

# **Freemasons by Jasper Ridley**

## **THE FREEMASONS, A HISTORY OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL SECRET SOCIETY**

By Jasper Godwin Ridley

Reviewed by Bro. Jason F. Hicks

This work is and comprehensive yet brief history of the fraternity. From the earliest origins to the papal bull to the American revolution to the Morgan affair to modern freemasonry in Britain and the United States. He approaches it with a very academic analysis and has an extensive bibliography.

The chapter I found most interesting was the one focusing on the papal bull. Then the enforcement in the various countries and the effect upon Grand-Duke Francis. This history is not one that I have studied before outside of knowing that Pope Clement XII issued it. Most interesting was the actions of the inquisitors and their "investigations" that involved torture and then making the people they tortured sign a declaration to not reveal anything that had happened.

The second most interesting section was the two chapters on modern freemasonry in Britain and the United States. These sections are concise but a thoughtful analysis of modern freemasonry and the memberships of individual members and the historical developments.

In closing, this book is a great history of the fraternity and is an objective analysis. The book is well researched and the bibliography is a great place for any young Masonic scholar to start with.