemason

The Legend of Hiram Abiff

The Master Mason Degree

The Path To Becoming a Freemason

- THE EPISODES SCHEDULED FROM JANUARY to JUNE 2021 NOTED BELOW -

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Along with City Operatives William O'Neil Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM, we are pleased to present the monthly "21st Century Conversations on Freemasonry".

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

Wednesday, January 20, 2021
7pm EST

Freemasonry's Future

Thursday, January 21, 2021
7pm EST

Directed the Infamy of the Morgan Affair and its Aftermath

A TPT Documentary from the Coronation Dept. and Olympia Documenting the Infamy of the Morgan Affair and its Aftermath. Thursday, January 28, 2021
7pm EST

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Along with City Operatives William O'Neil Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM, we are pleased to present the monthly "21st Century Conversations on Freemasonry".

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

Wednesday, February 24, 2021
7pm EST

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

Wednesday, March 24, 2021
7pm EST

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

Wednesday, April 21, 2021
7pm EST

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

Wednesday, May 19, 2021
7pm EST

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

Wednesday, June 16, 2021
7pm EST

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Along with City Operatives William O'Neil Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1 F&AM, we are pleased to present the monthly "21st Century Conversations on Freemasonry".

Observant Masonry

Monday, May 10, 2021
7pm EST

Innovations in the Body of Masonry

Wednesday, May 19, 2021
7pm EST

Fossil Lodge A.F. AND A.M. NEVER EVER GONNA CHANGE

Wednesday, May 26, 2021
7pm EST

Observant Masonry

Monday, June 14, 2021
7pm EST



Religion and Freemasonry - Ep 44.
Presentation by Rev. Terry Tilton,...



Ethics: The Heart of Freemasonry -
W.B. Brian T. Evans, Ep 24. Rubico...



Conversations In Freemasonry -
W.B. Dan M. Kemble, Ep 23. Rubico...



When is Man a Mason by Joseph
Fort Newton: Dedicated to Men...



Robert G. Davis - Keynote Presenter
at a William O. Ware Lodge of...



A View From The Starting Line - Bro.
Antonio Mantica, Ep 22. Rubicon...



Freemasonry and the Pendulum of
Classical Music - Bro. Steve...



Festive Board 2022 - S. Brent Morris
Keynote Presenter. - Rubicon...



Island Freemasonry - Worshipful
Brother John W. Bizzack, Ph. D - E...



Masonic Perspective on the Eye -
Brother Thomas Wayne Harper, M...



Freemasonry: Unseen In Plain Sight
- Brother Mark St. Cyr - Ep 18....



The Masonic Table - The Art of
Dining in Freemasonry: STREAMIN...



Building and Maintaining an
Observant Lodge - W.B. Doug...



Lodge Anatomy For Masons -
Brother Randy Sanders - Ep 16....



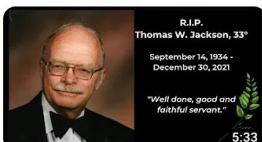
Masonic Dining - W.B. Pete
Normand - Ep 15. Rubicon Masoni...



Contemplative Masonry - W.B.
Chuck Dunning - Ep 14. Rubicon...



Groupthink In Freemasonry - W.B.
John D. Cissell - Ep 13. Rubicon...



R.I.P.
Thomas W. Jackson, 33°
September 14, 1934 -
December 30, 2021
"Well done, good and
faithful servant."



2021 Recap and
Open Discussion
Episode 12
2:03:29



The Masonic Table | OFFICIAL
TRAILER | The Art of Dining in...



Anxiety and Freemasonry - WB
Richard Hanson, Kentucky.



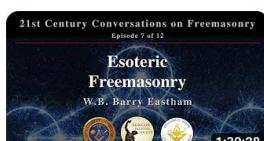
Masonic Retention:
A Matter of Value - MWB Mikel Stoops, Grand...



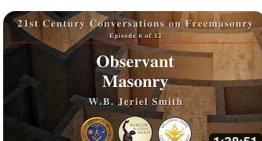
A Candle In The Dark - WB John
Bizzack and WB Dan Kemble - Ep ...



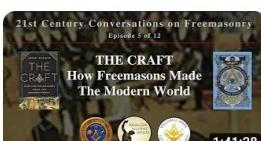
The Masons Words - MWB Robert
G. Davis - Ep 8 of 12. Rubicon...



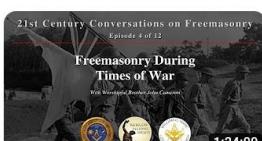
Esoteric Freemasonry - WB Barry
Eastham - Ep 7 of 12. Rubicon...



Observant Masonry - WB Jeriel
Smith - Ep 6 of 12. Rubicon Mason...



THE CRAFT
How Freemasons Made
The Modern World - John Dickie - ...



Freemasonry During Times of War.
WB John Cameron - Ep 4 of 12. By...



Episode 7: Living as a Freemason.
Education by Rubicon Masonic...



Episode 6: The Legend of
Hiram Abiff. Education by Rubicon...



Episode 5: The Master Mason
Degree. Education by Rubicon...



Episode 4: The Fellow Craft Degree.
Education by Rubicon Masonic...



Episode 3: The Entered Apprentice
Degree. Education by Rubicon...



Episode 2: The Path To Becoming a
Freemason. Education by Rubicon...



Episode 1: What is Freemasonry?
Education by Rubicon Masonic...

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Along with Co-Sponsors William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invites You to Attend the 2021 Monthly Virtual Series

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

Thoughts of an Accidental Book Publisher

S. Brent Morris, Ph.D. is managing editor of the Scottish Rite Journal, the largest-circulation Masonic magazine in the world, and was the first American to be elected Worshipful Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 276, the oldest and most prestigious Masonic research lodge in the world. He is the author of the book *Masonic Philanthropy*, which is the result of coauthor dozens of essays, papers, and of over 40 books on Freemasonry, including *Masonic Philanthropies, Orders of American Freemasonry, Cornerstones of Freedom, Is it True What They Say About Freemasonry?, The Complete Idiot's Guide to Freemasonry, and Why Thirty-Two°, Searching for Masonic Origins*. Dr. Morris is also the editor of *Hiram* and former editor of the *Plumbline*. He is responsible for assembling and editing the 1928-2016 MSA collection of Short Talk Bulletins.

Monday, March 24, 2021
7:00 p.m. EST

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>
To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page.

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the September 26, 2022 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 40TH EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLASSICAL MUSIC WITH MASONIC MUSIC

Steven A. Peterson is currently serving as a conductor, teacher, adjudicator, clinician, and composer, having recently served as a college band director. He has taught for almost 10 years on the college and high school levels. He has served as Director of Bands/Organists and Choral Conductors/Professor at the University of Missouri Kansas City, Webster University, Webster University-Parkville College, and Central College. He has also done a great deal of graduate work at Webster College (Magis Cum Laude), the University of Iowa, and the University of Kansas in music education, concert performance, and instrumental conducting, respectively.

He was raised a Prince Mason in 2006 in Lexington Lodge No. 1 and currently serves as a master in Lexington Lodge No. 1.

Monday, September 26, 2022 7:00 p.m. EDT

To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page.

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Along with Co-Sponsor William O. Ware Lodge of Research & Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the April 25th, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 35TH EPISODE OF THE ONGOING MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

LODGE ANATOMY FOR MASONS

Randy Sanders is the Lodge Education Officer for two Symbolic Lodges, Founder of the MenZone Lodge Club, Sovereign Master of the E. F. Coovert Allied Masonic Degree Chapter, Past Grand Chaplain of the Valley of the Mississippi, Past Master of the Valley of Gutin, and a Facilitator for the Academy of Leadership through the Valley of Gutin, and a Facilitator for the Masonic Legacy Society. He is the founding administrator for Refracted Light, full contributor to Midnight Freemasonry, and an international presenter on esoteric topics.

Join us for Brother Sanders' presentation, Lodge Anatomy for Masons, as he explores Masonic symbology and looking past the veils and allegories through what some refer to as "esoteric anatomy".

Monday, April 25, 2023 7:00 p.m. EDT

To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page.

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the November 28, 2022 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 42ND EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

VOICES OF FREEMASONRY

Dan M. Kembel is a member, Past Master and Fellow of Kentucky's William O. Ware Lodge of Research. He is also a member of Hays Lodge No. 574 in Hyde, Kentucky, and Alta Lodge No. 222 in Louisville, Kentucky.

W. B. Kembel is a member of The Rubicon Masonic Society, and serves as Recorder for that body.

"Voices of Freemasonry" is an ongoing research project of William O. Ware Lodge of Research that began in 2019. In the spirit of all that is Masonic, the project is a collection of voices from around the globe that record the opinions of Freemasons around the globe with respect to issues relevant to 21st century Freemasonry. To date, there have been five editions of "Voices of Freemasonry" which are available for download at [www.williamowarelodgeofresearch.com](http://williamowarelodgeofresearch.com). A sixth edition is currently in the planning stage.

This presentation will not only offer a review of the opinions collected, it will also reveal certain themes that have occurred throughout the course of the project.

All Freemasons have a voice - is your voice heard?

Monday, November 28, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. EDT

To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page.

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the October 24, 2022 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 41ST EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

A VIEW FROM THE STARTING LINE

Antonio Mantica was raised at Lexington Lodge No. 1 in July 2012 (yes, that was only three months ago). His presentation will be titled "The Starting Line," and will expand upon an essay of the same name that appears in the current Fall edition of *The Journal of The Masonic Society*. The original essay was written shortly after he became an Entered Apprentice, but now that he is a Master Mason, Antonio hopes to further explore and expand some of his observations presented therein. His presentation will include such engaging questions as: *To whom does Freemasonry appeal today? What does it look like to be a young man and a young Mason in 2022? Where are all the Millennial Freemasons? And why would someone even try to run a marathon in less than two hours?*

Monday, October 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. EDT

To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page.

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>

A black and white portrait of Michael R. Poll, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. To his left is a decorative graphic of a ribbon banner with the words "The Rubicon Masonic Society". Below the banner, the text "And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1" is visible. At the bottom of the page, there is event information: "Invite You to Attend the February 27, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series", "The 45th Episode of the Masonic Education Series", "21st CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY", "The Cause and Effect of Freemasonry", and details about the speaker and the book.

A collage of 40 small video frames arranged in a grid, showing various individuals speaking or participating in a video conference. The frames are set against a dark background.

The Rubicon Masonic Society

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Along with Co-Sponsors William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

A dark promotional image featuring a book titled 'THE CRAFT' by John Dickie. The book cover is ornate with gold lettering and illustrations. Below the book, the text 'Monday, May 24, 2021' and '7:00 p.m. EST' is displayed. At the top, the title 'The Rubicon Masonic Society' is written in a stylized font, and below it, the text 'Along with Co-Sponsors William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1'.

Invite You to Attend the August 22, 2022 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 39TH EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

**21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON
FREEMASONRY**

**THE GENESIS OF ISLAND FREEMASONRY
AND THE PRESERVATION OF MASONIC HERITAGE**

John W. Bizzack, Ph.D. is the author of source material books about Freemasonry, along with dozens of essays, commentaries, and articles published in Craft, Historical, and academic journals, and in books, including his own. He has written extensively on the history and the legacy of Freemasonry, and their significance. He has conducted many interviews of historians and Craftsmen in his career, the materials of which are included in these essays.

He was elected to the 2020-2021 team of Master of Lexington Lodge No. 1, Knights of Columbus, and he has been active in the Knights of Columbus, the Masonic Service Center of America, the Knights of Columbus Foundation, the Knights of Columbus, and the Knights of Columbus Foundation. He is also a member of The Rubicon Masonic Society, Hall Ved-Brahmin of The Philanthropic Society, and a member of The Rubicon Masonic Society, Volume I, and a co-presenter of My Masonic Tools, a documentary released in May 2022 about Masonic items. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus, and a member of Knights of William O. Ware Lodge of Research, where he was named the right-hand man of William O. Ware Lodge of Research Committee on Lodge of Research.

Monday, August 22, 2022 7:00 pm EDT

To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.

Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentleman Masons Expected

An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/swg/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

The image is a collage of historical documents, portraits, and symbols related to Freemasonry and the Morgan Affair. It includes various documents from the 19th century, portraits of prominent figures like George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, and symbols such as the square and compass. The collage is set against a dark background, with a portrait of George Washington on the right side.

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the May 22, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

The 48th Episode of the Masonic Education Series

21st CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

**OPERATIVE FREEMASONRY:
A Manual For Restoring Light and Vitality
to the Fraternity**


Kirk White is the current Grand Junior Warden of the Grand Lodge of Vermont and a Past Master of Hibon Lodge No. F & A. He holds a BA in Psychology and Religion, an MA in Counseling, and has completed coursework study in Organizational Psychology. He is an Intrastatic facilitator of the psychology of personal transformation and consciousness change. Kirk is a US Virgin Islands legislator, a licensed architect, author, and lecturer.



Monday, May 22, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. EDT
[To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page](#)

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the April 24, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

The 47th Episode of the Masonic Education Series

21st CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

A History of Catholic-Freemason Relations


Barron V. Gulla, Ph.D., is a Master Mason of Lexington Lodge No. 1 in Lexington, Kentucky and is a founding member of The Rubicon Masonic Society. He is also a member of the Lexington Scottish Rite. He has served as Senior Deacon and is currently Tyler at Lexington Lodge No. 1.


Brother Gulla is a native of Memphis, Tennessee. He is an economist by trade and taught in the Economics Department here at the University of Kentucky for twelve years. He left the University and is currently an Investment Advisor with Transamerica Financial Advisors.

Monday, April 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. EDT
[To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page](#)

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the March 27, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

The 46th Episode of the Masonic Education Series

21st CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

A Dissertation Upon Masonry - 1734


WB SHAWN EYER is a Masonic researcher interested in eighteenth-century literature, symbol and ceremony.

He holds advanced degrees from Hebrew College and Harvard University. As an author and editor, he has published dozens of studies, including the book *Exploring Early Grand Lodge Freemasonry* (edited with Christopher Mumford) that teaches Masonic symbolism and lodge functioning from the Masonic Dissertation Assembly in the 1734 Dissertation Upon Masonry, tells us about a document discovered in manuscript form in 1849 within the archives of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. The Dissertation has existed for nearly three centuries and is the oldest extant American edition, and the third oldest surviving Masonic oration in the world. The oration is believed to be "the first public Masonic oration ever delivered in America"—not simply the oldest preserved—and offers a fascinating glimpse into early Masonry.

Monday, March 27, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. EDT
[To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page](#)

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the September 26, 2022 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 40TH EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLASSICAL MUSIC WITH MASONIC MUSIC


Steven A. Peterson is currently serving as a conductor, teacher, adjudicator clinician and director, having recently served as a guest conductor and clinician for the 2021 National Conference on College Music Leadership. He has been a Director of the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Louisiana Monroe, The University of Central Arkansas, Kentucky Western College, and Cotteau College. He completed his undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of Missouri and met the University of Iowa, and the University of Kansas in music education, choral performance, and international conducting, respectively.

He was raised a Master Mason in 2006 at Lexington Lodge No. 1 and currently serves as an officer in Lexington Lodge No. 1.

Monday, September 26, 2022 7:00 p.m. EDT
[To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page](#)

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the June 26, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 49TH EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

GUARDING THE WEST GATE


Worshipful Brother Jeriel Smith is a retired litigation attorney. He was made a Mason in 1988 at Indian Wells Ridgcrest, CA and has been active since in Freemasonry. He is presently an active member of three California Blue Lodges—each considered an observant lodge.

He finished his 4th term as Master of the Southern California Research Lodge (SCRU) in 2019, and he remains the Senior Copy Editor of Lodge's *Fraternal Review* magazine. A frequent speaker at Blue Lodges throughout Southern California, WB Smith is also an Honorary Member of the Rubicon Masonic Society and an active participant in this lecture series since it began in May 2020.

Monday, June 26, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. EDT
[To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page](#)

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the January 30, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

The 44th Episode of the Masonic Education Series

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

RELIGION AND FREEMASONRY


The Reverend Terry Tilton, PGMI, UPS is an ordained United Methodist minister currently serving his 19th year under appointment in the Minnesota Annual Conference. In 1979 Rev. Tilton was raised in the Blue Lodge of Masons in Hibbing Lodge No. 255, Hibbing, Minnesota. He is the son of two generations to Dr. James E. Tilton, the first Surgeon General of the United States under President Thomas Jefferson (1803). He is an active member of the York Rite, including the Past Sovereign of the Grand Chapter of Minnesota, Past Grand Enclosed Mason, member of M. W. H. Tilton was awarded the First Grand Lodge Education Officer for the Grand Lodge of Minnesota from 1997-1999 and was instrumental in establishing the Minnesota Lodge Education Officer program. He holds dual membership in the Blue Lodge of Hibbing, Minnesota and the Blue Lodge of Hibbing, Minnesota. He is the newly installed Worshipful Master of Hibbing Lodge No. 255, Hibbing Minnesota (where he is the newly installed Worshipful Master). He is the Past President of the Hibbing Lodge of Minnesota. Rev. Tilton is the author of the book "Theology of Freemasonry" which was selected the 26th Fellow of the Society. He has spoken at numerous state and national Masonic events and his most recent published paper, "Deuter, Rabbinic Theism and the Religious Philosophy of Freemasonry" has been published in the *Transactions of An Quorum Research Lodge No. 2076* (London England).

Monday, January 30, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. EDT
[To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page](#)

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the December 26, 2022 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 43RD EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

ETHICS: THE HEART OF FREEMASONRY


Brian T. Evans owns multiple businesses relating to Digital Marketing, Media Production, and Real Estate Investment. He was elected Master of Lexington Lodge No. 1 for two consecutive years (2020 and 2021). WB Evans is also a Member of Alba Lodge No. 22 in Washington D.C., The William O. Ware Lodge of Research in Kentucky, and the Chairman of The Rubicon Masonic Society, located in Lexington, Kentucky.

He is the Executive Producer and Director of the documentary "The Masonic Table – The Art of Dining in Freemasonry", available on Amazon Prime.

Monday, December 26, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. EDT
[To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page](#)

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Cosponsored by William O. Ware Lodge of Research & Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the March 28th, 2022 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 34TH EPISODE OF THE ONGOING MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

THE LODGE AT TABLE: A DISCUSSION ABOUT MASONIC DINING


Pierre G. 'Pete' Normand, of College Station, Texas, is one of the Masons in America with a Masonic routine so long as to pass in the space allotted in our sidebar. A Past Master of both Sir Ross Lodge No. 1300 and St. Albans' Lodge No. 1455 in College Station, he is Past Master of the Texas Lodge of Research. St. Albans was founded in 1922 and is considered the first Masonic Lodge to be established in the Lone Star State. Mr. Normand is a historical Freemason and author, i.e. the former editor of *Antique Masonic Knives* and of the *Pharos*, the bulletin of the *Vintage Rose Research Society*. A noted Masonic writer and speaker, WB Normand is a member of the Blue Lodge, and currently serves as Secretary to St. Albans. Join us for an evening with WB Normand to discuss the historical and current aspects of Masonic Dining.

Monday, March 28, 2022 7:00 p.m. EDT
[To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page](#)

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and conviviality.
Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonicociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the September 25, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 52ND EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

**THE RIGHT STUFF
Guarding the West Gates So That Only the Worthy May Pass**


Brother Gerald K. Johnston was initiated at Lexington Lodge No. 1, Lexington, Kentucky in 2013 and raised in 2014. He currently serves the Lodge as Marshal, Assistant Secretary, Music Director, and is a long-time Instructor in the Lodge's Structured Degree Program, former Chair of the Lodge Education Committee. He frequently serves on investigation committees for the Lodge. He is a member of The Rubicon Masonic Society, and serves on its Executive Committee.

His essay, *The Right Stuff: Guarding the West Gates So That Only the Worthy May Pass*, appears in the recently released *Transactions of The Rubicon Masonic Society*. He points out that once a candidate passes through the West Gate, there are additional gates - some less obvious than others - through which only men worthy of being Freemasons should be allowed to pass.

Monday, September 25, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. EDT
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The Rubicon Masonic Society

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Invite You to Attend the July 24, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 50TH EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

DIARY OF A MASONIC ARCHAEOLOGIST:
REFLECTIONS ON HISTORY AND PRESERVATION

Interpreting Masonic history and the Craft's material culture has undoubtedly garnered much attention over the years, with scores of presentations appearing on streaming media and live in lodges and symposia. While this is welcome news, the role of a lodge-based historian, collections manager, curator, or caretaker remains underrepresented. What information can we learn from these individuals? How may they enrich the Masonic experience? What training is needed to interpret and maintain a collection successfully?

Worshipful Brother Adam Kendall is the Executive Director of the Oakland Scottish Rite Historical Foundation. A past master of San Francisco's Phoenix No. 144, a full member of the world's premier lodge of research, the London-based Quatuor Coronati No. 2078 (founded 1889), and a member of the Royal Order of Scotland, he is a frequent contributor to the Transactions of the Scottish Rite Research Society. As a Masonic historian, he was collections manager for the Henry W. Coil Library and Museum of Freemasonry from 2007-2016. He is a Fellow of the Philalethes Society and a member of the American Association for State Archaeology. He is also a 32nd degree member of the Society of Blue Friars. His research has been published in notable publications such as the *Journal of American Studies*, the *Journal for Research into Freemasonry and Fraternalism*, *Heraldum*, and *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*.

Monday, July 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. EDT

To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and comradery. Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Co-Sponsored by William O. Ware Lodge of Research & Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the November 29, 2021 Monthly Virtual Series

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

Anxiety and Freemasonry

In 2021 Worshipful Brother Richard Hanson received counsel and current Education Chair of Human Development Judge K.S. Freedman, Kentucky, published *Anxiety and Freemasonry*. His paper takes the reader on a journey through which he explains how anxiety contributes to the challenges we face in our fraternity. These issues have been before us since undiscussed.

He offers techniques that may be applied to effectively address such anxiety and improve the Masonic experience, including one he refers to as "Walking through the veil." He also addresses the use of specific working tools in dealing with anxiety.

Join us for the presentation of this interesting paper, and discussion of Brother Hanson's ground-breaking work.

Monday, November 29, 2021 7:00 p.m. EDT

To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and comradery. Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

And Co-Sponsors: William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the October 23, 2023 Monthly Virtual Series

THE 53RD EPISODE OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION SERIES

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

The Continued Decline of American Freemasonry – Cause and Effect

Alvin Martin is a thirty-four year veteran of the Lexington Police Department. After serving in the never Bureau of the Department. Appointed to the rank of Commander in 2003, he served on the Chief's Senior Staff until his retirement in 2011.

Elected president of both the United States Police Canine Association Region 5 and the Kentucky Peace Officers Association, he also graduated from the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy and served six consecutive years on the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council.

He is the founder of both Dalmatian, LLC, a professional service consulting company and OnPoint Technologies, an information technology company providing IT services in Central Kentucky.

W.B. Martin is Past Master and current Treasurer of Robert M. Sarks Lodge No. 254 and currently Senior Warden of Lexington Lodge No. 1. He is also a member of William O. Ware Lodge of Research, Chaplain of The Rubicon Masonic Society, and Regional Ambassador for the Masonic Homes of Kentucky.

Monday, October 23, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. EDT

To Register and RSVP, click anywhere on the announcement page

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and comradery. Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>

The Rubicon Masonic Society

Along with Co-Sponsors William O. Ware Lodge of Research and Lexington Lodge No. 1

Invite You to Attend the 2024 Monthly Virtual Series

21ST CENTURY CONVERSATIONS ON FREEMASONRY

The Mason's Words

The History and Evolution of the American Masonic Ritual

Robert G. Davis

Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma

Monday, July 26, 2024 7:00 p.m. EDT

This is the story of the Masonic ritual, the language and ceremonial forms that have evolved into the present structure of American Freemasonry, defined its lodge space, and offered its members the same stabilizing influence of instruction that has prevailed on every continent for nearly 400 years.

Open to Masons of all Degrees who are interested in thoughtful, structured, Masonic education, discussion, lively Q & A, and comradery. Preferred Attire Coat and Tie - Gentlemanly Manners Expected
An RSVP is required to attend: <https://rubiconmasonsociety.com/rsvp/>

To Register and RSVP, Click on this Announcement