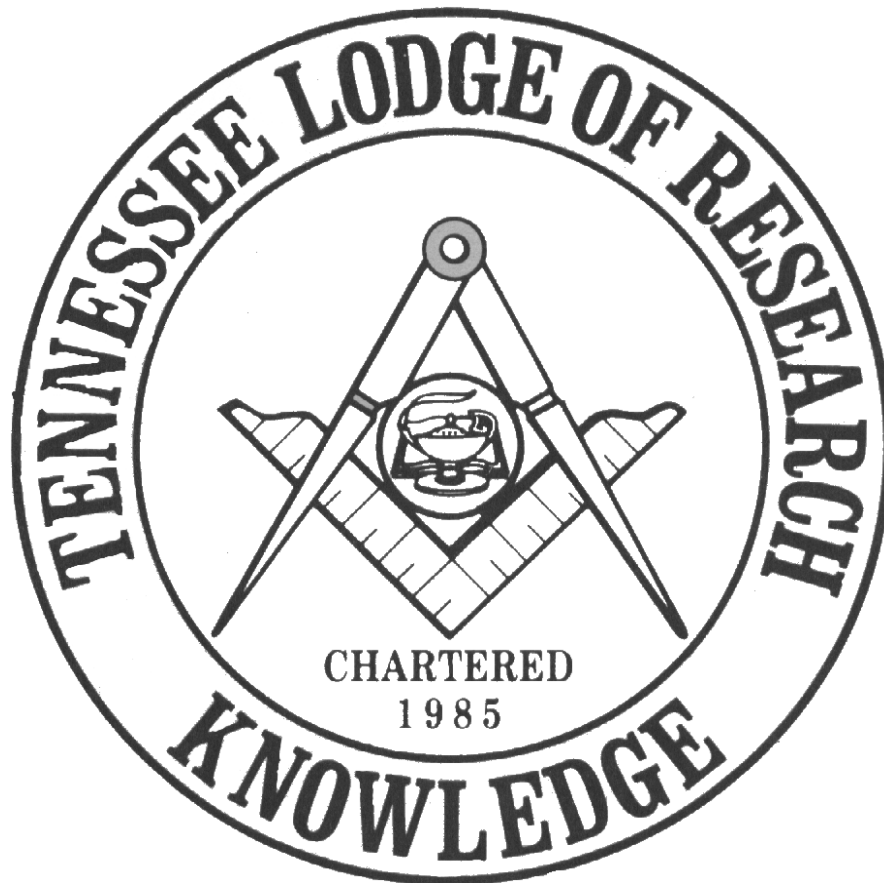


**TENNESSEE LODGE OF RESEARCH
F. & A. M.
ANNUAL PROCEEDINGS**



2019—BIVENS

**2019 ANNUAL PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
TENNESSEE LODGE OF RESEARCH
F. & A. M.**

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The Editorial Committee

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The entire document should be in 12 point Times New Roman font, including the title, which should be centered at the top of the page in **Bold**. The **By** Line should be centered and should contain the author's full **Name**.

All quoted or paraphrased material should be cited parenthetically, and all sources should be listed on a Works Cited page. Parenthetical citations, notes, and Works Cited should follow the guidelines found in *MLA Handbook, 8th edition*. An overview of general MLA guidelines may be found online at the "MLA Formatting and Style Guide" web page of Purdue University's Writing Lab:

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The Editorial Committee

A Theosophical View of Masonry

By
John Wiseman Simmons II

Abstract

Bro. Simmons is a member of Oakville Lodge No. 599 in Memphis, and the Tennessee Lodge of Research.

Charles Webster Leadbeater was a leading early Theosophist who helped redirect the Theosophical movement after the death of its founder Helena Blavatsky. Among his many writings were books on Masonry from a Theosophical perspective. This paper is a review of one of his works, *Freemasonry and its Ancient Mystic Rites*.

1 Introduction

This paper is a review of Charles Webster Leadbeater's book *Freemasonry and its Ancient Mystic Rites*. In this book, Leadbeater gives his understanding of the history and ceremonies of Freemasonry. This understanding is based on his belief in Theosophy, and differs from the usual views on Masonry. This review presents and critiques Leadbeater's view. It also considers the views of knowledge that Leadbeater presents, and deals with the philosophical questions of what Masonry is, and how we know what it is.

2 Theosophy

Since Leadbeater's view of Masonry is based on Theosophy, a brief consideration of Theosophy is in order. Theosophy is a syncretistic, esoteric belief system.¹ Its practitioners say that it is a world view, not a religion. *Syncretistic*, from *syncretism*, means taking beliefs from various different systems and putting them together. *Esoteric* means hidden or intended for only a small group.

¹[WP Theo]



Figure 1: Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

The main founder of Theosophy was Helena Petrovna Blavatsky,² shown in Figure 1. She was born in what is now Ukraine in 1831. After various world travels, she came to New York City in 1873. In 1875, she, Henry Olcott and William Quan Judge founded the Theosophical Society. She claimed to get her teaching by revelation from a group of people she called the Masters of the Ancient Wisdom³, or the Mahatmas,⁴ sometimes called the Ascended Masters.⁵

In 1879, Blavatsky and Olcott relocated to Adyar, India, while Judge remained in the United States. Theosophy had a great influence in India, as it championed local religions against British and Christian influence. After Blavatsky's death in 1891, Judge and most of the American group split from the Indian group, now run by Olcott and Annie Besant. Both groups still exist, as do a few other splinter groups.⁶ Annie Besant is important regarding Co-Masonry. Both are considered later in this discussion.

²[WP HPB]

³[WP MotAW]

⁴[WP Maha]

⁵[WP AM]

⁶[WP Theo]



Figure 2: Two of Blavatsky's Mahatmas: Koot Hoomi and Morya

3 Teachings of Theosophy

Here are some of the relevant teachings of Theosophy. This is not intended to go into detail about everything they believed, but just the things that are relevant for this discussion.

Theosophists teach that there is an ancient, secretive brotherhood of Mahatmas. *Mahatma* means “great soul.” They also call them Ascended Masters. This brotherhood is worldwide, but is centered in Tibet. Their identity is known only to each other, and to any to whom they may choose to reveal their hidden wisdom. Madame Blavatsky claimed to have received revelation from them, but none of them ever appeared in public.

This group is called the Great White Brotherhood or the Great White Lodge. It supposedly directs the evolution of mankind, and has started all the religions and secret societies in the world. Theosophists believe this group was the force behind the beginning of Theosophy.

Figure 2 shows artists' conceptions of two of these Mahatmas, Koot Hoomi and Morya. These were not painted from life, but from Madame Blavatsky's descriptions. She claimed to have received revelations and guidance from them. No one else ever saw them.

The goal of humanity, according to Theosophy, is to unite with one's higher self and march toward perfection until eventually becoming good enough to go up to God. Theosophists believe in reincarnation and karma. Through good and bad deeds, one acquires karma. A person must be reincarnated again and again until he or she atones for all bad deeds and achieves enough good *karma* to ascend to God.

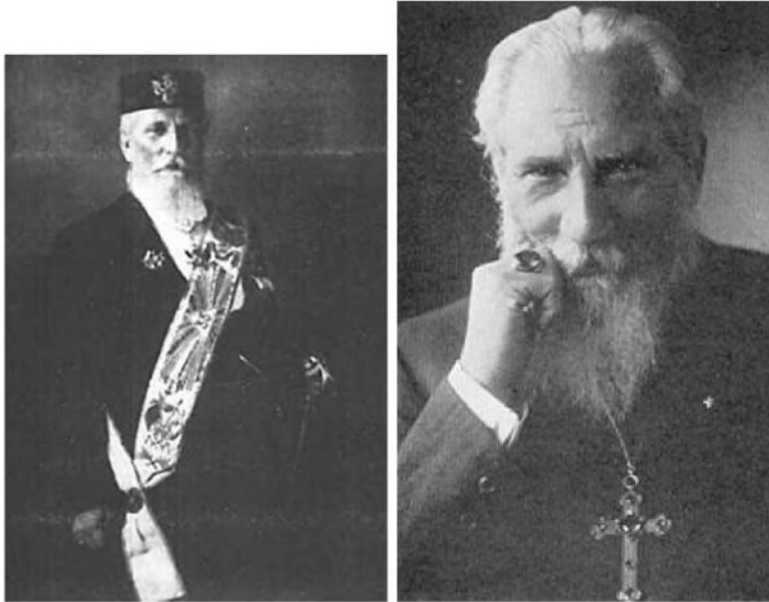


Figure 3: Charles Webster Leadbeater, in Masonic and priestly regalia

4 Charles Webster Leadbeater

Figure 3. shows the author of this book: Charles Webster Leadbeater. On the left, he is in Masonic regalia. He joined a kind of Masonry called Co-Masonry, which most grand lodges do not recognize. On the right, he is in an earlier set of regalia as an Anglican priest. His ideas changed quite a lot, and he left the Anglican priesthood.

Leadbeater was born in England in 1854 and died in Australia in 1934. Self-educated, he was ordained an Anglican priest in 1879. Then he became interested in Theosophy. He read some books, met some people, got interested, and joined the Theosophical Society. He went to India, where he became a clairvoyant. He claimed he could see things in the past. He ran a school in Ceylon. He returned to England and met Annie Besant, who was important in both Theosophy and Co-Masonry. Both returned to India and became active in the Theosophical Society in Adyar.

One of the things that Leadbeater believed, and added to Theosophy, was that there was a World Teacher who had appeared at different times in history in different reincarnations, and had been responsible for starting many of the world's religions. He thought that the time was ripe for this World Teacher to appear again. He found a young Indian man named Jiddu Krishnamurti, who he thought was the new World Teacher. He groomed him for this role and trained him in Theosophy. Eventually, Krishnamurti rejected the role. He became a professor and a lecturer on religion and philosophy. He was still influenced by Theosophy, but did not accept the role Leadbeater had for him. Leadbeater went to Sydney, Australia in 1915. There he met James Ingall Wedgwood, who initiated him into Co-Masonry, discussed later in this presentation. Wedgwood was also a founding bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church. Leadbeater joined this church and became a bishop in 1916.

In addition to his other work, Leadbeater was a prolific author. He wrote at least 35 books, mostly on Theosophy and the occult, including a few books on Masonry. After Madame Blavatsky's death in 1891, Leadbeater and Annie Besant took over the group in India. Besant began revising Blavatsky's books. This precipitated a split within Theosophy. Some Theosophists, including Judge and

the American group, rejected their teachings, calling them *neo-Theosophists*. This group continued to hold to the original teachings of Madame Blavatsky.

5 Disclaimers

This paper is not intended to advocate the teachings of Theosophy or Leadbeater's interpretation of Masonry. It merely reports them. Leadbeater mixed historical facts with his own speculations and alleged visions of past events. He wrote at a time when apparently not as much was known of Masonic history as is known today. The uncertainties about the origins and early history allow various interpretations, and Leadbeater gave free rein to his imagination in interpreting the facts as he knew them.

6 Outline of the book

Leadbeater traces what he sees as a secret or occult tradition through various periods of history, culminating in modern Masonry.

1. He begins with an interesting description of four schools of Masonic thought: historical, anthropological, mystical, and occult or sacramental. These are four approaches to Masonic epistemology, or how we know what Masonry is.
2. He reviews in some detail the ancient mysteries of various countries: Egypt, Crete, Israel, Greece, Persia, and Rome. He sees Masonry as the modern expression of the teachings of the mysteries.
3. He discusses some medieval groups that are alleged to be related to Masonry, such as the Druids, the Culdees, Celtic Christianity, the Roman Collegia, the Comacini, the Compagnonnage in France, and, of course, the operative masons.
4. He discusses the historic period, where there do exist documents related to Masonry.
5. He discusses some other related institutions and how they come in, like the Knights Templar, Royal Order of Scotland, and the Rosicrucians.
6. He discusses the rise of the Scottish Rite, which he sees as the culmination of Masonry.
7. He concludes with a discussion of Co-Masonry, which he regards as having restored the pure teachings and practices of the ancient mysteries, which had been, in a sense necessarily, corrupted in regular Masonry.

7 Assumptions behind the book

Here are some of his Theosophical assumptions behind this book.

1. God has a plan to develop mankind by spiritual evolution and eternal advancement.
2. The Great White Lodge is God's instrument to carry out this plan. This small, secretive group, headquartered in Tibet, manages the evolution of mankind spiritually. It starts all religions and secret societies. The world's great prophets have been reincarnations of its members.
3. The Great White Brotherhood, and its secret teachings, originally came from Atlantis and set up headquarters in Tibet after Atlantis fell. They had a branch in ancient Egypt.

4. The head of this Brotherhood is called the H. O. A. T. F., the Head of All True Freemasons. He is the one who orchestrates everything that happens. Sometimes he will personally appear to direct the formation of a new religion or secret society.
5. The soul, the real person, is distinct from the body and passes through different bodies. The soul passes from body to body and life to life through reincarnation.
6. In each life, the soul works out its karma until it eventually becomes pure enough to go to God.
7. Leadbeater added to Theosophy the idea of the World Teacher. Sent by the Great White Lodge, the World Teacher appears in a different incarnation every so often in history. His past incarnations have included teachers such as Thoth in Egypt, Orpheus in Greece, Zoroaster in Persia, Buddha over in India, and, most recently, Jesus. In each incarnation, he either starts a new religion or secret society, or reveals some kind of new truth. The pattern appears to be that the Great White Lodge uses each movement until it loses the truth and becomes ineffective. Then it sends the World Teacher again to start another movement.

Leadbeater expected the World Teacher to come again very soon. This time, Masonry would be his tool to bring people back to God, and to bring about the next step of human evolution. The book is not clear, however, on whether the appearance of the World Teacher will be the return of Jesus, or a new incarnation.

8 The Great White Brotherhood

According to Theosophy, some people become enlightened and pure enough to go up to God, but they voluntarily choose to stay behind on earth to lead other people on the path. This is similar to the Bodhisattvas in certain varieties of Buddhism.⁷ These are the Great White Brotherhood,⁸ the Great White Lodge,⁹ or the Mahatmas.¹⁰ This group has five levels of initiation, which Leadbeater does not describe. It guides the evolution of man and is responsible for setting up religions and secret societies, appropriate to the time, to reveal the truth and hidden wisdom to selected initiates.

⁷[WP Bodhi]

⁸[Lead 1998], p. 25, [WP GWB].

⁹[Lead 1998], p. 7.

¹⁰[WP Maha]

9 Four schools of Masonic thought

At the beginning of the book, Leadbeater describes what he calls four schools of Masonic thought. These are four approaches to the meaning of Masonry. This includes how we interpret the symbols of Masonry, and how we know what Masonry is. This is one of the most thought-provoking and useful sections of the book.

These four approaches are not strictly parallel. The historical approach deals with how one determines what evidence is acceptable in determining what Masonry is. The anthropological approach is a methodology of treating indirect cultural evidence to establish general principles about initiatory societies, Masonry included. The mystical and occult approaches, on the other hand, are philosophical positions on

how to interpret the symbols of Masonry or its history. Perhaps Leadbeater viewed these approaches as parallel because he viewed each methodology as necessarily leading to a particular philosophical conclusion.

9.1 The historical or authentic approach

The *historical* or *authentic* school insists on having historical documentation as a basis on which to draw any conclusions about the nature and meaning of Masonry.¹¹ Members of this school study lodge minutes, charters, rituals, letters, Masonic writings, exposés, and any other relevant documents and artifacts to determine the facts about Masonry and its history. Leadbeater believed that the historical approach is well and good, as far as it goes, but that it does not go far enough. After all, Masonry has secrets. Not everything was written down. The historical documentation can never give us the whole picture.

Furthermore, by its very nature, this approach will determine the conclusions reached ahead of time. As to the history of Masonry, it will inevitably lead to the conclusion that Speculative Masonry descended from the operative guilds of the Middle Ages, because that is what the evidence seems to indicate. As to the meaning of Masonry, people who take this point of view see only a moral interpretation of the Masonic symbols. This was not the interpretation Leadbeater wanted to see. Thus, he rejected the historical approach as insufficient.

9.2 The anthropological approach

The *anthropological* approach compares Masonry with other groups with similar characteristics: world religions and other initiatory societies in the past.¹² It looks at initiations that have gone on all through the world in different times. It compares what was done in those societies with what goes on in Masonry. If they look similar, the groups must be related. Leadbeater was more interested in similarity than in actual historical connection.

9.3 The mystical approach

The mystic desires union with God through ecstatic experience. The *mystical* approach sees in the symbolism of Masonry a description of the individual's approach to God through advancing levels of experience.¹³

9.4 The occult or sacramental approach

The *occult* or *sacramental* approach sees Masonic rituals as ceremonial magic.¹⁴ They are channels of spiritual or occult power. This is Leadbeater's personal view. The rest of the book assumes and develops this approach.

¹¹[Lead 1998], p. 2.

¹²[Lead 1998], p. 3.

¹³[Lead 1998], p. 5.

¹⁴[Lead 1998], p. 6.

10 Masonry as sacrament

A *sacrament* is a rite that is viewed either as symbolizing or as actually conferring divine grace. Leadbeater's view is closer to the stronger of these. He says that Masonic ceremonies do not merely teach moral lessons. They actually confer spiritual power, just by doing them. That is the meaning of the Latin *ex opere operato*: just doing them causes an effect. When we initiate a candidate, we have conferred a spiritual

power on that candidate. When we install a Worshipful Master, we have conferred spiritual power on that Worshipful Master. The one who understands and cultivates this power bestowed becomes a magician, able to perform the kinds of supernatural acts that interested Theosophists. These ceremonies do not affect only those involved, but bless the world at large. The very act of doing a Masonic ceremony draws down the spiritual power and disperses it to the world. Masonry is, therefore, ceremonial magic.

Leadbeater believed that the occultist and the mystic both seek to contact God, but they do it in different ways. Instead of seeking ecstatic experience, as the mystic does, the occultist seeks power. He goes through knowledge and will, and seeks the power to do things that cause God to respond. Here is a quote from Leadbeater about ceremony. This gives an interesting perspective on the insistence on perfection in Masonic ritual.

To the occultist the exact observance of a form is of great importance, and through the use of ceremonial magic he creates a vehicle through which the divine light may be drawn down and spread abroad for the helping of the world, calling to his aid the assistance of Angels, nature-spirits and other inhabitants of the invisible worlds.¹⁵

Leadbeater believed that there is a special class of angels dedicated to each part of Masonry. There are angels associated with the Blue Lodge, angels associated with the Royal Arch, angels associated with the Knights Kadosh in the Scottish Rite. At the performance of a Masonic ceremony, those angels are present. By way of contrast, an early *Tennessee Masonic Text-Book* has this to say about ceremony:

Ceremonies, simply considered, are little more than visionary delusions; but their effects are sometimes important. When they impress awe and reverence on the mind, and attract the attention to solemn rites by external forms, they are interesting objects. These purposes are effected when judicious ceremonies are regularly conducted and properly arranged.¹⁶

This suggests that the main purpose of ceremony is to prepare the mind properly for the business to be conducted. This could be viewed as a spiritual power in a limited sense.

11 Clairvoyance as an investigative tool

Leadbeater believed that he had clairvoyant powers, and could use them as an investigative tool for history. A person who trains his or her mind properly, and uses its inherent powers, can see what happened in the past.¹⁷ He used the example: one could land in England with Julius Caesar and see what happened. One could not only see and hear what went on, one could even know what the people were thinking. Since he believed in reincarnation, he said a person can especially see what happened in his or her own past life, or lives.

Leadbeater seems rather inconsistent in his use of this power. Sometimes he said, I was there, I saw what happened in ancient Egypt, or in ancient Greece. I can tell personally this is what happened. At other times, he said, we just cannot be sure of this, because we do not have sufficient historical documentation. It seems that if he had clairvoyant power, he should be able to look back at the doubtful events and see exactly what happened.

¹⁵[Lead 1998], p. 6.

¹⁶[Friz 1883], p. 11.

¹⁷[Lead 1998], p. 8.

12 The ancient mysteries

Leadbeater views Masonry as the modern continuation of the ancient mysteries.¹⁸ Many cultures had groups that performed secret rituals that initiated candidates and gave them teachings. They existed in Egypt, ancient Crete, Greece, and Persia, and were brought to Rome. He claimed that Israel had them as well. These mysteries often had several levels, or degrees. According to Leadbeater, the Great White Lodge started them all. They were part of God's plan to teach people the hidden wisdom and advance them spiritually. Many of the ancient mysteries had a legend of a dying and rising god: the corn king, as he is sometimes called. The death and resurrection of the corn king symbolized the cycles of the seasons and the crops. C. S. Lewis saw the corn king as a pagan echo of Christ.¹⁹ It is easy to see a Masonic parallel in this.

13 The Jewish mysteries

The Jewish mysteries deserve a special mention because, in Leadbeater's view, our modern Masonry is derived from the Jewish mysteries, which in turn came mainly from Egypt.²⁰ This section describes Leadbeater's understanding of Hebrew history and how they received and transmitted the mysteries. The Hebrew Scriptures were based on fact. They were, however, rewritten, amplified, and distorted after the Babylonian captivity.

As viewed in Theosophy, the Israelites were not the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They arose from the fifth (Semitic) sub race of the fourth, or Atlantean, root race. In ancient times, their Manu (progenitor) led them into the hills of Arabia. Later he led some of them to Asia and used them as the basis of the fifth, or Aryan, root race. Some of the Aryans later returned to Arabia and conquered the Semites. Some of these left and went to Somalia, then migrated to Egypt. They lived there until a Pharaoh increased their taxes and put them to forced labor. At that point, they left without much trouble and went to Palestine. Moses was not the World Teacher, but he was initiated into the Mysteries of Egypt and built the tabernacle as a lodge, a place to celebrate the mysteries. Leadbeater calls this the first, or Holy Lodge.

The prophets were the later custodians and teachers of the mysteries. They used the powers that initiation gave them to look into the spiritual worlds and reveal their secrets. Besides building the temple, Solomon wanted to recast the mysteries into a specifically Jewish form. He and the two Hiram's formed a council that oversaw the recasting. Each represented a different tradition of the mysteries, and they blended and modified their traditions to create the Jewish form. They kept the framework of the Egyptian mysteries, but replaced the story of the death of Osiris with that of the death of the master architect. Leadbeater calls this the second, or Sacred Lodge.

The practice of these mysteries was interrupted during the Babylonian captivity. After the return, Jeshua and Zerubbabel not only rebuilt the temple, but reconstituted the mysteries as well they could from memory. Leadbeater calls this the third, or Grand and Royal Lodge. These mysteries contained not only the basis of our craft degrees, but also what became the Mark Master and Holy Royal Arch. They later passed to the Roman Collegia, and thence to the operative guilds and speculative Masonry.

The Essenes received these mysteries, as well as the Chaldaic form. Jesus learned the mysteries from them and included parts of them, chiefly the Eucharist, in his teachings.

The Kabbalah is an independent line of transmission of some of the mystery teachings. It may have had influence on Masonic teachings, and provides clues about obscurities in Masonry. The Kabbalists spiritualized the meaning of the temple to represent the indwelling of God both in the universe and in man. They also spiritualized the loss of the true pronunciation of the Divine Name to represent the fall and redemption of man.

Leadbeater saw the development of these Jewish mysteries into Christian thought by the addition of the Logos. He connected the Hebrew Tetragrammaton with the name of Jesus. He also referred to what he called the true Tetragrammaton, seen in the inscription on the cross:

The new covenant added in the centre yet one letter more, the mystic *Shin*, emblematical of fire and of the Spirit; and so the word Jehovah became Jeheshua, the Name of the Christ. Which things are an allegory, for it is only by the finding of the Christ in the heart that the lost word can be rediscovered, and that very finding brings the knowledge of the true Tetragrammaton—that secret of man’s eternal being, which from the beginning has been written upon the cross of sacrifice and always kept hidden in the heart of the world among the secret things of God.²¹

¹⁸ [Lead 1998], p. 15ff. Leadbeater has several chapters describing the mysteries in different cultures. This paper focuses on the Jewish mysteries, since Leadbeater regards them as most closely connected with Masonry.

¹⁹ [CSL GM]

²⁰ [Lead 1998], p. 63ff.

²¹ [Lead 1998], pp. 76-77.

14 Leadbeater’s view of Masonry and the mysteries

Leadbeater took the identity of Masonry and the mysteries almost as an article of faith based on Theosophy, and interpreted all evidence in that light. Here are some observations on his approach.

- To Leadbeater, if two things look similar, they must be the same. He even went so far as to say that some people in ancient Egyptian paintings are giving Masonic signs, therefore they must be Masons.
- Historical documentation of a link is not necessary. Because the mysteries were secret, little historical documentation exists.
- The Great White Brotherhood created all the mysteries as well as Masonry, so they have to be connected.
- Surprisingly, he placed a great emphasis on “legitimate succession.” The power that the Great White Brotherhood gave to one of these societies had to be passed on down through time to other societies, from group to group and from leader to leader. Presumably, if the succession ran out, the Great White Brotherhood would send someone to start a new society.
- There is really only one secret tradition behind all the mysteries, that of the Great White Lodge.
- The teaching of the mysteries sometimes is driven underground, but it always reemerges in some other religion or secret society.
- Because people are fallible, they may corrupt the teaching of the mysteries. People may forget or confuse it. It may be corrupted as it passes through time and space. So, every so often, the Great White Lodge has to send someone to straighten everything out.
- There are different strains of the mysteries in different countries. Sometimes they get blended or even confused.
- If one group corrupts the teachings badly enough, the Great White Lodge will withdraw the power from it and make a new group the custodian of the mysteries.

- Modern Freemasonry is the latest version of the mysteries, having a connection all the way back to those of ancient times. Therefore, the development of Masonry is guided by the Great White Brotherhood.

15 Inner and outer mysteries

According to Leadbeater, the ancient mysteries had inner and outer mysteries.²² The existence of the outer mysteries was known to the public, and any worthy person could join them, go through a less rigorous form of the initiation, and be taught the teachings. Within that group, there was a secret inner group. Its existence was not known to the public, or even to the other initiates. The representatives of the Great White Brotherhood would watch for people who were most fitted, and initiate them into the inner mysteries. Initiation into the inner mysteries involved strenuous physical trials to prove the candidate's courage, worth, and determination. Those who rose to the top of the inner group might even be invited to join the Great White Brotherhood itself.

16 Christianity and the Middle Ages

Leadbeater viewed Jesus as one of the incarnations of the World Teacher.²³ Thus, through him, Christianity was also a creation of the Great White Brotherhood. In its early days, Christianity had mysteries, and indeed, was a repository of the mysteries.²⁴ Once Christianity came into power, its leaders became suspicious of, and suppressed, the mysteries.²⁵ So, the mysteries went underground.

In the Middle Ages, the Great White Lodge got involved again. They decided that a Jewish form of the mysteries would be less offensive to the Christians, so they created an intentionally confused form of the Jewish mysteries related to the building of King Solomon's temple. This they introduced into the lodges of the operative masons.²⁶ According to Leadbeater, the Head of All True Freemasons himself came down and supervised this process. This is how the secret teaching of the mysteries survived through the Middle Ages, ready to be passed on and reemerge after the Enlightenment.

²²[Lead 1998], pp. 31-32, 33, 38.

²³[Lead 1998], p. 194: "... the World-Teacher, the Lord of Love Himself, who taught in Palestine two thousand years ago."

²⁴[Lead 1998], p. 114.

²⁵[Lead 1998], p. 116.

²⁶[Lead 1998], pp. 117-118.

17 The historic period

The historic period begins at or about the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. Leadbeater sees this, not as the change from operative to speculative, or the addition of speculative to operative, but as the reemergence of what had been there underground all along.²⁷ During the Middle Ages, the mysteries had gone underground in the operative guilds. Several other groups, such as such as the Druids, the Culdees, Celtic Christianity, the Roman Collegia, the Comacini, and the Compagnonnage in France, also preserved parts of the secret traditions.²⁸ The Renaissance and the Reformation greatly decreased the power of the Catholic Church, permitting free thought to propagate again. In due time, these conditions paved the way for the Great White Lodge to see to it that the mysteries, in the form of Masonry, reentered the public eye.

18 The Scottish Rite

Leadbeater saw the Scottish Rite as the greatest modern development of the mysteries.²⁹ In his view, the earlier mysteries had always had extra teachings that were not part of the basic ritual. These teachings were codified in the higher degrees of the Scottish Rite. Here is a quote that he gave about the Scottish Rite.

The rite has spread into almost all countries of the world, and does an incalculable amount of good to thousands upon thousands of Brn., even though but few derive from it the full possibilities of spiritual advancement which lie behind it. But to be brought, however unconsciously, into touch with so holy an influence must unquestionably uplift and bless even the least sensitive; and some touch of its hidden glory is conferred upon all.³⁰

19 Co-Masonry

Leadbeater ends the book with a discussion of Co-Masonry, which began in France and admits both men and women.³¹ Masonry was brought from England to France. In time, it began to grow more and more liberal.

On January 14, 1882, it initiated Maria Deraismes, a feminist author and lecturer, as a Mason.³² Accounts differ as to whether they were then expelled from their Grand Lodge or had already left before that. A few years later, on March 14, 1893, Maria Deraismes and a retired French senator named Georges Martin, both shown in Figure 4, started an organization called *Le Droit Humain*, The Human Right, in Paris, and initiated six prominent French women.³³ This became the first Co-Masonic order, and still exists today. There have been numbers of splits off it. It has lodges in the United States.

²⁷[Lead 1998], p. 140ff.

²⁸[Lead 1998], p. 160ff.

²⁹[Lead 1998], p. 178ff.

³⁰[Lead 1998], p. 190.

³¹[Lead 1998], p. 191ff.

³²[WC Co-Mas]

³³Ibid.



Figure 4: The Founders of Co-Masonry

In Leadbeater's view, this is the future of Masonry. It was all the work of the Great White Brotherhood. Indeed, the Head of All True Freemasons was there to restore the pure rituals of the mysteries to their version of Masonry.

20 Annie Besant

Annie Wood was born in London in 1847, and died in India in 1933.³⁴ She married Frank Besant, an Anglican clergyman. She became active in social causes. They separated when she became an atheist and a socialist. For a while, she was active in labor movements and socialist work in Britain. In 1890, she encountered Madame Blavatsky, left socialism, and became a Theosophist. She went to India and helped spread Theosophy there. She joined *Le Droit Humain*, and she brought it back to England in 1902. She was the founder of Co-Masonry in England. Figure 5 shows her.

³⁴[WP AB]



Figure 5: Annie Besant in Masonic regalia.

Figure 6 shows Besant in India with Henry Olcott on her right and the author of this book, Charles Leadbeater, on her left. They worked together for the Theosophical Society in India, and Besant became its head after Madame Blavatsky died. She also became active in Indian politics and worked for Indian home rule under Britain. The neighborhood Besant Nagar and the schools Annie Besant School Allahabad and Besant Theosophical College, all in India, are named for her. Besant Hill School of Happy Valley in Ojai, California is also named for her.

21 Conspiracy theory?

According to the political scientist Michael Barkun, conspiracy theories rely on the view that the universe is governed by design³⁵. Most Masons would agree that events are not just random. Barkun says that a conspiracy theory involves three other assumptions:

- Nothing happens by accident
- Nothing is as it seems
- Everything is connected

³⁵[WC Consp]



Figure 6: Olcott, Besant, and Leadbeater in India

This conspiracy theory seems to fit Leadbeater's ideas. Another writer, Jesse Walker, has a list of different kinds of conspiracy theories³⁶. One is the *benevolent conspiracy*, where angelic powers work behind the scenes on earth to help people. According to these, Leadbeater's world view would classify as a benevolent conspiracy theory.

22 Closing quote

Here is the closing paragraph of the book. It makes one wish that Masonry could indeed fulfill the vision that it suggests.

Such surely is the destiny that awaits our beloved Order in the future; such the splendour that will transfigure the Craft in the years that are to come, until within its temple walls once more is raised—not only in symbol but in actual fact—the ladder which stretches between earth and heaven, between men and the Grand Lodge above, to lead them from the darkness of the world to the fullness of light in God, to the Rose which ever blossoms at the heart of the Cross, to the Blazing Star whose shining brings peace and strength and blessing to all the worlds.³⁷

23 Conclusion

According to the Tennessee Craftsman,

Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.³⁸

What is the scope of “morality” here? Is it simply personal conduct? Could it be expanded to encompass spirituality and philosophy, even esoteric philosophy, as bases for morality? Could it be interpreted broadly enough to justify the approach Leadbeater presents? It is easy to look at Masonic symbolism and think that it must be speaking of something more than morality. Many have done so. What is one to conclude?

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷[Lead 1998], p. 196.

³⁸[Sloan 2006], p. 8.

23.1 The philosophical questions

In philosophy, there are two basic questions: the ontological question and the epistemological question. The ontological question: “What is?” The epistemological question: “How do you know?” Consider these questions in the context of Masonry.

1. The ontological question: “What is Masonry?” To some degree, each Mason has his own understanding of what Masonry is. But is Masonry like an unknown alphabet or code that one can make to mean whatever he wants it to mean? This book introduces one author’s understanding and challenges the reader to reevaluate his own.
2. The epistemological question: “How do we know what Masonry is?” How do we know where Masonry came from and where it is going?

What evidence can be used to form answers to these questions? What is the proper stance on what evidence is admissible? Is it the historical stance, accepting nothing unless it can be supported by documentation? Is it Leadbeater’s stance, that similarity implies connection or even identity? Is there some middle ground?

23.2 A middle ground?

The sharing of symbolism could be viewed in other ways than as proving a direct historical link between Masonry and the ancient mysteries. It may be that the founders of modern Masonry were aware of the mysteries through historical sources, and had some idea of their teachings and rituals. They may have used them in Masonry either because they wanted to teach the same ideas, or as a means of adding prestige to the new system.

Another possibility is that there are some ideas and facts that are so basic to human experience that they show up again and again in different cultures and situations. For example, in *The Abolition of Man*, C. S. Lewis speaks of what he calls the *Tao*, a common understanding of morality shared by many cultures.³⁹ This could account for similar symbolism, teaching, and rituals used by different groups in different times and places. Further research and consideration is definitely indicated.

³⁹[Lewis 2001], p. 18.

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WHAT IS FREEMASONRY

By
Luther Alvin Hill Sr., 32° KCCH

Wor. Bro. Hill is a Past Master of Mount Juliet Lodge # 642, Past Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, charter member of the Tennessee Lodge of Research, and is member of the Anchorage Valley Orient of Alaska of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

Freemasonry is a beautiful story, a beautiful system of mortality, a beautiful way of life that gives meaning to life. Every good story includes a hero and a villain. That the story is mythical, mystical, legendary, or true hardly matters. What matters is the lesson it teaches, the meaning it has for those who hear it or read it or experience it. The question is “are we a better person because of the story?” Who is the hero or the villain is not important. The importance lies in the following questions: what was the motivating energy of the hero, and what was the inner conflict of the villain that created his dilemma?

In the beautiful story of Freemasonry, Hiram Abif is the hero, a man of unusual talent and expertise, of sterling character and courage. Having drawn his designs on the trestle board, he retired to the *sanctum sanctorum* or Holy of Holies where he offered up his devotions to Deity. Then tragedy struck! At the apex of his personal and professional life he met his untimely death. Despite his desire for wisdom, strength, and beauty; despite his character of faith, hope, and love; the sands in his hour glass were exhausted, all too soon.

The three ruffians, motivated by graft and greed, demanding secrets and shortcuts to success, felled him dead with a blow upon the head because he refused to compromise his convictions. The ruffians realized immediately the horror of their deed, they tried to escape seeking refuge from the guilt of their sin. The age-old question is still asked, “why so devious a treatment to so good and great a man as Grand Master Hiram Abif?” Why do good men suffer and deteriorate and die in the prime of life? In the quiet of our mind we hear the whisper of wisdom. “The young may die, the old must die, and the wisest knoweth not how soon, there is none that escape the inevitable doom.”

This brings us to the beautiful system of morality that Freemasonry offers. It is not the quantity of life, but the quality of life, to which good men devote themselves. I would like to believe that every man, being created in the image of God, desires deep in his soul to be good, kind, and loving, so that he may reprove what is vicious, cruel, and oppressive. Therefore, Freemasonry is more than obedience to the Ten Commandments of Moses, more than commitment to the Beatitudes of Jesus. There is a covenant, a conversation, a conviction, a commitment to the principles of truth and virtue. Jeremiah of the Old Testament, and the writer of Hebrews in the New Testament, quote God as saying, “I will put my laws in their minds and I will write them in their hearts” (Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:10). To know the law of love is one thing, to live the law of love is man’s greatest challenge. This Biblical passage is why Freemasonry is a beautiful way of life that truly gives meaning to life. This is why Freemasons live out of the lodge the life they learned in the lodge.

One of the most beautiful statements in all Freemasonry is found in the following description of a Mason. “When any man is said to be a Mason, the world may know that here is a man to whom the burdened heart may pour forth its sorrow, to whom the distressed may prefer its suit, whose hand is guided by justice, and whose heart is expanded by benevolence.” Running a close second in beauty and meaning is Freemasonry’s lesson of the trowel. “To make use of it for the

more noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection; that cement which unites us into one sacred band, or society of friends and brothers, among whom no contention should ever exist, but that noble contention, or rather emulation, of who can best work and best agree.”

Thus, Freemasons are taught that the path of salvation is found in living a beautiful and meaningful life through faith in God, in hope in immortality, and in practicing love toward all mankind. However, since faith is lost in sight, and since hope ends in fruition; only love is left to live beyond the grave. Love is the greatest attribute, because love is spiritual. God is divine love, God is the spirit of love supreme. That is why God is God. The Mason is ever in search of God to learn how love behaves. The secret that the Master Mason is trying to learn is to attain spiritual life before he experiences physical death. I state once again that Freemasonry is a beautiful story, a beautiful system of morality, a beautiful way of life that gives meaning to life. However, only as we practice pure friendship, only as we practice pure morality in our dealings with each other, only as we practice forgiveness of human frailty, can we influence society for good.

ARCH ERWIN McCLANAHAN

By
Luther Alvin Hill Sr., 32° KCCH

Arch Erwin McClanahan was born near Centerville, Hickman County, Tennessee, on October 29, 1888. He was the son of James Thomas and Mary Smith McClanahan. He received his education in the public schools of Williamson County and at Battle Ground Academy at Franklin, Tennessee. In politics, he was a Democrat in local and state politics, and an Independent in national politics.

He had been engaged in dairy farming, and in the breeding of registered Jersey cattle for a number of years. Arch served as President of the Davidson County Farm Bureau. In addition, he was a member of the Tennessee Jersey Cattle Club, American Jersey Cattle Club, and the Nashville Rotary Club. Arch served as a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Tennessee State Fair, and served on the Davidson County Planning Commission.

Arch was a member of the Price Memorial Methodist Church of Donelson, Tennessee, and was a member of its official Board.

Arch was married on June 8, 1921, to Miss Sue Weakley, of Nashville, and they resided near Donelson, in Davidson County (at the intersection of Elm Hill Pike and McGavock Pike).

One of his most notable charitable achievements during his lifetime was his donation of 189 acres of land, (valued at \$500,000.00) located in Southeast Nashville, to the University of Tennessee - Knoxville. At that time in 1970, it was the largest charitable gift received by the University.

Arch was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in McWhirtersville Lodge No. 375, of Donelson, on January 18, 1913, and served as Worshipful Master in 1917. He was exalted in Cumberland Chapter No. 1 of Nashville on February 5, 1915, and served as High Priest in 1919. He received the Order of High Priesthood at Nashville on January 28, 1919, and was elected Grand President of the Order on January 30, 1923. He headed the team which conferred the Order each January for many years. He was greeted in Nashville Council No. 1 on April 2, 1917, and served as Thrice Illustrious Master in 1928. He received the Thrice Illustrious Masters degree, or Order of the Silver Trowel, at Nashville on January 29, 1940, and was elected Thrice Illustrious Sentinel (or Captain of the Guard) on January 28, 1946 and advanced each year until January 1951, when he was elected Illustrious Master. He was knighted in Nashville Commandery No. 1 of Nashville on January 31, 1918, and served as Commander in 1921-1922 and its Prelate from 1938 until 1941 and from 1944 until 1976.

Arch was initiated in Al Menah Temple, A. A. O. N. M. S., at Nashville on May 31, 1919.

Arch was made a member of Tennessee Priory No. 15 Knights of the York Cross of Honour on May 4, 1943 and served as its Prior in 1951.

Arch received the Scottish Rite degrees at Nashville in November, 1943. Additionally, he received the distinction of KCCH and the 33rd Degree.

Arch was made a member of Old Hickory Conclave No. 83, Red Cross of Constantine in the charter class on September 11, 1947 and served as its Treasurer for many years.

Arch was ordained a member of Golgotha Tabernacle No. XIV Holy Royal Arch Knights Templar Priests of Louisville, Kentucky on April 30, 1951 and became Charter Preceptor of Holy Manger Tabernacle No. XLVIII Holy Royal Arch Knights Templar Priests on February 8, 1964.

In the Grand Chapter, Arch was elected Grand Master of the First Veil on January 26, 1926 and advanced each year until January 26, 1932 when he was elected Most Excellent Grand High Priest for a term of one year. He served as Grand Treasurer during 1948 through 1981 inclusively.

In the Grand Council Royal and Select Masters, Arch was elected Grand Marshal on January 28, 1946, advanced each year until January 29, 1951, when he was elected Most Illustrious Grand Master. He served as Grand Treasurer during 1957 through 1981 inclusively.

In the Grand Commandery, Arch was elected Grand Warder on May 14, 1929, and advanced each year until May 19, 1937, when he was elected Right Eminent Grand Commander for a term of one year. He served as Grand Treasurer during 1952 through 1981 inclusively.

In the Grand Lodge, Arch was elected Junior Grand Warden on February 1, 1940, and advanced each year until January 28, 1943, when he was elected Most Worshipful Grand Master. He served as Grand Treasurer during 1946 through 1981 inclusively.

He has served all of the Grand Bodies in various Committee capacities for many years, to mention a few Arch served as: chairman and Treasurer of the Educational Committee of the Grand Commandery, a member of the Jurisprudence Committees of the Grand Chapter, Grand Council, and Grand Commandery.

Arch Erwin McClanahan has the unique distinction of being the first man to have served as presiding officer of all four Tennessee York Rite Grand Bodies since 1894. Only five other Brothers of the Craft have been accorded this illustrious honor in Tennessee: Thomas Owen Morris, John Frizzell, Wilber Fisk Foster, Henry Martyn Aiken, and Benjamin Franklin Haller.

Arch Erwin McClanahan died on November 6, 1986.

References: Tennessee Priory No. 15 Knights of the York Cross of Honour records, Holy Manger Tabernacle No. 48 Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests records, Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of Tennessee records, Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons of Tennessee records, Grand Council Cryptic Masons of Tennessee records, Grand Commandery Knight Templar of Tennessee records, Nashville Scottish Rite Bodies records.

KYCH FOUR STARS OF TENNESSEE

By
Luther Alvin Hill Sr., 32° KCCH

THOMAS OWEN MORRIS

M. W. Grand Master	1886
M. E. Grand High Priest	1890
M. I. Grand Master	1894
R. E. Grand Commander	1892

President of Order of High Priesthood in 1893.

Born August 2, 1845, died November 8, 1924 in Nashville. Buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Nashville. Bro. Morris was a businessman with K. J. Morris & Co. He served as Mayor of Nashville from 1906-08.

JOHN FRIZZELL

M. W. Grand Master	1858-59
M. E. Grand High Priest	1865
M. I. Grand Master	1861
R. E. Grand Commander	1867

Grand Secretary for all four York Rite Bodies General Grand High Priest 1877-1880.

Born September 8, 1829 Died November 20, 1894. Buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Nashville. Bro. Frizzell served as a Captain in the Confederate Army. He was a law partner of Gov. A. S. Marks and Gov. Peter Tarney. He served eleven years as State Clerk of the General Assembly. He was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

WILBUR FISK FOSTER

M. W. Grand Master	1879
M. E. Grand High Priest	1874
M. I. Grand Master	1869
R. E. Grand Commander	1878

President of Order of High Priesthood in 1871-72 and a 33° Scottish Rite Mason.

Born April 15, 1834 in Springfield, Mass., died March 26, 1922. Buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Nashville. Bro. Foster served as a Major in Confederate Army. He was a civil engineer and built the defenses of Fort Donelson and Fort Henry. He drew maps for the Atlanta Campaign.

HENRY MARTYN AIKEN

M. W. Grand Master	1885
M. E. Grand High Priest	1876
M. I. Grand Master	1875
R. E. Grand Commander	1875

President of Order of High Priesthood in 1882 and a 33° Scottish Rite Mason.

Born March 4, 1844 Died March 22, 1928. Buried in Old Gray Cemetery in Knoxville. Bro. Aiken was a lawyer and businessman.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HALLER

M. W. Grand Master	1890
M. E. Grand High Priest	1878
M.I. Grand Master	1876
R. E. Grand Commander	1881

President of Order of High Priesthood in 1879 and a 33° Scottish Rite Mason.

Born March 4, 1836, died April 4, 1890, buried in Elmwood Cemetery in Memphis. Bro. Haller served as a Captain in Confederate Army. He was a businessman. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church.

ARCH ERWIN McCLANAHAN

M. W. Grand Master	1943
M. E. Grand High Priest	1932
M. I. Grand Master	1951
R. E. Grand Commander	1937

President of Order of High Priesthood in 1923. President of the Order of the Silver Trowel in 1951, and a 33° Scottish Rite Mason.

Bro. McClanahan served as Grand Treasurer for all four Grand York Rite Bodies for a number of years. He was the charter Preceptor of the Knights Templar Priests in Tennessee, and the Eminent Prior Tennessee Priory No. 15 KYCH 1951.

Born October 29, 1888 died November 6, 1986. He was a dairy farmer. He served as President of the Davidson County Farm Bureau. In addition, he was a member of the Tennessee Jersey Cattle Club, American Jersey Cattle Club, and the Nashville Rotary Club. Arch served as a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Tennessee State Fair, and served on the Davidson County Planning Commission.

References - Arch Erwin McClanahan's Grand Masters of Tennessee and all four Grand York Rite Bodies of Tennessee records.

THE LANGUAGE OF MASONRY

By
Derial W. Bivens, 32°

Wor. Bro. Bivens is a Past Master of New Middleton Lodge # 249, the Tennessee Lodge of Research, and is member of the Nashville Valley of Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

Abstract

Masonic ritual is rife with multiple layers of symbolism and linguistic double entendre. It is locked in the language of the late 17th and early 18th Centuries, near the end of a linguistic period known as Early Modern English. Most Masons will recognize this as the language of Shakespeare and of the King James Bible. However, in the time intervening since then and today, the phraseology, vocabulary, idiom and pronunciation of the time have changed remarkably, to the point that some words have passed from use altogether, some have undergone drastic change in meaning and/or pronunciation and the origins of some words, which carried at least some significance at the time, have been lost or forgotten. The end result is that brethren of the 21st Century, unless they have an understanding of the language in which their ritual is written, miss out on much of the beauty and meaning of Freemasonry.

Introduction

The farm where I live is known as the “Old Cowan Place” and my house was built by one Mr. Ira Cowan around 1875. The Cowans were (and still are) a very prominent family in that area. Around the turn of the last century, Mr. Cowan owned a sawmill, a gristmill, a blacksmith shop, a general store, a mineral well and a large farm with ten tenant (sharecropper) families. He was also the local postmaster, the justice of the peace, a colonel in the militia, and a deacon in his church. He even has a bridge named after him. He was a stalwart pillar of the community and a most perfect candidate for the mystic Lodge. Unfortunately, he would never become a Mason because his friends and neighbors, who were Masons, could never allow it. You see, he was a Cowan and they, expressing sincere, great regret, had specific instructions not to admit any Cowans. Seriously?

In all honesty, I do not know if Colonel Cowan ever petitioned the lodge or not. (Yes, Colonel Cowan was a real person and he really was “all that and a bag of chips” as my children would say.) But would it not have been unfortunate if such a worthy and well-qualified man such as Mr. Cowan could never have a part of the rights, light, and benefits of his local Masonic lodge, and even more unfortunate if the Craft be denied the association of such an upright and influential man, all because of sheer ignorance of the meaning of an obscure Masonic term?

Many a new Masonic initiate has scratched his head over the meanings of unfamiliar words or questioned the meanings of words that were normally familiar to him but seemed to be used in a strange context during his initiation ceremonies. This is largely because the language of the Craft is the English of the 17th Century and many words that were common during that time have either changed in meaning or pronunciation or have fallen from use altogether. A complete history of the development of the English language is beyond the scope of this paper but a brief overview can shed some light on the language of Masonry.

History of the Language

The English language as we know it had its beginnings with the Jute-Anglo-Saxon invasions of Britain that displaced the Romans in the 6th Century. While it had a few Latin-based “borrowings” left over from the Roman days, the English of this period was purely Germanic, characterized by the vocabulary, inflections and grammar of the Old Norse and Saxon that flavored the language of the Vikings and the Germanic invaders from the Continent. The language of this period is called “Old English” and its strange vocabulary, grammar, and obsolete alphabet combine to make it largely unreadable to the average modern English speaker.

The language of the next period is called “Middle English.” It began shortly after the Anglo-Norman invasion of England in 1066 and was in use until the middle of the 15th Century. It was during this time that the English language was enriched with words from the French-speaking ruling classes and with words that were brought home to England by Crusaders from the Middle East and from lands beyond the realm of the Saracens.

By around 1450, the rich new vocabulary, reconstructed grammar and lively inflections had gelled into what we now know as Early Modern English. Early Modern English is recognizable to the modern reader as the language of the King James Bible, Shakespeare, Sir Walter Raleigh and diarist Samuel Pepys. It was during the heart of this period that Freemasonry developed and near the end of it, emerged into the light of open society. The Early Modern English period is generally considered to have been over by around 1750, after which the language – that which we speak – is known simply as Modern English. During the middle of the 1700s, the rituals of Freemasonry became set and somewhat standardized. Thus, Early Modern English is the language of modern Freemasonry.

For most of the life of the English language, words were spelled phonetically. Since many words changed in pronunciation, sometimes back and forth between two or three pronunciations over the centuries, their spellings changed as well.

From the 12th Century right up until the 18th Century the English language went through what is often called “the Great Vowel Shift,” with the main effects in the 15th and 16th Centuries. Primarily affecting long, stressed vowels, the sounds of vowels shifted back and forth between long and short pronunciations. (Benson, L.D., 2000)

Standardization in grammar and spelling in all European languages did not occur until the advent of the printing press and mass-produced printed media in the 16th and 17th Centuries, particularly with the publication and dissemination of *The Book of Common Prayer* (1549) and the *King James Bible* (1611). From the 16th Century onward, literacy in the English-speaking world spread and every literate household (and many illiterate households) had a copy of the King James Bible. By 1600, the pronunciations of vowels had also pretty much stabilized, due in no small part to John Hart’s unpublished manuscript *The Opening of the Unreasonable Writing of our English Toung*, written in 1551, and his *An Orthographie*, published in 1559. (Ellis, pp. 794-795)

Curious Word Pairings

One of the first things the Masonic initiate notices is that important Masonic concepts are often inculcated in pairs of terms, such as *worthy* and *well-qualified*; *duly* and *truly*; and *intemperance* and *excess*.

In his book, *Born in Blood*, John J. Robinson used the word pairings to make a case for the Knight Templar theory of the origins of the Masonic fraternity. (Robinson, p. 224) According to his theory, the dual language pairings of words were a result of an infusion of French words brought into the Masonic order by fugitive Knights Templar in the 14th Century by way of Scotland. Rather than replace the existing English words, they just moved into place right beside them, thus, accommodating French-speakers as well as English-speakers.

The reality, however, is that the rituals we use today are modern, the prototypes having been developed in the mid-1700s, and before that, a new candidate for Masonry was introduced to the lodge; took an oath of fidelity and secrecy; and was given the token, sign and word. That was it. The brevity of the ceremony often meant that the first two degrees were often conferred on the same night. (Washizu, 2000) The meaning of the ceremonies and symbols of Masonry were taught later by means of catechetical lectures.

The ritual writers of the late 1700s and early 1800s had a more practical purpose in mind for using such paired words. As a stimulant to memory, they used rhyming pairs, alliterative sounds and multiple words with the same meaning to “make sure that no misunderstanding was possible.” (Carr, p. 314) Thus we have the alliteration of *worthy and well-qualified* combined with the similar meanings of the words; the alliteration and rhyming of *arts, parts and points* and a very large number of other pairings and groupings with alliterative and poetic characteristics.

They also used words with similar or identical meanings in direct conjunction with each other, usually in groups of two or three. Generally speaking, especially in pairs, one word is Germanic (Anglo-Saxon or Old English) in origin and the other is an Old or Middle French derivative. If there is a third word, chances are very high that it entered the English language from Latin.

They also intentionally used old-fashioned expressions and archaic words to aid the memory and to give the ritual a sense of importance and ancient age. By the mid-to-late 1700s, Early Modern English had given way to Modern English, but was “frozen” in the King James Bible, which was the standard book of Scripture of the Church of England and with which most, if not all, English-speaking persons of the day were familiar. Masonic candidates were thus imbued with the same sense of awe, reverence and solemnity by the language of the ritual as they were by the language of their Bible. (Washizu, 2000)

Terms Peculiar to Masonry

Many words and phrases have changed in pronunciation or meaning over the centuries and some have curious or obscure origins. Many of these terms are unique to the Craft and are not encountered in general (or even occasional) use anywhere else in the English language. For example, *Arts, parts* and *points* are three small words with MANY meanings each. Masonically, there are two ways to look at these three words as a group in a way that makes sense. In the first sense, one sees “large, smaller, and smallest.” In this context the word, *arts* is best expressed as in the 1300s definition of “skills in scholarship and learning, especially in the seven sciences or liberal arts” (Harper, “Art”) and thus, has a strong Masonic connotation. *Parts* are the specific “personal qualities or gifts of ability” (Harper, “Parts”) that contribute to those skills, again in keeping with the Masonic concept of personal qualities. *Points* are the “single items of detail” (Oxford Dictionaries, “Point”) of talent and ability that contribute to overall personal qualities. Thus, by this particular model of *arts, parts and points*, we see how small seemingly insignificant items point towards and contribute to individual abilities which, in turn, enable one to excel in learning.

Another model, using different accepted definitions of the same three words, yields an even more poignant Masonic lesson, considerably more in keeping with the context with which they are used in the ritual. In this model, *arts* means “products of human creativity” (Oxford Dictionaries, “Art”); *parts* means “roles, responsibilities, expected behaviors” (Oxford Dictionaries, “Part”); and *points* means “purposes, relevance or effectiveness” (Oxford Dictionaries, “Point”). Thus by this model we see that we are to protect WHAT we do Masonically, HOW we do it and WHY we do it.

Aught is an archaic word that pops up every now and then in Modern English. It can mean either “any at all” or “none at all.” In true form, it is the opposite of *naught*, which means “nothing at all.” To use *ought* to mean “nothing at all” is a 19th Century corruption that has continued down to this day, that is, as a placeholder for a *zero*, such as in the rifle caliber .30-06, expressed as “thirty *ought* six.” It is from this context, use as a zero, that it acquired the meaning of “nothing at all.” But the error was in using a *naught* for the placeholder, and mistakenly calling it an *ought*. So, in Masonic ritual, which pre-dates the 19th Century corruption, these words are used in the correct sense. (Mead, 2010)

We are told that no traveler returns from the *bourne* of the undiscovered country. *Bourne*, now spelled *ourn*, came from the French word *borne* which means “boundary or limit.” It derives from the Old French *bodne* and it is from this that the words *bound*, *border* and *boundary* all derive. Thus, a traveler cannot return across the border or *bourne* of that undiscovered country. (Oxford Dictionaries, “Bourn”)

Another definition, one that has survived to modern times, and one which may be more appropriate here, is “stream.” (Oxford Dictionaries, “Bourn”) To quote Tennyson:

“For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.”

(Alfred, Lord Tennyson, “Crossing the Bar,” 1889)

Thus, the stream of Time carries us in one direction and one direction only; once you enter the stream, you cannot leave it, it sweeps you away, out to sea. We are born into the *bourne* of Time, from which there is no return.

Almost all ritualists today pronounce *burthens* with the central consonant digraph, *th*, carrying the same sound as the same letters in *mother* and *brother*. According to Ellis, however, from the 17th Century, the “*th*” in *burthen* was pronounced as a *d* as in *deep*, or *add*. By the 19th Century, *burthen* and a similarly spelled and similarly pronounced word, *murther* were still around but by then were being more commonly spelled with a *d*, to match the correct pronunciation. (Ellis, p. 595) *The Century Dictionary* also specifically says the *th* pronunciation is erroneous, that the word should be pronounced *burden*. While a *burthen* or *burden* is usually used in the context of “a carried load which is grievous, wearisome, oppressive, and onerous,” in mathematics, the term is used in connection with mathematical analysis models of distribution, particularly for goods to be distributed, for projection of the spread of disease and for risk analysis in human health. (Crawford-Brown, 2.2.4) Another meaning is, “that which is often repeated; a subject on which one dwells,” the latter having no reference of anything being difficult to bear. (Whitney, p. 724)

The term *cable tow* is a term unique to Masonry. Anyone who has ever served aboard a ship knows that a *cable* is a large rope. And *tow* is an Old English word meaning “to pull or draw.”

Thus, a *cable-tow* is a rope used to tow something, such as an unsuitable candidate for Freemasonry from the lodge room.

Mackey says the word is purely Masonic and says it probably from the German *Kabeltau*, (Mackey, p. 126) while Haywood claims that Mackey's statement was in error because the word was to be found in the *Standard Dictionary of 1913*. However, the entry there defines the term as "a rope or line for drawing or leading; in Freemasonry, symbolizing in the Second and Third Degrees the covenant by which Masons are bound," almost verbatim from Mackey's definition, originally written in 1873. (Haywood, Chapter 6, Section II)

Albert Pike postulated a Hebrew origin and cited several biblical passages in support of his theory. (Pike, p. 47) In Proverbs 23:34 we find the Hebrew word, *חבל* *khabel*, referring to "one lying in the midst (or, heart) of the sea." (Complete Jewish Bible, Mishlei 23:34; Orthodox Jewish Bible, Mishlei 23:34) Pike somehow translated this passage as "a cable attached to an anchor." (Pike, p. 47) In Ezekiel 18:12 and 18:16 the Hebrew word, *חבל* *khabel*, rendered in modern Hebrew *chavol*, is used to mean a debtor's "pledge or binding." In Ezekiel 18:7, we find the Hebrew, *חבלתו* *khabel-to*, rendered in modern Hebrew *chavolah*, again used in the context of a debtor's pledge or collateral. (Complete Jewish Bible, Yechezkel 18:7; Jewish Orthodox Bible, Yechezkel 18:7)

While all the above theories of origin certainly sound plausible and some certainly sound very logical, they are, almost as certainly, wrong. First, in Early Modern and Modern English, a description of *something with a purpose* is almost universally written with the adjective or adjectival phrase preceding or "prepositive" to the noun being modified. Thus, if it were a cable used for towing it would be written *tow cable*, instead of *cable tow*. *Cable tow* is actually an example of a postpositive adjectival phrase. In a postpositive phrase, the adjective follows the noun instead of coming before it, as in most English phrases, and is generally regarded as being interpretable as the result of a reduced relative clause. (Kunze, p. 93) *Knight Templar* – a Knight of the Temple – is a classic example of such a phrase, as is *Court Martial* – a military or *martial* court. Postpositive adjectives are very common in the Romance languages, but usually confined to archaic terms in English. (Huddleston, p.109)

Some postpositive adjectival phrases describe the substance of which the noun is made, with the descriptive relative clause being reduced to a single word. *Angle iron* – an "angle made of iron"; *Pound sterling* – a "pound of sterling [silver]; *plate glass* – a large "plate or pane made of glass" are examples of such phrases. It is into this category that *cable tow* – a "cable made of tow" falls.

Tow is the Old English name of Germanic origin that was given to bundles of coarse fiber, such as hemp, sisal or flax that were broken and prepared for spinning. (Oxford Dictionaries – British and World English) It was of these coarse fibers that most ropes were (and still are) twisted. The term lives on in Appalachia in *tow sack*, "a gunny sack or burlap bag made from tow" (American Heritage Dictionary – "Gunnysack") and in the widespread descriptive phrase *tow-headed* that describes a flaxen haired youth ("white-blond hair resembling tow"). (American Heritage Dictionary – "Towheaded")

The paradox here is that the modern definition of *cabletow* of a "cable that tows" is in line with all the theories attributing the source to the meanings of the component words *cable* and *tow*, yet its etymology is something different. It is very much to be likened to the term *mobile home*. By definition, a *mobile home* is "a home that is mobile." Yet, the name came from the manufactured housing industry that grew up around Mobile, Alabama following World War II.

Around 1954, manufacturers in the area began to produce a 10-foot wide manufactured home and promoted the “Mobile home” as an improvement over the standard 8-foot wide “house trailer” of the time. So instead of *mobile home*, it would more correctly be *Mobile home*. So, the “cable made to tow” was a “cable made of tow,” just like a “home made in Mobile” was also a “home that was made to be mobile.” Despite it being descriptive of its component material rather than its purpose, the term **cable tow** is known, correctly, to all Masons as a *cable* by which an unworthy candidate can be *towed* from the lodge.

Charity is a word that has changed in meaning and is used in Masonic ritual with at least two and possibly three different meanings. The classical (and archaic) meaning of *charity* is “love of humankind, typically in a Christian context” and it is so used in the Fellow Craft degree rather emphatically. The more modern meaning of “the voluntary giving of help, typically in the form of money, to those in need” is also pointed out very strongly, especially in the Entered Apprentice degree. Another modern meaning is “kindness and tolerance in judging others,” a theme which pervades the whole scope and purport of Freemasonry. (Oxford Dictionaries – “Charity”)

Compass or compasses? The instrument used by engineers and architects to draw circles is called by them, a *compass*. It is this instrument and not the direction-finding instrument used for navigation with which this discussion is concerned. In Freemasonry, we call this same instrument by its seemingly plural form, *compasses*. Nobody seems to know why, really. Some Masonic jurisdictions use the singular form; some, including Tennessee, use the plural form. The ritual writers of the late 18th and early 19th Centuries show only a slight preference of the singular over the plural. Prichard’s *Masonry Dissected* (1730) uses the singular four times and the plural once. *The Three Distinct Knocks* (1760) has the plural form seven times and the singular twice. *Jachin and Boaz* (1762) show a slight preference for the singular over the plural by five to four. Looking back in the English language, we have multiple examples from the 16th and 17th Centuries in which the plural form of *compasses* was used in a singular sense as we do. A 1592 description and explanation of the construction of terrestrial and celestial globes uses the plural form multiple times in such a manner as “...setting the foot of your compasses in this very intersection, describe an Arch of a Circle...” (Hues, p. 104) In 1594, a convicted counterfeiter, one Edmund Jentill, in a letter to the Lord High Treasurer of England offered as “redemption of my great amisse and fault committed” a surveying instrument, a mechanism to drive a mill and a “a payer of compasses, which shall describe all sorts of figures, geometricall and spiral lynes and maye, for their excellencye bee termed the Euclidean Compas.” (Halliwell-Phillips, p. 35) A 1594 textbook on mapmaking instructs “hauing taken two of those partes with your Compasses, measuring from the North point downe to the West, and there make a pricke.” (Blundeville, p. 287) John Donne in his *A Valediction; forbidding mourning*, a poem written to his wife in 1611, likened her to the “fix’d foot” of “stiff twin compasses” that “...makes my circle just/and makes me end where I begun.” (Donne, p. 260-261) Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, wrote “in his hand he took the golden compasses to circumscribe this universe.” (Milton, 7:220) Here we have several poetic and operative uses of the plural form and many more can easily be found dating right up until the late 1800s. There are also as many examples using it in the singular form. But why would the plural form be used at all? Some theorize it is because it has two points and it is often referred to as “a pair of compasses.” That very phrase is a clue to the solution of this puzzle. The term *compasses* is what is known as a *summation plural*, “a term that denotes tools and articles of dress consisting of two equal joined parts. Such nouns are used in the plural but in the construction, *a pair of...*, they occur in the singular.” (Focus English School, 2015) That puts **compasses** in the same category as tongs, pliers, scissors, pants, etc.

Contention/emulation The phrase in which these two terms are used seems, at first glance, very oddly constructed and really doesn't seem to make sense. To understand it, think first in terms of an athletic contest. The contest is a *contention*, in which athletes *contend* for victory or try to out-do each other by doing the same thing, only striving to do it better, faster or in some other superlative manner. *Emulation* is defined as "an effort to match or surpass a person or achievement, typically by imitation." (Oxford Dictionaries, "Emulation") Thus we have yet another instance of the ritual writers using two different turns of phrase to say the exact same thing.

Cowans In 1598, the First Schaw Manuscript, an early Scottish Masonic constitution, warned:

Item, that na maister or farow of craft ressaue ony cowanis to wirk in his societie or cumpanye, nor send nane of his servands to wirk w'cowanis, under the pane of twentie pundis sa oft as ony persone offendis heirintill.

[Item, that no master or fellow of craft receive any **cowans** to work in his society or company, nor send none of his servants to work with cowans, under the pain of twenty pounds so often as any person offends herein.] (Chassagnard, Chapter 13)

Masons today are still warned to keep off cowans and eavesdroppers. But what exactly is a *cowan*? Jamieson defines a *cowan* as a Scottish term meaning:

1. One who does the work of a mason, but has not been regularly bred.
2. One who builds dry walls.

He derives the term from the Swedish *kujon*, or *kuzhjohn*, "an imbecile," and the French *coion* or *coyon*, "a base fellow." (Jamieson, p. 130) Robinson similarly derives the term from the French *couenre*, which means "ignoramus" or "bumpkin." (Robinson, p. 226) The American Heritage Dictionary has the following definitions of the word (without any accompanying etymology):

1. A worker in unmortared stone; a stonemason who has not served an apprenticeship
2. (freemasonry) A person who attempts to pass himself off as a Freemason without having experienced the rituals or going through the degrees.
3. (slang) A sneak; an inquisitive or prying person.
4. (in attributive use) uninitiated, outside, "profane."

Whatever its origin, the term **cowan** by definition, denotes not only someone who is ignorant of the secrets of Freemasonry, but also one who is unworthy to receive them.

A "wild **defile** that **cleaves** a mountain" is a very deep, "steep-sided narrow gorge" (Oxford Dictionaries, "Defile") in which troops would be required to **defile** or "pass in single file." (Oxford Dictionaries, "Defile") Such a gorge would have the appearance of **cleaving** or "splitting" the mountain. (Oxford Dictionaries, "Cleave")

Masons are to **discover** to the world the happy effects of our institution. *Discover* is usually used to mean to "be the first to find or observe something." There is an archaic meaning that is almost the opposite of the first. It means to "divulge, disclose or display," so rather than finding something that is hidden, we are to share with the world those "happy effects" and not hide them. (Oxford Dictionaries, "Discover")

Due guard is another uniquely Masonic term. A universal gesture of recognition among Masons, the origin of its name is a bit obscure, but there are a couple of clues to its true origin. Mackey says it is an Americanism and is a contraction of *duly guard*. (Mackey, p. 222) Brother Wildey Atchison made a (rather tenuous) connection with the watermarks used in the paper-making industry of medieval France which read *Dieu le garde*, or “God guard it.” (Atchison, 1922) In *Born in Blood*, Robinson, again in an effort to strengthen his case for the Templar theory of Masonic origins, says that it originated as a “gesture of security,” the *gest du garde*. (Robinson, p. 226) Although there is no evidence of that term ever being in widespread use, it does have a modicum of plausibility about it. There is however, another possible origin that may, in fact, be closer to true than any of the above. There are a few clues that point in this direction. In some jurisdictions, Ontario, for instance, there is no such thing as a *due guard*. It is called a “hailing sign,” not to be confused with the GHS of a MM. (Thom, 2013). In archaic English, *hail* meant “expressing greeting or acclaim.” (Oxford Dictionaries – British and World English) We know that the *due guard* is a sign of recognition or greeting. (Gould, 1918) Another word for *greeting* is “salutation.” Thus, it seems that perhaps the strongest case for the origin of the term lies in a French-English Dictionary of 1611:

“*Dieu-gard*: A salutation, or God save you.” (Cotgrave, 1611)

Thus the *dieu-gard* or **due guard** survives as a sign of salutation, greeting or hailing among Masons, the name of which was derived from a common greeting in French-speaking areas of the world, including England, during the formative years of modern Freemasonry.

Either and **neither** are two very common words that are used very frequently in Masonic ritual, and while they are used with their correct meanings, their pronunciations vary between “ee-ther/ eye-ther” and “nee-ther /nye-ther.” *Either* is derived from an Old English word meaning “each of two, both” and now means “one or the other of two.” (Harper, “Either”) *Neither* is derived from an Old English word meaning “not of two” and is not a contraction of “not either,” as is commonly believed. (Harper, “Neither”) Before the Great Vowel Shift, both words were pronounced with the “long i” sound - “eye-ther/nye-ther” and afterward both took on the “ee-ther/nee-ther” pronunciation. (Benson, L.D., 2000) However, the two words didn’t really settle exclusively on the new pronunciations. Nowadays, all modern dictionaries agree that *either* pronunciation is correct.

In a Masonic discussion of “freedom, fervency and zeal,” chalk is used to illustrate freedom. The Tennessee ritual informs us that “there is nothing more free than chalk.” It really takes a stretch of the imagination to equate *making a mark on something* (the analogy given) with *being free*. There is a clue to deciphering this puzzle in the way the phrase is worded in other Masonic jurisdictions. In most jurisdictions, the statement is made that “there is nothing **freer** than chalk.” Still there is no connection to “freedom.” Another visit to Cotgrave sheds a little light on this. In his 1611 *Dictionary of the French and English Tongues*, he lists several words that sound very much like *freer* which very accurately describe chalk.

Frailer: [fri-yer] to crumble in pieces, to breake into small crumlockes (brittle things)

Fraye: [fri-yer] to grate upon, to rub, to rase, to weare, beat down.

Friable: [free-a-bul] bruisable, easie to be broken.

Frouër: [froo-yer] to crumme, crumble, breake small.

Froyer: [free-yer] to rub, fret, rase, grate upon. (Cotgrave, 1611)

To an English-speaking person of the 17th century not familiar with the French language or its pronunciations, all but *friable* would sound very much like the English *freer*. Ok, so that provides a very plausible and likely source for the word as used in the ritual, but still...there is no connection to freedom. Or is there? In all ages, *graffiti*, illicit writing on walls, has been linked with anti-establishment behavior. It is a form of free expression and legal arguments rage even today over whether graffiti is vandalism, an expression of disrespect or whether it is an expression of self, true freedom of speech. (Gowers, 2014) In all ages, up until the advent of spray paint in the 20th Century, the preferred medium (other than scratching) for people “keen to have men read of them” was “rough charcoal or crumbling chalk.” (Martial 12:61, p. 103))

So here we finally have the chalk-freedom connection. What indeed, is *freer* than an expressive epigram furtively scrawled in chalk on a wall? Another, more likely connection is given in the ritual itself. There, chalk is used in conjunction with charcoal and clay to complete the allegory. While all three of these materials are some of the most useful known to man, with thousands of known uses for each one, there is only ONE application in which all three play a prominent role: extraction metallurgy, the smelting and refinement of metal ores. During the smelting process, chalk bonds with the gangue, or non-metal components of the ore and separates it from the ore in the form of slag or dross. Thus in a very literal sense, chalk *frees* metal from the impurities in which it is contained and the symbolism becomes obvious.

One Masonic phrase uses the archaic word, *hele*, in combination with three other terms of identical meaning with alliteration and rhyming schemes in and among all four terms. In the 13th and 14th Centuries, *hele* had a specialized meaning of covering something with earth tiles or slates. It is therefore highly probable that this term entered the language of modern Freemasonry as part of the technical vocabulary of Operative Masons, as did many other terms. (Washizu, 2000) Like many long-vowel words, *hele* was affected by the Great Vowel Shift. At various times over the last 800 years it has rhymed with *hail* and at other times with *heel*. In the 1300s, *hele* rhymed with *stele* and *concele*, both pronounced with the long “e,” as in *steel*. (Chaucer, *Wife of Bath’s Tale*, 1380); in the late 1700s, when Masonic rituals were being developed, it rhymed with *hail*; and today’s Oxford English Dictionary gives “hiel” (to sound like *heel*).

Masons are sworn to *help, aid and assist* each other. *Help, aid* and *assist* are all very common words, whose meanings are well known to virtually every speaker of the English language. Why would they be strung together in such a redundant fashion? This is a case of the ritual writers using several different words that mean the same thing. *Help* is an Old English word, *aid* entered the English language as *aiudha* from the Latin *adjuta* in the 9th Century, and *assist* came to us from the Middle French of the late-14th and early-15th Centuries.

The “*haunts of dissipation*” are presented as places where pleasure may be sought and found. The Oxford Dictionaries define *dissipation* as “dissipated living.” To *dissipate* in this sense is to “squander or fritter away.” A *haunt of dissipation* is a place someone goes for entertainment, a place where his thoughts are distracted and his cares *dissipated*. Modern examples would be movie theaters, night clubs, and the television in the modern family living room, where countless hours are “frittered away.” (Oxford Dictionaries, “Dissipate” and “Dissipation”)

A candidate for Freemasonry enters the lodge *hoodwinked*. In modern usage, to *hoodwink* someone is to deceive them or “pull the wool over their eyes.” The latter definition is almost spot-on to the original meaning and to the derivative roots of the word. The word is composed of *hood*, an Old English word meaning “a covering” and *wink*, an Old English word meaning “to close

one's eyes." (Harper, "Hood" and "Wink") Thus, the eyes are closed by a covering – a very literal description of what a *hoodwink* is and does.

The working tools of the Master Mason are "all the implements of Masonry *indiscriminately*, but *especially* the trowel." At first glance this seems like a gross contradiction in terms. *Indiscriminately* means "without favor or regard," yet in the very same sentence, the trowel is held up in special regard. In the past, *indiscriminately* has been sometimes used to mean, "taken in general or together as a group," without any qualifiers debarring favoritism. Thus we can take the phrase to mean "all the implements of Masonry in general, but especially the trowel." (Oxford Dictionaries, "Indiscriminate")

A Mason is to be true to his nation and *just* to his country. The first part of this oddly-worded phrase is easily understood by most. To be *true* to someone or something is to be "faithful." In Early Modern English, *just* also meant "faithful." (Merriam-Webster, "True" and "Just") So here we have yet another example of the ritual writers using two different phrases to say the exact same thing – be a patriot.

Masons close a prayer with the phrase, "so *mote* it be." *Mote* is an Old English word that means "might" or "may." Thus, the "so may it be" meaning is mirrored in the Hebrew, *amen*, which means, "so be it."

The new aspirant to the Masonic degrees is introduced to the lodge for the first time as a "*purblind* candidate" – a candidate that is "utterly blind." The word comes from the Middle English of 1250-1300 as two words – *pure-blind*, *pure*, meaning "utterly" (and later assimilated to *pur-*) – and *blind*, "lacking vision." During the 18th Century, when Masonic ritual was being developed, it had also come to mean "lacking vision, understanding or knowledge." (Oxford Dictionaries, "Purblind") Unfortunately, it is almost universally mispronounced as "*poor, blind* candidate" and the significance is thus lost. The use of this term along with the other two expressions with which it is grouped is another example of the ritual writers using three different terms or phrases to say the exact same thing.

In the Third Degree, the whole *scope* and *purport* of the Fraternity are unfolded for our instruction, lifelong study and practice. In this phrase, both *scope* and *purport* have the exact same meaning, "the purpose or intention of something." (Oxford Dictionaries, "Scope" and "Purport") We can be sure that the common modern meaning for *scope* of "extent or area of the subject matter that something deals with" does not apply here, for that would imply that the extent of Masonry is limited to the received ritual of the three Symbolic Degrees. As any Masonic scholar knows, the ritual itself is only the tip of the iceberg of the body of profound truths inculcated by the three degrees, truths that can only be learned by lifelong study and practice. This is another example of the ritual writers using two different words to convey the exact same thought or concept.

The verb *shew* is encountered several times in the ritual, and while almost everyone knows that it means "show," few know that it is also pronounced "show." *Shew* rhymes with *sew*. Another word in this family is *ewe*, "a female sheep." *Ewe* changed pronunciation over time to sound like *you*, but it originally sounded like *yo*, and is still pronounced that way in rural dialects of England, Scotland and Appalachia. (American Heritage Dictionary, "Ewe," "Sew" and "Shew")

The first thing a Mason is to learn to do is to *subdue* his passions. Most people think of subduing their passions in terms of "overcoming them," "quashing them," "beating them down" and "bringing them under control." It is this last definition with which Masons should apply the term. By bringing something under control, one does not necessarily lessen its force or weaken it. When one subdues a workhorse, that person harnesses the full power of the horse for his own purposes. So it should be with our passions. Rather than try to tone them down, stamp them out or

in some other way diminish their power, we should harness the full power of our passions for our use and betterment.

The *Indented Tessel* and the *Tesselated* [sic] *Border* are two terms describing the edge of the Mosaic Pavement that is a representation of the ground floor of Kings Solomon's temple. *Tessellation* is a mathematical term meaning "a repeating pattern made up of shapes which fit together exactly." (Ball, et al., p. 47) When a plane surface, such as a floor, is covered or tiled with regular polygons, such as squares or hexagons, there is unavoidably some space left that is uncovered. In the case of a floor covered with hexagons, the spaces between the hexagons are covered or *tesselated* with diamond-shaped tiles. In the case of the familiar Mosaic Pavement with parallelograms (usually squares or diamonds), the only space left open to be tessellated is the border, which is *tesselated* with triangular tiles to fill the spaces between the outermost rows of tiles and to make a smooth, even edge. (Coexter, 1973)

The name of the lodge's guard, the *tyler* is used nowhere else in the English language except as a proper name which is usually explained as originating as a descriptive name of a trade or profession, one who laid tiles or *tiled* a roof. One of his stated duties, "to keep off cowans and eavesdroppers" is usually used to point toward that origin. According to that theory, the eavesdroppers would lift tiles at the roof's edge to peer into or hear what was being said in the lodge. One flaw with that theory is that until the 16th Century, tiles were used for floors and paving and not so much for roofing.

However, there is another, and possibly more accurate clue to its true origin in the tyler's stated duty. The French word for "to cut" is *teiller*, pronounced the same as *tyler* and *teilleur* means "one who cuts" and is also pronounced the same as *tyler*. (Robinson, p. 225) Interestingly, a stonemason is a *teilleur de pierre*. The *tyler* is "armed with the proper implement of his office" which is a "cutting" instrument. Two meanings of the English word *cut* fit the duties of the *tyler*. "To separate from a group" and to "to refuse to recognize" those unworthy to enter are precisely what the *tyler* does to persons who improperly seek to enter the lodge. (American Heritage Dictionary – "Cut")

Ye, as in, "ye delivered me not out of their hands" is an archaic spelling of the second person pronoun *thee*, the plural of *thou*. Similarly, the word *ye*, as in *Ye Olde Booke Shoppe*, is likewise an archaic spelling of the definite article *the*. The use of the letter *wye*, *y*, was a printer's adaptation of the Old- and Middle English letter *thorn*, þ, the character in the Old English alphabet representing the *th*- sounds in Modern English; *y* was the closest symbol in the Roman alphabet, which over time had supplanted the Old English alphabet. Eventually, the definitive article *ye* took on the modern spelling *the*, and the pronoun *ye* became *thee*, before being dropped altogether for the modern *you* in the late 18th Century. So *ye*, whether used as a definitive article, or a pronoun *ye* was always pronounced "thee." (Oxford Dictionaries, "Ye")

Conclusion

The language of Masonry is the language of 16th Century England. Since most ritual was developed in the late 17th and early 18th Centuries, this artificiality of language served three very practical purposes – to aid in memorization, make sure there was no ambiguity and to convey a sense of dignity and respect for the ritual. Despite, or perhaps because of this pragmatic approach, we are left with a beautiful language that leaves the Masonic candidate with a sense of awe and reverence. While this discussion only touches upon a few of the many idiosyncrasies of Masonic

English and looks at only a few of the most common Masonic words of obscure origin, the references given below can open doors that can send a diligent Masonic researcher down a rabbit hole to wondrous word origins, curious customs, and delightful digging.

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A PILGRIM'S PATH: FREEMASONRY AND THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT, BY JOHN J. ROBINSON

Reviewed by
Michael Adam Neulander, 32°

Rt. Wor. Bro. Neulander is a Past Master of Transportation Lodge # 337, Past District Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, and the first member of the Tennessee Lodge of Research to earn the title of Tennessee Masonic Scholar.

A Pilgrim's Path: Freemasonry and the Religious Right, by John J. Robinson (1918-1996) is an important book that focuses on the anti-Masonic movement that rapidly spread in the 1980's through some fundamentalist Christian churches. The first half of Robinson's book laid out a detailed explanation of the anti-Masonic movement's accusations and his counter arguments to their claims. The second half of his book contains his advice on how Freemasonry should combat the anti-Masonic movement's accusations, so that they do not gain traction among Christian clergy and church parishioners. I think that part of the power of Robinson's book was that at the time of its writing he was not a Freemason; however, he was a great student of the fraternity and gained critical acclaim for his first book *Born in Blood: the Lost Secrets of Freemasonry*. Thus, within the fraternity he was seen as a trusted objective student of Freemasonry who understood its guiding moral principles, as well as an astute researcher who was able to critically refute the anti-masonic argument. Robinson stated that his reason for why he had to write this book grew out of an exciting discovery he made in researching the origins of Freemasonry while writing his book *Born in Blood*. "It appeared that Freemasonry may well have pioneered the very concept of religious freedom, the individual right to worship God according to one's own conscience. That was a purpose far more important than the original purposes which Freemasons usually ascribed to themselves."¹ I found that the preceding quote neatly dove-tailed with Robinson's thesis in this book. His thesis is that since speculative Freemasonry had stressed religious freedom since its first constitution was published in 1723 it had become the enemy of some Christian sects. There are three major subjects of the book that I will write about in this paper which I found important to "illuminating the path of my Masonic journey:" first, Robinson's research concerning the Roman Catholic Church's 1884 encyclical against Freemasonry, second, the Reverend Pat Robertson's virulent anti-Masonic attacks, third, Robinson's advice on how Freemasons should fight these attacks and "shine a light" on how Freemasonry improves the lives of its members and society in general.

The history of Europe and South America during the 19th century is replete with revolutionary uprisings that gave birth to new democratic governments which wound up weakening the political as well as the financial hold over much of the Roman Catholic world. Robinson perceptively noted that the Mexican uprising (1862-67), led by Benito Juárez, the South American revolutions (1807-25), led by Simón Bolívar and General José de San Martín, and the Italian revolution (1859-60), led by Giuseppe Garibaldi all had two factors in common. First, these revolutionary leaders were all Freemasons. Second, all these revolutions brought about religious freedom in former Papal controlled territory and took away vast sums of wealth from the Papal coffers. The Italian Revolution led by Garibaldi really must have especially "raised the hackles" of Pope Leo XIII since it literally took place right outside of the Vatican walls. These uprisings whose leaders were all Freemasons no doubt brought the Craft to Pope Leo's attention when he decided to lash out in 1884 by publishing an encyclical entitled *Humanum Genus*. Robinson pointed out that there were

two main accusations against Freemasonry in the encyclical which made Pope Leo view Freemasonry as working in league with Satan. The first accusation had to do with the danger Pope Leo perceived in allowing Roman Catholics to mix with men of other religious sects in lodge meetings. Pope Leo harbored several fears regarding Freemasonry's acceptance of men from different religions. He was afraid that Roman Catholics being in close social discourse with non-Catholics might cause them to question their own beliefs. More importantly, he feared that Freemasonry was practicing a form of Deism in their lodges. The second activity the Pope found abhorrent in his encyclical was that Freemasons had the freedom to elect their own lodge leaders. Pope Leo was convinced that Masonic religious freedom was "infecting" society as a whole. Thus, Pope Leo drew a direct connection between the Masonic religious freedom as practiced in its lodges and the right of citizens being allowed to vote for political leaders who advocated for the separation of Church and state. Therefore, Pope Leo saw religious freedom as a danger that had to be eradicated. Robinson argued, and I agree as a fellow historian, that Pope Leo was lashing out against Freemasonry over the diminished power and finances it suffered at the hand of all the democratic movements of the 19th century. Finally, the loss over nations who had formerly been led by Roman Catholic monarchies was too bitter a pill for the Pope to swallow; therefore, democracy and Freemasonry became enemies of the Church.²

The second aspect of Robinson's book that grabbed my interest was his chapter *The Media Mogul*; which is devoted to the Rev. Pat Robertson's attacks on Freemasonry. Robertson's anti-Masonic diatribe in his 1991 book, *The New World Order*, is well known to me and other Virginia Freemasons since his "700 Club" headquarters is in Virginia Beach, just a twenty minute drive from where I used to live for over twenty years. Robinson noted that Robertson rehashed in his book one of the oldest canards against Freemasonry; which was, Freemasonry was in league with several other institutions looking to create a "New World Order." "There are several villains involved, including the United Nations and the U. S. Federal Reserve Bank."³ The real target of Robertson's anti-Masonry was Albert Pike's writings in his book, *Morals and Dogma*. Robinson noted that Robertson's anti-Masonic attacks focused on a few lines written by Pike about the Legend of the Egyptian deity Osiris in the Southern Jurisdiction of Scottish Rite Masonry's 24th degree. Thus, Robertson accused the Scottish Rite of promoting pagan religious beliefs to their membership. Robinson accurately refuted this accusation and asserted that Pike's writings were misinterpreted and taken out of context by Robertson's "expert" research staff. It was apparent to Robinson that Robertson really did not do the actual research for the book but actually just "lent" his name to a book written by ghost writers; thus, giving it the possibility of a much wider readership. As a trained historian, it was easy for Robinson to recognize the sloppy work of historical research. Unfortunately, to the untrained reader Robertson's reputation and celebrity in Christian fundamentalist circles would cause readers to simply accept his accusations as "gospel." In fact, Robertson's book was the number one best-selling Christian book in 1991.⁴ Having lived in close proximity to the "700 Club" headquarters; I am reminded how Robertson was viewed almost daily on television by millions of people who "religiously" watched his show. In addition, he was quite a political force in his own right having run in the Republican presidential primary in 1987. However, what I and other Freemasons of Virginia found most ironic was that Robertson's accusations against Freemasons in general, and Scottish Rite members in particular, of being in league with Satanic forces; thus, causing him to accuse his own deceased father, Absalom Willis Robertson, of these vile practices. Robertson's father had been a U.S. Senator and was also an active Freemason in his Masonic lodge and was a 32nd degree Scottish Rite Mason as well. Of

course, we just shook our heads in disbelief when his book was published with these “cheap and ugly” accusations.

As I stated at the beginning of this book review, Robinson gained a great deal of notoriety, especially in Masonic circles, after the publication of his book *Born in Blood*. The thesis of his book was that Freemasonry grew out of the Knights Templar order which had fallen out of favor with the Roman Catholic Church in the 14th century. Interestingly, he became a popular speaker to Masonic meetings because of the popularity of his book and the fact that he was a “defender” of the Craft without being a member. He was happy to “wear the mantle” as a “defender” of Freemasonry; because, while conducting his in depth research about the origins of Freemasonry he became pleasantly surprised by learning that Freemasonry was a great “force for good” in society.⁵ Thus, the second half of Robinson’s book is devoted to advising Freemasons on how to “sell” themselves to non-members by pointing out what a “force for good” they had been since their “modern” origins in the 18th century. Examples that Robinson delineates in his book are how many men who are revered by society were members of the Craft. A quick list includes some of America’s great “Founding Fathers,” or men who went on to start other worthwhile organizations that benefited society; such as, the Boy Scouts, Kiwanis, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Rotary International.⁶ In addition, Robinson tells Freemasons to “shine a light” on their own good works conducted by the members of the many thousands of Masonic lodges and appendant bodies throughout the world. For example, many non-members have heard of and have a positive opinion of the Shriner’s children’s hospitals; however, few people outside of Freemasonry know that Shriners are Freemasons.⁷ I found that Robinson’s most prescient advice to members of the Craft was to understand that we are not a “secret” organization; but rather, “an organization that has a few secrets.” Robinson relates a conversation he had with the wife of a young and new Freemason. When she asked her husband what he did at lodge meetings she was told by him that he was sworn to secrecy from telling anyone, including his wife, about what took place at his lodge meetings. Saddened by her story, Robinson, who was not a member of the Craft at the time, educated this woman on some of “the great moral principles” of Freemasonry and informed her about the many good works Freemasonry conducted on a daily basis.⁸

In essence, what Freemasons only swear to keep secret is certain: “grips,” “signs of recognition,” and “passwords.” For years I have often been saddened at the thought of our great fraternity missing the chance of initiating hundreds of thousands of men due to our own ignorance about what we can divulge about our Craft to the un-initiated; especially our sons, grandsons, nephews, and close friends. It is for this reason as much as Robinson’s well-articulated defense of Freemasonry that I recommend this book should be read not only by Freemasons; but, their family members, and their clergy as well.

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2. Ibid., 24-32.
3. Ibid., 62.
4. Ibid., 62-72.
5. Ibid., 1-9.
6. Ibid., 138-147.
7. Ibid., 161-163.
8. Ibid., 120-127.

HISTORY OF PLEASANT GROVE LODGE #138 F&AM OF MAURY COUNTY, TN

By
Michael Adam Neulander, 32°

LODGE CHARTER AND HISTORY

Pleasant Grove Lodge #138 at Maury County Tennessee was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Tennessee on October 5th, 1848. MW Bro Hardy Murfree Burton and the Grand Secretary John L. Dashiell signed The Charter. Our charter stationed officers were WM Isaac Newton Bills, SW Dr. Andrew. T. Boyd, and JW William K. Leetch.¹ The lodge had 28 members at the time of its charter. Unfortunately, my preliminary investigation to uncover biographical information concerning our charter officers is sparse at this time. The lodge's first meeting place was originally the second story over the Pleasant Grove Male Academy; that the lodge paid for and had built. The Academy's location was on land on what is now known as Scott Hollow Rd; which is about two miles west of the lodge's present location. The lodge did not hold meetings during the Civil War owing to constant military operations taking place in the vicinity due to both sides desire to control the railroad network in the area.²

In 1868, the lodge paid \$3,000.00 to erect its new building; built by John Williams, of Pulaski, it still meets in the building to this day. Wor. Bro. Rev. William Harris Wilkes deeded the land to the lodge on September 2nd, 1869. I have not found any evidence of a Masonic corner stone ceremony having taken place for the building. However, the lodge was dedicated on December 27th, 1869 on Saint John's Day; the lodge was opened with much pomp and ceremony. In the 1920's the Culleoka Lions Club met in the Lodge. Throughout the years, the Lodge also hosted the Culleoka Country Christmas Event, The Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts. The lodge is listed as one of the oldest buildings in Culleoka in the book *A Century of Culleoka Memories*.³ 1910 to 1920 the lodge saw its smallest membership. In 1914, the lodge had a membership of only seventeen men.

LODGE PERSONALITIES

Isaac Newton Bills Charter Wor Master of the lodge, not much info however two Isaac Newton Bills were buried in the "Bills" cemetery, dates 1773-1821, 1812-1854, this latter dated burial is possibly our man. The Bills Cemetery was originally located in Glendale, Maury County, the grave markers were moved from the Bills Cemetery to their current location in the Rose Hill Cemetery about 1995 when the property was sold, and the new owners did not want them there.

Dr. Andrew T. Boyd, charter Senior Warden of the lodge. Was a son of James Boyd, whose father was a soldier under Generals George Washington and Nathaniel Greene during the Revolutionary War and was in the battles of Monmouth and King's Mountain and served throughout the remainder of the war. James Boyd was born in Davidson County, Tenn., and there married Elizabeth Henderson, a native of North Carolina. James was a tiller of the soil and departed this life in 1825. Elizabeth was a member of the Presbyterian Church and died in 1860. Andrew T. Boyd began studying medicine and took a course of lectures at Lexington, Ky. "He afterward attended the University of Philadelphia, Penn. He practiced his profession successfully for about twenty years, and then retired from active duties. In 1879 he married Miss L. Curthirell. In the late war he was surgeon in the Forty-eighth Tennessee Regiment for one year. He is now a Democrat, though formerly a Whig, and belongs to the Masonic fraternity, Royal Arch Degree."⁴

The Wilkes Brothers (Seven members total)

Rev. William Harris Wilkes was born on 7 May 1821 in Culleoka, Tennessee to Richard Ambrose Lipscomb Wilkes and Judith Harris, natives of Virginia who immigrated to the Maury County, Tennessee area in about 1806. He died on October 15, 1895. He was the charter secretary of the lodge in 1848. He served as Worshipful Master in 1858-88, 89, 90. Wilkes was known as both W. H. and Billy to his friends and family. W. H. was educated at the Triune and Pleasant Grove schools in Maury County. In 1839, at the age of 18, he entered into the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Over the years he was appointed to preach in various towns in Tennessee, including Springfield, Wartrace, Mt. Pleasant, Spring Hill, Pulaski, Franklin, Nashville, and Columbia. On 6 Jun 1848, he took his first wife, Mary Kennedy Amis, daughter of Thomas Amis and Hannah Gordon Kennedy. They were blessed with the birth of four children. In Dec 1855, just six months after the loss of his son, Thomas, his wife, Mary, passed away. On 1 Jan 1857, he took his second wife, Zurilda Amis, the younger sister of his first wife, Mary. He and Zurilda were blessed with the birth of one daughter. In about 1854, Wilkes made his mark on the history of Maury County, Tennessee. He platted the town of Culleoka and will ever be remembered as “the father of Culleoka.” In 1860, his wife, Zurilda, died of consumption. Wilkes later took a third wife, Elizabeth Jane Martin Johnson. On 15 Oct 1895, in front of the Masonic Lodge in Culleoka, Wilkes was struck by a train and killed. He had become hard of hearing and did not hear the train coming and stepped into its path. He was laid to rest at the Wilkes-Campground Cemetery in Culleoka, near both Mary and Zurilda and his son, Thomas Paul. His 3rd wife was later buried next to him when she passed away in 1902.⁵

Washington Lafayette Jefferson Wilkes, born September 28th, 1824, died June 18th, 1887. He was a charter member of the lodge in 1848. He served as Worshipful Master in 1866, 71, 73, 83. Washington Lafayette Jefferson Wilkes was born just one month after Major General and Masonic Brother; Marquis de Lafayette arrived in New York harbor to embark on his “Grand Tour” on the nation’s 50th anniversary. An incredible fact that proved how revered Lafayette was by our nation’s citizenry is that “over 600 American villages, cities, counties, mountains, lakes, rivers, educational institutions and other landmarks would bear his name.” There is no doubt in my mind that this baby naming was further proof of how Lafayette’s visit “touched the lives” of so many Americans.

Richard Sparkes Wilkes, born 27 Dec 1829 Culleoka, Maury County, Tennessee Died 6 Nov 1863 (aged 33) in Aberdeen, Monroe County, Arkansas. He was the brother of Rev. William Harris Wilkes. He served as Worshipful Master of the lodge in 1856 and 1857. He served during the war in (Clack's) 3rd Regiment, Tennessee Infantry, Co. E, with the rank of Pvt.

Milton A. Wilkes Joined the Lodge in 1867, he demitted 1872.

Col. John B. Wilkes, born 1820, died September 9th. 1883. Affiliated with the lodge in 1875, served as Worshipful Master in 1879.

George W. Wilkes, born February 22nd, 1834, died August 24th, 1853. He was raised in the lodge in 1875, Demitted in 1879.

Cpt. John L. Wilkes, born November 7th, 1845 died February 27th, 1928 (aged 82). He was raised in the lodge in 1870. He served during the war in “11Th Tenn. Cav.” “C.S.A. Co. E, CAPT ANDREW GORDAN’S CO.”

Cpt. Merritt Booker Tomlinson

When one investigates the long history of the lodge one cannot help but to notice that there was one man whom; due to his incredible longevity of life and the amount of time he devoted to working in the Masonic “quarries” of the Lodge, stands out as the Lodge’s “patron saint,” Cpt. Merritt Booker Tomlinson. Wor. Bro. Tomlinson born August 10th, 1840, lived until the age of 99 when on March 5th, 1939 he was called upon by the Grand Architect of the Universe to “lay down his working tools and travel to that celestial lodge above.” Tomlinson served in the 48th Tennessee Infantry as a quartermaster officer during the Civil War. Since the lodge went “dark” during the war; the first time Tomlinson shows up in lodge records is when he is reported having affiliated with Pleasant Grove Lodge #138 on August 12th, 1865. It is believed that he was raised a Master Mason in 1862, most likely, in one of the many “travelling military lodges” that existed during the war. In 1866, Tomlinson served as Junior Warden and embarked on his long career serving the lodge as an officer until 1921, a total of 55 years. He served as Worshipful Master for the first time in 1869; an office he would serve in for a total of 10 times, 1897 being the last time he was Worshipful Master of the lodge. Worshipful Brother Tomlinson served in every office of the lodge except Chaplain and Tyler. In 1921 he had served as Treasurer of the lodge for the 3 preceding years. I can only assume that 1921 probably marked the last time he attended lodge which was most likely due to his advanced years and his not being able to climb the stairs to the lodge room.

His obituary states that, “During the Civil War he served as a Captain in Co. F, 48th Tenn. Inf.; and as Provost Marshal in Walthal’s Division of the C.S.A. On 12 Sep. 1866 he married Miss Mildred Dillard and she bore his four sons and five daughters. He was the last of almost 3,500 Confederate veterans of Maury County to die and had the distinction of being the only surviving officer of the Confederacy in the entire country at the time of his death.”⁶

Worshipful Brother Tomlinson’s longevity started to bring him notoriety in several newspaper articles in his last years of life. The first one appeared in “Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro” dated April 6th, 1937. It describes him as a ninety-six-year-old veteran observing a parade in Columbia. The following quote is what I find most remarkable about the article. “Capt. Tomlinson, the oldest of the three surviving veterans in Maury County, is a lover of horses and an accomplished rider. He still rides horseback frequently and shows remarkable horsemanship for one of his years.”⁷

The second article in “The Tennessean,” dated August 10th, 1938 is about Tomlinson observing his 98th birthday. The article describes him as a past commander of the Tennessee division of United Confederate Veterans. He entered the war at the age of twenty-one as a 1st Lieutenant, mustered out in April 1865 in Greenville, NC as a provost marshal with the rank of captain. Tomlinson was known as “a great student of history and an authority on Civil War questions.”⁸ Unfortunately, Brother Tomlinson went blind in 1937 which essentially made him curtail his many activities that he enjoyed throughout his long and “storied” life.

The last article before Tomlinson’s death was dated January 8th, 1939. It describes a remarkable achievement for its day. “Probability that Capt. Merritt B. Tomlinson, Maury County’s only surviving veteran, has been a Mason longer than any other person in the United States was expressed here this week following receipt of a letter from a Minnesota Masonic Lodge.”⁹ The article further explains that a man in Minnesota had been a Mason for seventy-five years and Tomlinson at the time had been a member for seventy-seven years according to Grand Lodge records. He passed away two months after the publication of the article.

Winn and Wynn

Franklin Lafayette Winn, (another great patriotic name), was born on May 20th, 1831 died 1894. He affiliated with the lodge on August 13th, 1856. He was expelled from Freemasonry 1857, reason given was as follows: “LIVING IN UNLAWFUL INTIMACY WITH HIS BROTHER’S WIDOW, HE AND HIS BROTHER BOTH BEING MASTER MASONS AND HE HIMSELF BEING A MASON NOW.” (From Lodge annual return).

James Winn was born January 26th, 1812 in North Carolina. He died April 27th, 1881 in Maury County Tn. He affiliated with the lodge on May 12th, 1866, demitted November 10th, 1867.

Nathan W. Wynn joined the lodge in 1916, a member until he died on October 18th, 1943.

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4. Ibid, 165.
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6. Gray, 56.
7. "Confederate Vet, 96, Views Columbia Parade," Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro Tn., April 6, 1937, p. 4..
8. "Gen. Tomlinson Observes 98th Birthday Today," The Tennessean, Nashville, Tn. August 10th, 1938, p. 3.
9. "Maury County Man Believed Oldest Mason," The Tennessean, Nashville, Tn. January 8th, 1939, p. 3.

HISTORY OF EVENING STAR LODGE #180 F&AM OF CLAIBORNE COUNTY, TN From the Desk of the Historical Committee

Evening Star Lodge #180 was granted a dispensation from Rising Star Lodge #44 in June 1849 and was officially chartered under the Grand Lodge of TN in December 1849. Tristram Day Knight was both the first Worshipful Master of Evening Star Lodge and the first Junior Warden of Rising Star Lodge. Evening Star Lodge's first Junior Warden, Hugh Houston, was also Rising Star Lodge's first candidate. Over its history, Evening Star Lodge has granted further dispensations for the following lodges: Sneedville Lodge #277 (1859), Unity Lodge #378 in Rob Camp (1868-1927), Powell Valley Lodge #488 (1868), East Cumberland Gap Lodge #546 (1889, now Shawanee Lodge), and Pleasant Lodge #581 (1892, now Big Spring Union Lodge).

Evening Star Lodge first met in the home of Claiborne County Clerk and Senior Warden T. J. Johnson, having been purchased by the lodge for that purpose. The Lodge held its first installation ceremony at the Presbyterian Church using Rising Star Lodge's jewels for the installation of the officers. On St. John's Day, 1851, the Lodge worked in conjunction with the Tazewell Chapter Sons of Temperance to lay the cornerstones for a Masonic Hall at the corner of the current Church and Court Streets in Tazewell. The Hall was two stories tall, with separate rooms on the second floor for each organization, a belfry, and a stone chimney kept by an unidentified African-American slave. The first floor was designated for the Tazewell Female Academy, incorporated in 1854 and elevated to the status of Tazewell College in 1856. The lodge began meeting in the tavern house of Hugh Graham, Esq., in November 1854 until the completion of the first floor of the Masonic Hall. The first St. John's Day event in the Masonic Hall took place in 1855, and work was finalized on the upper portion of the Hall in September 1860. During this time period, Tazewell Female Academy had three teachers: Mrs. Morrison, J. W. Hodges, and Mary McAmis.

On June 7, 1861, the regular election of officers was pushed to December in anticipation of TN seceding from the Union the next day. The Confederate Army occupied the town after the Battle of Tazewell on August 2 1862, and there are no minutes of the lodge from that point until the Confederate departure and the town fire in November 1862. The lodge then met irregularly until finally going dark in December 1863, when the lodge minutes were collected for preservation until the end of the Civil War. Though the lodge was dark, the Masonic Hall was one of the least damaged town buildings during the war, and the Chancery and Circuit Courts met in the Hall while the County Courthouse underwent repairs. In her book *Blue Skies, No Fences*, Lynne Cheney also details the story of the Hall serving as a hospital for her ancestor, Andrew Simon Peter, who had lapsed into a coma due to wartime injuries.

Tazewell College was reopened under the tutorship of Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Dunbeck after the Civil War, but a request to open a "Negro school" in the Hall was denied. C. C. Webb opened an all-male school in February 1872, which was replaced by a boys and girls school taught by Mr. Western in August 1872. The pupils of Mr. Western were held responsible for the "willful destruction" of the Lodge's original charter the next month, and a decision to ban them from further use of the building was quickly repealed due to the lodge's dedication to education in the county. J. J. Harris took over as teacher of the school in 1874. Sallie M. Butters replaced him in 1877. Prof. J. B. Dodson was allowed the use of the Hall in 1886 to teach calisthenics, but the growing movement in the state for public education facilities impacted discussion on the school. In August 1905, a motion was made to create a board of trustees of Tazewell College for the 1906 year, which Worshipful Master E. E. Epps declined to entertain due to his belief that the motion was out of the

lodge's jurisdiction. P. G. Fulkerson, another Worshipful Master of the lodge, granted land for the building of Claiborne County High School in 1910, and the students were allowed to meet in the Hall during construction. The Lodge's treasurer's books indicate that A. F. Snodgrass, C. J. Chapman, J. J. Williams, Minnie Zwicker, and Viola Essary were teachers during this period.

The Masonic Hall was also host to several organizations during the Golden Age of Fraternalism, including the Good Templars (after the departure of the Sons of Temperance), Cumberland Gap Chapter #12 Grand Army Republic, Heath Chapter #2 OES, Tazewell Chapter #232 OES, Intermont Lodge Knights of Pythias, the Colored Oddfellows, Tazewell Lodge #383 IOOF, Tazewell Chapter #162 RAM, the Woodmen of the World, the Modern Woodmen, and the Perry Business School. The Hall's first story was repaired for use as a reception room in 1872, and was converted into a town hall in 1886 so meetings would not conflict with the school. The building was covered in white weatherboard and had a privy installed in 1890. Extensive repairs were approved in 1893 that included removing the stairway and expanding the downstairs to give more room for the town hall. The Secretary was then given permission to rent the hall for "lectures, public speaking, and moral entertainment," which was revised to exclude events featuring "dancing or dancing purposes" in 1902.

However, repairs on the building became increasingly difficult to fund. The lodge was put into a trust deed in 1917 to generate revenue. After much discussion, a new lodge building was constructed in New Tazewell in 1950 with the lodge once again meeting on the second floor. The first floor was leased to Torbett Auto Supply until their relocation, at which point the first floor was converted into a lodge dining hall. The original Masonic Hall was sold to Hugh and Octavia Welch. Tazewell Chapter #232 OES and Tazewell Chapter #162 RAM continued meeting in the new building as well. The new lodge was host to the Claiborne County Key Club in 1959, and the Town of New Tazewell and the New Tazewell Merchants Association throughout the 1960s. Members of the three masonic bodies cosponsored Tazewell Assembly #94 Order of the Rainbow for Girls from 1959-1989. Evening Star Lodge also worked with neighboring lodges to sponsor the Claiborne County DeMolay in the 1970s. Members of these bodies have included Jody Duncan, Grand Worthy Advisor of the TN Grand Assembly Order of the Rainbow for Girls 1987/88; Janice Derreberry, Grand Organist of the Grand Chapter of TN Order of the Eastern Star 2002/03; Earl Creech, Grand Master of the First Veil of the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons of TN 2005, and Deputy District Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of TN F&AM 2007; and Jeff Fannon, Grand Conductor of the Grand Council Cryptic Masons of TN 2005, and Grand Sword Bearer of the Grand Lodge of TN F&AM 2011.

WHAT IS ESOTERIC MASONRY?

By
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This turned out to be a challenging question to cover in 40 minutes, so I apologize if some subjects pertaining hereto are inadequately explained. Most of what I present today will be from the work of European university professors who are non-Masons, but who are scholars of the cultural phenomenon, “Western esotericism,” which has been with us since the Renaissance and which, these scholars assert, influenced speculative Masonry from its birth.

Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary defines *esoteric* as:

- 1a. Designed for or understood by the specially initiated alone
- 1b. Requiring or exhibiting knowledge that is restricted to a small group: difficult to understand
- 2a. Limited to a small circle
- 2b. Private, confidential
3. Of special, rare, or unusual interest (Miriam-Webster, Incorporated, 426)

Wikipedia’s *Wiktionary* adds to these “Having to do with concepts that are highly theoretical and without obvious practical application; often with mystical or religious connotations.” (Wiktionary)

At first glance, all of Masonry seems to fit this definition. Masonry is definitely for the specially initiated alone, it is restricted to a small group—a small circle and it is confidential. Definition 3 is suspect—you would think, or hope, that charity, friendship, morality, and brotherly love would not be “special, rare, or unusual” among men. But the “high degrees” of Masonry can delve into such unusual subjects as alchemy, hermeticism, the ancient mysteries, and chivalric orders of knighthood. So, is all of Masonry essentially esoteric?

Brother Arturo De Hoyos, who addressed us last spring, has written that

On a deeper level, and in a Masonic context, the word *esoteric* is usually taken to mean that our ceremonies and rituals allude to realities and/or truths not generally understood, or which may have a spiritual component to them.

The term [esoteric] is tainted to some people, and acceptable to others; hence, it may not be easy to wholly accept or discard the term “Esoteric Masonry.” Like an onion, each esoteric layer successively builds upon the other. We can all agree that Masonry is intended to be understood by few, and that it’s a kind of specialized knowledge.

But the questions are, “What kind of specialized knowledge?” and “Are they real secrets?” Depending upon one’s inclinations, the Master Masons Degree has been interpreted in a variety of different ways by different persons. For some, it’s a story of

fidelity; for others, it teaches hope in the immortality of the soul; for still others, it's a lesson in alchemy; and yet for still others, it alludes to the discovery of entheogens [chemical substances of plant origin ingested to produce a non-ordinary state of consciousness]. Some see [Masonry] as multi-faceted, or a combination of various things. But, as I have written elsewhere, we should avoid trying to enshrine our preferred interpretations as the “true” one. . . .

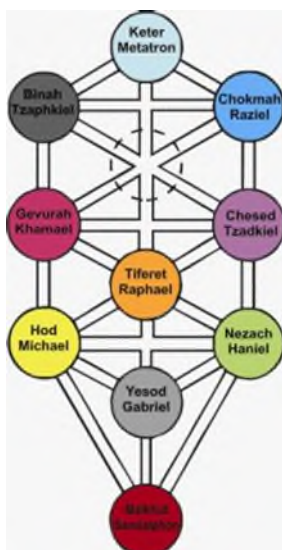
When someone describes himself as an “esoteric Mason” it often means that he perceives, and embraces, what appear to be aspects of the “Western Esoteric Tradition” in our rituals; i.e., some affinity to the symbolism of Hermeticism, Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, Kabbalah, etc. Freemasonry is an eclectic organization and, at various times, we have borrowed the language and symbols of these and other traditions. The question is, do our rituals really teach these things as realities or do we use them to stimulate thought—or both? As we are told in the 30°, Knight Kadosh, we should not mistake a symbol for the thing symbolized. In some cases, I believe that is what has happened, while in others, I believe we do indeed have vestiges of other traditions. But even when they are there, they may be only one layer thick on our Masonic onion (De Hoyos 4-5).

De Hoyos makes reference above to the “Western Esoteric Tradition.” According to British historian and Professor Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, this tradition has its roots in “a religious way of thinking, which reaches back to Gnosticism, Hermeticism, and Neoplatonism in the Hellenistic world during the first centuries A.D. In the Renaissance, the rediscovery of ancient texts led to the scholarly revival of magic, astrology, alchemy, and Kabbalah. Following the [Protestant] reformation, this spiritual current gave rise to theosophy, Rosicrucianism, and Freemasonry. . . .” (Goodrick-Clarke 3) So, according to Goodrick-Clarke, Freemasonry arose out of this “Western Esoteric Tradition.”

French Professor Antoine Faivre defines “western esotericism” as “a form of thought which consists of four intrinsic and two secondary constituting components.” These are:

1) Correspondences—the belief that there are symbolic and concrete correspondences between all parts of the universe. Man is a **microcosm**, and a reflection of, the universal **macrocosm**.

This idea is vital to the three “royal arts” of Western esotericism: astrology, alchemy, and magic. For example, the belief that the seven planets and seven metals have a correspondence to specific parts of the human body. Important to the Kabbalah is the notion that Biblical scriptures are in harmony with nature, and the study of one will yield greater knowledge about the other (Bogden 10). The Bible teaches you about nature—nature teaches you about the Bible.



2) Living nature—the entire universe is alive and the things of nature are “linked” by a network of sympathies and antipathies (Bogden 11). The sympathies and antipathies of herbs, stones, etc. can, according to this view, be utilized to produce healing, chemical reactions, and other effects.

3) Imagination and mediation—through the creative imagination, a relationship is established with the macrocosm. The imaginative faculty

of man is of great importance. Some traditions make use of angels, Kabbalistic sefirot, and other devices to “mediate” the macrocosm.

4) Experience of transmutation—ascend to a higher plane or personal transformation – “second birth”—as a result of knowledge gained through active imagination and mediation between macrocosm and microcosm. This is connected to the idea of initiation—the initiate goes through a transmutation as he goes through the rites of initiation (Goodrick-Clarke 10, Bogden 11).

The two secondary components of the Western esoteric tradition are:

5) Praxis of concordance—finding similarities between different traditions—connecting similar ideas from Pythagoreanism, Neoplatonism, hermeticism, Christian mysticism, and Kabbalah to synthesize a “perennial philosophy”—the idea that all these traditions sprang from a single, ancient, divine source—a *prisca theologia*.

6) Transmission—the notion that the teachings of a given tradition can only be passed from master to disciple through a path of initiation according to set rules (Bogdan 10-11).

The secondary component of “transmission” is very Masonic. We definitely adhere to Transmission—our teachings can only be passed via initiation according to set rules. The “praxis of concordance” component can be found in the higher degrees, especially in Albert Pike, who saw similarities between different traditions and did infer a *prisca theologia* that originated with the ancient Aryans and informed Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, and influenced other traditions that came in contact with it and its derivatives. The fourth Primary Component of the Western Esoteric Tradition, the “Experience of Transmutation” is, in my view, most definitely Masonic. The three Degrees of Masonry are designed to facilitate the transmutation of a good man, making him better.

Professor Henrik Bogdan of the University of Gothenburg in Sweden and author of *Western Esotericism and Rituals of Initiation* defines “esotericism” as “a Western form of spirituality that stresses the importance of the individual effort to gain spiritual knowledge whereby man is confronted with the divine aspect of existence.” According to Bogdan, the knowledge of the esotericists is of a revelatory and experiential nature: the adherents of this tradition emphasized the importance of inner enlightenment or gnosis—a revelatory experience that mostly entailed an encounter with one’s true self as well as with the ground of being, God.

Western esotericism can thus be viewed as a third pillar of Western culture, a form of thought that took a middle position between the other two pillars of doctrinal [Christian] faith and [Greek] rationality (Bogdan 5-7).

Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, Professor of Western esotericism at the University of Exeter in England, asserts that the Western esoteric traditions have their basis in certain distinct patterns of thinking about the divine, man, and the universe which stretch back into classical antiquity. These patterns concern correspondences between a higher divine reality, the universe, the earthly realm, and human beings; the idea of a living, ensouled, or animated universe; notions of spiritual intermediaries in the form of hierarchies, planes, and angels acting as a ladder of descent and ascent between the higher and lower worlds; and the idea of the human soul’s transmutation through reawakening and returning to these higher worlds. These patterns of thought are found in such ancient teachings as Alexandrian Hermeticism, Neoplatonism, theurgy, and to a limited extent in

Gnosticism, which all originated in the eastern Mediterranean area during the first few centuries A.D. (Goodrick-Clarke 15)

Professor Antoine Faivre, who formulated the components of Western esotericism, asserts that Western esotericism makes use of secrecy in its esoteric discourses, and does so in three ways. Some texts can be “designed to mean something other than what they appear to mean at face value” and the author can seem “desirous to give the impression that he conceals while revealing and reveals while concealing.” Professor Bogdan asserts “that the interplay between concealing and unveiling forms an important aspect of Western esoteric rituals of initiation as well, where each degree often points toward a further secret for the initiate to penetrate.”

Professor Jan Snoek of the University of Heidelberg asserts that Masonic ritual always has more than one meaning, but it is only the persons who are initiated that know which other meanings are definitely intended. He calls this the “allusive method”—the act of alluding to other things. Snoek asserts “The allusive method always refers to more than one layer of meaning. There are not only the primary meaning of the phrase used, and the immediate allusive meaning, but, for someone who is amenable to it, at least one extra meaning is added. . . .” (Bogdan 46)

This, in my view, is the essence of Esoteric Masonry—more than one meaning carried by a given text of ritual. Esoteric Masons infer multiple meanings and references to each part of the ritual—non-Esoteric Masons believe the text of the ritual is best restricted to its literal meaning.

Let me propose some examples.

There are a prolific number of esoteric interpretations assigned to the Hiramic legend. Here is a sampling of eight of these:

- The legend of the death and rejuvenation of the Egyptian god, Osiris
- Expulsion of Adam from Paradise
- The entry of Noah into the Ark
- Death and Resurrection of Christ
- The murder of Thomas Becket
- Persecution of the Templars and the death of Jacques DeMolay
- Execution of King Charles I of England
- A representation of Old Age (Madhavan)

I believe that later today you will hear an esoteric astronomical interpretation of the Hiramic legend, which, because microcosms reflect macrocosms according to Hermeticism, will have application to the spiritual life of man from that Hermetic standpoint.

A sampling of esoteric interpretations of the Three Rufians is:

- ignorance, prejudice, and greed (Madhavan)
- ignorance, superstition, and fanaticism
- Judas, Caiaphas, and Pilate
- the three autumn months
- the three winter months
- repression of speech, conscience, and thought (Cholka)
- perverted thought, uncurbed emotions, and destructive actions (Hall, Lost Keys of Freemasonry)

Alchemy was mentioned earlier as one of the three “royal arts” of Western esotericism. *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* defines alchemy as

1) a medieval chemical science and speculative philosophy aiming to achieve the transmutation of the base metals into gold, the discovery of a universal cure for disease, and the discovery of a means of indefinitely prolonging life; 2) a power or process of transforming something common into something special; 3) an inexplicable or mysterious transmuting. (Miriam-Webster, Inc. 29)

Brother Timothy Hogan, author of *The Alchemical Keys to Masonic Ritual*, writes that alchemy is:

the process of taking something of a “lower” or “lesser” valued nature, and transmuting it into something of a “greater” or “more valuable” nature. This process is always done through the action of heat or fire. On a physical level, it has been compared to turning lead into gold. On the moral level in Masonic symbolism, it may be compared with turning the rough ashlar into the perfect ashlar through the heat produced by the action of the gavel of will. Psychologist Carl Jung equated it with turning from a will-less person to a self actualized individual through the action of the “heat” of daily trials and tribulations. On a spiritual level, it relates to the individual coming to a closer understanding and connection with their God through right moral actions, prayer, and meditation during times of hardship.

The end product of the alchemical process was the “Philosopher’s Stone” which turns base metals into gold, prolongs life, and stimulates consciousness. (Hogan, *Alchemical Keys* 9-10)

In Brother Hogan's view, the three craft Degrees allude to alchemy. The penalties of the three Masonic bodies divide the human body into the three main parts of fire (MM), air (FC), and water (EA) "as outlined by the penalties of these obligations in the three degrees." Hogan states, "it is the action of fire, air, and water on earth that makes the Philosopher's Stone [of alchemy]." These elements are contained in the Hebrew version of the name, Hiram Abiff, "ChRM Abiff." "Fire, in Hebrew, is **Chamah**, and relates to the head. Air, in Hebrew, is **Ruach**, and relates to the chest. Water, in Hebrew, is **Mayim**, and relates to the abdomen. The first Hebrew letter of each word spells "ChRM." "It is the fire, air, and water that need to be rediscovered in the alchemical process

to 'raise' the dead earth—or transmute matter from its dead to its alive and spiritualized state." (Hogan 19)

Hogan's book, *The Alchemical Keys to Masonic Ritual*, delineates how, in his view, the three degrees of Masonry outline the alchemical process.

Earlier I mentioned Kabbalah, which is a key part of the Western esoteric tradition that emerged in the Renaissance. Kabbalah in Hebrew means "reception" or "to receive." It is a tradition of esoteric Jewish mysticism that provided a way of approaching God directly (Britannica.com). Johannes Reuchlin's *De artes cabbalistica* made the Kabbalah available to Christian Europe and ultimately brought about its integration into Western esotericism during the Renaissance (Bogdan 57-58).

Gematria is the substitution of numbers for letters in the Greek and Hebrew alphabets—a method used by Kabbalists to derive mystical insights into sacred writings or obtain new interpretations of the texts. The number equivalents of the letters of a word or phrase or sentence are summed, and words, phrases or sentences having the same sum are deemed to be related.

Here we see a table of these numbers to letter equivalencies. Since the Hebrew and Greek alphabets both derive somewhat from the Phoenician alphabet, many of the letters line up, as you can see.

As another example of esoteric Masonry, in his book, *The 32 Secret Paths of Solomon*, Brother Timothy Hogan compiles lists of words and phrases used in the ritual which would be deemed related by

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Aleph	א	Ⲁ	1	A α	•	Alpha	A
2	Beth	ב	Ⲃ	2	B β	•	Beta	B
3	Gimel	ג	Ⲅ	3	Γ γ	•	Gamma	G
4	Daleth	ד	Ⲇ	4	Δ δ	•	Delta	D
5	He	ה	Ⲉ	5	E ε	•	Epsilon	E / H
6	Vau	ו	Ⲑ	6	F	•	Digamma	Fv / V
7	Zain	ז	Ⲓ	7	Z ζ	•	Zeta	
8	Heth	ח	Ⲕ	8	H η	•	Eta	
9	Teth	ט	Ⲗ	9	Θ θ	•	Theta	
10	Jod	י	Ⲙ	10	I ι	•	Iota	I / Y
11	Caph	כ	Ⲛ	20	K κ	•	Kappa	C / K
12	Lamed	ל	Ⲝ	30	Λ λ	•	Lambda	L
13	Mem	מ	Ⲟ	40	M μ	•	Mu	M
14	Nun	נ	Ⲡ	50	N ν	•	Nu	N
15	Samech	ס	Ⲣ	60	Ξ ξ	•	Xi	
16	Oin	ע	Ⲥ	70	O ο	•	Omicron	O
17	Pe	פ	Ⲧ	80	Π π	•	Pi	P
18	Tzadi	צ	Ⲩ	90	Ϛ	•	Episemonbau επισημων βαυ	
19	Koph	ק	Ⲫ	100	Ρ ρ	•	Rho	R
20	Resh	ר	Ⲭ	200	Σ σ	•	Sigma	S / Sh
21	Shin	ש	Ⲯ	300	Τ τ	•	Tau	T
22	Tau	ת	Ⲱ	400	Υ υ	•	Upsilon	U
	Caph FINAL		Ⲛ	500	Φ φ	•	Phi	
	Mem FINAL		Ⲟ	600	Χ χ	•	Chi	
	Nun FINAL		Ⲡ	700	Ψ ψ	•	Psi	
	Pe FINAL		Ⲧ	800	Ω ω	•	Omega	
	Tzadi FINAL		Ⲩ	900	Ϛ	•	Sanpi	

Column 1: Names of the Hebrew Letters; 2: Samaritan letters; 3: Hebrew and Chaldean letters; 4: Numerical equivalents of the letters; 5: Greek letters; 6: Letters marked with asterisks are those brought to Greece from Phoenicia; 7: Names of Greek letters; 8: Nearest English equivalents.

this "interpretive science" of Gematria. Brother Hogan states

Due to the frequency of these significant number patterns in Masonic ritual, I personally have to believe that it may have been by design. I would also like to emphasize that the system of Freemasonry was largely developed in its current form by brothers who

would likely have been learned in both Greek and Hebrew, and it would not be unreasonable to assume that they utilized both while compiling aspects of the ritual.

Here are three of Brother Hogan's lists.

Greek

Cornerstone: γωνια (Ionia)

$$3+800+50+10+1 = 864$$

Holy of Holies: Αγίων (Agion)

$$1+3+10+800+50 = 864$$

God: Θεων (Theon)

$$9+5+800+50 = 864$$

Jerusalem: Ιερουσαλημ (Ierousalem)

$$10+5+100+70+400+200+1+30+8+40 = 864$$

Hebrew

Hiram Abiff: חורם אביו [Churam Abiu]

$$8+6+200+40 + 1+2+10+6 = 273$$

The Stone which the builders rejected:

אבן מאסו ה בונימ

[Eben Masu Ha-Bonim]

$$1+2+50 + 40+1+60+6 + 5 + 2+6+50+10+40 = 273$$

Hebrew and Greek

Receive: וקבלו (Qabal)

$$6+100+2+30+6 = 144$$

Blow: נפוח (Napush)

$$50+80+6+8 = 144$$

Forehead: מצחו

$$40+90+8+6 = 144$$

Lazarus: λαζαρε (Lazare--Greek)

$$30+1+7+1+100+5 = 144$$

“After the blow to the forehead is received, each brother is raised like Lazarus.”--Bro. Timothy Hogan. (Hogan, *32 Paths of Solomon*, 67-71)

What are some other ways in which Masonry is esoteric—what are some other allusions to extra meanings that confront the candidate with some divine aspect of existence? About these, you will hear more in the other presentations today. But suffice it to say that, using the components of

Professor Antoine Faivre's Western esoteric paradigm, whenever there is in Masonry an allusion to man being a reflection of some greater part of the universe, Masonry is esoteric.

Whenever nature is linked by sympathies or antipathies (light from the East, the North is a symbolic place of darkness), Masonry is esoteric. Whenever a candidate is experiencing a new degree in which he is being raised, elevated, exalted, knighted, or in some other way undergoing a transmutation in which he experiences a mediation between the macrocosm and the microcosm, Masonry is esoteric. Whenever there is an allusion to similarities between different traditions that convey a universal truth, Masonry is esoteric. Whenever a candidate swears or vows to only communicate the content of a degree during that degree, or in an appropriate setting, Masonry is esoteric.

Professor Bogdan asserts that

it is the experience of the ritual that constitutes the message—or perhaps more adequately, the experience *and interpretation* of the ritual is the esoteric message. It is often claimed that the secrets of Freemasonry and similar orders are noncommunicable, despite the fact that the rituals themselves have been revealed to the public. In other words, the purpose of the secrecy is not so much a matter of keeping the rituals secret as to keep that which is non-communicable secret. . . . In [Antoine] Faivre's words:

Esoteric transmission cannot, so it seems, unveil secrets. Rather, it is the non-communication of what is not transmissible that constitutes the secret.

Ergo, the secret of a Western esoteric ritual of initiation is the experience of undergoing the ritual—an experience that by definition is non-communicable. The experience of undergoing a ritual of initiation is tantamount to that of a mystical experience, and one characteristic of mystical experience is the difficulty in expressing and describing it verbally. Jan Snoek has commented on the masonic secret:

The secret . . . is just the experience of going through the ritual of the first degree, which turns one into an entered Apprentice Freemason. Like any other experience this cannot be communicated to someone else in any other way than letting that person go through it as well, which will turn him automatically into a Freemason too. So, this is the kind of secret which cannot be divulged.

Furthermore, previous scholars like [Micrea] Eliade have stated that a rite of initiation is supposed to change the innermost nature of the initiate and thereby make him or her into a new person. In my opinion, this is also the case in Western esoteric rituals of initiation, but it is not so much the experience as the interpretation of it that has a transmutative effect upon the initiate. Esoteric discourses . . . and rituals of initiation . . . are essentially interpretative. It is through an act of interpretation of the experience of the ritual, *and the ritual as such*, that the ritual of initiation becomes an initiation in the strict sense of that word. The interaction of experience and interpretation is essential to the understanding of rituals of initiation. **Without the experience** there is nothing but meaningless symbols for the esotericists to interpret, and **without the interpretation** the experience fails to become initiatic (Bogdan 47-48).

If I, as an Entered Apprentice, do not spend a material amount of time interpreting what I have been through, I have not really been initiated and I will probably not contact my mentor to learn my lectures. Also, the physical experience of the degree is essential. This is why I am skeptical of one-day classes where one watches one's craft degrees from the sidelines as a spectator.

Bogdan points out that

many of the esoteric symbols encountered in the rituals are of a religious or philosophical nature.... Through the rituals the initiates are thus able to reach a knowledge concerning the relationship among God, nature, and man. Scholars . . . have emphasized the importance placed on the *experience* of undergoing the rituals, and this experience . . . has a direct relation to esotericism as *gnosis*—a revelatory knowledge. One further aspect of masonic rituals of initiation in this context is the importance placed on the individual interpretation of the ritual, not only during the ritual, but also afterward. The initiates often return to the ritual, not only in the capacity of officiating initiators, but as spectators of the ritual (Bogdan 171-172).

Today I have presented the academic definition of Western esotericism. I suggest that “esoteric Masonry” is the use of symbols in Masonic ritual to allude to Christianity and/or traditions and elements of Western esotericism, such as alchemy and Kabbalah. I suggest that any time a Mason infers that a symbol is serving multiple purposes at once, and alluding to something beyond its literal meaning, he is engaging in esoteric Masonry. Was it the intent of the ritual authors to plant clues that would lead us to the traditions, arts, and sciences of Western esotericism? Since “our origin is covered with darkness and our history is, to a great extent, obscure,” we can only speculate. I guess that's why we're called speculative masons.

In closing, the Southern California Research Lodge polled its membership, asking them to name their top ten Esoteric authors. Here is the result of their poll.

1. Albert Pike, 33°, S.G.C.
2. Manly P. Hall, 33°
3. Arturo de Hoyos, 33° G.C.
4. W. L. Wilmshurst
5. W. Kirk McNulty
6. Eliphas Levi
7. Timothy Hogan, 32° KCCH
8. Angel Miller
9. Robert G. Davis, 33°, G.C.
10. C. R. “Chuck” Dunning
(Southern California Research Lodge, 7-18)

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**THE SHORT TALK BULLETIN
OF THE MASONIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION
OF NORTH AMERICA, JANUARY 2019**

The Meaning of L.I.F.E.

By
Brother Lawrence E. Bethune

Recently installed as Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, gave these edited remarks at the Feast of St. John the Evangelist celebration.

--STB Editor

Because of my brotherly love for all of you, I want to give you all a gift tonight. I want to reveal to you the answer to one of life's greatest secrets; the meaning of life.

I found the meaning of LIFE... Masonic Life... Leadership, Inspiration, Fellowship, and Education. L.I.F.E.

Through remembering the word "LIFE" and the letters that make up the word, I can easily focus every day on the tools I need for helping improve good men through Freemasonry.

Let me start with the third letter of LIFE; "F" for Fellowship. Fellowship is the most important tool in my bag. It is the very foundation of our beloved Fraternity. Fellowship is the breeding ground for all of our glorious dreams, ideas, and advancements. Let us not underestimate the power of good fellowship. Good fellowship directly impacts our happiness—and our effectiveness.

Studies show that groups of friends consistently out-perform groups of acquaintances, in both decision-making and achievement of their goals.

When friends work together, they are more trusting and committed to one another's success; they rejoice in each other's prosperity; and as long as they don't hold back on constructive criticism, and deal on the level with each other, they make better choices and get more done.

Fellowship allows us to develop and practice trust and respect—between and among each other. Trust and respect are the pillars of good human relationships. And good Fellowship can be just plain old good fun for the sake of having a good time.

The second letter of LIFE is "I" for inspiration.

The word "inspire" itself means to breathe life into," to fill someone with the urge or ability to do or feel something. As leaders, we need to inspire the good within the good man, the good that is yearning to rise up, and to flow out of each of us. We must help the good man find his internal spark, his genuine passion, his true fire.

Let me tell you a very short story to demonstrate this concept of intrinsic, or internal motivation, versus extrinsic or external motivation.

There once was an old man who lived in a house on a quiet cul-de-sac.

Every day at 4:00 o'clock, he would settle down in his easy chair by the front window to relax with a nice cup of tea and a good book.

One day, while reading his book, five neighborhood teenage boys decided to skateboard in his cul-de-sac while blasting their boom-box. These rambunctious boys were very noisy. The poor old man could not relax, he could not read his book; his quiet oasis was destroyed—this was very upsetting.

So, the old man thought—just how could he resolve this problem? After a while, he went down to the cul-de-sac and confronted the boys. He smiled and quietly told them that he really appreciated that they were skateboarding near his house and making so much noise. He feared he was losing his hearing, but their sounds elated him, he could hear them clearly; he was overjoyed that he was NOT losing his hearing.

He was so thankful that he offered to pay each of them \$1 to return every day and be as noisy as they liked. This made the boys very happy, and they easily agreed to be noisy every day, and for the next few days the old man came out and paid them each \$1 to be noisy.

After about a week, the old man told them that he could not afford to pay them \$1 each anymore, but that he could pay them 50 cents, instead. The boys were not very happy about this but, after thinking it over, they agreed to keep coming every day, and skateboarding, and making noise. The old man paid them 50 cents each for another week.

But, at the end of the second week, the old man told them that he could not afford to pay them at all anymore, but asked them to be noisy for free. The boys were outraged and refused and decided to go elsewhere to skateboard, never to be seen by the old man, again.

We must continuously search for our inspiration and hold onto it tightly. What inspires you? I'm inspired by being among all of you; men of honor and integrity, full of Brotherly Love. You are why I wanted to a member of this honorable society.

We all know one reason that bad men and weak Lodges do not get better is that they have not found or they have lost their secret inner spark, that “good” that is inside them; and sadly, they are not willing or able, or do not know how to help themselves.

As our Masonic lessons have taught us: though others may assist us, we cannot rise toward the perfect ashlar unless we employ our own exertions; the Grand Architect helps those who help themselves.

The fourth letter of LIFE is “E” for education. I was fortunate to work for the New England Patriots for 18 years where I learned a lot about the differences between instruction, training, and education.

Instruction is when I show you how to grip and throw a football. Training is practicing throwing that football over and over again. But education draws out that which is within you—your drive, desire, innate knowledge, passion, persistence, talents, understanding, and the myriad of other secrets within you that can turn you into Tom Brady.

The word “education” means to lead or draw out that which is within. Every Lodge could morph itself into a Lodge of Inspirational Education. Our ritual and our education need to soar beyond instruction and training. Our ritual is education, and it must inspire. What a beautiful thing it would be if instruction and ritual went hand-in-glove with Fellowship, Inspiration, and Education.

Lastly, the first letter of LIFE is “L” for leadership. We in this room have hopes and dreams beyond fellowship, inspiration, and education, for we have answered the call to be leaders of men.

As Masonic leaders, we must teach good men our wonderful Masonic values. We must proclaim our principles as widely as men will hear them. I believe that one of the best ways to do this is through leadership by example. We must live and demonstrate our Masonic values every day and through every interaction with others.

I want to reflect for a moment on our duty and the magical power that we in this room possess to help good men become better men. We have the power to lead this Grand Lodge to rise to become the Grand Lodge of Inspiration and Education.

You are the leaders who realize what makes Freemasonry different than other fraternal orders. Freemasonry is special because of our love, respect, and honor for true inspirational education dedicated to bringing out the best in ourselves and our fellow Masons.

What a glorious and inspiring vision I have before me. Men of honor. Men of integrity. Men full of brotherly love and affection for each other. How fortunate I am to be among such men who are my Brothers and my friends. To LIFE!

FEBRUARY 2019

A Panegyric to George Washington

By
MW Bro. Simon R. LaPlace

Close to April 30, the George Washington Inauguration Reenactment Committee of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York, and the National Park Service celebrate that first inauguration at Federal Hall National Memorial. Brother Simon R. LaPlace, Past Grand Master of Connecticut and now Executive Secretary of the Masonic Service Association of North America, was invited to speak at the event on April 29, 2016, by then Grand Master William J. Thomas and the Grand Lodge of New York.

The reference to the “Panegyric to Schoenberg” is more accurately titled “A panegyrick to the memory of His Grace Frederick, late Duke of Schonberg” by H. de Luzancy. The Duke of Schonberg was a marshal of France and a General in the British and Portuguese Army. He was killed at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.

--STB Editor

Honored members of the Grand Lodge of New York Free and Accepted Masons, and fellow citizens of the United States of America, we are here today to remember, to honor, and to celebrate what men of vision began 227 years ago. They had put their lives and fortunes at risk because they could no longer endure the humiliation of being second class British citizens. This came from a spirit of independence, a certain knowledge that, although men were created equal, every man must have the right of self-determination and personal liberty to live their lives without domination or adversity.

One man above all others stood out not only as a symbol of this ideal but as a very real example for all to follow. President, General, and our Brother, George Washington. Although he considered himself uneducated because he lacked schooling, the schooling that his father and his father’s sons had achieved in English schools, George Washington taught himself.

He learned surveying, military tactics, and was a voracious reader. Above all else, he taught himself how to act like a gentleman by a moral code that would forever be his compass.

One of the first books George Washington bought as a young 15-year-old was *A Panegyric to Schoenberg*. It is an ode to a past military leader who exhibited honor and virtue throughout his life. For a young Washington, the exploits of this illustrious general set an example for the young man that was to be his rule and guide throughout his life. The following words praising Schoenberg could certainly apply to General Washington.

“To be great and good is extraordinary and difficult. To be intent to overcome ourselves as our enemies is the highest improvement of virtue.” “His duty was his only passion, and the discharge of the noble truths put into his hand his only pleasure.” “He was in his different employments the only person who did not praise his own actions, as silent as if he had not been concerned in the things that were said of him, and in this truly great, to be above the mean insinuation of flatterers.”

When we look at the various portraits of President Washington, we should see the iron will, the determination, the dignity of the man. It was those traits he brought to his every endeavor.

Throughout his life, he accepted positions that required maturity at an early age upon the death of his father, responsibility as a Virginia military officer during the French and Indian War, as a negotiator while president of the Continental Congress, and as the commander in chief of revolutionary forces. And after each term of service ended, he attempted to retire to his farm on the Potomac River.

Finally, not in desperation, but as a call of need to the one who had served his country so well, the new republic called on him to lead it into a new era of government. He knew his every step set an example, from the organization of the executive branch of government, his cabinet of opposites, his interpretation of the new constitution, even his farewell address eight years later. Much was asked of him.

He knew the importance of the ceremony reenacted today, and we should never forget the man who was first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen. For this country, there was no one else who could do that duty than George Washington.

So, as we pause to reflect on the multifaceted genius of Brother George Washington, we would do well to learn more about this man. We would do well, and we and our country would benefit if we could infuse into our daily lives the values which shaped the life of Brother George Washington.

After all, as John Adams noted, "His example is complete, and it will teach wisdom and virtue to magistrates, citizens, and men, not only in the present age but in future generations."

Thank you.

MSA's *Short Talk Bulletins* include numerous references to George Washington. Here are a few:

Vol. 10, No. 2, February 1932

Facts for Speakers about George Washington, Master Mason by Carl H. Claudy

Vol. 11, No. 7, July 1933

Our Masonic Presidents by Carl H. Claudy

Vol. 20, No. 2, February 1942

Freemasonry's Monument by Carl H. Claudy

Vol. 30, No. 10, October 1952

Washington, The Man by Carl H. Claudy

Vol. 47, No. 1, January 1969

Arise and Fear No Danger (A Talk for Washington's Birthday) by A. Douglas Smith

Vol. 51, No. 1, January 1973

This Great Triumvirate of Patriots by Conrad Hahn

Vol. 54, No. 4, April 1976

Washington, the Friend of Masonry by Erford W. Poole

Vol. 55, No. 3, March 1977

"1977—You Are There!" (I) by Ronald E. Heaton

Vol. 67, No. 2, February 1989

The First Inauguration - Patriotic and Masonic by Kenneth R. Force

Vol. 69, No. 2/3, February/March 1991

George Washington: A Truly Remarkable Man by James C. Rees

Vol. 68, No. 4, April 1990

Washington and the Society of the Cincinnati by Alexander A. Bleimann

Vol. 71, No. 2, February 1993

George Washington Masonic National Memorial—Proud Memorial or Forgotten Legacy?
by Donald M. Robey

Vol. 76, No. 11, November 1998

George Washington: Some Personal Facts by James C. Rees

Vol. 79, No. 3, April 2001

The DeWint House by C. F. William Maurer

The MSA store has these digests available about George Washington:

Washington and NYC

Washington's Home and Fraternal Life

Washington Portfolio

MARH 2019

Freemasonry and the American Revolution

By
Bro. Robert A. Pruett

Brother Robert A. Pruett from North Carolina prepared this talk for his Sons of the American Revolution chapter.

Over the last two centuries, various Masonic writers have often attempted to inflate the involvement of members of the Masonic Fraternity in the events leading up to and resulting from the signing of the Declaration of Independence. These claims have been made to bolster the theory that the events of the American Revolution and the formation of the American colonies into an independent republic were carried out according to some Masonic plan and by universal Masonic principles.

It is always best that such claims be tempered by the light of responsible and accurate historical research, not to discount the patriotic nature of our early American Masonic forbearers, but rather to understand the role that Freemasons did play in the formation of this great nation. Probably the best accounting of Masonic membership among the signers of the Declaration of Independence is provided in the book *Masonic Membership of the Founding Fathers*, by Ronald E. Heaton, published by the Masonic Service Association.

According to this well-researched and documented work, positive proof of Masonic membership can be found for only eight of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence. They are:

- Benjamin Franklin
- John Hancock
- Joseph Hewes
- William Hooper
- Robert Treat Payne
- Richard Stockton
- George Walton
- William Whipple

Additionally, another five or six signers have from time to time been identified as members of the Fraternity based on inconclusive or unsubstantiated evidence.

As for the Masonic membership among Washington's generals, it is true that many were members of the Fraternity, but many were not. The recognized modern authority on the subject is former Grand Historian James R. Case of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, who published his findings in the 1955 booklet *Fifty American Military Freemasons*.

When examining the participation of Freemasons in the American Revolution, we should first remember the Ancient Charges of a Freemason and especially that charge concerning "the Civil Magistrates, Supreme, and Subordinate." This charge enjoins the Mason to be "a peaceable subject to the Civil Powers" and "never to be concern'd or involved in plots and conspiracies against the peace and welfare of the nation." This charge was listed as the second of those contained in the

Constitutions adopted by the Premier Grand Lodge at London in 1723, long before the American Revolution. How then can we justify the participation of American Freemasons in their rebellion against the King?

The answer can be given in two parts. First, the Masonic Fraternity in the American colonies took no part in the Revolution, following Masonic tradition by taking no official stance. However, the fraternity's official neutrality may have owed as much to the divided loyalties of its leadership as it did to Masonic tradition. Many Masons were Loyalists. And second, rebellion against the state, whether justified or unjustified, is not a Masonic offense. The Old Charges state clearly "if a Brother should be a Rebel against the State . . . if convicted of no other crime . . . they cannot expel him from the Lodge, and his Relation to it remains indefeasible." Simply put, in the case of the American Revolution, many brethren, feeling that the actions of the Crown warranted revolution and independence, were justified in following their consciences without fear of violating their Masonic obligations or any Masonic law.

As the charge concerning the Civil Magistrates reminds us, "Masonry hath been always injured by War, Bloodshed, and Confusion." The Fraternity was indeed injured by the war. General Joseph Warren, Grand Master of the Ancient's Provincial Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, lost his life at the Battle of Bunker Hill in June 1775 and his body was thrown into an unmarked grave. While he had led the American troops during the battle, his lodge brother, Dr. John Jeffries, assisted the British troops. Nearly a year later, his body was exhumed and identified by another lodge brother, Paul Revere.

Even before the Declaration of Independence, colonial Masonry suffered from the disruptions of the war and the divisions of loyalties among its members. Many lodges found it difficult to meet regularly, and others ceased to meet at all. Many lodges were disbanded as occupying British forces prohibited private assemblies, and loyal Masons fled the colonies or joined the British forces.

Although the Masonic Fraternity played no part in the Revolutionary War, it can easily be shown that in many ways the revolutionary ideals of equality, freedom, and democracy were espoused by the Masonic Fraternity long before the American colonies began to complain about the injustices of British taxation. The revolutionary ideals expressed in the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of independence, and the writings of Thomas Paine, were ideals that had come to fruition over a century before in the early Speculative lodges of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, where men sat as equals, governed themselves, and elected their own leaders from their midst. In many ways, the self-governing Masonic lodges of the previous centuries had been learning laboratories for the concept of self-government.

Down through the years we have been free to dream, to explore, to invent. We have been free to work, to achieve, to accumulate. We have been free to venture and if we failed—to venture again and again. We have been free to spend our money or to save it. We have been free to climb from lowly beginnings to positions of power, honor, and trust. We have been free to rise from rags to riches. But as we enjoy these blessings, we should always remember that freedom can be lost and that it will be lost if we take it for granted. Freedom is a sacred trust—one which we must protect and pass on inviolate, unblemished. It is our children's birthright—ours to hand to them and their children.

On September 18, 1793, President George Washington, dressed in his Masonic apron, leveled the cornerstone of the United States Capitol with the traditional Masonic ceremony.

At that moment, the occasion of laying of the new Republic's foundation, Freemasons assumed the mantles "high priests" of that "first temple dedicated to the sovereignty of the

people,” and they “helped form the symbolic foundations of what the Great Seal called ‘the new order for the ages.’”

In closing, please consider that “A Mason is not necessarily a member of a lodge. In a broad sense, he is any person who daily tries to live the Masonic life, and to serve intelligently the needs of the Great Architect.”

And a quote from a Masonic Brother: “Being persuaded that a just application of the principles, on which the Masonic Fraternity is founded, must be to promote private virtue and public prosperity, I shall always be happy to advance the interests of the Society, and to be considered by them as a deserving brother.”

[Signed] George Washington.

APRIL 2019

Nebraska's Return to Proficiency

It is newsworthy that the Grand Lodge of Nebraska has succeeded in putting the "toothpaste back in the tube" after previously letting go of the requirement of proficiency of candidates.

In a move rarely seen in Masonry, delegates at the Grand Lodge of Nebraska's 2019 Annual Communication abandoned 30 years of candidates memorizing a meager number of words to advance in the degrees and voted to return to learning full-form proficiency.

While it may be surprising that two-thirds of the voting delegates approved the longer proficiency, sentiment has long been building for the full-form version that sustained Nebraska Masonry for over 125 years.

In 1989 the requirement for learning the full-form answers ended, replaced with a short manual that focused on Freemasonry's history and philosophy. It contained readings about each degree, questions to answer, and very short proficiency memorization.

Masonic leadership justified this significant reduction citing the greater potential to attract men because of an easier memorization requirement.

From 1986 to 1988, the number of men raised averaged 277. Then from 1990 to 1992 an average 443 men were raised, a 62 percent increase.

However, between 1992 and 2017, except for coincidental spikes, the number of men raised began a steady and drastic decline. It wasn't unusual for seasoned members who learned the full-form proficiency to reminisce with candidates about their time spent with a mentor. That relationship, they were often told, created a strong bond between them as well as with the lodge.

Many new members, especially in recent years, recognized what they missed. They felt deficient because they weren't offered the opportunity to form that same close bond with a mentor. Some felt strongly enough that they memorized the answers with a mentor anyway and presented them in lodge.

After seeing more and more suspensions for nonpayment of dues, then-Deputy Grand Master Dean Skokan developed an Enrollment Program. It relied on lodges to assign a mentor to serve as a teacher, advisor, and friend for each candidate. "But nothing compared to the mentoring received through 'posting,'" MW Scott Krieger said, referring to learning the full-form answers for proficiency. "Lodges never fully embraced our substitute mentoring program." In 2014 MW Thomas Hauder recommended a by-law change authorizing lodges to increase their own proficiency requirements. Numerous lodges in Lincoln, Omaha, and other cities across Nebraska increased their proficiency requirements.

New members of those lodges gained self-confidence and interest in performing ritual work. A larger number of brothers in the state began seeing how these changes had a positive impact. Lodges regained the ability to confer degrees without outside help.

Nebraska's corps of Deputy Grand Custodians (DGCs), who examine lodge ritual performance, faded fast after 1989. With less than one Mason per year becoming certified "Individually Proficient" in the work, DGC ranks dwindled. As many aged, they held onto their position in hopes others would replace them. Unfortunately, that rarely occurred, and many Nebraska districts didn't have a DGC for years. Thus, no one coached those lodges on ritual work.

After a survey by DGCs of Nebraska's 130+ lodges in 2017, two thirds were found unable to confer degrees because members didn't know ritual. Many believed this was because of the "then-long-standing" shorter proficiency. As experienced ritualists died, there were not enough others willing to memorize the parts, creating a major void in the work of lodges.

In response, then-Grand Junior Deacon Patrick Garger, a DGC and later Grand Master, was appointed to address these ritual challenges. After assessing the status of lodge ritual, he implemented a strategic plan establishing several Grand Lodge ritual programs.

It began with the first-ever Individual Proficiency School, convened in five cities over a year and was taught personally by Brother Barger and his DGC Apprentices. This initial class generated over 50 new Masons certified in memorizing the esoteric words of Nebraska ritual. In the following years and to this day, Brother Barger's Apprentices and other DGCs conduct them.

As an augmentation to the Individual Proficiency School, Grand Master Barger created the Grand Lodge College of Ritual featuring DGC instructors teaching extended lectures such as the "Middle Chamber," "Second and Third Section Entered Apprentice," and "Second and Third Section Master Mason."

Lastly, Brother Barger created the Full-Form Answers School for all three degrees. Led by WB John Herbolsheimer with assistance from other DGCs, this class focused on the "Questions and Answers."

In 2018, Grand Master Barger established a Grand Masters Coin for Full-Form Proficiency Excellence in all three degrees. He bestowed his coin on new Masons who voluntarily chose to learn and do an excellent job in reciting the full-form answers. With the overwhelming success of this program alone, MW Barger was inspired to make a Grand Master's Recommendation to restore the full proficiency requirements to historical standards.

Also, in 2018, MW Barger created the new Deputy Grand Custodian at Large program. With the 2017 repeal of a by-law requirement limiting the number of DGCs in Nebraska, the Grand Lodge of Nebraska is poised to assist lodges anywhere in the state. The requirement for DGCs to live in or near their district (which left many districts without one) no longer exists.

All these efforts to recapture the brotherhood, a greater understanding of Masonry, and the Hiramic Legend had a tantalizing effect on the brothers who participated. Prospects for passing MW Barger's recommendation to return to the full-form proficiency at Nebraska's 2019 Annual Communication were promising. A year earlier, the required two-thirds majority barely failed with 62 percent of the delegates in favor.

In 2018, the need for full-form proficiency was advocated through a massive statewide public relations campaign during visits to lodges and in statewide leadership classes. Articles in the monthly *Nebraska Mason* and on the Grand Lodge website also raised awareness of the need to restore the mentoring aspect of learning full-form proficiency.

Leaders of Nebraska's lodges were reminded that the bond created when a new Mason is mentored in the catechism by a seasoned brother is something neither forgets. It ensures candidates understand the nature and purpose of the Fraternity and makes them less likely to walk away from it because of a lack of emotional depth.

"Making it quick and easy to become a Mason only makes it quick and easy for them to leave us," MW Barger said. "Full-form proficiency ensures a candidate invests something of himself in the Fraternity, making him much less willing to throw it all away by leaving."

At the Annual Communication in February 2019, delegates pushed the vote above the required two-thirds majority.

Congratulations are due to the brethren of Nebraska who recognize the value of instilling the tenets of Masonry in men who come to our fraternity in search of it!

MAY 2019

American League Masonic Hall of Famers

Brothers Cary Cohn and Lee Roof of New York researched and found Baseball Hall of Famers who were Masons. Each playing position was filled for both leagues. Their findings were first published in the Winter 2017 issue of Empire State Mason. Here is the American League "team." Next month: the National League.

An investigation of how Masonry has permeated the game of baseball over time fills a Mason with both pride and pleasure. Living by the square, mental and physical toughness, and a modest nature helped many individuals to be better baseball players, coaches, managers, or executives. The old principles of living by the square, coupled with good fellowship, guided by the lessons we are taught in the lodge rooms, better prepared and contributed to the careers of forty-two Masons who have been inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. These brothers learned to win in the game of life.

Of the 323 members of the Baseball Hall of Fame, 226 are Major League ballplayers, thirty are baseball executives, twenty-two are managers, ten are umpires, and thirty-five are players from the Negro Leagues. This last group of men played before integration—which began with Jackie Robinson—was instituted by a Mason, Branch Rickey, of Lucasville Lodge No. 46, Lucasville, Ohio. Of the first five hard-ball players inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, three were Masonic brothers. The first induction class was held in 1936, and the men are known as "The Immortals." "Fantasy baseball" has been a large part of American culture for many years. The following is a list of an American League fantasy team composed of Hall of Famers in their playing positions. They are Masons, all.

Tyrus "Ty" Raymond Cobb, "The Georgia Peach," American League (AL) center fielder, Detroit, Michigan (his Shrine fez is on display at the Hall of Fame). He led the American League in batting twelve times and created or equaled more Major League records than any other player. As a center fielder in the AL, he had a career batting average of .367 after 11,434 at-bats, in a twenty-four-year stretch of 3,033 games. He retired with 4,101 hits. An AL active player between 1902 and 1928, he was inducted in 1936. *Royston Lodge No. 52, Detroit, Michigan.*

Denton True "Cy" Young, "The Cyclone" or the "Grand Old Man of Baseball," AL pitcher, was the only pitcher in the first 100 years of organized baseball to win 500 games (511). Over his career, he threw from three different pitching distances as baseball aged. In a twenty-two-year career that spanned five different teams, he pitched the most innings pitched in baseball. His 7,536 innings were 1,300 more than his closest competitor in baseball history—in either league. He was active from 1890-1911 and inducted in 1937. *Mystic Tie Lodge No. 194, Uhrichsville, Ohio.*

Tristram "Tris" Edgar Speaker, known either as "Spoke" or "The Gray Eagle," AL outfielder, had 11,995 at-bats in a total of 2,789 games, producing 3,514 hits and a .345 lifetime batting average. He played for four teams in his twenty one-year career. He had three hitting streaks of 20 or more games in a single season (1912). He taught Brother Will Rogers how to use a lariat. An active AL player between 1907 and 1928, he was inducted in 1937. *Hubbard City Lodge No. 530, Hubbard, Texas.*

Earle Bryan Combs, "The Kentucky Colonel," AL right fielder. He was a lifetime New York Yankee. He led the league in hitting triples three times. He was the lead-off hitter on some of the most successful teams of the 1920s and 30s. With a .356 batting average, he was a part of

“Murderers’ Row” that led to eleven pennant-winning teams and nine World Series Championships. Earle was active from 1924-1935 and inducted in 1970. *Richmond Lodge No. 25, Richmond, Kentucky.*

James Emory Foxx, “Double XX,” “The Beast,” AL first base. A first-baseman extraordinaire, he was noted for his batting, particularly as a home run hitter from 1925-1945. He appeared in 9 All-Star games and hit over 500 home runs in his career. In the 1930s, Jimmie was the AL’s home run leader four times, RBI leader three times, and was three-time batting champion. He managed the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, immortalized in the movie *A League of Their Own*. Active from 1925-1945; inducted in 1951. *George W Bartram Lodge No. 298 (now George Bartram Paul Sand), Media, Pennsylvania.*

Edward Trowbridge Collins Sr., “Eddie,” “Cocky,” AL second base. Famed as a second-baseman, base runner, batter, and field captain, his career batting average was .333. He was second only to Ty Cobb in modern base stealing. In the year 1910, he not only had 188 hits in 583 at-bats, but he also stole 81 bases successfully. He is a member of the “3,000 Hit Club,” with 3,313 in 2,826 games. There are in total 32 members of this exclusive group in baseball as of May 2019. He was an active player from 1906-1930 and inducted in 1939. *Solomon’s Lodge No. 196, Tarrytown, New York.*

Joseph Wheeler Sewell, “Joe,” AL shortstop. Nobody in baseball history was tougher to strike out than Joe. In 7,132 at-bats, he struck out only 114 times! That averages out to one in sixty-three at-bats, or roughly once in 17 games. He went the most consecutive games without a strikeout (115). His 40 oz. “Black Betsy” was the only bat he used during his career. In 1930, after 353 at-bats he only struck out three times. He had another three seasons with only four strikeouts per season. Active from 1920-1935, he was inducted in 1977. *Tuscaloosa Lodge No. 785, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.*

John Franklin “Home Run” Baker, AL third base, was another shining star of baseball’s “dead-ball era.” He was the best power hitter of the time, 1908-1922, utilizing a 46-ounce bat. He was inducted thirty-two years after his last played game. He led the AL in home runs, thus his nickname. He played in six World Series. Over his thirteen year Major League career, he never played any other position than third base. He was the symbol of power at that time. He was inducted in 1955. *Coats Lodge No. 102, Easton, Maryland.*

Gordon Stanley “Mickey” Cochrane, “Black Mike,” AL catcher, first with the Philadelphia Athletics, then with the Detroit Tigers. He was considered to be the best catcher in fifty years in his time. His batting average was .357 in 1930. He was Connie Mack’s starting catcher, and in his career, he was player, coach, and manager. He was a two-time All-Star, two time AL MVP and three-time World Series Champion. He became the first Major League catcher to score 100 runs and produce 100 RBIs in the same season. He twice “hit for the cycle” (single, double, triple, home run in a game) during his career. On May 25, 1937, he was hit in the head by a pitch, which nearly killed him and resulted in his retirement as a player. In that year he was hitting .357. His all-time manager’s record was 348 wins/250 losses. He was an active player from 1925-1937 and inducted in 1947. *Fellowship Lodge, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.*

Obscured by the sands of time, the deeds of great baseball superstars and accomplished Freemasons may be forgotten. We, however, must remember that Freemasonry is a way of life that can make every one of us a super star—maybe not as a great sportsman, but as a traveler in the human race.

JUNE 2019

National League Masonic Hall of Famers

The National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, celebrates the men who have made key contributions to America's Pastime.

RW Brother Cary Cohn and Brother Lee Roof researched and found Baseball Hall of Famers who were Masons. Each playing position was filled for both leagues. Their findings were first published in the Winter 2017 issue of Empire State Mason.

The May 2019 Short Talk Bulletin discussed the American League players who were Masons. Presented now is the National League Masonic Hall of Famers team.

Johannes Peter "Honus" Wagner, "The Flying Dutchman," National League (NL) shortstop. He was made famous, among other things, by the rarity and beauty of his baseball card—the Holy Grail of baseball card collectors—the last one of which sold for over three million dollars in October 2016. He was considered to be the best shortstop in baseball history of his time. He scored more runs, made more hits, and stole more bases than any other player in the National League. NL active player from 1897-1917. Inducted in 1936. *Centennial Lodge No. 544 (now Centennial-Lafayette), Carnegie, Pennsylvania.*

Edd J. Roush, NL right fielder, was a two-time National Batting Champion and he used a 48-ounce bat. He played with seven different teams but is associated mostly with the Cincinnati Reds. In his time, he held the record for the most outfield put-outs. He won the World Series in 1919. He claimed never to have broken a bat. Active from 1913-1931, he was inducted in 1962. *Oakland City Lodge No. 467, Oakland, Indiana.*

James Leroy Bottomley, "Sunny Jim," NL first base. Always in a good humor, thus "Sunny," he set the all-time single game record of 12 RBIs on September 16, 1924. This record stands to this day (tied by Mark Whiten in 1993). In 1929 he had seven homers in five days. Jim was active between 1922 and 1937. He was inducted in 1974. *Nohomis Lodge No. 456, Nohomis, Illinois.*

William Jennings Bryan Herman, "Billy," NL second base, was the master of the hit-and-run play. A ten-time All-Star, he holds the NL record of most put-outs by a second baseman. He had 200 or more hits in a season three times and played in four World Series. In 1935, with a .341 batting average, he amassed 227 hits and 57 doubles. Starting play in 1931, he finally rose to Manager of the Boston Red Sox in 1964. He was an active player 1931-1947 and inducted in 1975. *Perseverance Lodge No. 973, Chicago, Illinois. (This lodge had eleven active players in MLB, two of them Hall of Famers.)*

William Boyd McKechnie, "Deacon," NL third base, played Major League ball for seven different teams from 1907-1920, and then went on to manage five more teams. Player, coach, and manager, he was the first to win pennants with three different teams. He played every position in the infield except catcher. He was the first manager to win a World Series with two different teams. Active player from 1907-1920 and inducted 1962. *Orient Lodge No. 590 (no longer exists), Wilkinsburg, PA.*

Raymond William Schalk, NL catcher, had the pleasure of catching four no-hitters and one perfect game. He served as a player, coach, manager, and scout. He had 177 career stolen bases as a runner, a record that still stands. He is credited with being the first catcher to back-up infield throws to first and outfield throws to third in the evolution of how the game is played. An active player

between 1912 and 1929, he was inducted in 1955. *Litchfield Lodge No. 236 (no longer exists), Litchfield, Illinois.*

Rogers Hornsby, “The Rajah,” NL second base, must be mentioned here as both a shortstop and second baseman of great renown. After playing for seven different teams, he produced a .358 lifetime batting average in a career spanning twenty-three years as a player. In 1924 his average was .424, which is a standing Major League record of the 20th Century. He was a seven-time batting champion of the National League. His Shrine fez is on display at the Hall of Fame. An NL player from 1915-1937; inducted in 1942. *Beacon Lodge No. 3, Hazelwood, Missouri.*

We pay tribute to these pioneers of America’s favorite pastime and close with the following attributed to Honus Wagner, “There ain’t much to being a ball-player, if you’re a ball-player.”

Other Masonic Hall of Famers

Brother Nathan Tweedie, manager of on-site learning at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and brother of Ostego Lodge No. 138, Cooperstown, provided the following information:

Pete Alexander, Richie Ashburn, Dave Bancroft, Ernie Banks, Charles Bender, Jim Bottomley, Mordecai Brown, Morgan Bulkeley, Alexander Cartwright Eddie Plank “Happy” Chandler, Bobby Doerr, Bob Feller, Frankie Frisch, Clark Griffith, Burleigh Grimes, Ned Hanlon, Will Harridge, Bucky Harris, Waite Hoyt, Carl Hubbell, “Cal” Hubbard, American League Umpire, Travis Jackson, Addie Joss, Ted Lyons, Larry MacPhail, Eddie Matthews, Bill McKechnie, Hal Newhouser, Herb Pennock, Sam Rice, Branch Rickey, Eppa Rixey, Red Ruffing, George Sisler, Bill Terry, Joe Tinker, Pie Traynor, Dazzy Vance, Zack Wheat, Hack Wilson

The story that Abner Doubleday created baseball is an interesting myth. Doubleday, a well-regarded Union general in the Civil War, probably was not a Mason. However, there have been several Doubledays who were members of Ostego Lodge No. 138 in Cooperstown, New York.

The baseball field at the Hall of Fame is named Doubleday Field.

JULY 2019

Whither Masonry

The following is an edited article printed in the March 2019 Montana Freemason and used with permission.

No Mason who has the good of the Craft at heart, who values the prizes its associations, its comradeships, its friendships, and the tender memories that cling to these as he looks backward over the heart of hearts all that Masonry has meant to him and has done for him, can help but be a bit concerned at the signs of disintegration and dry-rot which seems to threaten to slowly but surely destroy the fraternity. It is not the loss of numbers that fills him with the greatest foreboding. The things he fears lies far deeper than that. He can prize a mere loss of members at its real worth. He knows that that is not the worst thing that can happen to a society or institution.

It is perfectly clear to the wide reader of present-day Masonic literature that things are far from being with our fraternity as they should be.

Our ancient brethren believed in good company, good comradeship, in friendly intercourse, in hours of happy sociability and generous hospitality. But they had ideas of the eternal fitness of things, and they practiced them. There was with them a time, and a season, and a place for all things. Dignity and decorum and decency were no idle words with them, for at bottom they were earnest-minded men. So must we be if we would save the Fraternity from certain destruction. We dare not let this spirit of frivolity that would feed and fatten upon the Fraternity get the upper hand, as it surely will if we do not fight it.

When all is said and done, the real remedy lies in the deepening of moral earnestness in each individual soul of us. It is not enough that we should “learn to subdue our passions,” but we must also learn “to improve ourselves in Masonry” and we cannot do that until we come to know in our heart of hearts what Masonry means.

Time was, we are told, when Masonry was considered to be a very select institution and to be counted among its members a rare privilege. Then Masons were particular with whom they associated, with whom they fraternized. In those days it was an article of Masonic faith that a man was first made a Mason in his heart and not in his pocketbook. They didn't bother their heads about building big and showy temples. Nor did they seem to care about belonging to big lodges with more members than they knew what to do with. What they wanted was an intimate association with worth-while men, men who could come to know one another, respect and love one another for what they were, and not for what they had. Men who would help one another to do right, to be steadfast and true on all occasions without counting the cost.

Masonry seems to have turned away from the speculative and the spiritual, to the mundane and the material from the unseen things which are eternal, to the specious, the showy, and the short-lived, the permanent to the perishable.

An editorial writer in *The Builder* put it this way:

We in America have been bitten by the lust for size, for numbers, for wealth. That we should be gratified by increase in our numbers is natural, and such increase is not in itself evil so long as the level of qualification is maintained.

We have gotten ourselves into a state of mind where we have come to judge the success or failure of our institution solely by the numbers enrolled and the size of its material possessions.

All over the United States, the Craft has plunged into a perfect orgy of temple debts which have caused the fraternity to resort to desperate measures for the raising of money. Under the stress of these conditions, the Mason who shows sufficient moral courage to blackball a blatherskite or a black-leg runs the risk of getting himself looked upon as an enemy of the order, when really, he is the truest and best of its friends. You cannot make a Mason of a man who was not first made a Mason "in his heart." Or, in other words, it is an idle and a futile thing to try to make a Mason out of a man who hasn't it in his heart to be made a Mason. To say nothing of the disquieting, depressing, discouraging, and disintegrating influence these men have upon the rest of us. It is the most futile of financial policies to take them in. Such men are not of the sort that stick and stay.

Should we worry at the exodus of that sort of frothy stuff from out the fraternity? What did we take them in for in the first place? Was it because we felt they could prove loyal comrades in laudable ambition and worthwhile endeavor, or was it because we wanted their money to help us build a material temple? Were we practicing Masonry for revenue only?

From all over the Masonic world comes a wail of woe because our society seems to be losing, or at least not gaining in membership. Yet, that does not worry us nearly as much as some of the things we have mentioned above. There is a certain sort of Masonic membership that the less we have of it, the better for us, for the fraternity, for the persistence of our institution.

Brother Robert J. Allen of North Carolina said, "No hostile church, no unscrupulous political group, no competition from other activities, can or will do to Freemasonry serious harm. Her greatest danger is from the unassimilated material within. There is evidence of Masonic indigestion.

"The great danger today is not in decreased numbers through suspensions, nor in retarded accessions through scarcity of degree work, nor yet through finances, but through disintegrated moral. If a large percentage of our membership is not interested in Masonry, keeps its names on the rolls and does nothing more, there is naturally a very serious result upon those who otherwise would be interested workers." Well, now, what about it all?

You would have a perfect right to accuse us of perpetrating a piece of pernicious and pestiferous pessimism did we not at least suggest the remedy. As we see it, that remedy is twofold.

First. To guard well our portals, and see that we take in no more of the trashy stuff . . . that we quit merely proclaiming this principle and failing, to practice it as persistently as we proclaim it.

Second. That we try to make real Masons of the men we have taken in, beginning first of all with ourselves, by striving "not to be better than others, but better than ourselves." That we do our level best to beget a "Masonic heart" within the men we have taken in, to make of them Masons in spirit and in truth and not in name only.

And as for the rest, let us not worry to see them go. Let us rather rejoice that the fraternity has at last rid itself of such unregenerate and unredeemable rubbish and that it no longer remains to corrupt a cherished and consecrated comradeship. If our effort is to be successful, it will require all the patience, the persistence, the forbearance, all the unremitting kindness and courtesy of which we are capable. Above all, it requires that we should consecrate ourselves anew to the cause in which we believe, a cause well worthy to command from strong men "the last full measure of devotion."

Louis Block, Iowa PGM 1911, first composed this article for the 1930 Iowa proceedings.

AUGUST 2019

Is Masonry Relevant?

This article is reprinted with permission from the June 2019 Grand Lodge of New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory's Freemason and the father/ son and brothers team of RW Brian Louis Chaytor and Brother Brian Lawrence Chaytor of Claude M. Kent Lodge No. 681, Oakville, Ontario, Canada.

The 21st century is an era of colossal changes; globalization, artificial intelligence, space exploration, social media, and the expansion of private enterprise, all of which have seen growth of unprecedented proportions.

In spite of these great advancements, the new millennium has also presented us with an escalating number of challenges: social divide, terrorist attacks, political unrest, and an alarming increase in the frequency of natural disasters. These events have all had a radically transformative effect on our economic, political, and ecological systems on a global scale. We are living amid a rapidly changing world.

Change is what makes the world go around. Energy in motion permeates the entire universe, causing a state of constant transformation. As a consequence of this universal law, the human race continues its dynamic forward march perpetually transitioning from a state of lesser complexity to a state of greater complexity. As our inner and outer realities change, the world—as we once knew it—is no more.

This brings us to the question: *After enduring for 300 years, has Freemasonry evolved enough to make it relevant to a new generation of men in 2019?*

The answer is beyond the deceptive veil impressed upon our senses by the wonders of this fast-changing Information Age. In order to gain an appropriate degree of perspective, it is necessary to delve into and explore the very essence of human nature.

Emotional needs are inherent in all human beings. In order for a man to achieve a degree of self-actualization*, his emotional needs—those that are a part of his essence—must be satisfied first. It is due in part to Masonry's proven ability to fulfill the higher needs of man which has enabled its resilience to the passing of time, ultimately cementing its staying power.

**For further information, see work of Abraham Maslow on "Hierarchy of Needs."*

Freemasonry is a selective institution where not everyone is accepted. Once he is received, the new member is granted access to our worldwide Fraternity which honors the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God. It is this noteworthy aspect of membership which fulfills a man's intrinsic need to belong, particularly to something important and worthwhile.

Freemasonry provides a man with the opportunity to establish lifelong friendships with like-minded individuals. Having this type of bond with fellow members reassures the new Mason that he can turn to someone for advice or confide in one of his brethren. This aspect of membership fulfills one of the other innate desires in man, namely: the need to be sociable while experiencing a feeling of safety in his environment.

Just as importantly, Freemasonry equips a man with the necessary tools to improve all aspects of his character. The Masonic system enables the member to rid himself of some of his less-favorable traits by improving his weaknesses, and it facilitates a deeper understanding of who he is by refining his strengths. The process is transformational and enlightening, conducive to a journey towards self-actualization, which gradually becomes a Mason's ultimate destination.

These are only a few of several transcendent and unconditional qualities which set the institution of Freemasonry apart from the rest of mankind.

Some people may ask, "All of this sounds very appealing, but what type of specific knowledge can a man expect to obtain from Masonry which makes it strictly unique, and could not be found anywhere else?"

By becoming a Mason, a man can expect to have access to a type of knowledge that is unaffected by the passing of time.

He may expect to learn that Masonry is universal. Masonry knows no creed, race, or color. The tenets of liberty, equality, and fraternity which Masonry advocates and champions know no bounds. These proverbial axioms embrace all cultures and cross every geographical line, promulgating a genuine sense of brotherhood amongst men of all nations. And although Masonry is neither a religion nor a substitute for one, the Craft acknowledges the significance of all religions, grasping their corresponding qualities, unifying their commonalities, but yet remains impartial to all beliefs. It counts within its circle Jews, Muslims, Christians and Hindus amongst many others.

Freemasonry's embracive nature also makes it equally welcoming to those men who are not necessarily creed-bound, but who being true to their conscience, will only profess a belief in a Supreme Being. The acronym GAOTU, meaning the Great Architect of the Universe, truly is a most egalitarian, unbiased, and integrating expression. The term is non-denominational, allowing each Mason the right to follow the spiritual path he so chooses.

A man may also expect to learn that Masonry is educational. One of Masonry's principal facets is the applicability of its wise philosophies to everyday life. The Craft inculcates morality by encouraging its members to be ethical in all their undertakings. It instills charity by emphasizing the existing interdependence and common ground of all mankind. The lessons are imparted in their purest form, proclaimed unpretentiously, and demonstrated with candor.

The charges and lectures are sources of great inspiration, motivating each initiate to furnish favorable contributions toward society, making it a better place for everyone to live.

Freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and freedom of thought are three timeless precepts which rest on the cornerstone of the Masonic foundation, ever ready to obliterate the imminent threat from humanity's three principal enemies: ignorance, fanaticism, and tyranny.

Its rituals are the channel which transmits this timeless knowledge, making the essence discernable. Such rituals play a fundamental role in keeping the flame alive.

The Masonic system of communication is expressed through symbols, an idiom that is comprehensible in all of the world's languages, and decipherable by all initiates, enabling each Mason to derive benefits from the teachings in proportion to his individual capacity. Since the inception of the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster, Freemasonry has progressively become an organized, policymaking body. The essence infused the substance giving it identity, the spirit acquired form, making it intelligible, and the foundation which had been laid over centuries gave rise to a superstructure.

For more than three hundred years the Craft has disseminated its ancient wisdom the world over. This perennial knowledge has been transmitted from the homely repose of its temples of instruction, those distinctive dwellings we commonly refer to as "the lodge."

It is in the lodge where each Mason is extended the privilege to partake of its mysteries, and it is there where he learns that such invaluable ancient knowledge truly is time transcendent.

Since time immemorial, the essence of Masonry has lived in the heart of mankind. From that defining, enlightening moment when man first became aware of his consciousness and developed a sense of self, the torch of Masonry rose and soared. Passed to us today is an inextinguishable beacon of light for all seekers of truth to revere and follow.

[Our duty is to pass this torch on to future generations. -STB Editor]

SEPTEMBER 2019

The Heroes Bissell

By
Simon R. LaPlace, PGM

The August 2019 issue of The Northern Light by the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, AASR, contained an article which referenced the 1775 “alarm letter” written and distributed after the confrontation between colonial militia and British troops in Lexington, Massachusetts; “the shot heard ‘round the world.” The letter comes from the Northern Jurisdiction’s Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library collection in Lexington and can be viewed online at the Museum’s Van Gorden-Williams Library and Archives Digital Collections website.

Israel Bissell was born in East Windsor, Connecticut, in 1752. During 1775 he was a post rider delivering mail in Massachusetts. When General Joseph Palmer of Watertown, Massachusetts, wrote the letter warning that hostilities had broken out and that war had begun with Great Britain, he wanted notice sent as far and wide as possible. General Palmer particularly wanted the different “Committees of Safety” warned that the British were on the march and the patriots in Massachusetts needed help. As Israel Bissell spread the news across Connecticut and even to New York City and Philadelphia, volunteers prepared to answer what became known as the “Lexington Alarm.” After his ride, he joined the Connecticut volunteers for a short time before returning to Connecticut, perhaps due to the death of his father. Of the nearly forty Bissells who joined the Revolution from Connecticut, none may be more renowned than Brother Daniel Bissell IV, also of Windsor, and later a Mason in New York. He was Israel’s second cousin once-removed and of vital use to General and Brother George Washington.

Daniel Bissell first enlisted as a fifer and then became a corporal for the duration of the war. After being promoted to sergeant, he was selected by General Washington to infiltrate the British forces and spy on them. His military record states he was “absent on secret service” during that period. For some thirteen months, he did just that. He served as a British soldier under the infamous traitor and Brother Benedict Arnold, also from Connecticut. Returning to the Continental army proved to be a challenge since he was clothed as a British soldier. The guards on the front took him prisoner until he appealed to General Washington who confirmed his identity as a patriot. Sergeant Bissell was able to furnish valuable information including detailed maps he drew of the enemy’s positions. He spent two days recording his account.

Near the end of the war, Brother Washington did something unprecedented at the time—he created an award for enlisted men and noncommissioned officers. Awards and decorations for these men of lower rank was unheard of at the time. Only officers had been celebrated for gallantry and distinction. The award was a creation of the General’s when he noticed a piece of purple fabric that had been torn from a lady’s dress during a ball. He kept the fabric but later had it fashioned into a heart shaped citation; thus the “Purple Heart.” This badge was the only award issued during the Revolution and only three men—all of them sergeants of the Connecticut Continentals—are on record as having been awarded it by General Washington. Daniel’s was presented to him by Jonathan Trumbull Jr., General Washington’s aide-de-camp

and son of Jonathan Trumbull, the only colonial governor to support the revolution, and namesake of Trumbull Lodge No. 22, New Haven, Connecticut. Washington's citation did not elaborate on the service that Daniel performed because revealing that he acted as a spy would put his life in danger if he were captured by the British.

After the war, the citation fell out of use and lay dormant until revived by Brother and General Douglas MacArthur during the bicentennial of Brother Washington's birth in 1932. No longer simply an "Award for Merit," it now became a symbol for wounds sustained during battle. The award has also been expanded since 1932 to include all servicemen and even those who might have received it had it been available during World War I. It is no longer a simple piece of cloth, but an enameled heart-shaped medal with the profile of George Washington and his family crest. On the obverse side is the inscription, "For Military Merit."

Another of Israel Bissell's cousins was Captain Ozias Bissel, born in Bolton nearby East Windsor, Connecticut. He was born in 1729, a generation before Israel and Daniel. His military experience began in the French and Indian War (Seven Years War, 1756-1763). It is generally considered that George Washington started this war with his exploits against the French in western Pennsylvania. Ozias' adventure in this conflict included being captured during an attack on Havana, Cuba. This same attack caused Brother Israel Putnam to bring tobacco leaves back to Connecticut, and thus the beginning of Connecticut shade tobacco industry. Brother Ozias Bissell was raised a Master Mason on May 6, 1767, in St. John's Lodge No. 2, Middletown, Connecticut. Whatever caused him to travel the more than thirty miles between the towns is lost to history. Evidently his Masonic experience was important enough that when he answered the "Lexington Alarm," he became a charter member of American Union Lodge chartered by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

In August 1776 as captain in the Continental army, he took part in what is known as the Battle of Brooklyn but was captured along with many others. The story, as well as a study of the officers captured, is well documented in Charles H. Lewis' *Cut Off. Colonel Jedediah Huntington's 17th Continental (Connecticut) Regiment at the Battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776*. His fate took him to the prison ships docked in Brooklyn harbor for only a short time before he was "paroled" to Long Island. This parole was perhaps because he was an officer, or because he was nearly 50 years old. "Paroled" in those days meant he lived with a family and could travel the countryside providing he kept his "honor as an officer" and returned by evening. Considering the conditions of confinement in prison ships and prison buildings in New York City, his surroundings were comparatively comfortable. He shared the bed of fellow prisoner Jabez Fitch who wrote a detailed account of their captivity. A frequent visitor was Ethan Allen, also a prisoner of the British. After a year and a half, he was returned to Connecticut. He immediately re-enlisted and served in various regiments before again being captured on December 10, 1780, in what is now Greenwich, Connecticut. He was held until June 1781 when he was again discharged. He served a total of five years and eight months, was in three general actions, seven skirmishes, and wounded three times, once severely. He lived to the age of 92 years.

Of the 230,000 who served in the Revolutionary War, and only about 48,000 at any one time, the forty some Bissells played a part, and only a few leave records for us to investigate. Two of the three profiled here were Freemasons, and they certainly didn't serve for a Masonic reason. But perhaps their independent spirit and the notion of freedom and free will was enough for them to support a cause they must have believed in. Masonic principles align well with what have become universal truths; changing away from the authority of church and royalty, and rights

achieved through birth; changing to a way of self-determination; freedom of speech; peaceful assembly; and other radical ideas for the time.

A man once said he wanted to join the Masons because his grandfather was a Mason, and he was a great man. It was explained to him that Freemasonry didn't make his grandfather great. His grandfather made Freemasonry great.

OCTOBER 2019

Leadership Means More Than “Faithful Service”

By
S. Brent Morris, PM

Brother Morris is Past Master of Patmos-Solomon’s Lodge, Savage, MD, and Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, London. He is managing editor of the Scottish Rite Journal and editor of Heredom, the transactions of the Scottish Rite Research Society. This article was first published in the Northern Light, in August, 1989, but its meaning is still strong today. –STB Editor

It is unusual today to see young Masons in their twenties and thirties with responsible fraternal leadership positions, and this state of affairs is a recent innovation.

Before he was 30, Thomas Smith Webb was a giant in the development of American Masonic ritual. His *Freemasons Monitor and Illustrations of Freemasonry* formed the ritualistic foundation upon which nearly all of our Grand Lodges have built their work. He published this classic volume in 1797 at age 26, the same year he helped organize the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons for the Northern States of America and was elected its first General Grand Scribe.

When Webb died in 1819, Jeremy Ladd Cross, 36, succeeded him as the nation’s leading Masonic lecturer and published his famous book, *The True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor*, the first illustrated Masonic monitor. Its artwork has influenced virtually every American monitor since. Webb and Cross are but two of many examples of brethren whose recognition was on the basis of something other than time in grade. They were leaders selected for their merit, not their seniority.

The Craft, however, has long had an ambivalent attitude towards selecting its leaders. In our fraternity’s first published regulations, Anderson’s 1723 Constitutions of the Freemasons, we read under the fourth “general head”:

IV. Of Masters, Wardens, Fellows, and Apprentices

All preferment among Masons is grounded upon real Worth and personal Merit only;... Therefore no Master or Warden is chosen by Seniority, but for his Merit.

However, in 1738 when Anderson published an expanded edition of the Constitutions, we see the real value our early brethren placed on merit over seniority. Prior to the historic meeting in 1717 that created the premier grand lodge, brethren from the four old Lodges “met at the said Apple-Tree [Tavern], and having put into the Chair the oldest Master Mason (now the Master of a Lodge), they constituted themselves a Grand Lodge pro Tempore in Due Form.” For this radical band, so intent on altering the body of Masonry as it then existed, seniority was more important than merit. Now it may have been that letting the oldest Past Master assume the Grand East was just an expedient rule of order, and that seniority was no worse (but certainly no better) than drawing straws. However, we can only judge from the limited records available, and they seem to speak rather clearly for themselves. How then has the modern Masonic fraternity followed this balancing of merit and seniority? The answer is fairly obvious to anyone who has endured Masonic “elections” just a few times. As Sovereign Grand Commander Francis G. Paul, 33° observed in

his 1988 allocution, “we are less concerned with merit and performance than we are with faithfulness.”

The penchant today for rewarding faithful, plodding service produces faithful, plodding officers—men who have had their enthusiasm drained from them by the numbing path to the East. And those who do remain on the path for their brief, shining moment in the Grand East often seem to be driven by little more than enthusiasm. Travel schedules alone limit their ranks to the retired or the wealthy or those with few civic, professional, or religious commitments. It would be foolish to argue that experience is not crucial to a leader, especially in an organization that values tradition as highly as we do, but more than mere endurance is needed to lead Freemasonry in the twenty-first century. The most obvious problem with equating long, faithful service with leadership qualities is organizational constipation, due to the misguided notion that if one just waits long enough (and doesn’t rock the boat in the process), he can have his “turn.” A less obvious but potentially more damaging problem is the disenchantment of young Masons.

Perhaps it is worth reviewing the activities of a few more of our earlier Brethren who advanced on the basis of their abilities, not their age. New York saw the election of De Witt Clinton as Grand Master in 1806 when he was 37. At 45 he was Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, and at 47 he became the General Grand High Priest. Rob Morris was Grand Master of Kentucky in 1857 when he was 30, and two years later he conceived and arranged the degrees of the Order of the Eastern Star.

Starting with the formation of the General Grand Chapter in 1797, the most exciting, original, and lasting innovations upon the body of Masonry have been made by young men. In the nineteenth century men were involved in all civic and religious activities at younger ages than today and perhaps naturally expected the same opportunities from Masonry. If organizing and expanding the Craft didn’t provide enough active involvement, then the disaffected young Mason could always start his own group.

The Shrine was started in 1871 by two young Masons, Walter M. Fleming and William J. Florence, 33 and 40 respectively. The Scottish Rite can count among its founders in 1801 several youngsters: Frederick Dalcho, 31, Comte de Grasse-Tilly, 36, Emanuel de la Motta, 40, James Moultrie, 35, and Isaac Auld, 32. These creative impulses have not been confined to nineteenth century Craftsmen. The title of “Great Originator” must belong to a little-known Mason: John Raymond Shute II of Monroe, North Carolina. Shute was only 27 when he invented the Knights of the York Cross of Honor and brought the Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests to our shores. The next year, 1932, he imported and organized the Allied Masonic Degrees and created the Grand College of Rites and the Society of Blue Friars. In 1934, he and William Mosley Brown established the Knights Beneficent of the Holy City (Chevaliers Bienfaisants de la Cité Sainte or C.B.C.S.), both having received the degrees earlier in Geneva. As if these were not enough, in 1936 he imported the Knight Masons of Ireland, which eventually became the Knight Masons of America. This must be something of a record: seven major, thriving Masonic bodies organized by age 32.

Does all of this mean that we should only let Masons under 40 lead the Craft, that our only hope rests with the new and excited Brother ready to build on the innovations of his illustrious predecessors? Not at all! It only means that we must look beyond men who have “put in the time,” and be willing to give real leaders a chance and the time in office to make meaningful contributions. We must begin to change our worship of faithful servants and their defense of the status quo.

Just think what the body of Masonry would be like today without the innovations of its young radicals in the East.

1. Lionel Vibert, "Anderson's Constitutions of 1723," in *The Little Masonic Library*, 5 vols. (Richmond: Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Co., Inc., 1946), vol. 1, p. 234.
2. Lewis Edwards and W. J. Hughan, *Anderson's Constitutions of 1738* (Bloomington, Ill.: Masonic Book Club. 1978), p. 109.
3. Francis G. Paul "A Beacon for the 21st Century;" *The Northern Light*, November 1988, vol. 19, no. 4, p. 7.

NOVEMBER 2019

“Bees” and “Salt”

By
George O. Braatz

Two short Short Talks are presented here, both focusing on two four letter words. The author, a Past Grand Master and Past Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, is retired Executive Secretary of the Masonic Service Association of North America.

Importance of Bees

The beehive for centuries has been an emblem of the Masonic Fraternity. Why is it important today? There have been many news stories in recent years about the number of bees declining throughout the world, and that we should be concerned. In fact, one headline on the Internet late this year proclaimed, “The Bee is Declared the Most Important Living Being on the Planet.” The Earth Institute concluded in a debate of the Royal Geographical Society of London how great the importance of the bee is, and scientists also made the announcement that “Bees have already entered into extinction risk.” At the same time, other scientists have determined that “bees are the only living being that is not a carrier of any type of pathogen, regardless of whether it is a fungus, a virus, or a bacterium.” Whether these pronouncements about the value of bees to our lives are accurate or simply headline grabbing statements by several research organizations, it brings us back to the original Masonic emblem.

Why did ancient Master Masons believe that the beehive was so important? Did they know as much about the value of the bee that many scientists believe today? The Masonic “beehive” is an “emblem of industry.” So what does that mean? One dictionary defines “industry” as economic activity concerned with the processing of raw material and manufacturing of goods in factories. Well, our ancient brethren worked in constructing buildings prior to what we know as a “factory” today. A secondary dictionary suggestion for “industry” is simply “hard work,” or “diligence in any employment or pursuit, especially steady or habitual effort.” It surely seems that these secondary definitions would describe our ancient Masonic ancestors, who felt “industry” is needed for “all created beings.” So many of the lectures and practices of Freemasonry over the years—yes, over the centuries—have focused on making men better, on making Masons to be better men.

Our modern age has progressed in giant ways over the past three centuries or so. But it is so astounding how brilliant our Masonic forefathers were in their time. We learn from lectures about their understanding of geometry, astronomy, and so many of the arts and sciences. But they also adopted the beehive as an important symbol. Did they know how valuable the bee was to human life? Did they observe the bee so closely that they knew what traits made the bee’s efforts so valuable?

The beehive was selected hundreds of years ago to teach an important lesson. That lesson is still important to every Mason today. The emblem is the symbol for industry, or hard work, or diligence in any pursuit. Or, as the beehive tells us, we may become like a drone in the hive of nature, a useless member of society, and unworthy of protection as Masons. Let us work to protect bees and beehives—and the “industry” they represent.

Importance of Salt

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. - Matthew 5:13-16

If someone said to you, “You are the salt of the earth,” or if it was said of you, “You are the light of the world,” wouldn’t you feel great pride? This Biblical passage of scripture is very familiar, and often quoted. In addition to the many religious interpretations, it contains a profound message for Freemasonry. More than 2,000 years ago, when these words were spoken and written, “salt” was an important commodity of life. It was a preservative, protecting other food items from “going bad.” It was also a flavoring agent, something to make other food taste better. Salt was an item of great value. So, if “you are the salt of the earth,” you are a very enriching person for those around you. In today’s world, however, salt is seldom used as a preservative, and how often are we instructed to reduce our intake of salt to improve our diet and health? The principles of Freemasonry could be called the “salt of the earth,” and Masonic tenets surely have maintained their value into the 21st Century, unlike the historic path of sodium chloride (NaCl, or salt).

In like manner, the concept of “light” was easily understood centuries ago. This vital force in the universe—usually experienced in the form of the sun, or the moon, or fire—provided heat, illumination, and the ability to produce a food supply. “Light” has always been identified as a valuable resource. So, if “you are the light of the world,” you have inspiring attributes for those around you. In today’s world, with inventions and development of such things as the light bulb and electricity, we have few problems seeing clearly at night in our homes, or even driving at night in our vehicles. But in Freemasonry today, the concept of “light” is still important in our ceremonies and also in our educational programs.

In the scripture passage, “salt” can easily represent “good works.” If the salt “has lost its taste,” which means lost the “good works” it can perform, it no longer has value and “is thrown out and trampled underfoot.” In like manner, the good works provided by “light” should not be placed “under a bushel basket, but on a lamp stand, so it gives light to all in the house.” The famous and inspiring last verse of the scripture concludes with this powerful message: “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” Good works are important to individual Masons and to Masonic Lodges. The “good works,” symbolized by “salt” and “light” should become a part of us and shared with the world.

DECEMBER 2019

Peace and Joy to All

By
David R. Ritchie

Brother Ritchie, a pastor and farmer in Darlington, Wisconsin, is Senior Grand Deacon of the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, and a former Grand Chaplain. This is one of his "Thoughts for the Journey" columns in the Wisconsin Masonic Journal, from December, 2014, and still appropriate for today.

My wife kids me about being solar powered. The heavy grey days of late autumn and early winter here in Wisconsin often weigh heavily on me and I wait for that Alberta Clipper to come sweeping down in January. An Alberta Clipper is a snow fall with high winds followed by crystal clear skies and bitter cold temperature. Even though the temperature is below zero you will often find me outside rabbit hunting, cutting wood, or any other thing I can think of to be out with the bright light glimmering off the new snow.

As Masons, darkness weighs heavily upon all of us. It is not the darkness of snow-laden clouds or short winter days, but the darkness that is ignorance. As Masons, we understand the light of knowledge and how powerful and strong education can be. Where the darkness of selfishness, prejudice, and hatred threaten Masonic teaching, education brings light.

It is not coincidence that during this time of darkness we celebrate. A friend from California once remarked, "The people here in Wisconsin are the most remarkable people I have ever met. At a time of year when any sane person would stay home with a cup of coffee and a good book, you people are out celebrating from deer season through the Super Bowl. Then when it gets warm, you stop celebrating and go to work." Our faiths celebrate also. We celebrate Thanksgiving, people of all faiths, then onto Christmas, Yule, Hanukkah, Solstice, then our reuniting in the hope of the New Year. Christmas, Yule, Hanukkah, and Solstice all have strong elements of light to them.

Aside from my wife and family, the greatest gifts given to me were done in the light of three burning tapers. The greatest of these is you, my brothers. Men I would never have known without the light of those three burning tapers. You have become my friends, mentors, examples, and extended family.

So therefore, at the risk of offending: I wish you and yours a Merry Christmas. I hope it does not offend. I also wish you Deity's profound blessing on your celebrations and traditions, but I do celebrate Christmas and because of its personal importance to me, I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Now Christmas in America has lost much of its religious meaning. Nativity scenes are nowhere as common as Santas. So, I do not wish you a Merry Christmas from a religious viewpoint nor from the Santa gift-giving side. I certainly do not wish you a Merry Christmas from the commercial side. I wish you a Merry Christmas from the Masonic side of the holiday.

A true celebration of Christmas means wishing all men peace and joy. It means feeding the poor and clothing the needy. It means visiting old friends and paying a visit to shut-ins. It means time with family. It is a time to observe the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. This is a time of year when, to paraphrase Dickens in the Christmas Carol, "want is most keenly felt."

This is the time when the light of Masonry changes from being an external light that shines upon us, to being an internal light that shines from us. This is the time when we pass the hat for

the less fortunate, hold gift drives and food drives and hat and mitten drives. It is the time when we visit the widow and remember missing brothers. It is a time when we as Masons wish each other joy and peace. This is what I mean when I wish you a Merry Christmas. May your light shine brightest when it is in darkness. So, my brothers, Merry Christmas.

Masonry, I know, is open to all men of faith and there will be some who disagree with what I have written. To them then, I wish peace and joy this December 25th and also upon any and all days Deity calls them to celebrate. Peace and Joy to all good men, my Brothers.

Peace and Joy.



SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL

On behalf of the Masonic Service Association of North America, we wish a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Season's Greetings to all our brothers and their families—and a Happy New Year!

ELECTED FELLOWS OF THE TENNESSEE LODGE OF RESEARCH

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE AWARDED</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE AWARDED</u>
Howard Ketron "Jack" Akard	Dec. 13, 1997	MW John Lawrence Palmer	Dec. 12, 2015
*MW John Burton Arp, Jr.	Dec. 10, 1994	Philip Edward Phillips, Ph.D.	Dec. 12, 2009
*Donald Barrow	Dec. 10, 1994	*Richard Travis Milton Prine	Dec. 10, 1994
Thomas Ernest Brooks	Dec. 10, 1994	*Paul Frederick Richards	Dec. 11, 1999
*Derial Wayne Bivens	Dec. 14, 2019	Robert Harold Richards	Dec. 10, 1994
*MW Billie Reginald Brown	Dec. 10, 1994	*John Nicholas Sharp	Mar. 9, 1996
MW Ronald Jasper Coates	Dec. 8, 2001	*Donald Martin Smith	Dec. 10, 1994
*Harold Cristil	Dec. 10, 1994	David Edward Stafford, Ed.D.	Dec. 11, 2010
*Bobby Joe DeMott	Dec. 10, 1994	*Louis Steinberg	Dec. 10, 1994
*Jacob Roach Denny	Dec. 10, 1994	Charles McBerry Thames	Dec. 10, 2005
Thomas James Driber, Ph.D.	Dec. 13, 2008	Vincent Lamar Troglen	Dec. 10, 2011
*Charles Jahew Eads, Jr.	Dec. 10, 1994	*Clarence Raymond Wilson, Jr.	Dec. 12, 2015
*Robert Elmer Gooch	Dec. 10, 1994		
*Gary William Hall	Dec. 13, 1997		
Jason Francis Hicks	Dec. 18, 2021		
*Virgil Marion Hileman	Mar. 9, 1996		
MW Dickie Wayland Johnson	Dec. 9, 2000		
Matthew Glenn Johnson	Dec. 13, 2014		
*Thomas Charles Kenner	Dec. 13, 2003		
Joseph Clayton Pryor Kindoll	Dec. 11, 2010		
*Billy Wilton King	Dec. 12, 1998		
James Michael Kinslow	Dec. 10, 2016		
George Caleb Ladd, III	Dec. 11, 2004		
Sanford Dale Lancaster	Dec. 13, 2008		
Michael Carroll Lett	Dec. 14, 2002		
*Moses Defriese Manning, Jr.	Dec. 10, 1994		
*James Allen Marshall	Dec. 10, 1994		
*James Clifton McCarley	Dec. 10, 1994		
John Russell Meldorf	Dec. 10, 1994		
Warren Lee Moore	Dec. 10, 1994		

* Deceased