

THE
NEWSLETTER

OF THE COMMITTEE

ON
MASONIC
EDUCATION

WINTER 1996 (1st Quarter) VOL. 15 NO. 3

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c/o Robert A. Barnett—Editor

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TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS

The factual accuracy of an article is the contributor's responsibility. The opinions expressed by the authors do not necessarily reflect those of the Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M. of Canada, in the Province of Ontario, nor of the Committee on Masonic Education.

Size of Articles: Material submitted for The News-letter should reflect consideration of both the physical size of the publication, and the readability of the piece. Our pages run 300-325 words per page, so a maximum of about 1200-1300 words is the limit. Articles can also be one-paragraph notes of interest, or any length in between. Longer articles of special merit should be printed in sections over several issues.

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An Invitation: The Newsletter is published by The Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education. We welcome responses from all our readers. If any of our contributors or subscribers have access to historical information about their District, or Lodge, or special individuals, please forward it to the editor. Much of our Masonic History is also linked to the history of our country through members who have been community, business, professional, religious or political leaders. Careful research of material made available should provide some interesting information for newsletter readers. It would also help to educate us all about the contributions of individual members, Lodges and Districts to the history of our country, provinces, and our villages, towns and cities. We need to know more about each other and about the part that Canadian Masons have played in our history. Can you help?

SUBSCRIPTION EXPIRY DATES

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Your annual subscription rate (\$12.00) includes one each of that masonic year's quarterly issues (July to June), for a total of four (4) issues

(Issue #1, (3rd Qtr.); Issue #2 (4th Quarter)
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NOTICE

Copies of the latest hardbound edition of
THE NEWSLETTER
(which contain all of four issues of each volume)
ARE AVAILABLE

Some of the earlier hardbound editions are now sold out
ANNUAL HARDBOUND EDITIONS

There are a few copies of the Hardbound Volume No. 8 at \$12.00 each. Hardbound volumes No. 9, 10, 11,12, and 13 and the NEW VOLUME No. 14 are avail-able at \$15.00 each. Each hardbound volume has a quality Buckram cover and contains a copy of each of the 4 quarterly issues from that volume - in a properly stitched and glued binding These are attractive editions for your home library and they are sturdy enough to withstand the years of use we hope they will get.

SINGLE COPIES OF THE QUARTERLY BACK ISSUES ARE STILL AVAILABLE. The supply of some of the single issues is very thin and there are a few that are "Sold Out"

- All single back issues up to Vol. 4 No. 4, \$1.00 each (Note re: Vol. #1 - all issues sold out)
- Single back issues from Vol. 5 No. 1 to Vol. 6 No. 4 - \$2.00 ea.
- Vol. 7 No. 1 to Vol. 10 No. 4 - \$2.50 ea.
- Vol. 11 No. 1 to current issue - \$3.00 ea.

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•••NOTICE•••

THE COLLEGE OF FREEMASONRY

BRETHREN: The Committee on Masonic Education is still offering its challenging Correspondence Course throughout this grand Jurisdiction. Because of the interest that continues to be shown, it now is being offered in a new format. That same twinge of excitement, that same challenge, that same desire to delve into and find out more about the Craft is there - all we have done is to separate the four programs so that YOU may now choose to complete only one - or all four - you may take as many, or as few, of the programs as you wish and in the order you wish.

Upon the completion of each program a certificate will be awarded, but to become a member of THE COLLEGE OF FREEMASONRY, you still must complete all four programs.

The cost for each program is \$20.00 payable in advance to:

Masonic Education Course

Return to: Committee on Masonic Education

363 King Street West

Hamilton, Ontario L8P 1B4

Brethren, a real opportunity - don't miss it - broaden your Masonic knowledge - EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO YOUR ENJOYMENT OF YOUR MASONIC FUTURE! (Note: This course requires access to reference material readily available in this jurisdiction and parts of the course pertain specifically to this jurisdiction.)

A supply of the new Application Forms has been forwarded to your District Education Chairman. Be sure to contact him. Good Luck!

"FITNESS," A NECESSARY REQUIREMENT OF THE TRUE FREEMASON

*Sultan H. Cambridge, 32□
K.C.C.H.
4422 Oregon Street, #1
San Diego, California 92116-3019*

We fail if we do not make our members fit to receive the special instruction unique to the Masonic Lodge.

It is well understood that one does not attempt Calculus without Algebra and Geometry as foundations. In a word, one must be made fit to receive advanced knowledge by the acquisition of lesser knowledge. The Symbolic Lodges have the very great responsibility of making Masons. But what does it mean to "make" a Mason?

The answer to this question will vary, but minimally it must mean that it makes a man fit to receive a higher knowledge than he has been exposed to earlier. This "unfitness" is achieved by sharing experiences found no-where else in the world and by imposing a severe self-discipline that has no equivalent in any other endeavour. It is achieved by undergoing a ritual.

To understand ritual and what it has to do with the concept of fitness, we must distinguish between ritual and ceremony. A ceremony binds people together as a social unit; ritual is intended to effect a profound change in the character of the participant.

The example of a wedding may serve to help make the distinction clear. For the observers at a wedding, it is only a ceremony uniting not only two individuals but also uniting two families. But for the participants, the marriage is a ritual, intended to effect very fundamental changes in their outlook on the world and themselves. Over time, the importance of the ritual character of marriage has declined, and divorces have risen as even the participants see in marriage nothing more than the ceremony and, consequently, feel no real bond to each other, no permanent transformation that only ritual can give.

It is equally true in Freemasonry that appreciation of the transformative character of Masonic Ritual has begun to decline, and the workings of many Lodges

have become mere ceremonies or, worse yet, mere entertainment.

The result is that too many newly made Masons possess the title in name only and do not understand the great weight of responsibility set upon them to pre-serve and protect the great truths given by Freemasonry to Freemasons.

We fail at the greatest responsibility of leadership if we do not prepare our members to receive that special instruction unique to the Masonic Lodge, if we do not make them fit to receive it.

The power of Freemasonry resides in its Ritual, its fellowship, its catechism, its traditions, and its moral truths. This power exists because of the ability of our Fraternity to transform its members from ordinary good men to extraordinary, better men. The need for more Masonic education is universally understood, and many Grand Lodge jurisdictions have begun pro-grams to ameliorate this condition.

However, at times it appears Freemasonry is com-promising its standards in order to accommodate those aspirants who are not fit and properly prepared to embrace the elevated teachings our Fraternity possesses. While this might be a positive gesture regarding membership statistics, we must be very careful not to lower the standards which our noble Order and its teachings require. We must be prepared to demand high qualifications from the applicants, insofar as we can observe them. Doing so, this will assist the newly initiated Brother Mason and assure continuation and perpetuation of Freemasonry itself.

In order to take advantage of the Masonic heritage, the Mason is encouraged to be tenacious enough to re-view his Freemasonic teachings continually; otherwise he can stray from the true Masonic path, slip from Ma-sonic joy to complacent and sink into a quagmire of disinterestedness. The Mason must be prepared to work, because study and learning must coincide with a striving for intimate attachment to the principles of our Fraternity.

However, study alone is not enough; the Mason must be prepared, willing, and ready to apply Freemasonry's lessons to his life and to share them with others. Masons must be willing to devote sustained energy to accepting the responsibilities of our Masonic lessons. Every effort must be made to impress upon and teach these to the newly made Brother Mason.

He must be able to recognize and repudiate the approach that will take

knowledge as an end in itself and, instead, come to the conviction that the aim of Masonic study and application is to acquire nobility of character, integrity, and good habits. He is prompted to dedicate himself to the willing service of people and to attempt to exert his influence upon them for good, rather than to remain apart and aloof.

We, by our very nature, are evolving beings. We never stand still; we are always becoming something else. Therefore, we are encouraged to review our Masonic teachings and principles, then recommit our lives to them. This promises to be an ongoing process because there is no genuineness in our existence without a sense of commitment and indebtedness; without a cognizance that man must transcend himself, his needs and his self-interests; without the realisation that our existence involves celebration, satisfaction, and exaltation. It is difficult for Masons to think of themselves as true Masons without being conscious of their indebtedness. The true Mason has a sense of being committed to a continuous task, being called upon to experience living and receiving as well as taking. To the Mason, this is the most important experience and joy in life.

Masonry's meaning, therefore, is found in understanding the demands made by our Craft and in responding to them.

Furthermore, Masons are strongly encouraged to strive to acquire a thorough knowledge of the world in which they live. This becomes a necessary prerequisite for comprehending the condition of their Brothers and Sisters whom they will be asked to serve. To commit oneself fully to the teachings and principles of Freemasonry, then, requires a leap, a suspension of one's inevitable self-centeredness.

Thus, the ability to love is a Masonic qualification of paramount importance. To assist in effecting positive change, love and compassion are offered first before we commence our practical assistance to the less fortunate.

Finally, there are three conditions a Mason has to meet: the perfection of his intellectual faculties, an active imagination to probe the concepts conveyed by Masonic imagery and, as a result, the determination to live a strong moral life.

Then, and only then, will he be fit to be a Mason.

Julian H. Cambridge was raised on September 7, 1977, in King Solomon's Seaport Lodge No. 260, now Starr King Lodge No. 344, in San Francisco, CA, serving as

Master in 1982.

A Life Member of the Philalethes Society, he is an active member in the Scottish and York Rite, High 12 International, and Quetto Grotto in San Diego. He is also a member of York Rite College No.148 of San Diego, California, Kit Carson Council No. 237, Allied Masonic Degrees an active member of tile Ancient Egyptian Order of Sciots-San Diego Pyramid No.32; and The Royal Order of Scotland, The Robert Bruce Association.

MASONRY VERSUS MISINFORMATION

*M. U! Larry R Packwood, 32□
Grand Master
Grand Lodge of New Mexico
5800 Osuna Blvd. NE, #209,
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Not rote memorization of proficiencies or required time between Degrees but Masonic education is the key to membership retention and involvement.

***Who do we consider of utmost importance
during this critical period in a new Mason's life,
ourselves or the candidate?***

When the Grand Lodge of New Mexico first announced plans for its "All the Way in One Day" Class (held on September 16, 1995 in Albuquerque with 272 candidates), there was, to no one's surprise, a lot of misinformation which led to misunderstandings and misinterpretations of fact.

Let's get right to the biggest bit of misinformation-that all we're interested in is numbers. Nothing could be further from the truth! If we could somehow wave a magic wand and double the number of Masons in our Jurisdiction (think about that, twice as many Masons in your Lodge) and, yet, if we didn't give them a thorough education regarding Freemasonry (such as the revised Lodge System of Masonic Education) and if we didn't provide them with meaningful meetings after they'd become Master Masons, we'd soon be back in the same situation in which we now find ourselves.

As Wor. Bro. Bob Hall of San Juan Lodge No. 25 in Aztec and I discussed over

the phone, it isn't how a man is made a Mason that counts. It's what is done for him, with him, and by him afterwards that counts.

There are, however, some very positive and worth-while concerns. Fortunately, most of these concerns are in the very area of our opportunity and obligation to teach a new Mason the basic underlying tenets and truths of Freemasonry.

I am very pleased that you who understand what Masonry is and who care about the real education we owe the new members of our Jurisdiction are voicing your concerns.

There are a couple of other related misunderstandings that I would like to address. It appears that some Brethren labour under the mistaken impression that we can only educate a new Brother by making him memorize the proficiencies and that a Lodge's obligation and opportunity to enlighten a new Mason end when he returns his Third Degree proficiency.

How else can we explain the lack of ongoing educational and enlightening programs at the vast majority of our regular and social meetings? Even if it is easier for us to stick with a script with which we are comfort-able than to duly and truly prepare ourselves to respond to any questions or concerns our candidates may have, our proficiencies can't do it all

It is also safe to say that most of us enjoyed the Ma-sonic education we received during (or maybe, in spite of) the time we had to spend memorizing our proficiencies. However, I have yet to hear anyone say how much they enjoyed the pressure of having to memorize the proficiencies word perfect or of being corrected each time he made a small mistake.

Listen to how respectfully we all reminisce about the time we spent with our coaches as they taught us the proficiencies. It becomes readily apparent that what we remember is not the exact words of the proficiencies nor the number of days we had to wait between Degrees but, rather, the time and effort spent on our behalf by a caring and loving mentor. Does it then follow that if we spend the same time and effort with a Brother who receives all three Degrees in one day that he will love us any less or have any fewer fond memories of us or less information on Masonry? Let's ask ourselves some questions.

- Who do we consider of utmost importance during this critical period in a new Mason's life, ourselves or the candidate?
- Who are we interested in, ourselves or those candidates who are our future?
- Are we interested in doing things only if we get to do them "our way"? or should we be more interested in doing things in ways that will educate, motivate, and captivate our new members?
- Are the proficiencies really what makes a man a good Mason? If they are, then how many of us right now are able to return satisfactory proficiencies in all three Degrees? Ok, how about just the Third? If we can't, does that mean we are no longer "good Masons"?
- Are the proficiencies a contributing factor to the statistics showing us that only 10% to 20% of those whom we make Masons ever take an active part in Blue Lodge Masonry? Is the format of the introduction they get more appealing to us than to them? Is their introduction to Freemasonry supposed to be a hardship to be endured or the start of a lifelong fellowship to be embraced?
- If we put a candidate through our regular process of three separate Degrees in full proficiencies, will that assure us that he be a well-informed and enthusiastic Mason who will take an active part in his Lodge and who is prepared to and capable of carrying the light of Masonry to his friends and family? Past results say "NO!"
- on the other hand, even if a candidate gets all three Degrees in one day, if well-informed Brethren of his Lodge (perhaps a cadre of Past Masters, etc.) met with him and, as a caring and loving group, walked him through the new (1992 with a revision in 1993) New Mexico Lodge System of Masonic Education, what would be his prospects? I think it's worth getting out of our comfort zone and into theirs to find out!

The word Lodge is bold in the preceding paragraph for several reasons. First, it is a Lodge's (not just the Master's or the coach's) responsibility to educate its members. If you haven't taken an active part in all that is involved in welcoming, educating and accommodating a new member, don't sit and wonder why he isn't taking an active part in your Lodge!

Second, all our members want and should get more ongoing enlightenment than they are getting now. At Grand Lodge, I suggested that Masters use the Masonic Service Association's "Short Talk Bulletins" during our Regular Lodge Communications as well as during our social functions.

There's also enough great information in our new Lodge System of Masonic Education in New Mexico to provide ongoing programs for members and families alike for years to come!

That's right! Let our wives, children, and guests (who are prospective members of either our Lodges or women's organisations) hear about real Masonry and what we are really about. If we don't tell our story our-selves, others will make up stories about us!

Finally, at whose feet does the responsibility lie if "leaders" who aren't prepared, capable, and willing to lead us are elected and installed? If our current members haven't been taught as much regarding Masonry as they should have been? If our candidates aren't learning as much as they should about Masonry? If our potential new members aren't being actively sought? And if our involvement with our communities is al-most nonexistent? Those feet are ours - as members of our Lodges!

Now, one last bit of misinformation needs to be addressed. Does my waiving the proficiencies of the first two Degrees for those who join us during our "All the Way in One Days program mean that I am against our proficiencies? Does it mean that a Lodge which feels that the proficiencies are the only way to enlighten a new Mason cannot teach him the first two proficiencies in addition to the third? NO! OF COURSE NOT! I am, however, uncomfortable with our attitude that says that what we are comfortable with is all that is important and then being so surprised when young, busy professional men won't commit themselves to playing our game by our rules and for as long as we say they have to play it.

How are we going to address these basic questions: Is the time a man spends waiting between his Degrees the essential ingredient of his Masonic life? Is it the format of rote memorisation of words and phrases which he may not understand? Or is the important thing what he actually learns from us and how well we equip him to apply Freemasonry's lessons to his life?

Perhaps none of us can answer these questions right now, but I have a challenge for anybody willing to accept it. Put one of your candidates through the three Degrees,

make him learn all three "longs proficiencies, and make him wait at least 28 days between Degrees. And put another of your candidates through the "All the Way in One Day" session and spend as much time with him on the new version of the Lodge System of Masonic Education program as you would have if you taught him the long proficiencies. Wait a few months. Then talk with both of them and see which one is better equipped to tell Masonry's story to his family, friends, and fellow workers, those who might want to join us and, finally, to those who would attack us. Is anyone up to the challenge?

The preceding article by Grand Master Packwood is reprinted, in slip shorter form with permission from The New Mexico Freemason, Summer 1995.

Larry R. Packwood was initiated, passed, and raised a Master Mason in 1966-67 by his father, R.W.B.D.N. Packwood, 32° K.C.C.H., in Hiram Lodge No. 13 in Albuquerque, was extended "courtesy work" by the Scottish Rite and Shrine in Tampa in 1975, the year his father was Potentate of Ballut Abyad Temple in Albuquerque, returned to Albuquerque in 1978; was appointed to his Blue Lodge line; served as its Centennial Master in 1985 and is currently striving as Grand Master 'to set the Craft to work and to give them proper instructions to pursue their labours'.

NEW CABLE TV SERIES FEATURES MASONRY IN THE U.S.A.

A new television series on Freemasonry is being created by Capstone Productions, Inc. The series of half-hour videos will be called "The Masonic Television Forum," according to Jackson Polk, president and executive producer of Capstone Productions.

The videos can be ordered by individuals or Masonic organisations for use as lodge programs, as well as local access cable television channels. Four programs will be issued during the first year. The series will be designed to provide information for Masons and to educate non-Masons on the history, philosophy, and goals of Freemasonry.

Subscribers to the Forum will receive the series of four programs on VHS videocassettes as well as an optional 3/4" broadcast video-tape for the local access cable channel. Included with the tapes are instructions on how to get free cable access air time on most U.S. local cable TV systems. The tapes can be donated to libraries,

and a public relations kit is sent to subscribers that offers guidelines on how to get local newspapers to publicize the program and the library donation.

The half-hour programs will use a news magazine format with segments on current Masonic events, historical events, symbolism, philosophy, Masonic charities, book reviews, and sketches of personalities.

The Masonic Information Centre will advise Cap-stone Productions on the content of the series. The Centre has endorsed She Forum as Freemasonry's newest voice in She television marketplace.

“We have worked with Capstone before, and we're enthusiastic about Masonry getting a fair presentation with this regular program on cable TV,” said III. Richard E. Fletcher, 33□, chairman of the Center's steering committee and executive secretary of the Masonic Service Association of the United States. “I think the project is an excellent way for lodges to publicize the fraternity by subscribing to the video series and distributing the tapes.”

Capstone Productions has produced a number of Masonic videos recently including ones on the White House and U.S. Capitol cornerstone re-enactment ceremonies.

Individuals or lodges may subscribe to She series of four videos for \$240. Continuation of future series will depend on interest generated from the first series. For further information, contact Jackson H. Polk, Cap-stone Productions, Inc., 12002 Citrus Grove Road, N. Potomac, MD 20878.

Editors Note:

The Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario has produced the video “Friend to Friend” it is available to all members of the Craft (\$19.00 per copy) and can be ordered through Lodge Secretaries or picked up at the Grand Lodge, Hamilton, Ont. This professionally produced video tape provides an excellent way to introduce masonry to individuals, families or groups who have expressed an interest in finding out more about Freemasonry

WE CAN'T GROW IF THEY DON'T KNOW

*Sovereign Grand Commander C. Fred Kleinknecht, 33rd
A. Id A. S. R. Southern Jurisdiction*

Easy to read and understand, "What's a Mason?" a new Masonic Information Centre brochure, tells what Freemasonry is and what we have to offer. Remember, we can't grow if they don't know.

Perhaps the most important development in Masonry over the last five years is an increasing determination to bring Masonry out of the tiled re-cesses of the Lodge rooms and Temples and into the mainstream of daily life. Grand Lodges, the Supreme Councils, individual Masons, and expert consultants have all arrived at the same basic conclusion-if we are to grow again, the "outside world" must know about us, as they did in the first half of the century. As one Masonic leader said, it's not that we need to change who we are or what we do, it's that we've got to let people know who we are and what we do. The issue can be summed up in seven words:

We can't grow, if they don't know.

Masonry has a great story to tell. We can talk about the men who have been Masons-any fraternity which can claim such leaders as Washington and Franklin and Churchill and Roosevelt, such cultural giants as Mozart and Haydn and Sibelius and Chagall, such captains of industry as Penny and Gillette and Ford and Olds, such popular entertainers as Will Rogers and John Wayne and Roy Clark and Ernest Borgnine, such scientists and mathematicians as Fleming and Burbank and Laplace and Menninger, any fraternity which can claim such men has a story to tell and a wealth to offer to men today.

We can talk about our philanthropies. We touch literally millions of lives each year.

We can talk about our teachings. The great lessons of the dignity of each individual, the vital importance of toleration, the right to spiritual, political and intellectual liberty-these values are as relevant today as they have ever been in the past.

We have a lot to offer the men of today. But they won't know it if we don't tell, and we can't grow if they don't know.

We need to tell them the story of Masonry.

First, we need to tell it to our own members. Many Masons have not set foot in a Lodge since they took their Master Mason Degree, in some cases more than 40 years ago. They know Masonry is a good thing, they are proud to be members. But, especially in the face of criticisms and attacks from anti-Masons, our Brethren need to hear the story again. And we must make sure that our new members really understand Masonry, that it is explained to them in clear, understandable terms.

Second, we need to tell the story of Masonry to our friends. One of the saddest stories in Masonry, and we all hear it frequently, is of a man who waits for years for his Masonic friend to invite him to join the Fraternity-and finally concludes he just isn't good enough. Just a little information would have saved him all those years of waiting.

Third, we must tell the story to the outside world in general, in every way we can and at every opportunity. We need to let them know who we are and what we do. We need to tell them how we touch their lives and the lives of everyone living in the community.

The John J. Robinson, 33rd, Masonic Information Centre (MIC) was established in 1993 through the generosity of Brother Robinson to help with that task.

The Centre has produced some excellent publications. The most recent is "*What's A Mason?*" Let me share with you parts of some letters the Centre has received about the pamphlet.

"As Secretary of our Lodge for over 23 years, I have read a lot of information, and this booklet is as good if not better than any I have read"

"I feel this brochure will do wonders in re-establishing what a Mason is. Many of us are not as eloquent as we could be, and this brochure will aid us in explaining our Craft to Chose who may be interested

"Thank you, thank you, thank you for putting together the pamphlet titled "*What's a Mason?*" This is exactly what I, as a Lodge Education Officer, have been trying to put together."

"I intend to recommend to the Worshipful Master that a copy be given to each

petitioner at the time the investigating committee visits his home. This will provide the candidate with additional information about Masonry and will provide his family members with information which may help them understand who we are and why the candidate wants to join."

Share this information with your friends who are not yet Masons. Let them know about our great and wonderful Fraternity. It's a simple act of friendship to make them aware of all that Masonry has to offer. And remember: we can't grow if they don't know.

(Reprinted from The Scottish Rite Journal (March 1996)

Copies of "What's a Mason?" are available from our Grand Lodge in Hamilton, Ontario. They can be ordered through your Lodge Secretary.

READERS OF THE SCOTTISH RITE JOURNAL "SOUND OFF"

PUT ON YOUR SUNDAY BEST

I'm impressed with the article "Father's Lodge" in the June *Scottish Rite Journal*. In it, III Bro. George A. Newbury states, "On Lodge night, father would get dressed up in his Sunday best and hie himself off to Lodge. It was an event he looked forward to." When I was a small lad, I had a neighbour I admired very much. His son was my best friend. When my friend's father would leave home, on a weekday, in his best Sunday suit, I asked, "Jim, where's your dad going!" His reply was, "Dad's going to Lodge!" This made a real impression on me, especially during the Depression. My Father wasn't a Mason. He could not afford to be. I'd say, "Someday, I'm going to be a Mason "And I have been, for 27 years.

I believe until Masons of all the Masonic Bodies start to respect their organisations enough to put on their Sunday best to attend meetings, our membership will continue to decline. We owe our "Sunday best" to the organisation in our dress and in our actions.

*Bro. Sam C Bales,
Wichita, Kansas*

"I'D RATHER BE A COULD BE"

About 1983, when I was Worshipful Master of Boulder Lodge No. 45, A. F & A M, in Colorado, my father was in a hospital in Denver. In addition to that anxiety, I was beginning to wonder if my various time-consuming, sometimes apparently fruitless Masonic activities were worth it.

I happened to notice a poem, handwritten on a piece of notebook paper taped to a wall at the nurse's station. After reading it, I thought to myself, "That explains it all!" I don't know the author, and I don't recall the title. But for what it is worth, here it is.

*I'd rather be a could be if I couldn't be an are,
Because a could be is a maybe with a chance of touching
I'd rather be a has-been than a might-of-been by far,
Because a might-of-been has never been, but a has-been was an are.*

*Bro. Charles R. Travis,
Denver, Colorado*

MASONIC PASSPORT

"From Canada: A Fun Idea To Stimulate Visiting" a brief item in the May 1995 *Scottish Rite journal* de-scribed the concept of a "Masonic Passport." This idea is to stimulate Blue Lodge and other visitation. Appearing like an official document, the Passport" has space for one's Blue Lodge dues card and contains sections for other Masonic credentials or titles as well as a "Journey Ledger" where each visitation to a Lodge or other Masonic Body can be listed and officially recognized via an officer's signature and the stamp of the Masonic Body visited.

Actually, this is an idea which was conceived and copyrighted in the United States in January 1991 by myself and produced by Passports & Papers of St. Paul, Minnesota. Since that time, the Masonic Passport," complete with accessory items, has been embraced by the travelling Mason and promoted in the U.S. and Canada via distribution by the J. P. Luther co. of Berlin, Wisconsin. For more information write: Passports & Papers, 711 Decorah Lane, St. Paul, MN 55120-1668.

W.Bro. Alvin E Bohne,
Shekinah Lodge, No. 171, St. Paul, Minnesota

WEARY OF VICIOUS ATTACKS

I wish to thank all the Brethren who have responded so positively to my article "On Freemasonry: One Southern Baptist To Another" in the May issue of the *Scottish Rite Journal*.

For years now, I have grown weary of the vicious attacks on Freemasonry by the likes of Dr. James Larry Holly (a resident of my hometown of Beaumont, Texas) and others of his misguided ilk. Incidentally, Dr. Holly is the only person, to my knowledge, who has been excluded from the fellowship of the First Baptist Church of Beaumont, a predominantly Fundamentalist congregation. The venomous lies will doubtless persist; nevertheless, at least I have gone on record with my position as a Southern Baptist Freemason. Thank the Lord that only He shall judge us. see Romans 14:10-12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10.

My Brethren, keep up the good work and continue to fight the good fight against fanaticism, tyranny, ignorance, and all forms of spiritual oppression. With time, patience and perseverance, we may overcome all things! I treasure each of you in my prayers.

Bro. David v Thomas,
Galveston, Texas

MASONIC RITUAL ...ANCIENT PENALTIES OF THE OBLIGATION

From the Spring/Summer 1995 The Green Mountain Freemason, publication of the Grand Lodge of Vermont.

For some time, the Ritual Committee of the Grand Lodge has been hard at work reviewing the present Ritual and Floorwork. It submitted recommended re-visions to the Grand Lodge Officers and the District Deputy Grand Masters - all of whom have responded with their recommendations to the committee. This revised document is now before the lodge officers and brethren for their review and comments. In as much as the revision will be on the agenda of the annual communication, your Grand Lodge officers believe that it is important that they discuss this matter with you.

The only change in the ritual is to move the ancient penalties from the obligation to the address given by the Worshipful Master to the candidate immediately after the obligation. To some brethren this move is long overdue. To other brethren this move is not warranted.

Your Grand Lodge officers are aware that our fraternity has been subjected to escalating criticism and defensive praise in recent years by several organizations and individuals - both within and without our fraternity. Indeed, several books have been written in response to this criticism.

In two such books, *A Pilgrim's Path* by John J. Robinson and like *Boy Who Cried Wolf* by Dr. Richard P. Thorn, the authors both of whom were Freemasons, saw no reason to remove the ancient penalties. However, others, such as Dr. Gary Leazer, whose out-spoken support of Freemasonry cost him his position with the Southern Baptist Organization, urged us to remove the ancient penalties from the obligation.

As in every issue involving change, there are two sides to be considered, and each side can advance reasons why it should or should not occur. Your Grand Lodge officers agree that we should not change our Ritual and Floorwork as a knee jerk reaction to criticism. However, we would be irresponsible if we did not recommend change where we believe it is warranted.

In the *Boy Who Cried Wolf*, at page 52, Dr. Thorn states:

"The obligation amused me and I had to smother a laugh. The idea that grown men would actually take such an oath seriously seemed ludicrous. But then I re-called that just before entering the lodge, I had been told that the only penalties Freemasonry ever imposes are reprimand, suspension and expulsion, and that all references to any other penalties are only symbolic in nature."

We, of course, presently require the explanation mentioned by Dr. Thorn at the conclusion of the degrees. Yet, in spite of this "disclaimer," we are still troubled with the inclusion of the ancient penalties during the solemn and moving part of a candidate's initiation - the moment he is professing to the Almighty, with his hand on the Sacred Volume, that he will keep and perform the same without equivocation. We have asked ourselves, is it right to make such a promise to God and to our fellow brethren knowing it not to be true? We have this concern not because of any criticism by professional anti-Freemasons such as Carlson, Pat Robertson, Ankerberg or Holly.

We have this concern because of our belief in the principles of our fraternity, wherein we dedicate our lives to reverence for God, truth in the conduct of our affairs with one another, and a determination to make good men better.

Brethren, we want our candidates to take their Ma-sonic oath seriously. We do not want them, as Dr. Thorn stated, to "smother a laugh" or to conclude "the idea that grown men would actually take such an oath seriously seemed ludicrous." If we believe in our principles, it makes little sense to require the recitation of archaic, blood thirsty penalties, in the name of God with a hand solemnly resting upon the Holy Bible or other volume of the Sacred Law. The fact that we presently explain to a candidate that these penalties are solely symbolic tends to trivialize the essence of the obligation. This irreverence may even be a factor in the failure of many of our candidates to ever complete their degrees. Most certainly its inclusion in the obligation is not a factor in candidates joining Freemasonry or completing their degrees.

The revised Ritual and Floorwork was discussed at the midyear assembly of the District Deputy Grand Masters on January 22, 1995. At that time our Grand Chaplain, Rev. David J. Dean, addressed the issue of the bloody penalties forthrightly. He informed us that we should either remove the Holy Gospel from the altar or move the bloody penalties from the obligation. He declared the two are not compatible with one another.

For all of the foregoing reasons, your Grand Lodge officers support moving ancient penalties from the obligation and allowing the Worshipful Master to explain them as he approaches the candidate following the obligation. We recommend the adoption of the revised Ritual and Floorwork.

The Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, Grand Treasurer, Grand Secretary, Grand Lecturer, Grand Chaplain (Grand Lodge of Vermont).

Quoting from an accompanying article by the Grand Chaplain, Rev. David J. Dean:

As I think of thirty-eight years of social, ethical, political and philosophical upheaval, loaded words and phrases flash through my mind like so many covers of "Time." Civil rights, riots, assassinations, the drug scene, the sexual revolution, the Vietnam War, human rights, the New Left, the New Right, Vatican II, the Moral Majority, feminism—these suggest a few of the hurricanes that have been roaring

through these years. They have been testing times for any Masonic Lodge seeking to witness to the power of Masonic teachings as a reality in our Masonic lives. Today, I rejoice that, by the grace of God and the backing of a loyal, understanding and stimulating Grand Lodge of Vermont, I am able to say with an even greater confidence: "I am not ashamed to be a Mason!"

But I would be ashamed if I had to confess to you that my understanding of Masonry and our teachings had not budged one inch since 1958. I should like to think my Masonic eye is now on the practising Masonry in the twenty-first century. And the greatest gift is the grace to change one's mind.

This is a way of saying I no longer believe the Masonic Oath can continue to be given in fidelity to the Bible without the removal of the archaic penalties. Let the penalties be given by the Master to the candidate after the obligation. If the penalties are to be retained within the oath, then let us not require the Holy Bible be used as a symbol of our acceptance of the Third Degree.

This recommendation was adopted by the Grand Lodge of Vermont at their annual communication June 14, 1995.

It is presented solely for your edification and is the position of the Grand Lodge of Vermont.

Editor's Comments:

During the past eight years as editor of 'The Newsletter' there have been many questions received from subscribers. Most of them have been answered or the questioner directed to another information source for his answers. Among those that are asked most frequently, are those concerning the 'traditional penalties' of the obligations. Most are concerned that the impact of the words of the traditional penalties on the thoughts of an initiate is inappropriate and that it detracts from the solemnity of the ceremony and ritual. Later, and with instruction, most candidates understand the traditional background of the words - and their original significance and purpose. This later understanding does not ever remove the first impact of those words which seemed so out of place with the events that proceeded or followed the obligation. There is always only one chance to make a good first impression.

Do those words at that time and in that situation at the altar, detract from the import of the others that follow?

Several jurisdictions have removed the words of the traditional penalties (the so called 'Blood Oath' words), from the rest of the obligation that is given on the holy book representing the faith of the initiate. In some of those jurisdictions, the words reappear later in the 'traditional history' of the degree.

The questions show that concerns are present in the minds of many, and they also represent the whole spectrum of opinion from concerns that changes are imminent to concerns that there will not be any changes considered.

The foregoing article was published by the Southern California Research lodge as an information piece. It is representative of similar concerns and actions in other jurisdictions on this continent and overseas, including the Grand Lodge of England.

BOOK REVIEWS

by R. W. Bro. Wallace McLeod

MASONIC CHALLENGES

(Transactions of The Lodge of Research. No. 218, Victorian Constitution, 1991). Edited by Kent Henderson and Graeme Lodge. Pp. 152. Victoria, Australia: Rowick Printers. (1993).

All too often we don't realize what's going on, Masonically speaking, in other parts of the world. For example, how many of you ever heard of the Lodge of Research in Victoria, Australia? It was founded in 1911, which makes it a good deal older than any other of the research lodges in North America. It didn't begin publishing its transactions until 1918; that means that the first forty-three papers presented in the lodge are totally lost—a frustrating amount of wasted effort. The motto of the lodge is Latin, *Sequendo Lampade Disco*, which means something like "I learn by following the light" Here we have the eight papers that were delivered in the Lodge of Research during the year 1881. The booklet has a soft cover, and is spirally bound, so that it lies flat when open. The papers of course vary a good deal in the nature of their appeal and in the type of research that was required; that is probably inevitable.

The first one, *"The History, Development and Current Status of English Freemasonry"* is a masterful perspective by John Hamill, the Librarian and Curator of Freemasons' Hall in London, who delivered it while on a lecture tour in Australia. D.C.

Stocks gives an interesting and scholarly review of "Early Freemasonry in Russia" William M Caulfield, in "Rudyard Kipling -Master of His Craft", offers us a readable biography, less concerned with the books than with the man. S.W. Martin, in "Who Really is Ruth?" considers some of the paradoxes in our usual reading of her life. Kent W. Henderson provides a fascinating summary of "*Overseas Masonic Practices-What Can They Teach Us?*"

In particular he suggests that the success of any lodge is based on four factors: ceremony, involvement, education, and after-proceedings. Peter H.I. Green, in "*The Consequences of Cut-Rate Masonry*", argues that Masonry sells itself too cheaply, and does not make enough effort to appeal to young professional men. Mel Moyle offers a detailed series of notes entitled "Further Explanation of the Three Tracing Boards" And finally, Tony Pope traces the evolution and development of "Australian Lodges of Research: An Historical Overview"

As a whole, the collection is quite interesting, and the papers are perhaps somewhat above the level of those produced in some of our research lodges. The North American Mason might find it useful to learn more about this Australian lodge. Membership in the Correspondence Circle is open to any regular Master Mason. The cost is \$20 (either American or Canadian). Members receive the Annual Transactions, and the monthly lodge summons together with the monthly research bulletin Thoughts for the Inquiring Mason. Inquiries should be directed to G. C. Love, P.O. Box 2108, St Kilda West, Victoria, Australia 3182.

A PILGRIM'S PATH

One Man's Road to the Masonic Temple by John J. Robinson, Pp n.; 179, 1 illustration. New York: M. Evans and Company, Inc., 1993. Available from Grand Lodge through your lodge secretary.

Is there anybody out there who hasn't heard how the fundamentalist wing has taken over the Southern Baptist Convention? And how a fanatical and bigoted liar Dr. James Holly has arranged to have Masonry investigated as a non-Christian religion?

Is there anyone who hasn't heard of John J. Robinson, who in 1989 published a book called *Born in Blood: The Lost Secrets of Freemasonry?* (His main thesis, that the Masons are descended from the Knights Templar, is quite wrong, says the reviewer arrogantly but he demonstrated a familiarity with the history and practices of the Craft that was extraordinary for a non-Mason).

Over the next three years Mr. Robinson appeared on dozens of radio and TV talk shows, speaking on the subject of Masonry. He kept on being invited back because he was articulate, learned and persuasive-and of course because he was uncorrupted by membership in the brotherhood. Away up here in Canada, I heard only one program, but in it he made mincemeat out of the televangelist John Ankerberg.

After all this fun, Mr. Robinson decided to become a Mason himself I am happy to tell you that he was initiated in Nova Caesarea Harmony Lodge, No. 2, Cincinnati, on November 25,1992, and was passed and raised at sight by the Grand Master of Ohio, M. W. Bro. H. Ray Evans, on December 3,1992.

In this latest book, he talks a bit more about these years, outlines his perceptions of Masonry, and - discusses the Baptist situation. The volume has already received more than one rave review in the Masonic press from brethren who were privileged to get advance-copies. I have to agree with them. For years, some of us have been saying that it's time we stopped ignoring our critics, and started to answer them. Here is a textbook on how to do it. One by one he ticks off their lies and misconceptions. He demonstrates that Dr. Holly regularly takes scriptural passages out of context, and wilfully misconstrues the text. If the so-called "amen of God" who are spreading lies about us choose to ignore Bro. Robinson's book, they will confirm that their devotion to truth and honesty is superficial.

But as well as pillorying error, Robinson offers some advice on how Freemasonry might move with the times, by decreasing our emphasis on secrecy, and by introducing a few innovative practices. He presents an "idea file", which might serve to increase awareness among non-masons, thereby generating membership. Robinson has done his homework, he writes beautifully, and he argues convincingly.

He is not quite infallible. He admits that he consulted a Hebrew scholar about the meaning of a text in the book of Isaiah (page 47). He would have been well advised to consult a Latin scholar about the origin of the name of the morning star (page 48), or about the two adaptations of Virgil that appear on the Great Seal of the United States (page 65). He says wrongly that Albert Pike did not write the Preface to *Morals and Dogma* (page 45), but one has to admit that these are -mere trifles, and do not much affect the value of the work as a whole. As Dr. Brent Morris says in his review, "If you're going to buy just one Masonic book this year, this is the book for you."

LIGHT AFTER DARKNESS

by Chief Ranami Abah

As you read this book, you will understand why this man is entitled to attempt such a task, for this is truly an explanation of Freemasonry for all brothers from the youngest Entered Apprentice in the Northeast Corner of the Lodge to the Worshipful Master in the East.

Just one example to whet the appetite: Where else have you had explained the basic requirements of a Landmark and then had landmarks explained in language you can understand, together with a basic sound reason why that item qualifies to be called a 'Land-mark'?

Here is a man who was exiled from his home country by a military and political coup, who went to Scotland and England to live and write about and practice Freemasonry in his daily life. This book can serve as a 'primer' and an advanced textbook at the same time for Masons everywhere who really want to know what their Masonry is about. It is short (128 pages) but packed with the kind of information you can talk about. It should quench almost any Mason's thirst for knowledge and understanding and whet his appetite for more"

WILLIAM PRESTON AND HIS WORK:

by William Preston

The first 158 pages are about William Preston and his work. But, the real jewel can be found at the back of the book, particularly if one is intrigued by ritual, for from page 159 through 281 are found Preston's Lectures.

As the pages are turned, familiar passages from our ceremonies keep popping up. All of us, most of us, are most comfortable when we are in familiar territory. And that is what makes this book so fascinating. The Hiram Legend as we know it might not make for interesting reading - but - the story of Hirab Abif, as Preston tells it, makes for some of the most thought provoking reading one can imagine, actually giving one the impression that our proceedings are a condensed version.

And the same goes for page after page of the other parts of the Master Mason Degree as well as the two preceding degrees. You will have called to your mind the proficiencies you may or may not have enjoyed learning. You will stop for a moment

during your reading, look at the ceiling and enjoy the recollection of your receiving the degrees, but you will now have a greater appreciation of your efforts. And you know what else? I'll wager that after going through these lectures you will suddenly have a desire to attend your lodge to enjoy and profit from one of our degrees.

I just can't imagine anyone being bored with this book. Don't let the word lecture scare you, they are really interesting narratives. And all I have covered is the second half of the book.

MOZART'S MASONIC MUSIC

E K Edwards, Jr., M.D. 32°

Few realize the amount of Masonic music Mozart composed.

The bicentennial of the death of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was in 1991. He was a member of Lodge Zur Gekronten Hoffnung, or the "Crowned Hope" Lodge, in Vienna, Austria. Mozart was raised to the Degree of Master Mason in 1784, while his close friend and mentor, Joseph Haydn, was raised the following year. Vienna was rich with Masonic activity during this period, boasting no less than eight Lodges.

The city became closely associated with the ideals of enlightenment permeating western Europe at that time. It is no surprise, then, that much of Mozart's music is replete with Masonic overtones, but the following list mentions only those pieces that are strictly Masonic in character.

- ' O heiliges Band der Freundschaft" ("Most Holy Tie of Brotherhood's Deep Friendship") K 148
- "Die Ihr einem neuen Grade" ("You Who Now Are Risen Higher") K 468
- "Die Maurerfreude" ("Mason's Joy") K 471
- "Maurerische Trauermusik" ("Masonic Funeral Music") K 477
- "Zerfiesset heat' geliebte Bruder" (Opening of the Lodge") K 483
- "Ihr unsere neuen Leter" ("Closing of the Lodge") K 484
- "Die Ihr des unermesslichen Weltallis Schopfer ehrt" ("A Little German Cantata") K 619
- "Die Zauberflote" (The Magic Flute") K 620
- "Kleine Freimaurer Kantate" ("Little Masonic Cantata") K 623

Many realize Mozart's opera "*The Magic Flute*" is rich in Masonic symbolism, but few realize the amount of Masonic music Mozart composed. Freemasonry played a key role in Mozart's life, and some critics feel that perhaps his best works were written after Mozart became a Mason.

In the above list, however partial it may be, I have listed the "K" of "Kochel" number after each piece. This number refers to Ludwig Ritter von Kochel who, in 1862, catalogued all of Mozart's work. Each of Mozart's works is classified or categorised by its Kochel number.

The lower numbers represent Mozart's earliest works, while the higher Kochel numbers correspond to his later works. All of the works listed here are available in cassette or compact disc from most record stores. Also, I had no problem purchasing a CD entitled *Masonic Songs*. As Masons we need to appreciate and take advantage of our rich musical heritage, with Mozart being only one of dozens of Masonic composers.

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