

# *Transactions* of the **Discovery Lodge of Research**

**No. 971, United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory**

*direct descendant of the Research Lodge of New South Wales  
and the Sydney Lodge of Research*



The lodge generally meets in the  
Sydney Masonic Centre  
on the first Thursday of the month  
March (Installation), June, August & November, at 7 pm.  
Dress: lounge suit, lodge tie, regalia.

Master VWBro Alan Gale

Secretary WBro Brad Del Munns  
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*Foundation member of the*

***Australian & New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council***

website: <http://anzmrc.org/>



## From The Editor

*Dear Sir and Brother,*

*After an absence of Transactions for a number of years for DLoR 971 we are pleased to return with this edition to welcome in the New Year. We hope to have Transactions out more regularly. They will include content presented in the lodge over the last few years as well as papers from past transactions which should be of interest, particularly to more recent members.*

*The next meeting will be the Installation on Thursday 2nd March 2017 at the Sydney Masonic Centre.*

*In wider news May 2017 sees the first International Meeting of Lodges of Research (ICOM) taking place in Toulon, France. Long serving member of this Research Lodge, VWBro Neil Morse, will be presenting at the conference on the unique success of the ANZMRC as a regional body of research groups. If you are in Europe this summer please feel free to attend and make yourself known to Bro. Neil. Visit the ICM website for more details (<https://www.icom.fm>).*

*See you at the Install...*

*Yours fraternally,  
Ian Shanley  
Secretary-Elect*

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## Officers-elect for the year 2017

Worshipful Master-elect	VWBro Stewart Grant	<a href="mailto:sgrant.ggl@bigpond.com">sgrant.ggl@bigpond.com</a>
Immediate Past Master	VWBro Alan Gale	<a href="mailto:agale@iinet.net.au">agale@iinet.net.au</a>
Senior Warden	VWBro David Slater	<a href="mailto:dbslater633@gmail.com">dbslater633@gmail.com</a>
Junior Warden	WBro Phillip Lye	<a href="mailto:philliplye@aol.com">philliplye@aol.com</a>
Chaplain	VWBro Samuel Tov-Lev	
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Inner Guard	On Rotation	
Tyler	On Rotation	

*Please advise of any omissions or incorrect entries.*

# The Symbolism of Freemasonry: Its Antecedents Explained

Presented on 3 November 2016

*by Bro Stewart Grant*

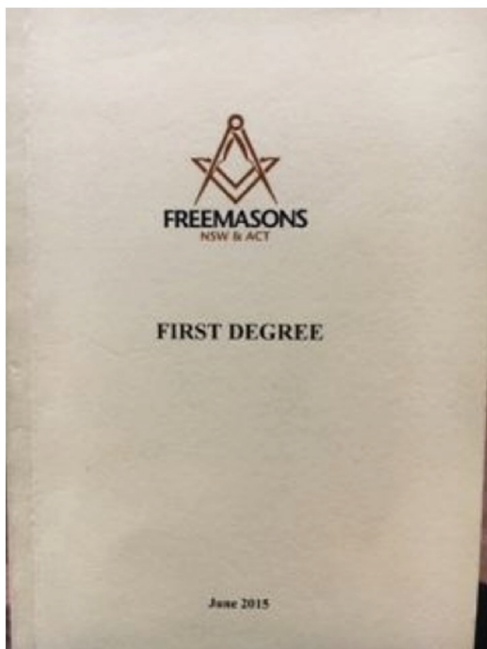
## Introduction

I have for some time been interested in the deeper symbolism of our Fraternity. I am sure we all appreciate that the furniture of the Lodge is symbolic and that the working tools provide specific moral lessons for each tool used. To some degree, this initially allows the new Mason to reflect on the manner in which the stonemasons' tools are being used as symbols to assist him through his life's journey in a moral and virtuous manner: or at least attempt to do so.

In this paper I hope to show that at a deeper level the symbolism of the Craft, and indeed those Orders which extend beyond the first three degrees, actually runs parallel with and feeds off the development of philosophic thought and religious practices from the beginnings of human thought. I use the term philosophy not in its purely academic sense, but rather as a thought process seeking to understand some specific idea or concept. I will bring to your attention aspects of the Craft ritual that draw from such developments and seek to show the development of philosophical and religious thought to which they refer.

## The Craft Ritual

The Craft ritual is not exactly the same in all jurisdictions. Under the United Grand Lodge of England there are some 25 or so rituals in use. In Scotland, the independent Scots have rituals specific to each Lodge because many were operating before the formation of the Grand lodge of Scotland<sup>1</sup>. Under the United Grand Lodge of NSW and the ACT we require that the Ritual is standardised across the jurisdiction.



If visiting on the Continent of Europe, there are further differences flowing from the continental humanist approach as opposed to the religious orientation which originated in the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom<sup>2</sup>.

Irrespective of the variances that one might find when visiting in other English speaking jurisdictions, the underlying principles and tenets are the same and represent a philosophical view as to how good men should conduct themselves in accordance with a moral code developed over centuries.

A review of our Craft rituals (UGLNSWACT) reveals some interesting examples of the influence of ancient philosophical thought on the symbolism being used to explain the masonic journey and its principles either directly or allegorically.

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<sup>1</sup> Cooper Robert L D. *The Essence of Scottish Freemasonry* Sept 2014. "First and foremost because participation in Freemasonry is a personal experience which differs from person to person the meaning of different aspects of Freemasonry can also differ from person to person. Although there may be a consensus among some Scottish Freemasons as to what any particular word or symbol might mean there can be other alternative explanations. The letter 'G' will suffice to illustrate this point. A Freemason who is a Christian by faith will usually interpret the letter 'G' as G\_D but a Freemason who is a Muslim might well reject that idea because he cannot accept that G\_D can be reduced to a mere letter of a human alphabet. He will, quite often argue that the letter 'G' stands for geometric or perhaps geometry. For similar reasons a Freemason who is Jewish might argue that 'G' stands for goodness – the innate goodness within every human being."

<sup>2</sup> Jaccard M. *"Spiritual Paths of Freemasons of Continental Europe"*. ANZMRC 2015

## **First Degree Examples**

- “Three”, a trinity, a triumvate or a triad
  - Three working tools (Working Tools Charge)
  - Duty to God, to yourself, and to your neighbour (NE Charge)
  - Secrecy, Fidelity, and Obedience (NE Charge)
  - Three grand offerings: Abraham’s sacrifice; David’s Prayers, Solomon’s Temple (Tracing Board)
  - Moral, Ceremonial, and Judicial laws (Tracing Board)
  - Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty (Tracing Board)
  - WM, SW, and JW: representing S K of I, H K of T, and H A. (Tracing Board)
  - Faith, Hope, and Charity (Tracing Board)
  - GAOTU; ‘Spirit of God’; God (Prayer before removal of hoodwink)
- The Sun: The Blazing Star (Tracing Board)
- Mosaic pavement and tessellated border (Tracing Board)
- Darkness to light. “Light was ever an object of attainment in all ancient mysteries”. (Charge on obtaining Light)
- Truth and Knowledge (Charge on obtaining Light)
- Seek to understand or know yourself (The underlying purpose of the Masonic journey expressed in the SE Charge)

## **Second Degree Examples**

- The Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences (2<sup>nd</sup> Tracing Board)
- Equality (“the Level” in Working Tools Charge)
- Orders of Architecture (2<sup>nd</sup> Tracing Board)

## **Third Degree Examples**

- Protection of Family (Compare older version of Obligation: “respect the chastity of those nearest and dearest to him in the persons of his wife, his sister and his child”1972 Ritual Book). (Obligation)
- Renewal: Resurrection (Raising)
- Mortality (Retrospect)

## **Installation Address Examples**

- “As a pattern for your imitation consider that great luminary of nature which rising in the East.....” (Address to WM)
- “Wisdom Strength and Beauty” (Address to the Brethren)
- “When the Soul shall take wing.....” (Address to the Brethren)



## Sectional Lecture Examples

- “An Art founded on the principles of Geometry and directed to the service and convenience of mankind”. (Introduction)
- “the nature, character, the attributes and perfections of the Deity” (Introduction)
- “Seek and ye shall find; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened to you”. (While this quote is clearly from the New Testament it reinforces the philosophical importance of ‘Three’ which occurs so many times throughout the rituals)
- “ And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters and God said ‘Let there be light’ and there was light” (There are two philosophical ideas in this quotation: one the importance of light removing the darkness of ignorance ; and the other the inference that the Spirit of God and God are separate entities)
- “intellectual illumination which shall dispel the darkness of his mental and moral ignorance” (The concept of improvement and knowledge of one’s self)
- “As it is the blessed and benign influence of the Sun and Moon” (The importance of the daily and seasonal renewal which is essential to the continuation of life)
- “hence are our lodges furnished with Mosaic work to point out the uncertainty of all things here on earth” (The concept of duality: black against white describing good and evil and that life’s pattern is ever changing and uncertain)
- “History of Ancient Rome ..... Consul Marcellus..... a Temple dedicated to Virtue and honour” (Two Temples erected one of Virtue leading to the one of Honour to show that without one the other cannot be achieved)
- Mercy described as feminine (Many of the early theocracies and philosophies defer to the feminine gender as essential to life and bringing forth life)
- “A Lodge of Geometricians, or Masons, at Alexandria ..... where Euclid presided as GM” (Euclid taught the Egyptians how to use geometry to measure land and space in the face of the annual Nile floods. Geometry becomes synonymous with architecture and the building of each mason’s inner temple)
- Omnipotent Being; the Almighty; spirit of God (The concept of different deities or different emanations of the “All” described by Plato and the Gnostics)
- “the foundations of the Heavens, which he called firmament, designed to keep waters within the clouds and those beneath them asunder” (On the surface one might see this as the difference between rain clouds and rivers, lakes or oceans; but ancient man seeking to describe the universe considered that there was water above as well as below)

These examples extracted from the ritual and given some summary explanation provide for deeper thought than the lessons of the stonemasons tools in each of the degrees which teach the mason the manner in which he should organise himself and the manner in which he should act to make him a better person as he journeys through life, better in his relationships with his family, his neighbour and above all his God.

In addition to the directions as to how conduct oneself through life the ritual through allegory suggests one reflect more deeply, making reference to obtaining light from darkness; to being

penniless; to the GAOTU; to the liberal arts and sciences; and to resurrection or renewal. It uses the symbolism of “Three”, “Dualism”, the nature of Deity, death and renewal. Whilst these concepts were no doubt understood within the guilds and stonemasons lodges of medieval times, my view is that they have developed over thousands of years from when man first felt comfortable enough in his environment to think of more than food and sex (Maslow’s hierarchy of needs) despite the view at one time espoused by the UGL of England that history can only in strictness be deemed to commence from the period when the chaos of mythical traditions is succeeded by the era of Lodge records. A view imposed on the premier Research Lodge Quatuor Coronati and causing some difficulty for Westcott when he became the lodge’s WM. So where do all these ideas come from? Certainly not all of the symbolism is derived from the Old and New Testaments. I shall not deal individually with all the examples given above from our current ritual but seek to explain some of the overall concepts which are reinforced from sources outside the VSL.

We are taught that Freemasonry revolves around the building of King Solomon’s Temple and the teachings of the Old and New Testament, remembering of course that in Europe in the middle ages the Christian religion was the basis of culture whilst Islam was seen as the anti-Christ or a heresy along with the Gnostics, Cathars and other cults. Nevertheless all theories on the origin of masonic belief have in common a derivation from the mysticism of the near East as well as from the Bible.

To understand, there is a need to look at the development of Philosophy from earliest times and to consider how the thinkers in the Age of Enlightenment challenging the authority of Church and State came to establish the rituals of the Craft and the Orders and degrees beyond the craft.

Earliest Humans sought to identify the structure of the universe and the power or powers that created all things. A search for the identity of humanity within an incomprehensible Universe; which has continued through Mesopotamia, the Egyptians, the Greek Philosophers, Galileo, and Darwin to today as scientists and philosophers still struggle to understand the birth of the universe and the possibility of extra-terrestrial life forms. As man became a communicator, a designer, a builder, an agriculturalist, and above all a thinker it is no wonder that he began to postulate his origins, the reason for his being and the nature of all around. Whilst these thoughts naturally led to the concept of the four elements of Earth, Water, Air and Fire; the concept of superior beings as “Gods” is a rational explanation eventually resulting in a Supreme Being even if that being is incomprehensible and has more than one aspect. Further to explain the superiority of superior beings, the seasons, monthly and annual cycle; concepts of Initiation/renewal, mortality/immortality and resurrection were developing with the soul being separate from the body. To simplify these ideas symbols were developed; thus we have:

- The triangle and the tau cross denoting the threefold nature of a deity
- A cross denoting the fourfold nature of the elements
- The square denoting special boundaries.
- The mosaic pavement denoting the dualist concepts of good and evil, uncertainty, and that one idea has an equally opposite idea.

These mathematical symbols led to the veneration of Geometry in ancient times: a simile for Architecture. Even the symbol for Yin and Yang of Asian origin expresses the Dualist concept of each thought/idea having an opposite.

From the examples of the ritual given earlier some general concepts may be recognised which whilst it is true that mostly their origin is biblical there are other sources of philosophical thought which have influenced the biblical stories and during the Christian era have had further impacts on our ritual. These may be grouped as follows:

- God and the godhead or Trinity
- Good versus Evil
- The seven liberal Arts and Sciences

- Resurrection/ Renewal
- Architecture
- Lodges

## Early Developments

Initially the primary concept of renewal develops from Sun worship as daily renewal, and the seasons as annual events of renewal. Thus we have the pagan concept of the worship of Nature and in particular the Sun: and why not; consider the concern that would occur at the disappearance of the Sun daily or the anxiety occurring during an eclipse and the joy at the rising of “that bright morning star” (3<sup>rd</sup> Degree), as a new day dawned. Thus, man (I use this term advisedly in today’s gender neutral environment, but I do use it in its proper sense as referring to both male and female gender) naturally would see the world from the view that some greater force was at work.

Sun worship can be found throughout most of recorded history in various forms and reinforced by monuments and the structure of archaeological sites. The sun was one of the most popular deities among Indo-European peoples before monotheistic religion took them over. In Hinduism, the god Surya represented the sun and is glorified as an all-seeing god who sheds light on both good and evil actions.

The ancient Semitic religion which had the god Shamash, a solar deity derived from the Sumerian God Utu plays an important role during the Bronze Age, and becomes the god of Justice in Babylon and Assyria. The Sun becomes more relevant once agriculture becomes the norm. Prior to that in nomadic days the Moon had precedence, leading eventually to an early triad concept of the Moon, the Sun, and the Earth. Just as the Sun disperses darkness, so in Babylonian times the God Shamash brought wrong and injustice to light, and described the power of light over darkness and evil<sup>3</sup>. The Babylonian King Hammurabi attributes to Shamash the inspiration that led him to gather the existing laws and legal procedures into what is now known as the Hammurabi Code<sup>4</sup>.

The Sun was a Symbol of God in the East and the light which provides enlightenment of the mind. In the west is darkness and ignorance. Following this attention of the ancients to the sky or heaven, astrology became the foundation of all the ancient faiths: Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek, Roman, Zoroastrian, Mithraism, the Druids and the Norse gods. Although the only reference in the Craft sectional lectures is to “foundations of the Heavens, which he called firmament, designed to keep waters within the clouds and those beneath them asunder”, it is not surprising that the earliest humans should take note of the planets and the constellations. More specific reference to astrology is found in the Royal Arch where the astrological symbols are aligned with the 12 tribes of Israel.

Twelve, of course, is clearly an important number as the calendar eventually was divided into 12 months to align with the movement of the moon, the tides and the menstrual cycle of the female.

From these initial concepts the importance of the seasons each quarter and the importance in particular of the winter solstice in the northern hemisphere marking the time when the sun began to rise higher in the sky showing that the days would get slowly warmer even if there is a lag in time for the heat to arrive. No wonder the concept of renewal arises from the daily reappearance of the Sun and yearly as the seasons change. December 25<sup>th</sup> becomes a real festival as a new year begins and is celebrated by a number of different cultures eventually being subsumed in to Christianity to encourage conversion after Constantine declared Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire. The fact that during the Roman Empire, a festival of the birth of the Unconquered Sun (or Dies Natalis Solis Invicti) was celebrated on the winter solstice—the “rebirth” of the sun—which occurred on December 25<sup>th</sup> rather helped this transition. There is an annotation to a manuscript of a work by 12th-century Syrian bishop Jacob Bar-Salibi where the scribe who added it wrote: “It was a custom of the Pagans to celebrate on the same 25<sup>th</sup> December the birthday of the Sun, at which they kindled lights in token of festivity. In these solemnities and revelries the Christians also took part. Accordingly when the doctors

<sup>3</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica

<sup>4</sup> Jeremy Black and Anthony Green. *Gods, Demons, and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia: An Illustrated Dictionary* 1992

of the Church perceived that the Christians had a leaning to this festival, they took counsel and resolved that the true Nativity should be solemnised on that day."<sup>5</sup>

Logical reasoning must have indicated there is a higher power or powers: God or the Gods. There appears to have been three or so developments in this thought process. The mythology of the Greeks and the Romans; and indeed the Nordic region of Europe where various gods were responsible for aspects of life; named for the planets: war, thunder, beauty, love etc. But in the Middle-east and Egypt the concept of a Supreme God arose, although minor gods are still present. Perhaps the oldest development from sun, nature or a talisman protecting individual tribes or towns is Zoroastrianism which was the State religion of Persia (modern day Iran) in the pre Islamic era and still exists in small pockets on the Indian sub-continent.

### **Ancient Mesopotamia Magi (referenced in First TB)**

In ancient Mesopotamia the art of divination received more intense, sustained interest than in any other known civilization. All events were seen as communications from the divine. Atmospheric signs, rain, clouds, wind and lightening were interpreted as forebodings; the cracking of furniture and wooden panels foretold future events. Flies and other insects, as well as dogs, were the carriers of occult messages.

Mesopotamia was noted throughout the ancient world for its magic -- men and women for whom nothing was accidental. They also saw a unity in nature and harmony in the universe which bound together all objects and all events. The Assyrians made accurate observations of stellar movements and developed mathematical formulas to predict heavenly events. Reference to the Magi appears in many near eastern documents and indeed in the story of the birth of Christ.

The Assyrian king, Assurbanipal 668-626 B.C., recounted this incident in an ancient dream-book: The army saw the river Idid'e which was at that moment a raging torrent, and was afraid of crossing. But the goddess Ishtar who dwells in Arbela let my army have a dream in the midst of the night addressing them as follows: "I shall go in front of Assurbanipal, the king whom I have created myself." The army relied upon this dream and crossed safely the river Idid'e:<sup>6</sup> a parallel to Moses and the Jews crossing the Red sea.

### **Zoroastrianism**

Zoroastrianism represents an original attempt at unifying under the worship of one supreme god, a polytheistic religion comparable to those of other early peoples. Ahura Mazda (Wise Lord) is its Supreme Being.

The prophet Zoroaster or Zarathustra 6th Century BC is really the first identifiable character that proposes Monotheism. At the same time in conjunction with the Most High Sublime Being there is a dualist approach seen as a prince of good and a prince of evil leading to a struggle between Ruler of Light and Prince of darkness. The Zoroastrian ideal was "to be among those who renew the world to make the world progress towards perfection". The Zoroastrian tenets may be summed up as:

- Good thoughts, words and deeds
- One path, the path of truth
- Do the right thing because it is right to do so and then beneficial rewards will come to you.

Significantly for Freemasons the Zoroastrian philosophy taught that humans are free to choose between right and wrong, truth and lie, and light and dark, and that their choices would affect their eternal destiny as we are taught in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree Working Tools. Many of Zoroaster's ideas, including ethical monotheism, heaven, hell, angels, demons, the resurrection of the body, and the messiah figure, have notable parallels in Judaism, Christianity, Gnosticism and Islam.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ramsay MacMullen. *Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries*, Yale:1997

<sup>6</sup> Mishlove, J, PhD ,*The Roots of Consciousness*

<sup>7</sup> Hinnel, J The Penguin Dictionary of Religion, Penguin Books UK (1997)

## Ancient Egypt

Ancient Egypt is probably the most famous sun-worshipping culture. One can understand the Egyptian concept of rebirth as the economy was largely based on the annual flooding of the Nile from the far south. The earliest Egyptian beliefs attribute Atum as the Sun-God and Horus as a god of the sky and sun. As theocracy gained power, early beliefs were incorporated with the expanding popularity of Ra and the Osiris-Horus mythology. Atum became Ra-Atum, the rays of the setting sun. Osiris became the divine heir to Atum's power on Earth. The sun-god Ra (who was merged with Horus) became the dominant god in Egyptian religion who was said to be the creator of all forms of life. The Egyptian Book of the Dead 1550 BCE (a copy of which can be seen at the Royal Arch headquarters at Petersham) contains a series of funerary writings as to how one should answer to God in the Hall of justice when in the afterlife; the most well-known being the weighing of the heart to establish good works as opposed to bad whilst on earth.

The Osiris myth is central to ancient Egyptian belief. The myth described Osiris as having been killed by his brother Set, who wanted Osiris' throne. Isis, Osiris's sister and wife, joined the fragmented pieces of Osiris, but the phallus was lost. Isis fashioned a golden phallus, and briefly brought Osiris back to life by use of a spell that she learned from her father. This spell gave her time to become pregnant by Osiris before he again died. Isis later gave birth to Horus. As such, since Horus was born after Osiris' resurrection, Horus became thought of as a representation of new beginnings and the vanquisher of the evil Set. Ancient Egyptians believed that death was in fact transitional. They believed that the ka, or life-force, left the body at the point of death and even their practices of preserving the body further indicated their understanding of the continuance of life.<sup>8</sup>

## Greco- Roman Myths

In Greek myth, the Titans ate Dionysus. Zeus his father destroyed the Titans and from their ashes humans were formed. Rhea the grandmother of Dionysus collected his remaining parts, particularly his heart, assembled the pieces and he was reborn. This story parallels that of Egyptian mythology where Osiris killed by Set (Chaos/Evil) who hid the body parts in different locations to prevent rebirth was overcome by Isis who searched for the remains and resurrected Osiris.



Plato, the great Greek philosopher seeks to explain creation as a thought process with the universe developing from nothing or emptiness under the "One" who is all powerful and unfathomable. This concept creates a Demiurge which then creates the world and humanity. Heaven is comprised of a number of levels and earth has water above and below with air and the earth in between. The triune nature of the One comprises the intellect the Soul and the Spirit. Thus I am intrigued by that portion of the ritual in the First degree which in one short paragraph refers to seemingly three levels of deity: the GAOTU, the spirit of God and God. (This is repeated in the Sectional Lectures with "Omnipotent Being; the Almighty; spirit of God")

Plato also identified the Four Cardinal Virtues with the faculties of man: Temperance; Fortitude; Prudence; and Justice.

Plotinus (204- 270 CE), a student of Plato, taught that there is a supreme, totally transcendent "One" which using a venerable analogy that would become crucial for the (largely Neoplatonic) metaphysics of developed Christian thought, likens the One to the Sun which emanates light indiscriminately.

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<sup>8</sup> C. W. Leadbeater, *Freemasonry and its Ancient Mystic Rites* (Gramercy, 1998)

Taking his lead from his reading of Plato, Plotinus further developed a complex spiritual cosmology involving three foundational elements: the One, the Intelligence, and the Soul.<sup>9</sup>

The Samothracian rite was an ancient cult, lasting about a thousand years, to the end of the 4th century CE which reached its peak during the Hellenistic time. The Romans, too, participated in the initiation rites. However, many centuries before that, legend tells us that the Argonauts, Hercules and Agamemnon all took part in the Mysteries. Plato mentioned the Great Gods (Theoi Megaloi). There were two important stages in the mysteries of these Great Gods: the first stage of "initiation" after which participants were considered "initiates" and the second stage of "viewing", which was restricted to those who were already initiates. Diodorus of Sicily tells several stories associated with the cult, including the story of a flood and the foundation of the sanctuary. Diodorus does indicate something of the significance of these mysteries; however details of the initiatory rite are communicated to the initiates alone. The claim is also made that men who have taken part in the mysteries become more pious and more just and better in every respect than they were before. Their Temples included a smaller room containing sacred symbols accessible by two doors at the north end. These two doors may have been flanked by two ithyphallic statues (of the male Great Gods). An inscription found in this part of the building forbids entrance into this section to any that have not achieved "initiation".<sup>10</sup> They had a sacred legend about Hermes and used a Tau cross to represent a rebirth as a trinity in one being.<sup>11</sup>

The Eleusinian Mysteries were initiations held every year for the cult of Demeter and Persephone similar to the Samothracian rite. They are the "most famous of the secret religious rites of ancient Greece". The rites, ceremonies, and beliefs were kept secret and consistently preserved from antiquity. The initiated believed that they would have a reward in the afterlife.<sup>12</sup> It is thought that their basis was an old agrarian cult which probably goes back to the Mycenaean period (c. 1600 – 1100 BC).<sup>13</sup> The mysteries represented the myth of the abduction of Persephone from her mother Demeter by the king of the underworld Hades, in a cycle with three phases, the "descent" (loss), the "search" and the "ascent", with the main theme the "ascent" of Persephone and the reunion with her mother. It was a major festival during the Hellenic era, and later spread to Rome.

To understand in full the relevance of the Mithraic Mysteries would take longer than the time planned for this paper. Suffice it to say that it involved man's attempt to understand the Cosmos when the Earth was regarded as a stationary point in the centre of the Universe. The movement of the Sun within the fixed firmament of the Stars resulted in a celestial equator rather than an Earthly one but the Sun still crossed its circle at the summer and winter equinoxes first day of spring and the first day of autumn. These points equate to crossing the Zodiac Circle. Thus the celestial equator was responsible for defining the seasons, in addition to its abstract astronomical meaning represented by the imagery found in the Mithraic temples showing the bull (Taurus), the dog (Canis Minor), the snake (Hydra), the raven (Corvus) representing constellations of the stars.<sup>14</sup>

## Hermeticism

Gilles Quispel says "It is now completely certain that there existed before and after the beginning of the Christian era in Alexandria a secret society, akin to a Masonic lodge. The members of this group called themselves 'brethren,' were initiated through a baptism of the Spirit, greeted each other with a sacred kiss, celebrated a sacred meal and read the Hermetic writings as edifying treatises for their spiritual progress."<sup>15</sup>

Hermeticism is a doctrine that affirms the existence of a single true theology that is present in all

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<sup>9</sup> Stace, W. T. *The Teachings of the Mystics*, New York, Signet (1960)

<sup>10</sup> PA Harland Associations, *Synagogues and Congregations* 2013

<sup>11</sup> Tripolitis, Antonia. *Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age*. November 2001

<sup>12</sup> Martin Nilsson. *The Greek popular religion. The cult of Eleusis*

<sup>13</sup> Tripolitis, Antonia. *Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age*

<sup>14</sup> David Ulansey. *The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries: Cosmology and Salvation in the Ancient World*

<sup>15</sup> 15. Quispel Gilles. *Preface to The Way of Hermes: New Translations of The Corpus Hermeticum and The Definitions of Hermes Trismegistus to Asclepius*. (Translated by Salaman, Clement; van Oyen, Dorine; Wharton, William D.; Mahé, Jean-Pierre. Rochester, 2004)

religions and that was given by God to man in antiquity. It is derived from Hermes Trismegistus (Thrice Great Hermes) who was "the Hellenised reincarnation of the Egyptian deity Thoth, the source of wisdom, who was believed to deify man through knowledge (gnosis). He was said to be a wise pagan prophet who foresaw the coming of Christianity. The ultimate reality in Hermeticism is referred to variously as 'God', 'The All', or 'The One'."<sup>16</sup>

Some of its beliefs will be recognised as pertaining to Freemasonry:

- It considers humanity is on a spiritual journey to return to a state of unity with the Divine
- Spiritual growth cannot be achieved without human effort
- It is polytheistic, yet ultimately monotheistic. Says there are a multiplicity of manifestations of the Divine which emanate from an ultimate Divine Unity
- Holds that the Universe is Divine and basically good
- Encourages spiritual curiosity
- Urges believers to seek a balance in embracing all things<sup>17</sup>

Hermeticism was suppressed in the 4th century CE along with all other competitors to the Roman Church, but in 1460 C.E. Cosimo de Medici obtained a copy of the Corpus Hermeticum from the Greek East and had it translated by Marsilio Ficino. Ficino believed that the texts were ancient forerunners of Christianity and following the Renaissance these texts influenced the Age of Enlightenment.

Isaac Newton studied in detail the Corpus Hermeticum writings, said to have been transmitted from ancient times, to aid his understanding of the physical world, in which the secrets and techniques of influencing the stars and the forces of nature were revealed and placed great faith in the concept of an unadulterated, pure, ancient doctrine.<sup>18</sup>

Today Hermeticism has included Rosicrucianism since the 17th Century and influenced aspects of the symbolism in masonic ritual during the 18th century. The influential work of the psychologist Jung may reasonably be considered a hermetic legacy with its alchemical symbolism and god-like archetypes.

In the 19th century the hermetic tradition became wedded to secret orders of initiates and their arcane truths gave way to a more public transmission of their teachings. This occurred initially by way of the work of H.P. Blavatsky and her Theosophical Society and indeed the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and Aleister Crowley's occultism.<sup>19</sup>

### **The Common Era**

Christianity developed from the first century AD from Judaism where the Pharisees and Sadducees did not have a concept of Resurrection, but it is of note that the Essenes were never criticized in the New Testament which espouses the Resurrection. The Essene Philosophy of Love of god, of virtue and of Mankind, practice charity, maintain truth and conceal secrets of the society (Gould) infers the idea of Trinity or triad by grouping their concepts into three.

However, as has been shown, the concept of resurrection is much older and is found in a number of religions/philosophies including Baldr in the Norse stories of Northern Europe. Carl Jung notes that there were a number of myths where pagan gods symbolically died and were resurrected. The Egyptian Ishtar and the Greek Persephone were reborn annually as the season for growing occurred. The story of Osiris includes resurrection so that initially Pharaohs were said to have Osiris, which was later on was

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<sup>16</sup> Yates, F., Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition, Routledge, London, 1964

<sup>17</sup> M Isidora Forrest & Adam P Forrest, *What is Hermeticism?*, <http://www.hermeticfellowship.org/HFHermeticism.html>, 2014

<sup>18</sup> Tambiah, Stanley Jeyaraja *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality*, 1990

<sup>19</sup> Regardie, Israel (1940). *The Golden Dawn*. St. Paul: Llewellyn Publications.



accepted by beings of a lower status so that Osiris became to mean “rebirth”.

The early Christian Justin Martyr writes that in believing in the resurrection “we propose nothing different from what you believe regarding those who you consider the sons of Zeus.”<sup>20</sup>

The Gnostic belief of a personal vision of God has come down to us through the Cathars who used the Hiram legend, KT's and the medieval Grail myth. The medieval Companionship<sup>21</sup> in Southern France which had a Cathar base and had sub groups known as:

- Sons of Solomon – Stonemasons, joiners & locksmiths
- Sons of Master Jacques – many trades but admitted only RC companions
- Sons of Father Soubise – carpenters, tilers and plasterers

The Templars may be seen as an important conduit of Gnostic beliefs into masonic practices. Whilst separately it can be seen that the revival of Hermeticism in the Age of Enlightenment has also made its contribution to philosophical thought.

Contributions to the eclectic sources of our rituals must include the legend of the Apprentice pillar: as we hear of the master jealous of a skilled apprentice kills him with a blow to head.<sup>22</sup> At the same time the Roman tradition of craft guilds and mason's lodges attached to their legions is no doubt a relevant antecedent.

In Medieval times universities developed from the Christian Cathedral schools with the first occurring in the 11th Century in Paris, Bologna and Oxford. The degree structure followed the seven liberal Arts and Sciences within two sections The Trivium which taught Grammar, logic and Rhetoric; then the Quadrivium dealing with Arithmetic, Music, Geometry and Astronomy. It took three years to complete the Trivium and a further three the Quadrivium. It was only after this; that students could move on to study The Law, Theology or Medicine though all teaching was focused on the Philosophical and Theological implications of each subject.

The development of the universities coincided with the reintroduction of the teachings of Aristotle and other Byzantium and Arab scholars:

- Masonic origin as far back as Babylonian, Egyptian and Greek times
- Collegia or guilds of Rome contained many Christians
- Magistri Comacini – A guild of architects on fortified island on Lake Como
- Masonic origin as far back as Babylonian, Egyptian and Greek times

The Council of Nicea 325CE confirms the doctrine of the Trinity but was challenged by Arius resulting in Arian heresy: Jesus was begotten not created. “The doctrine of the Trinity has no scriptural basis whatsoever.” The concept of a Triumvirate is much older. It is basic to Zoroastrian and Platonic philosophy: Mind, Soul and Spirit.

In Orkney the Kirkwall Scroll originally from Rosslyn is preserved and shows how the Gnostic and Hermetic knowledge of the KT's passed into the ancient masonic Scottish rite. Elements of Gnosticism remain in various sects even to today, but are picked up in the Age of Enlightenment and surface in the 18<sup>th</sup> century rituals of Freemasonry.

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<sup>20</sup> Justin Martyr, *Hortatory Address to the Greeks*

<sup>21</sup> François Icher, *The Guilds and the French Society in XXth century, history, memory, representations*, 2000

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

## **Conclusion.**

It is without doubt that the basis of Masonic philosophy is taken from the Old and New Testaments, whilst at the same time using the tools of a stone mason as symbols of the duties and characteristics to describe the teachings of a freemason. This has been very cleverly done by the originators of the oral tradition from which our written ritual was developed in the 17th and 18th centuries. Perhaps the greatest contribution is that of de-Christianising the philosophy in the late 18th century to remove the religious element, to really make it truly a brotherhood of all men whilst at the same time retaining much of the philosophy of Christianity such as the two St John's whose days of celebration just happen to coincide with the winter and summer solstices and therefore also have a pre-Christian basis.

Masonic philosophy has developed over many years based on the monotheism of the Judaeo-Christian philosophy but integrating symbolism from one might say secular or alternate philosophies. Thus symbology is used in our rituals as follows:

- The sun and moon to show the duality of Light and Darkness
- The sun's cycle to show renewal
- The trinity of the God head described in many ways by the grouping of three, the triangle. A metaphysical thought not confined to biblical teaching
- The differentiation of the GAOTU, the spirit of God and the Logos or word; inferring the influence of Plato and Gnosticism in the development of the ritual.
- The Renewal ceremony of the Hiram Myth which is found in many other myths throughout the ancient world
- The Duality of the mosaic pavement: Light and Dark; good and evil
- Tessellated pavement with its four corners: Temperance; Fortitude; Prudence and Justice.
- The arms of the cross: pre-Christian showing negative and positive; horizontal and vertical still used in management theory today
- The tau cross of the Samothracians on the master's apron: the symbolism of three
- The Roman development of the architectural Collegia and the attachment of stonemasons to the legions of the army as a lodge to provide the resource for building fortifications
- The Degree system of the universities where the study of the seven liberal arts and sciences was the curriculum.

I have only touched the surface of the relationship in our rituals to the development of thinking about our origins and *raison d'être* but I think it fair to conclude that our Masonic philosophy is eclectic and draws its symbolism from many sources which themselves derive from a fundamental view that there is a greater immutable, ineffable unknowable something which we call the GAOTU.

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## Replies to the Paper

**BRO. RICHARD DAWES SAID:** The Companionage, while being particularly operative in its nature balances this with the spiritual aspects. There was also fierce competition between different groups in the Companionage. They included builders, carpenters etc., moving around France, in a clockwise direction (generally). It is very interesting to see that the movement is still continuing today, but much more as a moral or character building journey.

**BRO. STUART GRANT REPLIED:** My research drew the conclusion that they (the Companionage) did use the Hiramic Legend and that they were situated originally in the southern part of France. In this location they were influenced by the Cathars (Gnostic Christians) who drew their influences from the Templars. So that is why I introduced them to indicate another element influencing the ritual. While the Companionage have an obvious link to Freemasonry based on trade guilds, they also, and more meaningful to this paper, had spiritual, philosophical and moralistic parts to their society that may have influenced Freemasonry.

**BRO PHILIP CARTER SAID:** Interestingly, the version of the Hiramic Legend that the Companionage used had replaced Hiram Abif with “Master Jacques”. Peculiarly enough Father Soubise was the villain in the piece and yet he had a whole division of the Companionage who respected him (Soubise). Of course they were very secretive so we only have the version of the Hiramic Legend that the “Sons of Solomon” used. Presumably the “Sons of Soubise” might have had another version.

**BRO IAN SHANLEY SAID:** It is fascinating that once you start to unravel the lines of text in the ritual you can look for antecedents in earlier movements of societies or schools of philosophy, religions etc. Certainly seeing these very familiar Masonic terms and phrases given wider philosophical and cultural context is valuable for opening up our understanding of what our ritual means. Quite often we get stuck learning them by rote to use for the performance of our Office and don't think about what we are saying. Br Grant has shown tonight that they are actually primers and lead-ins to the whole history of philosophy. These thoughts and phrases are supposed to be unpacked by the Brethren - not taken as statements of dogma, but as jumping off points for deeper discussions.



## A lost jewel of the Craft rediscovered

09 January 2017

*by Bro Ian Shanley and Mr Kurt Schiller*

In 2016 the Grand Master of the Craft in NSW&ACT asked all Masonic Centres to hold an Open Day. The aim was to encourage an awareness of our organisation in the local communities an opportunity for “lay persons” to meet and greet us. One such lay person (Kurt Schiller) took advantage of our open doors at the Collaroy Masonic Centre in Sydney and brought along a beautiful Masonic jewel that belonged to his father (see pictures below).

Though clearly Masonic, Kurt had been unable to identify its purpose or origin. He had spoken to a number of Freemasons over the years but no one had seen its like before here in Australia.

Masonic “jewels” or medals usually have one or two symbols to denote the rank or office of the wearer in a Masonic Order (either in a Grand body or private lodge). This jewel however contains almost every symbol in a clever overlay. But it was unclear what function or by whom it would be used (even what Order).

Its providence itself was very interesting and gave some clues as to where the investigation might start. In Mr Schiller’s words:

“We [the Schiller family] are of Austrian heritage from Vienna. During the war my father was in the Luftwaffe stationed in Amsterdam. It was during this period that he, like many other German soldiers, helped people get away from the German authorities, (Gestapo). The person my father helped was an older man (nationality unknown, could have been Jewish) who in appreciation of this help gave my father this jewel. At first my father did not want to take it but the elderly gentleman insisted with the words “it might come in handy someday”. My father did not understand what he meant but kept the jewel which is now in my possession.”



Bro Neil Morse assisted by reaching out to his contacts in Continental Europe but no one was aware of the jewel's design as belonging to a specific jurisdiction or country. Another organisation known as "Jewels of the Craft", an online forum was tried but was uncontactable. Finally, Neil put us in contact with Bro. Trevor Harris of London, an online collector/trader of Masonic jewels and medals (<http://masonicmedals.net/>) who was able to provide the following response to our enquiries:

"You have a superb and rare jewel. It is clearly Continental, probably either German or French, but definitely not British, and dates from around 1800-1850.

It is a symbolic jewel and would have been worn by either a Past Master or a proud master mason happy to show his membership of the craft. As a result it is known as a Symbolic jewel.

These jewels were reproduced in silver for collectors around 15 years ago, however your jewel is clearly original, and worth several Hundreds of Pounds Sterling."

Mr Schiller now knows something of the pedigree and function of this beautiful and detailed Masonic Jewel that will hopefully remain a treasured possession of his family for years to come.



# *Transactions* of the **Discovery Lodge of Research**

**No. 971, United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory**

*direct descendant of the Research Lodge of New South Wales  
and the Sydney Lodge of Research*



The lodge generally meets in the  
Sydney Masonic Centre  
on the first Thursday of the month  
March (Installation), June, August & November, at 7 pm.  
Dress: lounge suit, lodge tie, regalia.

Master VWBro (Hector) Stewart Grant  
Secretary VWBro Ian Shanley  
email: [secretary@discoverylodge.org](mailto:secretary@discoverylodge.org)

website: <http://www.discoverylodge.org/>



*Foundation member of the*

***Australian & New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council***

website: <http://anzmrc.org/>





## From The Editor

*Dear Sir and Brother,*

*This issue takes its lead from the Address made by our Bro Grant at his install in March. He asked the question "What does Freemasonry teach". While education is not necessarily the realm of research, it can be fruitful to investigate how lodges engage in the process of pedagogy or "forming" the new mason. What works and what doesn't?*

*A few lodges in the NSWACT jurisdiction require proficiency papers from their initiates (or planches as the continental lodges call them). At our July meeting last year Lodge Southern Cross presented their system. Three of their Entered Apprentices then delivered their essays. We have produced both the notes and a sample of the essays here for your consideration.*

*The next meeting will be on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017 at the Sydney Masonic Centre.*

*Yours fraternally,  
Ian Shanley  
Secretary*

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## Officers for the year 2017

Worshipful Master-elect	VWBro Stewart Grant	<a href="mailto:sgrant.ggl@bigpond.com">sgrant.ggl@bigpond.com</a>
Immediate Past Master	VWBro Alan Gale	<a href="mailto:agale@iinet.net.au">agale@iinet.net.au</a>
Senior Warden	VWBro David Slater	<a href="mailto:dbslater633@gmail.com">dbslater633@gmail.com</a>
Junior Warden	WBro Phillip Lye	<a href="mailto:philliplye@aol.com">philliplye@aol.com</a>
Chaplain	VWBro Samuel Tov-Lev	
Treasurer	VWBro Neil Morse	<a href="mailto:morse@netspeed.com.au">morse@netspeed.com.au</a>
Secretary	VWBro Ian Shanley	<a href="mailto:ishanley090@gmail.com">ishanley090@gmail.com</a>
Director of Ceremonies	RWBro Geoff Ludowyk	<a href="mailto:jludowyk@bigpond.net.au">jludowyk@bigpond.net.au</a>
Senior Deacon	Bro Stephen Hodgson	<a href="mailto:stephen_hodgson@yahoo.com.au">stephen_hodgson@yahoo.com.au</a>
Junior Deacon	VWBro Stephen Hayne	<a href="mailto:HayneS@belmonttimber.com.au">HayneS@belmonttimber.com.au</a>
Steward	VWBro Tom Hall	<a href="mailto:theologist@icloud.com">theologist@icloud.com</a>
Inner Guard	On Rotation	
Tyler	On Rotation	

***Please advise of any omissions or incorrect entries.***

# What Freemasonry teaches: we don't know<sup>1</sup>

Presented on 2 March 2017

by *Bro Robert H. Johnson<sup>2</sup>* and adapted as an Address for the Installation by *Bro Stewart Grant*

*What is the Grand Lodge of California's authorized and approved version of the history of Freemasonry? It has none, except what is found in ritual. What is its interpretation of the symbolism of Freemasonry? It hasn't any, except the ritual. What is its Doctrine about the philosophy, religion, or principles of Freemasonry? Obviously nothing, except what is already taught in the ritual.*

These paraphrased words are from the Committee on Masonic Information, under the Grand Lodge of the state of California, in the proceedings for 1947. What is outlined is this idea that what we have, has no meaning outside the ritual. This is stated by numerous Grand Lodges all around the world, if not in print than certainly by inaction. There is an inherent ideology which prevents a lodge or Grand Lodge in the United States at least, from stating that any one symbol means anything concrete. Sure, we offer new members small pamphlets on our history, who some famous masons were and outline a few rules a Mason should live by and if you're extremely lucky, there might be an allusion to some deeper concepts.



author Bro Robert H. Johnson

Hence the mystery of our origins before recorded proceedings. The mystery of our operative ancestors and innumerable tomes of speculation regarding the teachings, what they mean and why we do them are readily available to anyone to read, open for further speculation and writing, even by those without the slightest expertise. We only have printed and documented proof of our existence, which is tainted at times and in some cases anecdotal evidence by second and third source parties.

The documented history of Freemasonry therefore, has had the most credible and accurate writings. But our craft isn't about teaching its modern history. If it were, our first brethren would be studying what they had literally just accomplished. It is supposed to be a "Peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols" Or in other words, a different system for a way of living, taught with stories and depicted through pictures or symbols. But what are these teachings?

Is it simply Love for all mankind, Faith in a God and Hope in an

<sup>1</sup> This article first appeared on the Midnight Freemasons blog site. Permission has been given by the author to reprint his work in our transactions. Original article: <http://www.midnightfreemasons.org/2017/01/what-freemasonry-teaches-we-dont-know.html>

<sup>2</sup> From the Midnight Freemasons website - RWB, Robert Johnson is the Managing Editor of the Midnight Freemasons blog. He is a Freemason out of the 1st N.E. District of Illinois. He currently serves as the Secretary of Waukegan Lodge No. 78 where he is a Past Master. He also serves as the District Deputy for the 1st N.E. District of Illinois. Brother Johnson currently produces and hosts weekly Podcasts (internet radio programs) Whence Came You? & Masonic Radio Theatre which focus on topics relating to Freemasonry. He is also a co-host of The Masonic Roundtable, a Masonic talk show. He is a husband and father of four, works full time in the executive medical industry and is also an avid home brewer. He is currently working on a book of Masonic essays and one on Occult Anatomy to be released soon.

afterlife? Almost no one agrees that it is as simple as this. Authors such as; Manly P. Hall, Arthur Edward Waite, Blavatsky, Doyle, Pirtle, Pottenger, Steinmetz, Krieger and a slew of writers living today argue that there is indeed a deep symbolism of the degrees. Ideas vary from author to author, but suffice it to say that the main take away is that; Freemasonry is truly ancient. It teaches the idea of a perfection of man or deification. It teaches that there is a secret doctrine and that absolute practice of these realized concepts within the mind of the initiate leads to a true spiritual awakening .

These concepts are truly mind boggling to some and even offensive to others, especially when these ideas clash with the religious theology of the person so reading it. It can create a deep division of the mind if one is a Freemason, who is of the persuasion of a theosophy which is incompatible with these seemingly enlightened ideas and is reading these texts. One tends to shut down in these instances. It's too convenient to keep believing the wrong information than it is to subject yourself to the new information that's been presented, whether factual historical record or perhaps peer reviewed scholarly written esoterica.

But what do we know? There is nothing out there which affirms that these posited ideas of our actual purpose are absolute. We know for certain our craft has innumerable made up concepts to deal with the many areas we cover.

The Landmarks of Freemasonry are a prime example of creating something that was non existent. They were written based on loose ideas presented in any one of the diverse manuscripts which exist for your intimate perusal. These are as ancient as the 18th century.

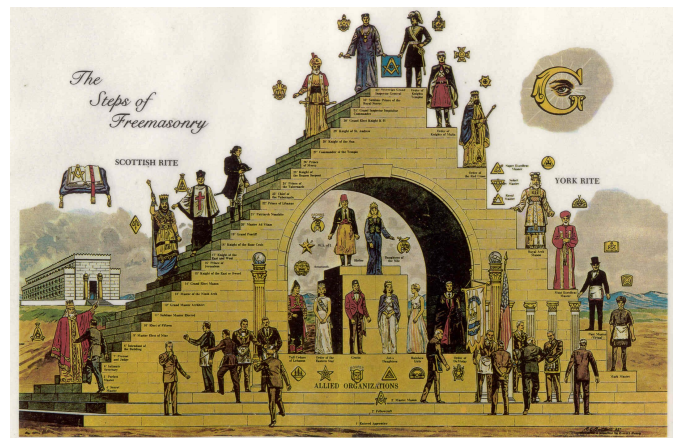
There are those who claim our [Freemasonry's] origin is from Ancient Egypt, and much has been written about this. However, there are also scholars who claim this is absolute nonsense; that we came from the descendants of Noah, again, nonsense. Why nonsense; because there is no factual historical record to be examined. Where we came from lends to the credibility of what we are said to teach. E.g. If we came from Ancient Egypt, than perhaps we would truly value the magical elements of ritual. If we came from Ancient Greece, perhaps we would value more the sacred geometry.

The question remains, what does Freemasonry teach? Certainly, Grand Lodges refrain from taking a stance on what it is, we wouldn't want to alienate hundreds of thousands of members. So we're left with the maxim, "Freemasonry is many things to a great many people." This just isn't satisfying, and perhaps it is the reason for all the appendant bodies. Believers of certain paths can join up and get active in one or several other "Masonic" groups dedicated to theosophical ideologies or perhaps just to have a social club. To go beyond that; needs Research.

Certainly brethren, we are more than Faith, Hope and Love. We should indeed admit to ourselves that the esoteric ideas which are written of our craft, which are not so much authorized interpretations shared by any Grand Lodge are most likely the product of Renaissance and Enlightenment period members joining our ranks and influencing the direction of the craft. For in our fraternity was a safe haven for these free thinkers, these titans of philosophy and romantic chroniclers.

It is thanks to these members that we have a craft left at all. A craft who's documented origin is that of operative, that is, actual stone masons and their guilds in which obligations were taken over the guilds bylaws, not it's holy book. From this, we sprang forth. A society who's chief concern was that of Unity. An influx of free thinkers then came into the craft, and changed it forever. This fraternity is in a constant state of change.

In the end, we teach ritual. We teach how to make a square corner, hold your wand and how to memorize words. If we only teach ritual, than what is the supposition? If there's nothing deeper, what is the point? If you argue that the ritual teaches something else, than what is it? And why hasn't it been stated officially?



To be sure, there are some Grand Lodges which have made tantalizing statements in the materials given to the members. For instance the Illinois Grand Lodge “The Master Mason Degree Proficiency Booklet” or indeed UGL of NSW & ACT booklet “Understanding the Craft Degrees’

“The Symbol of the Temple for each of us is founded upon the idea that man himself is a living Temple, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe resides.”

Too often a Brother may dive into the depths of Masonic philosophy only to risk nothing less than one’s own sanity in the search for divine truth. Perhaps this is the *raison d’être* for Discovery Lodge of Research. The philosophy of Freemasonry as it relates to enlightenment, and not just the ordinary perpetuated concepts, is worth delving into: What is that philosophy? From where does it derive?

What is Myth and what is Fact? This Lodge provides a safe place for study and discussion. All of which contributes to our present outlook and understanding.

Something to think about.



# **The Lodge Southern Cross No.91 experience**

Presented on 25 July 2016

*by Bros Brad Del-Munns, Dane Pymble & Clem Kian*

Lodge Southern Cross #91 is one of the most successful lodges in the NSW & ACT jurisdiction. Retention rates in the lodge are high and there is a long wait to get into the lodge as a member (visitors are always welcome). But what makes the Lodge successful?

There are no Masonic “passports” of things to “tick off” before taking the next Degree. There are just four things that need be done.

1. Impress your mentor
2. Know your catechism
3. Know some extra charge
4. Present a 5 to 10 minute “Proficiency Paper” based on your understanding of your current Degree.

The Proficiency Paper is something unique to Southern Cross, every candidate joins Southern Cross knowing they'll be required to present a paper.

And this evening, some members of Lodge Southern Cross will present a Proficiency Paper that was part of their progression to the next Degree (and one “challenge” paper at the request of the Worshipful Master of Lodge Toxteth.)

At the end, you'll see that Masonic Research does not need to be a Master thesis to be interesting, nor does it have to be particularly serious to be engaging and capture your attention. If you take something back to your Mother Lodge, one of those aspects might be that, in setting your new members an (achievable) challenge and working with them to reach that goal, you might just educate and retain them.

Item 4 mentioned above is part of the training and development of new candidates. The “proficiency paper”, delivered in open Lodge, describes their impressions and thoughts about the Degree they have taken before proceeding to the next level. Below is the paper given by Bro Dane Pymble following his initiation. The paper answers the three questions set for every Entered Apprentice at Lodge Southern Cross No 91. They are:

*What is Initiation? What Symbols or aspects of the Entered Apprentice Degree ritual had a particular personal significance to you? What do you view as the most important lessons in experiencing the Entered Apprentice Degree?*

## **Reflections on Initiation by an Entered Apprentice by Bro Dane Pymble**

Initiations have been used throughout history and across many cultures with some well-known ones being the Christian Baptism, Jewish bar mitzvah & the Hindu diksha.

In all of these historical initiations and in Freemasonry, they stand as a significant point along one's lifeline as one develops into something greater. This concept of developing into something greater I deeply connect with. My life has been a continuous journey in the pursuit of knowledge that has no end, and perhaps, no beginning. In this respect I am reminded of the famous proverb “When the student is ready, the master appears”.

I feel that in respect of Freemasonry that point came the first evening I attended a Lodge Southern Cross dinner. However I don't believe the initiation ends at the end of the actual ceremonial, rather

every day we seek to acquire masonic knowledge we are in fact initiating ourselves as we make more sense of who we are and our surroundings through the obtaining of this knowledge. If I was to look at my own life and the initiations I have been through, each one of them permanently changed me and helped make me the person I am today. The correlations with life's initiations and that of the First Degree initiation are quite evident to me:

Starting with Birth – the birthing process brought me in to the light of this world. Prior to being born the known universe to me consisted of my mother's womb. Being born opened my eyes to the material world around me. At first I know very little about it and am very reliant on my mother for both protection and nourishment. As an Entered Apprentice the door to a new world of knowledge opens but at first I know very little of it and am also heavily reliant upon my brothers to guide me on this journey. With their outstretched hands I am comforted in the fact that there exists in front of me a group of men that will help make me better.

The next major step in my life was school. For me school represented both an environment that allowed me to develop social skills and friendships but also it became abundantly clear to me that the way I thought about things often differed vastly to that of my schoolmates. From school right through to today I have been searching for other people like me. In Freemasonry I have finally found what I have been looking for all these years.

One of the toughest initiations had to be dealing with the divorce of my parents when I was nine. At a young age I was thrust into the role, as the eldest of four siblings, of the father figure, and I didn't handle this well although looking back perhaps I did the best I could.

Growing up in a middle class area with a split family where Mum had to work four jobs just to make ends meet had its challenges. I developed a deep resentment for other families who were more "well off" and became incredibly bitter and frustrated with the fact I was placed in this situation. I gave my mother one hell of a time and I am so fortunate that I have since had the opportunity to both thank her for everything she has done for me as well as apologise for the horrible things I said to her during that tough time in my life.

Looking back I am eternally grateful for that experience as it has led to a tremendous appreciation for everything I have achieved since then. Whilst I feel I have worked quite hard to get to where I am in business I have been incredibly fortunate along the way to have met some great people who have helped me take the next step in both my work & life in general.

I know I feel every bit the same about you my brothers in helping me take the next steps on life's journey and I hope I can also help you along yours.

I truly believe that whilst a lot of things may be pre-determined; call it destiny or fate, there remains an element of free will under which an individual has the opportunity to go down different paths of their choosing. I have taken many wrong paths in my life but looking back I think in retrospect I have

taken more right than wrong. I am healthy, I love my work, I have a great partner and daughter and I have some wonderful friends.

There are three symbols in particular that stand out in the Entered Apprentice Degree ritual that have had a profound effect on me:

1. The Rough Ashlar – When I was first introduced into the world of Freemasonry I was very much the rough ashlar. Prone to adopting wild theories that would change on a whim, frustrated at injustice in all areas of life, to the point of getting directly involved in disputes that had nothing to do with me, with an intense desire to convince the world of my opinions. What the EAF Degree has taught me





is to focus on self-improvement as a daily habit, constantly smoothing those rough edges along the path to becoming a better person. Do I ever become the perfect ashlar? Well, can one count to infinity? As I stand here today I honestly don't have an answer. I do believe though that the journey is more important than the destination and as I actively seek to gain masonic knowledge on a daily basis I feel I am heading in the direction of the perfect ashlar. Or am I just saying that to soothe my ego's inability to grasp the full potential of my existence! I feel this small element of what I understand about human potential is what I can consciously control and thus I work hard to stay on the path towards perfection, although the soul's urge to reach the destination of that spiritual state of perfection that I feel is symbolised by the perfect ashlar forever remains in my heart.

2. The Compasses – The compasses are quite pertinent to me. I now have a much greater attention to how I interact with people whose opinions differ to mine. I find harmony from the control I now have over myself when confronted with these types of situations, comforted by the fact that nobody has a mortgage on knowledge and in fact through listening, rather than chest beating, new ideas, philosophies and methods are revealed to me that I never would have considered in the past, fixated in the view that I was always right. We are all on different life paths, while I may personally not agree with other people's thoughts and actions at times, these thoughts and actions are perfectly valid to them based on their life experience and all the events that have led them to their current point. It is not for me to judge. Also, my own thoughts and actions may also be perfectly valid however through the interaction with other people from different backgrounds and lifestyles I develop through contemplating concepts that are natural to others that I may not have come across in my own life and way of thinking. The biggest lesson I have learnt from understanding the symbology of the compasses is that life is much simpler and more fulfilling when you can find ways in which you can relate to others. Instead of bashing your head against the wall trying to get your own way with people take a step back and see things from their perspective, it might even change what you really want to achieve. The social aspect of Freemasonry was not high on the list of my reasons for seeking admission, although I knew being surrounded by men who had a thirst for knowledge and were genuinely looking to improve themselves could only benefit me in my development as a person. I have met people I never would have socialised with outside of the Lodge and have benefited greatly from those chance conversations I have had with each and every Freemason I have interacted with.
3. The 24" gauge is an interesting tool. I have a new appreciation of what time really is. I have found it at times very hard to say no to people however through contemplating the lesson of the 24 inch gage I realise that I am in complete control of how I spend my time. It also tells me that time is limited, so spend it wisely. Having just become the proud father of my beautiful daughter, the days of 4 day drinking binges, wasting precious energy and of course money, are long behind me. I have become more grounded, living a richer and more fulfilling life. The journey of course does not end here and in the future I will continue to chisel away at that rough ashlar on the path to betterment, always keeping my opinions within due bounds, living a fulfilling life with careful, focused attention on how and what I do with the most precious commodity of all, time.





For me the most important lesson of the Entered Apprentice Degree is to know thyself. The better I know myself the more value I am to my family & community. I believe we are placed here with the task of maximising our potential before we move on. Knowledge of who I am forms the foundation upon which my spiritual development grows. Through a daily process of self-improvement Freemasonry truly does make a good man better. I am now much more aware of where I can improve in my life and it is fantastic to be surrounded by brothers who are on similar journeys. The Entered Apprentice Degree opens the door to a better set of morals which I now hold dearly. Of utmost importance and value to my development is a greater understanding and appreciation of who and what brought me to where I am today, what I have achieved along the way and a strong and purposeful acknowledgement that it is the choices I have made in life that has led me on the path to Freemasonry and that I am here right now because this is where I am supposed to be.

Thank you brethren for the opportunity to share my story with you.

### **Proficiency paper about the Illuminati by Bro Clem Kian**

Worshipful master, brethren all. I've been given the prestigious honor to present to you this evening my proficiency paper on the Illuminati!

#### **Who are the Illuminati?**

The Illuminati (plural of Latin illuminatus, "enlightened") is a name given to several groups, both real and fictitious. Historically, the name refers to the Bavarian Illuminati, an Enlightenment-era secret society founded on May 1, 1776.

They're the shadowy group who control every aspect of our lives. They dictate what's in the movies we watch, the music we listen to, and the news we read, even what we eat!. They're the string pullers of history and observe satanic rituals which they'll happily kill for- to preserve their secrecy.

They're able to exert their influence over just about every government and every major company in the world. Want more proof? Maybe your grandfather was a Freemason?. If so, he was also a low-level Illuminati operative, though to give your Grandfather the benefit of the doubt, he might not have realised it.

Their ultimate plan is to create "The New World Order". One might ask what is "The New World Order"? Well, to put it mildly, The New World Order is a conspiracy theory which promises a new period of history bringing about a major change in the world with the balance of world power. This New World Order involves a group or groups of the world's most elite & influential people, bent on ruling the world through a single worldwide system of government. The appeal of this New World Order lies in its proposal to free the world of wars and political strife, and its promises to eradicate poverty, disease, and hunger. Its purpose is to meet the needs and hopes of all mankind through worldwide peace and a one world religion.

#### **How are the Freemasons linked to the Illuminati?**

Conspiracy theorists would say there is a strong relationship between the two organizations. All Freemasons are Illuminati and work alongside them. The Illuminati is generally a term to describe the people that "run the world behind the scenes." They are a select group of the wealthiest individuals who control global wealth and influence. They essentially own the media companies, major corporations, oil companies, the financial industry, etc. They also "own" the politicians.

The Freemasons, on the other hand, is a secret fraternal organization that almost anyone can join provided they are sponsored by a Freemason and go through the initiation process. By becoming a Freemason, you instantly become a member of the Illuminati. There is a hierarchy to the Freemasons and with each level that a Mason goes through, more knowledge about Freemasonry is revealed to them. There are 33 degrees of Freemasons of the Scottish Rite, and there are so many other orders, each with their own secrets and mysterious Illuminati influenced rituals. Some other orders that have definite links to the Illuminati are, The Holy Royal Arch, The Knights Templers and The Secret Monitors, just to name a few. Freemasons are a group that the Illuminati "controls" to carry out their agenda.

Another interesting theory is that Freemasons are servants to the Illuminati and the purpose of the group is to effectively gain influence in different areas of the world, their “foot soldiers” or “eyes and ears” if you will. For example, the Illuminati may use the Freemasons to groom a particular individual to become a local politician so that particular politician can push the agenda of the Illuminati at a local political level or Freemason connections may have a particular individual become the CEO of an important company.

Another reason we are led to believe that there is a close link between the two groups is because of the symbolism that the groups share. Both Illuminati and Freemasons give great importance to the “all-seeing eye” or the Eye of Horus; the Egyptian god of sun. The Freemasons call this the symbol of “The Great Architect” while Illuminati may refer to this symbol as the “Light Bearer” which translates to Lucifer or Satan. Another common theme that you’ll come across for these two organizations is that Satan is the source of their knowledge and power. After all, knowledge is power and the Illuminati ARE the world’s wealthiest individuals because Satan has bestowed upon them.

For example; I’m talking about how famous Illuminati members became the titans of industry. John D. Rockefeller started Standard Oil Company (which was Exxon-Mobile) and who can forget the Rothschild’s who basically own the world!

I’m not here to bore you with these crazy conspiracy theories brethren, however, I’m pleased to share the following theory, proven by the great minds of the internet to be absolutely and undoubtedly TRUE!!

1. David Icke, a pundit of the Illuminati, believes humans have been getting messages from alien "Illuminati-reptilians" for thousands of years. The reptiles explain such things as the Gregorian calendar. The whole scenario was planned centuries ago because the reptilians, operating from the lower fourth dimension, and indeed whatever force controls them, have a very different version of "time" than we have, hence they can see and plan down the three-dimensional "time"-line in a way that those in three-dimensional form can't. A great example of this is Skull & Bones, another Illuminati secret order, which operate 5 minutes ahead of the rest of the world. This makes them feel superior to the rest of us “barbarians”. Some evidence for this theory is that George W. Bush was inaugurated a couple minutes before noon when Presidents traditionally are sworn in. In other words, Dubya started making mistakes from the very first moment of his Presidency. Icke fancies himself "The most controversial author and speaker in the world." For him, the origin of the Illuminati is extra-terrestrial. He knows this because he is sure we have been contacted regularly with messages from beyond by the alien lizards.
2. 2. KFC. KFC is red. Do you know what else is red? That is right, the colour red. Red has 3 letters. KFC also has 3 letters.  $3 \times 3 = 9$  7 ate 9. Therefore we are left with 7, who ate 9. There are 7 days in a week. Week. Week rhymes with the word beak. Beak. Chickens have beaks. Chicken. Chickens have 2 wings. Humans have 0 wings.  $2 + 0 = 2$  the colonel has 2 eyes chickens also had 2 eyes.  $2 + 2 = 4$  there is 4 letters in the first 4 letters of McDonald's. McDonald's sells chicken. KFC also sells chicken. There are nine letters in the word McDonald's. Nine. Nine rhymes with the word electromagnetic delay line. Magnet. Magnets are metal. Cages are also metal. Chickens are kept in cages, is this where KFC gets their chicken? Let's find out. Chickens have 2 legs and humans also have 2 legs,  $2 + 2 = 4$  Colonel Sanders had 4 limbs, chickens have 2 limbs unless you count their wings, which is 4. 4 divided by 4 is 1, the illuminati has 1 eye. KFC is illuminati..... confirmed brethren!!!
3. 3. The Ice Bucket Challenge Is a Satanic Baptism Ritual!" The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge obnoxiously dominated everyone's social media feeds for the entire summer, but it's hard to find fault with something that helped gather over \$100 million for medical research. Unless you're a

crazy person on the Internet, in which case the fault is obvious, all the people you saw dumping cold water on their heads were actually baptizing themselves into Lucifer's infernal doom army. As evidence of this grand satanic plot, believers point to the fact that a ton of celebrities are taking part in the challenge and, as we all know, celebrities are totally in league with the author of all sin. Lady Gaga dressed in black, and instead of a bucket, she used a silver bowl, an object that has only ever been used for evil. Likewise, Bill Gates built a flimsy bucket-dumping rig, clearly evocative of the Temple of Solomon and not just a pile of random crap he found laying his backyard. The most shameless affront to God-fearing decency came at the hands of Oprah, who conducted her challenge "in the name of ALS" – and according to this totally sane YouTube lady, actually stands for Antichrist Lucifer Satan . According to the internet, this ritual is a prized favourite of the Illuminati.

4. 4. The Beatles were completely engineered by The Illuminati! Some people think that a British research council called The Tavistock Institute for Human Relations designed the Beatles career. In short, the band was a “carefully crafted plot” to sweep the world’s youth into a new brain-washed cult by sexual rhythms and drug-infused imagery. Its purpose?, to replace Christianity with a New Age occult belief system that was without morals... and more in line with The Illuminati New World Order. Also, Paul did die...Confirmed members of the Illuminati are: Adele -Alicia Keys -Barack Obama -Bob Dylan -Bob Marley -Bono-Cristiano Ronaldo - David bowie -George Washington - Justin Bieber -Kylie Minogue -Liverpool FC - Manchester UTD - Michael Jackson (Former member turned against Illuminati)Paul McCartney -Queen Elizabeth (& entire royal family)Big Bird ( sesame street) Kermit the frog- The Pope and the entire Catholic Diocese- All Freemasons are Illuminati

To Conclude Brethren, I personally believe the Illuminati do exist; after all I am a Freemason. I feel as though, my proficiency paper and all my countless hours of internet-based research, will give you all, an insight into who the Illuminati really are. Do I think the Illuminati will take over the world? Absolutely brethren! Will there be a new world order? Without a doubt in my mind, one only has to refer to the proven theories in my paper and many, many more theories that are constantly proving to be true, to realise that the Illuminati, along with their faithful foot soldiers, the Freemasons, will take over the world and enslave us all and the many generations to follow!  
Thank you.



# *Transactions* of the **Discovery Lodge of Research**

**No. 971, United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory**

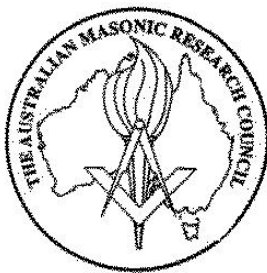
*direct descendant of the Research Lodge of New South Wales  
and the Sydney Lodge of Research*



The lodge generally meets in the  
Sydney Masonic Centre  
on the first Thursday of the month  
March (Installation), June, August & November, at 7pm.  
Dress: lounge suit, lodge tie, regalia.

Master Rt WBro (Hector) Stewart Grant  
Secretary VWBro Ian Shanley  
email: [secretary@discoverylodge.org](mailto:secretary@discoverylodge.org)

website: <http://www.discoverylodge.org/>



*Foundation member of the*

***Australian & New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council***

website: <http://anzmrc.org/>



## From The Editor

*Dear Sir and Brother,*

*This issue consists solely of the exemplary work of the current ANZMRX Kellerman Lecturer for NSWACT – Rt WBr Peter Bindon.*

*His work is scholarly. It is multi dimensional. Those with a love of history will be pleased. However if your bent is scoliology, philosophy, the political read on. The whole gamut of our fraternity is considered in its interplay with the time and place of the 1800s and the goldfields.*

*Peter finally brings his investigations home to the present by considering what is enduring in those early flourishings of Freemasonry and what is relevant for understanding ourselves today as we seek to perpetuate our ancient fraternity and hold its relevance in our minds eye.*

*The next meeting will be on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2017 at the Sydney Masonic Centre. Br John Belton – all the way from Britain will be speaking as the ANZMRC Touring Lecturer for 2017.*

*Hope to see you there.*

*Yours fraternally,  
Ian Shanley  
Secretary*

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## Officers for the year 2017

Worshipful Master-elect	RtWBro Stewart Grant	<a href="mailto:sgrant.ggl@bigpond.com">sgrant.ggl@bigpond.com</a>
Immediate Past Master	VWBro Alan Gale	<a href="mailto:agale@iinet.net.au">agale@iinet.net.au</a>
Senior Warden	VWBro David Slater	<a href="mailto:dbslater633@gmail.com">dbslater633@gmail.com</a>
Junior Warden	WBro Phillip Lye	<a href="mailto:philliplye@aol.com">philliplye@aol.com</a>
Chaplain	VWBro Samuel Tov-Lev	
Treasurer	VWBro Neil Morse	<a href="mailto:morse@netspeed.com.au">morse@netspeed.com.au</a>
Secretary	VWBro Ian Shanley	<a href="mailto:ishanley090@gmail.com">ishanley090@gmail.com</a>
Director of Ceremonies	RWBro Geoff Ludowyk	<a href="mailto:jludowyk@bigpond.net.au">jludowyk@bigpond.net.au</a>
Senior Deacon	Bro Stephen Hodgson	<a href="mailto:stephen_hodgson@yahoo.com.au">stephen_hodgson@yahoo.com.au</a>
Junior Deacon	VWBro Stephen Hayne	<a href="mailto:HayneS@belmonttimber.com.au">HayneS@belmonttimber.com.au</a>
Steward	VWBro Tom Hall	<a href="mailto:theologist@icloud.com">theologist@icloud.com</a>
Inner Guard	WBr Justin Patety	<a href="mailto:jmpatey@aapt.net.au">jmpatey@aapt.net.au</a>
Tyler	On Rotation	

# Two enduring treasures: Freemasonry and gold

Presented on 1 June 2017

*by Bro Peter Bindon*

## Gold Fever

In the 1830's and 40s, well before Lawrence Hargraves was acknowledged as the discoverer of gold in Australia, at least three other men had also claimed this honour. They were John Lhotsky, Count Paul Edmund de Strzelecki and the Rev William Branwhite Clarke. Interestingly, although no information regarding any affiliation with Freemasonry has been found for Strzelecki or Clark, it appears that Lhotsky may have been a member of Australian Lodge number 820 meeting in Sydney New South Wales, as an 1833 subscription book contains a record of a payment made by him on December 13 of that year.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it is Hargraves who is accredited with the discovery after returning to Australia from California where he had been prospecting for gold. Hargraves discovery in New South Wales was soon followed by other equally exciting discoveries elsewhere in Australia.

An announcement in the July 7, 1851 issue of the Geelong Advertiser revealed that payable gold was discovered by James Esmond at Clunes near Ballarat. Shortly thereafter more discoveries followed at many other locations spread across a wide area of central Victoria.



Australian gold diggings, by Edwin Stocqueler, c. 1855  
The Australian National Library

At this time in Australia's history many changes were taking place in the social structure. The first colonies had been established as Penal Settlements but once many of the convicts had served their time and were freed, free immigrants had begun to arrive determined to make a new and more prosperous life in this somewhat strange and exotic land far from the troubles of Europe. Announcements that gold had been discovered in the new continent accelerated this growth in population.

Victorian England manifested great strength in law and order and this was reflected on the diggings in the law enforcement undertaken generally by troopers but also later by goldfields police. There also existed a strand of lawlessness in the society at that time perhaps as a heritage from the convict ancestry of much of the populace. While the greater portions of the colony were peaceful and law-abiding, goldfields were to some extent lawless. Consequently, any government buildings were strongly constructed, perhaps we should say fortified, to reflect the power of strong government, but more to provide some sense of security for the undermanned police forces who were generally powerless and

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<sup>1</sup> [http://interactive.ancestry.com.au/60620/43970\\_uql%5Ec%5Eg%5E1813-00159/1494432?backurl=http%3a%2f%2fsearch.ancestry.com.au%2fcgi-bin%2fsse.dll%3fgst%3d-6&ssrc=&backlabel=ReturnSearchResults#?imgeld=43970\\_uql%5Ec%5Eg%5E1813-00159](http://interactive.ancestry.com.au/60620/43970_uql%5Ec%5Eg%5E1813-00159/1494432?backurl=http%3a%2f%2fsearch.ancestry.com.au%2fcgi-bin%2fsse.dll%3fgst%3d-6&ssrc=&backlabel=ReturnSearchResults#?imgeld=43970_uql%5Ec%5Eg%5E1813-00159)

most unpopular. Laws that the police were called upon to administer, particularly the hated ‘licensing laws,’ contributed to the low esteem in which the police were held. No doubt many of the diggers, who considered themselves ‘colonials,’ saw the English law as disadvantageous to them while favouring the landed gentry. It is true that the licensing laws were designed partly to force the diggers back into the paid workforce, which suffered huge labour shortages as employees left every kind of business to try their luck on the goldfields. A further source of discontent was the government requirement that gold should be sold at the police station or other official depot within 10 days of its discovery when the price paid for it was also set by the government.



Immigrants disembark at Queen's Wharf, Melbourne, 1863.  
Artist - Frederick Grosse. National Library of Australia

The numbers of diggers arriving on the Victorian goldfields was enormous; for example at the end of 1851 there were 4000 diggers at Golden Point near Ballarat. The exodus from Melbourne was so great that Governor Latrobe complained that gold mania had resulted in men abandoning their jobs and families, that towns were being emptied and ships deserted. By early 1852 there were thousands of diggers on the Victorian fields.



It was not only the Chinese diggers that walked to each new 'rush' – many diggers were forced to relocate in this way.

1914, 'The New Rush' plate 22 from 'The Australian Sketchbook', 1894, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

The rebellion at Eureka near Ballarat is the only Australian example of an armed revolt that actually lead to existing laws being changed. Although there were deaths on both sides the rebelling miners were acquitted at the trial in February 1855. Just prior to this trial, a bill had been passed giving a franchise to any digger who owned a miner's right or licence (which now cost 1 pound). Miners would now pay a tax on the gold they found instead of a monthly licence fee for the possibility of making a find. They could own the land on which they worked and the much disliked Gold Commission was replaced by a system of mining wardens.



A few months after the Bendigo goldfield opened in 1851 most of the several thousands of diggers were itinerant. Freemasons, through their membership in various jurisdictions were all conversant with the teachings of charity, fraternity and equality. These principles were just as important for the new lodges that would be formed on the goldfields as they were in the lodges to which the miners had previously belonged. No doubt it was partly their wish to establish in the new continent of Australia a society that embodied the principles of charity, fraternity and equality.

Using the time-honoured methodologies adopted from operative stonemasons in the Middle Ages the miners were able to identify and recognise Brothers using the ancient systems. When they had done so they then organised and attended meetings with the intention of forming new lodges

Freemason William Scott described the method used for setting up a Masonic Lodge in the evolving goldfields town of Bendigo. Scott wrote that in 1854 a group comprising Smith, Emmett, Williams, Schulzen, Smith and Mocklet met in a back room of the Royal Exchange Hotel (Bendigo), and decided to form a Masonic Lodge. Subsequently a notice was tacked to a tree reading: “Should this meet the eye of a Freemason it is to notify that a meeting of the craft will be held at Fraser’s store, near the Black Swan Hotel, on Wednesday night at 9 PM. Fail not on your O. B.”<sup>2</sup>

*“At the time and place indicated”, Scott wrote, “I attended, and found a number of gentlemen representing all nations, all in full dress of the period, black flannel shirt, Yankee boots with tassel on front, moleskin trousers and patent leather belt.*

Americans who had been on the California Goldfields were easily identified by their outfits and their hats as shown in this 1858 watercolour by E. C. Moore with the title *Yankee Digger*.



*“All the brethren, as I may term them, then withdrew except three, of whom I was one. After some preliminary inquiries as to name and number of each other’s mother Lodge et cetera, I volunteered to test oath, which is usually administered when visiting American lodges, and after examination, administered the oath to the others, and subsequently, one by one, to the whole of the brethren assembled. All proved themselves, very creditably, to be true masons, although belonging to various constitutions and different countries”.*<sup>3</sup>

The decision of the men at this first Bendigo meeting was that a Masonic Lodge should be established there, to be named the Golden Lodge, which first met formally and officially on 3 October 1854.

<sup>2</sup> Wickham, D, 2013, Freemasons on the goldfields; Ballarat and District 1853 – 2013. Ballarat Heritage services, Ballarat Victoria

<sup>3</sup> op. cit., 2013:28

Our William Scott was an Irishman born in 1828 who had immigrated to Canada with his parents. He was initiated into Freemasonry at Freeport, Illinois in 1849 and not long afterwards was appointed as Master. Attracted by the announcements of the discovery of gold in Victoria he immigrated to the Colony of Victoria (recently separated from New South Wales) arriving in Melbourne in June 1853. As we have seen he took an active part in the foundation of Golden Lodge number 641 (Scottish Constitution) and became the Worshipful Master of that Lodge in 1855. William Scott had an illustrious career in Freemasonry as well as in civic life and was also a prominent member of the Independent Order of Oddfellows being a Past Grand Master in the Colony of Victoria.

Watercolour by S.T. GILL, 'Improvident diggers in Melbourne' 1869

State Library of Victoria.



## Revolution and Evolution

Given that the mid 1800's were tumultuous times and the discovery of gold did little to calm the turbulent waters, it seems logical to examine the quest for stable social conditions made by groups of like-minded individuals.

Globally this was the time when feudal systems, monarchies and old world social structures were in a state of collapse. Industrialism and the fallout from the industrial revolution, which had inadvertently promoted difficult and unfair working conditions, had not been addressed by either the monarchies that still existed or the new forms of democratic government that had recently come into being. But, three landmark socio-political events that took place earlier and far away from the newly settled land of Australia, contributed to the social conditions on the goldfields. These events were the American Revolution, the French Revolution and political upheavals in Ireland.

## The American Revolution

The Spanish colonisation of that part of the American continent, which was to become the United States of America, took place in about the 1500's. English settlement followed 100 years later. In the last quarter of the 1770's the original 13 colonies of the United States gained independence from Britain. The principles and rules that would form the basis of the American Nation, directed the design of the Constitution of the United States of America. The first principle was that rights come from God, not from government. The second principle was that all political power emanates from the people. The third principle was a belief that there should be a limited government in the form of a representative republic. The founders of the nation distrusted a direct democracy because they saw it as a kind of mob rule and they wished to establish a system that was free of special interests and factions that might gain control of government. They saw that throughout history, majority factions consistently tyrannised minorities, regardless of whether they were based on race, wealth, religion, geography or some other defining characteristic. The fourth principle was that there would be a written constitution that set out

the rules for governance between the people and their elected representatives. Any change in this document would be through a specified process. And the fifth principle granted property rights to private individuals; in other words liberty of citizenship would never allow the government to come unheralded to confiscate an individual's property.

So the miners who hailed from the USA and came to Australia in the gold rushes of the 1860's and who were only two or three generations removed from those who had established what was seen at the time as the world's most significant expression of the principles of liberty and equality and fraternity, brought with them the same ideals and aspirations for a similar society to be established in their new home.

## **The French Revolution**

The French Revolution began in 1789 and finally ended in the late 1790's when Napoleon Bonaparte ascended to prominence. It was a watershed event in modern European history and contributed its own specific ideas to political systems regarding the freedoms of an individual. During the turmoil of this dramatic upheaval, French citizens remade the political landscape of their country, sometimes with great violence and viciousness as they uprooted centuries old institutions like the absolute monarchy and the feudal system of land ownership.

Like the American Revolution before it, the French Revolution was influenced by Enlightenment ideals, particularly the concepts of popular sovereignty and inalienable individual rights. The revolutionary movement played a critical role in shaping modern nations by showing governments and rulers the inherent power contained within the will of groups of people.

## **Political upheavals in Ireland**

Irish emigrants at Cork waiting to embark – mainly to America, but many came to Australia.  
Irish Emigrants Arriving at Cork: — ... on the Quay. Illustrated London News (10 May 1851): 387



Political transportation of individuals caught up in a harsh judicial system for petty theft along with a trickle of free Irish immigrants into Australia had made the continent familiar to many Irish men and women by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From 1851 to 1860 more than 100,000 Irish came to Australia, some struck with gold fever, others to escape poverty and starvation. They formed about 1/5 of the people who came to the Australian colonies from Great Britain at this time.

As most of the gold found on the early Australian fields was alluvial, the fact that the Irish immigrants had little or no mining skills was no hindrance to their enthusiasm. After the alluvial fields were exhausted many worked as unskilled labour for the reef mining corporations or moved into other trades and professions, where they enjoyed a higher standard of living than they had left behind.

Despite their ready acceptance of the new opportunities available to them on the Australian goldfields, political discontent, perhaps a carryover from their more or less oppressed state back in Ireland, often came to the fore. Amongst the Irish immigrants, most of whom were staunch Catholics, there were also those who were accomplished orators and political activists. Of the diggers involved in the 1854 Eureka Stockade Rebellion, a witness at the Gold Fields Commission reported that about half the rebels were Irish including Peter Lalor, the leader.<sup>4</sup>

### **Fraternalism on the goldfields**

While Masonic Craft Lodges were the most commonly found fraternal organisations on the goldfields there were also Lodges of Mark Masons, Royal Ark Mariners, Knights Templar and many others with direct relationships to Freemasonry. As well as these orders with a Masonic background there were others whose ceremonies were similar to those of Masonry like the orders of Odd Fellows and Manchester Unity, which although not aligned with Masonry per se, bore similarities to it. Numbers of miners probably belonged to Masonic Orders as well as to orders with other alliances.

In the preface to his book “Odd Fellows, a History of IOOF Australia” the historian Geoffrey Blainey says:

*“...for decades the lodges were far more important than the trade unions but unlike the unions they rarely are mentioned in the single volume histories of Australia. This is partly because the lodges cloaked themselves in mystery. Their oaths and rituals and dress belong to a forgotten era. Today, historians seem to have little knowledge of what the lodges believed in and the role they played in town and suburban life. Their role was vital. They were a major private precursor of today’s welfare state, and many of their welfare tasks they carried out with impressive skill and the help of a tiny bureaucracy. In all, they form an heroic chapter in Australia’s history.”<sup>5</sup>*

The Tolpuddle Martyrs were on-board the convict ship *Surrey* on 17 August 1834 as she sailed through the Sydney heads towards her anchorage in Sydney Cove. They had been sentenced to 7 years transportation for establishing the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers. The sentence was designed to suppress the growth of trade unions by making the agricultural labourers from Tolpuddle an example, but they had not been found guilty of establishing a trade union, which was not illegal. They had been found guilty of administering an unlawful oath!

*“The oath they took differed little from the oath as commonly sworn by the trade unions, friendly societies and Freemason’s lodges of the day. It was an oath of loyalty to other society members and a promise not to disclose society affairs to outsiders. It formed part of an initiation ceremony – saying a prayer, singing hymns, and exposition of the aims of the society – which was very like the ceremonies of other trade unions and friendly societies. The suggestion that the six men had formed a criminal conspiracy was absurd.”<sup>6</sup>*

Fraternal groups and lodges exist in many forms and for many different reasons. For example the Free Gardeners described in Cooper’s account of that organisation might be considered an early form of trade union.<sup>7</sup> They organised labour, controlled trade, they made payments of ‘trade dues’ for benevolence, and were involved in the supply and sale of plants. Their constitution indicates that they

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<sup>4</sup> Coughlan, N., 1965, The Coming of the Irish to Victoria; Historical Studies, Australia and New Zealand; 12:45, PP. 64 – 86.

<sup>5</sup> Blainey, G. 1991. Odd Fellows: a history of IOOF Australia. Allen & Unwin, Sydney

<sup>6</sup> Green and Cromwell 1984:3

<sup>7</sup> Cooper, R. L. D. (Pope, T. Editor) 2005. Freemasons Templars and Gardeners. Australian and New Zealand Masonic research Council, Melbourne

were prepared to cooperate mutually, exercise some control over their members, educate them and attempt to improve their morals.

An examination of the history and the social contributions of friendly societies established in Australia would require several volumes, and still awaits research and publication. Although most Australian groups had their origins in Great Britain, some had other origins simply because many immigrants originated from many different countries.

In 1851 Victoria's population was 97,000; just 10 years later it was 540,000 and in 1865 the Victorian Statistical Register contained details of 13 societies of Oddfellows, Foresters and Druids having a combined total of 24,410 members. By 1879 there were 34 societies with 766 branches and 46,191 subscribing members.<sup>8</sup> Clearly, there is more to this statistic than the simple desire to belong to a group of like-minded men for social reasons, and the aspect of mutual financial support prior to the provision of any state aid for sickness or unemployment was a key factor in the high participation rate.

The Australian Holy Catholic Guild, a benefit society founded by Archbishop Polding in 1845 existed until 1996. Here the Guild marches in procession past the Oddfellow's Hall in Yass, NSW



Whiteland Collection, Yass and District Historical Society Inc.

Two of the 34 societies listed had originated during a dispute over the control of religious education in Victorian government schools; these were the Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society and the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society. Campaigns during the early 1860's while an Education Act was before Parliament, led to disputes that caused great bitterness between religious factions. This resulted in drastic falls in membership numbers in one or another friendly society. While both of the two aforementioned orders were organised along lines similar to traditional affiliated societies with their ritual and regalia bearing a superficial resemblance to that of the Oddfellows, the sentiments expressed inside their rituals and ceremonials differed markedly. Members undergoing initiation swore their allegiance not to international brotherhood regardless of race, colour or creed, they declared their loyalty to one or the other religious faith.

The fraternal societies that had established themselves in Australia included contributing and shareholder groups like Manchester Unity Independent Order of OddFellows (MUIOOF), Independent Order of Rechabites (IOR), Order of the Sons of Temperance, Protestant Alliance Friendly Societies of Australia (PAFSOA), Free Gardeners, Ancient Order of Druids, United Ancient Order of Druids, Ancient Order of Foresters, Australian Order of Foresters and the Australian Natives Association among others. All of these had individual benefit lodges within their establishments.<sup>9</sup> Doubtless there were numerous other societies with similar aims, but in this paper I intend to examine briefly only the

<sup>8</sup> Royal Commission on National Insurance, 1924 – 25, minutes of evidence, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.achha.org.au/friendlysocieties.php>, retrieved April 2016

Foresters and Oddfellows after a brief sally towards the Druids and to note that a number of home-grown Australian friendly societies also existed in former times.

Druids: In 1833 and despite having the motto “Unity, Peace, and Concord” part of the Ancient Order of Druids broke away from the parent organisation to become a Registered Friendly Society and in the process renamed itself the ‘United Ancient Order of Druids, (UAOD)’. With its strong membership it soon became one of the biggest of the British benefit societies especially in the colonies where its lodges (called ‘groves’) formed an important support network. In the late 1800’s there were reputed to be 25,595 members in Australia. A lodge of the Ancient Order of Druids (AOD) could have been founded in Melbourne in 1851 when a Mr Hymen, who originated from London, arrived carrying an authority from the Ancient Order of Druids in England to establish a Lodge in Melbourne, but a permanent lodge did not eventuate until 1861. Just the next year a Victorian Grand Lodge of the United Ancient Order of Druids (UAOD) was established. Juvenile lodges were established in Prahran in 1886, and later in South Melbourne and Footscray, but had ceased to exist by 1900. The first female lodge had been opened in 1899 in Launceston, Tasmania, and by about 1925 there were fifteen ladies lodges.<sup>10</sup>

According to historian Elizabeth Willis, the first home-grown Victorian Friendly Society, the Melbourne Union Benefit Society, was formed in May 1839 and by September had about 100 members, drawn from ‘the congregated trades of the town’. A second was formed in 1840, when a group of men formed the Australia Felix Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Most of the early members of this lodge were self-employed. Later, wage-earners flocked to join. Nearly one-sixth of the Victorian workforce belonged to a friendly society in 1891, and by 1913 over half the population was insured by them in some way.<sup>11</sup>

Foresters: One of Britain’s oldest and largest Friendly Societies, the Ancient Order of Foresters, evolved from an earlier organisation known as the Royal Foresters whose origins are unknown. But there is a literary reference to a gathering of Royal Foresters in Yorkshire that took place on 29 October 1745. Somewhat later in 1790 The Royal Order of Foresters held its Supreme Court No 1 at the Old Crown Inn, Kirk Gate, Leeds, in the same room in which the Masonic Lodge of Fidelity held its meetings. This Forester’s Court is the oldest on record and is generally believed to have been the founding body of the present organisation of the society. At one stage the Royal Order of Foresters was considered to be the largest and most popular Friendly Society in Britain. Interestingly, several of the founders of the Royal Order of Foresters, including its first Worshipful Master, were also members of the Masonic Lodge of Fidelity. The founders of the Royal Order of Foresters were men of high moral standards and great philanthropy and they demanded these characteristics from those who wanted to join the new order. The early rulebook says, “... *every Forester is bound by the inherent principle of Forestry to be a good moral man; a good and peaceable subject, a good husband and a good father.*

*“The object of Forestry is to unite the virtuous and good in all sects and denominations of man in the sacred bonds of brotherhood, so that while wandering through the forest of this world they may render mutual aid and assistance to each other”.*

Unlike many other fraternal societies the Ancient Order of Foresters had within it a second order. In 1815, The Ancient Order of Royal Shepherds was introduced into the Order as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree. The Order of Shepherds was based on the religious ideas contained in the Biblical parable of the Good Shepherd and the opening words of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, which were the motto of the Order “the Lord is my shepherd.” The Order of Shepherds was thus an order within an order, and this arrangement made the

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<sup>10</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient\\_Order\\_of\\_Druids](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Order_of_Druids), retrieved April 2016

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00614b.htm>, retrieved May 2016



Order of Foresters unique among Friendly Societies. This second order provided a means of paying additional contributions into the Order's funds resulting in an additional benefit being payable, the rates being about half those of the Foresters. While the Ancient Order of Foresters met in a "Court" the meeting place of the Shepherds was known as a "Sanctuary" and the Sanctuary and the Court of the same name and number usually met in the same premises but at different times. For reasons not made clear in the easily available literature, in 1817, this so-called 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree of Forestry separated itself from its parent body and became a mutual society in its own right.

Social, ritualistic and practical benefits were the reasons behind joining the Ancient Order of Foresters. The practical benefit was a Sickness Benefit Fund from which, for a specific regular contribution, payment to offset any loss in wages was made in times of sickness or disablement, thereby giving some financial independence before state sickness benefits were common; the contributory funeral fund paid out money to cover funeral costs of the member, his wife or widow, saving many from the ignominy of a pauper's funeral. Cases of distress or hardship amongst the membership were assisted with funds granted from a General Distress Fund at the discretion of the Court. Courts also had a Medical Fund from which a regular contribution was paid to the Court Surgeon for the provision of medical attention and medicine to the members in times of sickness.

Forestry rapidly spread throughout the world during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and particularly to the British colonies. The first Foresters Court in New South Wales opened in 1843 and a district was formed soon after in 1848. By 1856 there were 24 new Foresters Courts in the colonies of Victoria, South Australia, West Indies and South Africa. Between 1857 and 1864, a total of 20 new dispensations were sent to the Adelaide district, 5 to the broader Australian district, 12 to Melbourne and 3 to Otago in New Zealand (the scene of a gold rush in the 1860's). As a response to this growth in membership numbers and probably to assist with lightening administrative responsibilities, in 1864 the High Court authorised the setting up of colonial High Courts.<sup>12</sup>

Manchester Unity: A British Act of Parliament signed by Queen Victoria on 5 August 1850, separated the Port Phillip district from New South Wales. The act named the new colony "Victoria" (after Queen Victoria) and provided it with its own Constitution. Enabling legislation for the separation was passed by the New South Wales Legislative Council on 1 July 1851. Before that event, on 9 March 1840, the first Lodge of Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows Friendly Society had opened in Sydney when the city had a population of just under 30,000 people, many of whom were convicts.



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<sup>12</sup> The major part of this section on Foresters was sourced from: Cooper, W. G. 1984, The Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society 150 Years: 1834 – 1984. The Executive Council of The Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society, Southampton, England



The first record of an Oddfellows “Lodge” is reputed to have been in London in 1736. Like most of the other early “Friendly Societies” the Oddfellows commenced as a result of a real need. It is believed that the mediaeval trade guilds were part trade union and part benefit society. By the 18th century the effectiveness and influence of these guilds was failing and their membership was declining. At that time, there was no form of public assistance that could be drawn upon in bad times or in sickness for aid and assistance and there were no easily accessible funeral or death benefits.

On the other hand, members of a group desirous of financial independence agreeing to contribute a small amount of their weekly earnings into a pool, recognised that in this manner a large number of contributors could build up funds to assist members of the group and their families in times of need. At first the groups were formed as a number of separate “clubs” until workers began to travel to other towns for work when it was seen that having societies with a number of branches would be an advantage. From 1810 in Britain, with Manchester Unity leading the way, these clubs began to federate into affiliated societies, often with the wider group becoming known as an “Order” and the smaller groups being called “Lodges”. Attendance at Lodge meetings was most important because at them weekly subscriptions could be paid and the mandatory current passwords that were regularly changed could be heard. A receipt for your payment and knowledge of the password demonstrated to others that you had maintained your membership in the Lodge.

Manchester Unity Friendly Society was established in Melbourne in 1840 when Augustus Greeves, a member of the MUIOOF in England, migrated to Australia. By the late nineteenth century, the Society had an extensive network of lodges in metropolitan and country Victoria. A key feature of the governance of Manchester Unity was the Annual Moveable Conference which met in a different centre annually and elected the organisation’s directors for the coming year.

Manchester Unity of Oddfellows in Australia has operated continuously and under the same name for over 150 years. Now called Australian Unity it was formed by the merger of the Australian Natives Association Friendly Society (ANA) and the Manchester Unity Independent order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) in 1993. The Australian Natives’ Association had been established in Melbourne in 1871, as a membership organisation for people born in Australia at a time when most of the administrative jobs in the Australian colonies were exclusively held by those born in Britain. The ANA had two aims – to act as a Friendly Society giving financial support to its needy members by providing services such as sick pay and funeral benefits and to promote the moral, social and intellectual improvement of its members. It placed little emphasis on the usual ritual practices of friendly societies and specialised regalia, instead encouraging public debates, presenting concerts and other social activities while promoting Australian nationalism, federation and the establishment of Australia Day. A further merger with the Grand United Friendly Society Limited, whose structure and aims were similar to Manchester Unity, was undertaken in 2005. At the time of writing Australian Unity has 34,000 members/customers.<sup>13</sup>

Chinese associations: After the British, the next biggest source of immigrant diggers were the Chinese. There were already several thousand Chinese workers in Australia before gold was discovered. They had first come mainly from the southern provinces of China to work on the sheep farms of New South Wales at a time when the declining number of convicts being shipped to Australia from British ports was creating a labour shortage. Local agents found work for young Chinese in various foreign countries during the 1840’s and 1850’s. These agents promised them a good future and advanced to them the cost of the ship’s passage. This money was repaid by the recruits from their wages earned in the destination country.

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<sup>13</sup> McDermot, A. 2015



At first, Chinese arrived by ship at Melbourne throughout 1855 and 1856. In 1856 Samuel Brees painted this scene of men passing through Flemington on their way to the central goldfields  
State Library of Victoria collections



Diggers on the Australian goldfields included adventurers from many races and creeds as did the diggings in California.  
Public domain, 3852 image

Typically Chinese labourers stayed in Australia for two or three years and it is thought that a total of perhaps half a million came to Australia at some point during the gold rushes. Many had gone first to join the gold rush in California after the news of the gold discoveries there reached Hong Kong in 1848. Some left directly for Australia from California, following the announcements of gold discoveries in New South Wales and Victoria, with the biggest numbers coming into Australia arriving after 1854. It has been said that they feared the British and mistrusted British law and it was only when mining for gold in California became more difficult and less fruitful that they turned towards Australia.<sup>14</sup> At the time of the 1841 census in the Victorian region, Chinese immigrants made up less than 1% of the population, but by 1858 they made up almost one quarter of the population of Victoria.<sup>15</sup>

China heard of the gold finds in Australia in 1853 and Chinese miners soon began arriving in Victoria. Their pigtailed, unfamiliar clothes and religion made them the target of a great deal of racial prejudice. An 1885 law taxed them at £10 plus £1 protection fee for the right to live and mine in the colony. No-one else had to pay this tax so they landed in South Australia and walked to the goldfields to avoid it.



Chinese about the mines.  
Gerry Images

'Celestials' on the way to Ravenswood diggings – an 1870 pen-and-wash sketch by D S Thistlethwayte depicts four Chinese men and a dog on the way to the Ravenswood gold fields Queensland, is typical of the stereotyping of Chinese miners at the time.

State Library of Queensland



A Flood of Celestial Light pouring on upon the Diggings.

Melbourne Punch Almanack, January 1857. Raw Nook Collection, State Library of Victoria



<sup>14</sup> Hill, D., 2010.

<sup>15</sup> McGowan, 2008 (PDF of online version)

Cultural cohesion was particularly strong amongst the Chinese miners and amongst Victorian towns, Bendigo was unusual having a Chinese Masonic Lodge. This may not be as pertinent to this essay as it seems. John Fitzgerald acknowledges that the members used the term 'Masonic' in the name of their organisation but he suggests that the Chinese adopted this practice in an attempt to gain public status and recognition rather than using it as a formal or official connection with Freemasonry.<sup>16</sup> The Bendigo Hongmen Tiandihui was an association that used ceremonies, ritual and regalia to cement the bonds of friendship amongst its members but for all that, the organisation is more accurately described as a fraternal mutual benefit society than it is a Masonic Lodge. Additionally the Hongmen Tiandihui and other secret Chinese societies were essentially social in their aims, character and activities, but unlike the Freemasons they also had political objectives. The Chinese organisation in Bendigo occupied what is locally known as the Chinese Masonic Temple, which is reputed to have been constructed in the 1860's.

In 1911 the New South Wales branch of the international Hung League went public in Sydney under the title 'Chinese Masonic Society' opening a newly built 3 storey 'Grand Lodge'.



The temple, which is the only one of its kind surviving from the gold-rush period in country Victoria, was dedicated to the deity Chit Kung Tang but has an inscription above the door that reads 'Chinese Masonic Hall'. The occupants of this building belonged to the 'Hung League' which in modern parlance was a 'Triad' and which had developed from the loose affiliation of rural clubs and organisations into a far more organised social network having, as this building demonstrates, a prominent urban profile.<sup>17</sup> We will revisit the Chinese situation in the section in this essay devoted to the NSW Southern Tablelands.

We are not drawing too long a bow if we assume that the aspirations of all the friendly societies that were established in Australia from the middle 1800's onwards were similar. Their aims can be divided into two broad streams; firstly, benevolence and charity and secondly, personal and social education and development. In broad terms these are the same aims as those of Freemasonry and were also the goals sought by the miners toiling in the goldfields of central Victoria and the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales.

A few words need to be said about other organisations that encouraged social cohesion and educational advancement, like Schools of Art and Mechanics Institutes which, when first established, also had the aims just stated.

<sup>16</sup> Fitzgerald, J. Abstract to: 'Politics and Networks in the Transition from Rural to Urban Organisation of the Hung League of Colonial and Federation Australia'. Paper 2CSAA conference, Bendigo 2005 quoted in Wickham 2013, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p97101/mobile/ch06s02.html>, retrieved April 2016



Mechanic's Institute Hall, Murrumburrah/Harden NSW

Although Australian Mechanics' Institutes did not faithfully mirror their British equivalents, the pedagogical function of the Institutes was inherited along with the English and Scottish models that had launched the movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They shared the same inspirational source and original aim of providing technical education, 'useful knowledge' and 'rational recreation' for working class elite. Henry Lawson in Mudgee and Ben Chifley in Bathurst, among others, recognised the part played by small town Mechanics' Institutes in their own self-education.

As an organisation with the proclaimed purpose of diffusing useful and technical knowledge everywhere, by the late 1890's the Mechanics' Institutes had reached their zenith and began a period of decline. They had made a significant contribution to the construction of Australian culture but after the turn of the century their social influence diminished until they were eventually overtaken in their role by public libraries, most of which were funded by local government. Bremer and Lyons' conclude that there was a considerable gender difference in membership of Mechanics' Institutes, which was in any case skewed towards the middle classes unlike Freemasonry, which proclaimed fraternal equality and universal brotherhood.<sup>18</sup> Today these institutions are generally represented in Australia by the buildings in which these active libraries and places for personal development were once housed.

## Rise and Fall of Masonic Lodges on the goldfields

### Central Victoria

After the discovery of gold was officially announced in July 1851, Freemasons drawn from all points of the compass were among the first men who immigrated in their droves to the new colony of Victoria where it was rumoured that vast riches were being discovered. Wickham says that two months later, in September 1851 there were 560 men mining for gold on the Ballarat diggings.<sup>19</sup> Before this time most of the population in the area was itinerant. However just a month later in October 1851 there were about 6000 people on the Ballarat diggings but some were already leaving to join the new rush to Forest Creek near Castlemaine that had been discovered a month earlier. The population fluctuations were such that Lieutenant Governor Charles Joseph Latrobe was able to report in March 1852 that there were only 200 licensed miners working in Ballarat. It was the discovery in 1853 of the deep leads rich in gold that encouraged the growth of the township which by 1854 contained about 20,000 people. Most of these were men and women of Anglo-Saxon origin and their ages were said to be between 20 and 40. Although it's hard to generalise about the composition of the goldfields population, it is clear that people of many ethnic backgrounds other than Anglo-Saxon or Europeans were present. In fact

<sup>18</sup> Bremer & Lyons, 2001:211

<sup>19</sup> Wickham 2013:13

there were more nationalities on the goldfields than one would normally find in other places in Australia, making the goldfields communities cosmopolitan, vibrant and progressive.

Freemasons who had come to Australia to take advantage of the gold rushes were conversant with the teachings of charity, fraternity and equality, and no doubt wished to form Lodges on the goldfields that maintained these teachings. Like their relatives the operative stonemasons in the Middle Ages, they were able to identify and recognise other Masonic men by the use of the various signs and phrases. It wasn't long before groups of them organised and attended meetings.<sup>20</sup>

The formation of the first Lodges took place in the typical manner described in the introduction to this essay. However there were some interesting variations amongst the lodges that were established. "In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century Ballarat was one of the few places in the world where a French Lodge was established in a predominantly English colonial setting. The Rameau d'Or d'Eleusis, number 103 was one of only nine Le Philadelphes (Grand Orient, Rite of Memphis) Lodges that existed outside France." Wickham states that historian Eric Hobsbawm has the opinion that throughout the period of the French Revolution, Brotherhoods such as this especially between 1789 and 1848, were of considerable importance in shaping world affairs.<sup>21</sup>

It is also Wickham's opinion that there was a strong possibility that some soldiers of the 40<sup>th</sup> Somerset and the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, both present at Ballarat in 1854, were members of Masonic Lodges holding travelling charters that permitted meetings to be held wherever the regiment was located at the time. It has not been possible to ascertain whether this was indeed the case.



Former Bendigo Masonic Temple in View Street now a Performing Arts Centre was said to bring "honourable, enduring and stately testimony to the wealth and magnificence of the city, ...".

In the way suggested earlier, organised Freemasonry began in the Bendigo area in 1853 when seven Brethren met in the back room of the Royal Exchange building in the newly born township. As noted by author David Beagley, these men had diverse backgrounds coming from Britain, the German States, France, Ireland and the United States of America, but together they were 'keen to establish in Bendigo the social institution ... called Freemasonry.' Their efforts to achieve this aim ... are an example of people desperately trying to establish a stable, familiar social structure [amongst] that chaotic landscape of mine shafts, claims and gold fever.<sup>22</sup>

While attempts to establish a Freemasons Lodge in Bendigo were in train amongst the assembled Freemasons, the Provincial Grand Master of South Australia paid a visit. This is an interesting occurrence given that other fraternal societies were established in Victoria through the auspices of

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<sup>20</sup> Jones, B. E. 1961:10

<sup>21</sup> Wickham, op cit.

<sup>22</sup> Beagley, 2004: vii



parent organisations in South Australia – although in this case there does not seem to be a connection between the two events. However, the efforts of the Victorian Masons who had met together bore fruit at a formal Masonic meeting on 3 October 1854 when the first Worshipful Master of the Golden Lodge was installed, a candidate was initiated, 11 more were proposed, and 10 brethren applied for affiliation. Beagley offers a view that the very first members of what became later the Golden and Corinthian Lodge, understood that “together they were strangers in a strange land” and wanted to create a community structure that was familiar and comforting to them all. The Golden and Corinthian Lodge was the first of eight lodges formed in and around Bendigo that either directly or indirectly stemmed from this first effort. In this burgeoning centre of population other lodges grew up in nearby areas to accommodate the men who also wished to be Masons but whose employment or homes were inconveniently remote from the more central lodge in Bendigo itself.

Name	Formation	Number and Constitution
Golden Lodge	1854	number 641 English Constitution
Corinthian Lodge	1858	number 770 English Constitution
Golden and Corinthian Lodge	by amalgamation in 1872	641 English Constitution then 7 Victorian Constitution
Eaglehawk Lodge	1865	1203 English Constitution, then 55 Victorian Constitution
Zenith Lodge	1866	1133 English Constitution, then 52 Victorian Constitution
Sandhurst Lodge	1904	194 on the Victorian Constitution
Corona Lodge	1904	195 on the Victorian Constitution, warrant returned in 1986
The Lodge Composite	1922	314 on the Victorian Constitution, warrant returned 2001; affiliated with Golden and Corinthian
Bendigo City Lodge	1951	number 714 Victorian Constitution
Bendigo Daylight Lodge	1983	number 876 Victorian Constitution

#### *Bendigo Masonic Lodges from 1854*

We may speculate that from the names of the Lodges many of the miners who joined or formed these lodges originated in Great Britain. Roger Burt in a chapter entitled ‘Masonic networking by migrating Cornish miners’ in Beagley’s book ‘Gold and Blue’ makes the observation that: “It used to be a commonplace that wherever you found a hole in the ground, you found a Cornish man at the bottom of it! Sadly, the recent collapse of the centuries old industry in Great Britain means that it is no longer true, but in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Cornish miners, mining engineers and managers were a ubiquitous feature of mining districts across the world.”<sup>23</sup> Given the economic conditions in Ireland and the declining importance of mining in Cornwall it is not surprising that many miners with a Celtic background journeyed to the Australian goldfields.

Cornish miners had travelled from their homeland to the gold rushes in California; they came to Victoria, and later would also go to the Rand in South Africa. It is Burt’s opinion that the Cornish miners and their families who moved to the new mining regions were supported by strong ethnic and community ties which had existed in their homeland and which they transplanted to every foreign mining region where they worked. The social interrelationships of this single group of British immigrants were complex and depended on relationships amongst the members of extended families,

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<sup>23</sup> Burt quoted in Beagley, 2004:13

common religious affiliations, local allegiances and a common work experience in underground mining. An inheritance of some Celtic racial characteristics may also have provided an adhesive force within this group. Similar conditions may well also have been a factor amongst the Irish who came to the central Victorian goldfields as they also had a common cultural heritage which acted as a unifying force.

Furthermore, Burt also makes the point that the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, the Ancient Order of Foresters and above all, he says, the Freemasons prospered in 19<sup>th</sup> century Cornwall.<sup>24</sup> These and other groups united their members despite their varying economic background and social class. The fraternal societies brought men together using solemn promises, providing mutual support and benevolence and giving regular opportunities for communal dining and socialising. Burt arrives at the inevitable conclusion that becoming a Freemason provides a man with spiritual support that he feels is a precondition for an active social life in many small provincial towns, and is a mark of respectability that may lead to economic advancement. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Cornish miners transported these ideals and aspirations with them wherever they went *en masse*.

It has not been possible to separate out from the British migrants who arrived in Australia those whose home was in Cornwall; this is a project for the future. However, between 1851 and 1860 about 101,540 Irish immigrants had arrived in Australia with the vast majority of them finding their way to the goldfields. In 'The Gold Finder in Australia' (published in 1853) John Sherer, commented that many of the miners on the goldfields had come from Ireland; and of course the potato famine had been partly the cause of this great wave of immigrants departing their homeland as much as did the lure of gold in Australia. While their Welsh, Scottish and English neighbours had something of a tradition of mining, the Irish had none. But they took advantage of other opportunities available in the new colonies and became grocers, publicans, carriers, brewers, policeman as well as general labourers.<sup>25</sup> As an aside, the iconic Queensland beer, XXXX, was originally brewed by two Irish brothers on the Castlemaine Diggings.

In Ireland in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was already considerable political discontent are generations after the discovery of gold in the Bendigo district, the Irish in Ireland would rise against their British overlords. So it is probably fair to assume that the political aspirations of the Irish were much like those of many of the other diggers on the goldfields. It is worth noting that a large number of Irish names appear in the roles of the early Masonic lodges in the Bendigo district, and notably, a considerable number who belonged to the Catholic faith.

As we have seen, along with the half a dozen Masonic Lodges formed in central Victoria, quite a number of other Fraternal Societies were also established there. Collectively all these groups had a total membership that perhaps approached 2000 individuals, some of whom probably belonged to more than one association. While population growth may have been the main driver for the establishment of many of the Masonic lodges in central Victoria, the geography of the state also contributed to the proliferation of Masonry. Movement around the State was not particularly difficult and of course was facilitated by the early establishment of the river trade on the Murray River. An examination of the history of Masonry in just one centre on the Murray River, Echuca, shows that Freemasons who joined the Lodge there came from near and far within the state as well as from outside Australia.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> op. cit.: 14

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.egold.net.au/biogs/EG00091b.htm>, retrieved April 2016.

<sup>26</sup> Rachkind, H., 1995. The Freemasons of Echuca. Self published, 20 Vines Street, Echuca



## New South Wales Southern Tablelands

### Braidwood district: Araluen Valley

After the gold rushes at Ballarat, the precious metal was being discovered elsewhere in New South Wales (of which the state now known as Victoria was still a part until 1851). Scattered gold discoveries were made in the Southern Tablelands surrounding the Limestone Plains, later to become known as the Australian Capital Territory with Canberra as its focus. Some discoveries were made in the farming district of Araluen Valley near the town of Braidwood. Finds about 10 km further south at Majors Creek and another 10 km south from there at Araluen itself were reported in several colonial newspapers beginning in mid-October 1851. Mrs Baxter found gold where she lived at Irish Corner near the current town of Reidsdale about 20 km south of Braidwood.

The Majors Creek Field was worked by small-scale mining, like cradling, followed by sluicing until finally dredging took over even though droughts and poor stream flow severely hampered the work. Araluen suffered from a similar situation but a few months after the discovery of gold there in September 1851, hundreds of miners had descended on the small valley and clusters of tents sprang up. By the 1870's there were about 600 residents in Braidwood but 4000 in the Araluen Valley. The initial success of the gold miners on the Majors Creek field who were obtaining an average of 1 ounce of gold per day lasted until about 1856 when other forms of mining took over.



Sergeant (at his death) Joseph Walmsley arrived in Sydney in 1851 aged 21 years. He went to the Braidwood goldfields and erected a 20 foot water wheel, one of the first in the field. Moving to Araluen he lost all his possessions in the 1860 flood. Joseph then joined the Southern Mounted Police Patrol under Captain Zouch, serving with him at Lambing Flat (Young), the Weddin Mountains, Wombat and other places before being sent to Cooma where he later died.

Majors Creek township grew up on land selected by Major William Sandys Elrington, quickly becoming a shantytown with miner's tents makeshift stores and sly grog shops where 2000 miners and their supporters lived. As one would imagine living conditions were rough, there were frequent fights probably exacerbated by drunkenness until the arrival of miner's families tempered the frontier lifestyle and the police post was able to encourage a calmer existence. In 1866 the population had fallen to about 200 but in 1871 returned to over 1000 before declining once more to less than 600. Even by the 1860's Wesleyan, Church of England, Roman Catholic churches were operating in tent accommodation but 10 years later had moved into permanent structures.

An Oddfellows Lodge was established in 1866 and Masonic Lodge Peabody having been formed a few years earlier at Majors Creek was working under a charter issued by the Grand Lodge of New South Wales as number eight on their register but it closed before the time of union in 1888 when the new Grand Lodge of New South Wales was formed. During the mining boom there had been a Freemason's Lodge at Araluen that belonged to the Scottish Constitution, but its history is presently unknown by the author.



Procession of Royal Lodge No. 47 MUIOOF, Araluen in 1865  
National Library of Australia

In the days before Trade Unions and the welfare state, the welfare of miners at Majors Creek was principally addressed from 1863 when it was established by the “Rose of Australia” branch of the Grand United Order of Oddfellows. As it did elsewhere, the GUOOF provided sickness, unemployment and funeral benefits for its members and took care of widows and orphans. The records of this organisation indicate that the Majors Creek Branch acted as executors for widows and orphans of the Southern District until the 1970’s.

According to author McGowan in his excellent publication “From Fraternities to Families: The Evolution of Chinese Life in the Braidwood District of New South Wales”, Chinese miners arrived in very large numbers in the Braidwood district from about 1858 onwards.<sup>27</sup> At least 1500 Chinese miners worked on the goldfields at Araluen, Majors Creek, Mills Creek, Jembaicumbene and Mongarlowe. Generally they joined Chinese fraternal organisations with links to their native place of origin or other secret societies but in any case these provided an extensive social network that secured their employment and took care of their needs. As miners, they were often organised into groups known as *kongsis*, which were economic organisations of several dozen or more shareholding partners.<sup>28</sup>

A rather mundane observation regarding the Chinese on the Australian goldfields is that on most of them a Chinese immigrant, or sometimes more than one, operated a vegetable garden. The produce was sold to the Chinese diggers living in Chinese villages adjacent to where they worked, as well as to anyone else who wished to buy fresh vegetables. A number of the shrubs and trees brought into Australia during the time of the gold rushes were imported by Chinese miners and stand as a monument to their industry to this day.

Although not all Chinese diggers remained in Australia some did so. They became market gardeners, merchants and entrepreneurs whose families often continue in the shoes of their forebears today.



<sup>27</sup> McGowan, B., 2008:4 From Fraternities to Families: The Evolution of Chinese Life in the Braidwood District of New South Wales (NSW), 1850s-1890’s. In Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies, Volume Two, 2008 南方华裔研究杂志, 第二卷

<sup>28</sup> [https://ch1-old.anu.edu.au/publications/csds/csds2008/4CSDS2008Ch%201\\_McGowan.pdf](https://ch1-old.anu.edu.au/publications/csds/csds2008/4CSDS2008Ch%201_McGowan.pdf)

Chinese Secret Societies typically operated within the confines of the Chinese temple, as demonstrated by the existence of a subscription board for a Chinese Secret Society from Narrandera and a wooden sign board that once hung above the Chinese temple doors in Albury; this reads: “Chinese Masonic Society”. As we will see, a notable man of Chinese heritage, Quong Tart, became involved in one of these Chinese fraternal groups and somewhat later, knowledge of this affiliation probably delayed his acceptance into Freemasonry.



Mei Quong Tart was not only a successful businessman, he maintained the principles of the several fraternal groups to which he belonged, Freemasonry, Oddfellowship and Foresters

As we will see below, the Braidwood goldfields were free of serious incidents of racial violence although this does not imply the complete acceptance of the Chinese by other miners and townsfolk with European heritage.



Mei Quong Tart in the dress of a mandarin and outside his tea rooms in Sydney NSW



### Southern tablelands: Braidwood

As McGowan observed, Braidwood itself was not a mining town like Ballarat or Bendigo, but more of an administrative centre like Bathurst in New South Wales. Prior to the gold rushes it had hotels, churches, police station and court, retail establishments and some industry such as flour mills and a sheep boiling down works. But the population in 1851, on the eve of the gold rushes, was a mere 212.<sup>29</sup>

Masonry was represented in Braidwood by the Lodge of Truth, which is number 26 on the register of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. It is one of the oldest country lodges still working in New South Wales. When formed on 20 March 1860, it was given the number 1183 on the register of the United Grand Lodge of England. Subsequently, in 1863, in a

<sup>29</sup> [https://chl-old.anu.edu.au/publications/csds/csds2008/4CSDS2008Ch%201\\_McGowan.pdf](https://chl-old.anu.edu.au/publications/csds/csds2008/4CSDS2008Ch%201_McGowan.pdf)

‘closing-up’ process that involved removing from that register those lodges which had surrendered their warrants, Lodge of Truth’s number was changed to 881 EC. The means by which Lodge of Truth in Braidwood became regularised with the acquisition of a charter from a recognised Grand Lodge was rather tortuous. Earlier the Lodge number had become number 18 on the New South Wales register, but at the March Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of New South Wales it was noted that the Lodge of Truth Braidwood, which was formerly under the English Constitution had been granted a charter by the local body. Meanwhile the Lodge had been operating under the auspices of the United Grand Lodge of England and gained the distinction of being the only Lodge under the United Grand Lodge of England to come over to the Grand Lodge of New South Wales.

In July 1888 when the new local Grand Lodge was formed a Lodge in Queanbeyan known as Lodge Saint Andrew was registered as number 56 in the register of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales. The little town of Bungendore between Queanbeyan and Braidwood witnessed the rise and rapid fall of the Bungendore Lodge of Australia, which was consecrated on 18 April 1885 but it ceased meeting after only five years on 3 June 1890.

Araluen is known for many things but as far as Masonry is concerned the noted businessman Quong Tart is its greatest luminary. Quong Tart migrated from Canton in China to Araluen at the age of nine in the charge of his uncle who was bringing a shipload of Chinese labourers to the Braidwood goldfields. The young boy worked in the store at nearby Bells Creek before becoming naturalised in July 1871 and in September was admitted into the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows as a member of the Loyal Miners Refuge Lodge, Araluen. Later in 1885 he joined Freemasonry. He agitated for a ban to be made Australia wide on opium, which he saw was a destructive force amongst his compatriots. He carried his anti-opium crusade to Melbourne and especially to Ballarat.<sup>30</sup> Seemingly, Quong Tart did not become a member of the Lodge of Truth in Braidwood even though he was being considered for membership in 1871. The Lodge decided that his membership application could not proceed because of his association with “the irregular Chinese Lodge” at Jembaicumbene.<sup>31</sup>

When in 1881, Charles de Boos who had been the Mining Warden and Police Magistrate at Braidwood, returned there for two very special presentations, he received on St John’s Day 24 June “a very handsome gold Past-Masters jewel from the members of the Lodge of Truth and other Freemasons in the district.” Charles de Boos had been Worshipful Master of the Lodge from 1878 to 1880, and as is usual, the gift was “a token of esteem for his valuable services rendered to the Craft.” The local paper added that the award also recognised “the great services he had rendered ... in this district during his residence here.” During the same visit (and possibly on the same occasion), de Boos received an even more remarkable gift from the local Chinese community, as “a token of their esteem for the very fair and impartial manner in which he always settled their mining disputes while he was warden of the Braidwood district.” The Chinese miners in the district each subscribed a piece of gold, from which a medal was designed and presented to him.<sup>32</sup>

A preliminary meeting of interested parties met at Braidwood in March 1856 at Mr Badgery’s Doncaster Inn and decided that a Lodge of Oddfellows should be opened in the district. Their very next meeting opened the Young Australian Branch of the Grand United Order of Oddfellows, which decided that the new Lodge would be called the Loyal Friendly Brothers Lodge. It would meet fortnightly at the Royal Hotel, Braidwood. The Sydney District of the organisation received the application to form a Lodge and duly dispensed permission to do so. A medical officer was approached as was a proprietor

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<sup>30</sup> E. J. Lea Scarlett, Mei Quong Tart (1850 – 1903), Australian dictionary of biography, National Centre of biography, Australian National University, accessed online 19th of May 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Cited by E. A. Reynolds, in the manuscript of a talk “Lodges in the Braidwood District.”

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/objectsthroughtime/de-boos-chinese-medal/>

of a dispensary and dues were fixed as a weekly subscription. A Fines Book from the time still exists recording such matters as members being fined 5/ for fighting, 10/6 for non-attendance at the procession, 2/6 for not standing for office when nominated, 1/6 for ridiculing the N.G., 6d for sleeping at Lodge, and 1/ for sitting under the emblem.

Another similar fraternal group without ritual or ceremonial affiliations was also formed in Braidwood. It was called the Braidwood Benevolent Society, which cared for the sick and infirm prior to 1859 when the Braidwood Cottage Hospital was established. The society was funded by police fines levied in Braidwood and Araluen, unclaimed poundage fees, subscriptions and donations from the public along with a government subsidy.<sup>33</sup> A literary Institute was established in about 1871, but the purpose designed building is now occupied by Shire Council offices.

Surprisingly this goldfield did not experience the anti-Chinese riots that were a feature of other regions especially that on the north-western corner of the Southern tablelands around the present day township of Young. However, in contrast to this peacefulness, the notorious bushrangers known as the Clark Gang circulated in the area committing the typical crimes of bushrangers: robbery, stealing and horse theft. Noakes provides a very useful summary of the interrelationship between mining, bush ranging and Freemasonry in New South Wales in a publication released in 2014.<sup>34</sup>

### Southern tablelands: Yass Valley

On the 28 May 1866 Brethren resident in Yass and a visiting brother met at the Commercial Hotel to consider the formation of a Masonic Lodge. The chair having been duly elected it was unanimously decided that a petition should be prepared and forwarded to the Provincial Grand Lodge in Sydney for a dispensation to enable the Brethren to open a regularly constituted Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in the town of Yass under the name of “the Yass Lodge of Concord.” The first regular meeting was held at Yass on 18 July 1860. The original warrant was dated 21 August 1863 and is at that date that the existence of Lodge number 980 of the English Constitution commenced. When the warrant was received, a dispensation under which the Lodge had worked was recalled by the Provincial Grand Lodge.

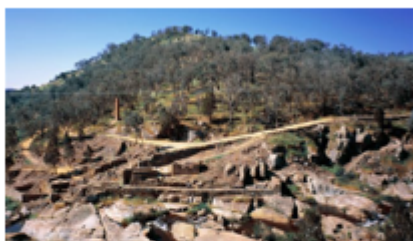


<sup>33</sup> 'Back to Braidwood' pamphlet produced as a souvenir for the back to Braidwood celebrations, 22<sup>nd</sup> November to 29 November 1925. Published by the back to Braidwood executive committee.

<sup>34</sup> Noakes, M. J. 2014. Mining, bush ranging and Freemasonry in New South Wales: the influence of mining on the spread of Freemasonry in the early years bracket 1850 – 1900) self published.



Many of the early members of Yass Lodge of Concord came from such distant places as Adelong, Harden, Gaylord, Binalong, Aurora, Gunning, Gundagai and Gundaroo. A number of these places went on to establish their own Masonic Lodges - only one of which at Harden remains extant.<sup>35</sup> In Gundaroo, a small town south east of Yass, an Oddfellows Hall was erected in the 1860's largely due to the efforts of William Affleck a Scotsman, but Gundaroo failed to prosper after the demise of the minor gold rush at nearby Bywong in 1895-6; Masonry was never established in the town.



A mining community named Cornishtown existed about a mile to the west of Adelong till the 1940's.

Local History Library, Internet Family History Association of Australia. Retrieved 2008-10-01.



Former Masonic Lodge building at Adelong – functional no doubt, but an example of undistinguished architecture.

Masonry was established in Tumbarumba but as yet, it has not been possible to discover the history of its consecration and closure. At one time there were 5 lodges in Gundagai, three of them belonging to the Scottish Constitution but these have now closed and/or amalgamated. In 1929 a theatre seating 1000 people was built by Freemasons (as distinct from lodges) which is still occupied by Lodge Gundagai No. 25 in an upstairs Lodge room incorporated in the building. In 1895 one of the Lodges formed at Gundagai originally named Lodge Excelsior No. 500 on the register of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, amalgamated with Lodge Loyalty No 155 taking the name of Gundagai United, becoming no. 25 on the register of the Grand Lodge of New South Wales. Lodge Gadara at Adelong has only recently amalgamated with Gundagai United.

1000 seat theatre built by a consortium of Masons in Gundagai NSW. A lodge room still used by Lodge Gundagai United No 20 is situated upstairs at the rear of the building.



Despite the zeal and enthusiasm displayed by the foundation members of Yass Lodge of Concord and the members who joined in the early years, their anticipation of a prosperous and flourishing Lodge was not immediately realised. When the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales was formed in 1888, Yass Lodge of Concord became number 27 on the register of the new Grand Lodge and a dispensation was received, bearing the signature of the first Grand Master, Lord Carrington, authorising the Lodge to function under the original warrant until a new warrant issued by the United Grand Lodge of New

<sup>35</sup> Freemasonry in Adelong was represented by Lodge Gadara 39, itself a consolidation of Lodge Adelong St, Clair 39, and Lodge Tumut Unity, but the lodges in this part of the State require further research.

South Wales was received. In 1963 a century after its establishment, the Lodge had a membership of 176; Lodge membership in 2016 is <30.<sup>36</sup>

### **Southern tablelands: Young district**

Not surprisingly and as on many others of the Australian goldfields, the miners were a rough-and-tumble lot and amongst them must have been some individuals of dubious character. In 1851, 10 years after the principal discoveries of gold around Braidwood, discoveries were made at Lambing Flat and at a series of small localities south of there in the direction of Gundaroo and Canberra at Spring Creek, Stoney Creek, Back Creek, Wombat, Blackguard Gully and Tipperary Gully. Lambing Flat was established as a small town in 1861 but two years later it was renamed Young after Sir John Young at that time the Governor of New South Wales. The goldfield was known as the Burrangong Goldfield and in 1863 something like 20,000 miners worked the field.<sup>37</sup>



Former Masonic Lodge  
in Young NSW now a  
restaurant bearing the  
name 'Zouch' the  
name of the policeman  
charged with quelling  
the Chinese Riots at  
Lambing Flat.

Google street view.

Lodge Burrangong St John was formed under the Scottish Constitution as no. 1348 in 1860 at the Burrangong Goldfield a little outside the present town of Young. At the time of the formation of the Grand Lodge of New South Wales it became no. 20 on the register of the new Grand Lodge. More recently it has become Lodge Young Burrangong retaining the number 20 after amalgamation with Lodge Young. It was a sponsor of a lodge at Burrowa and another at Harden-Murrumburrah. In this twin-town Lodge Federal United remains a viable organisation after having absorbed Lodge Burrowa and Lodge Cootamundra Saint John.



Banner carried by rioting miners at the Lambing Flat riots  
against Chinese on the goldfield.

<sup>36</sup> MacQuillan, A. J. & VWBro P. Bindon DGIW. 2010. Yass Lodge of Concord # 27. A. J. MacQuillan, and Yass Lodge of Concord, Yass

<sup>37</sup> Atherton, 2011:23



150 years previously, in the middle of 1861, reports of alarming racially motivated incidents on the New South Wales goldfields began to appear in local newspapers on the Southern Tablelands. For example, on page 2 of the Goulburn Herald of Wednesday, 3 July the following story appeared:

*Riots at Burrangong.*

*On Monday evening the following telegram was received at this office: –*

*“Yass 9 PM*

*Fearful riot today (Sunday) at Lambing Flat. The members of the [Anti-Chinese] League burned and destroyed everything belonging to the Chinese and robbed and ill-used them. I will send full particulars by Tuesday night.”*

*“Captain Zouch and the mounted patrol started from here for Lambing Flat yesterday morning.*

*The following is from our Sydney correspondent: –*

*“Monday afternoon.*

*“I presume that you will be by this time in full possession of the news from Burrangong. A telegram received by the government announces that a ‘roll up’ of 2000 Europeans had taken place; that they had driven off the Chinese, burnt their tents, cut off their tails, and otherwise maltreated them; and that they had then proceeded to Back Creek and driven the Chinese from that place. The Chinamen were being rationed by Mr Roberts, at the request of the Resident Commissioner. Mr Cloete and Mr Zouch have been instructed to proceed against the ringleaders immediately.”*



S T Gill depicted atrocities against the Chinese diggers in this record of the Lambing Flat riots.

Right vs Right [The Lambing Flat Riot] S.T.G. Gill 1861. From Dr Douglas Mitchell Book, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

The following is from a correspondent at Burrangong, on whose statements the fullest reliance may be placed: –

*“This day – Sunday, June 30 – will long be remembered. A mob of from 1500 to 2000 men, carrying among other flags a large banner with the words ‘Roll up – Roll up – no Chinese,’ written upon it in gold letters – paraded Tipperary Gully, then to Lambing Flat; and having gained accession to their numbers, went to the Chinese camp (about a quarter of a mile from the*

police headquarters) with a large band of music – burnt and destroyed everything about it, after robbing and violently ill-using every poor Chinaman they met or who came in the way.<sup>38</sup>

*“They then proceeded to another Chinese camp on the Yass Road, where upwards of 150 huts were inhabited, and having done the same mischief, robbed and ill-treated every Chinaman they met. One lot of the Chinese, hearing of the disturbance at Back Creek had packed up their things and were departing; but the ringleaders, on horseback, pursued them, robbed them, and burned all their bundles.*

It was not only on the Australian goldfields that the Chinese were persecuted and subjected to atrocities; earlier they had been discriminated against in California. Were the Australian miner's attitudes influenced by what had happened there?



Thomas Nast's cartoon of a townsman beating a Chinese immigrant, appeared in Harper's Weekly in 1896. Nast was criticizing the unfair treatment of Chinese immigrants in California.

*“Everything is in a fearful state of confusion, and business at a standstill.”*

At the time of the riots, Yass was the centre of the Police District and the District Magistrate's Court was held in the Yass courthouse. Mounted police were stationed there and it was to Yass, where they were under police protection, that many of the Chinese fled to escape the persecution at the Lambing Flat diggings.



<sup>38</sup> Remarkably, this banner is still preserved in the museum of the Young Historical Society.

## **Social evolution since the time of the gold rushes**

### **Self education and improvement**

Adult technical education in Australia was first addressed by Mechanics Institutes and Schools of Arts, including Schools of Mines. A mere six years after the establishment of the Edinburgh School of Arts in 1821, the world's first Mechanic's Institute, the first Australian Institute was established in Hobart. It was called the van Diemen's Land Mechanics Institution. The Sydney Mechanics School of Arts was established just six years later in 1833, and in 1839 an Institute was established in Melbourne. All of these were well before the time of the gold rushes. This was an indication that the new settlers arriving in Australia from Britain were going to bring with them a desire for self-education. In their new homeland they were keen to establish a new, more educated and fairer society.

Throughout the 19th century in Britain, the main form of developing skilled labour had been through the apprenticeship system. Apprenticeship laws were passed in New South Wales in 1828 and 1844 and in Tasmania in 1844. It wasn't until 1896 and following agitation for anti-sweating laws to be passed that wages boards were established in Victoria to determine the various conditions that together looked at training, wages and hours of work. To cater for the professional development of mining engineers the Ballarat School of Mines was established in 1870 and the Bendigo School of Mines three years later in 1873.

### **Mechanics Institutes and the Role of unionism**

It is generally considered that unionism took root in Australia in the 1850's, when the discovery of gold transformed the economy and the social structure of the new colonies in which convict transportation had ceased. Although the formation of unions per se is a complex issue and outside the scope of this paper, it can be stated that most early unions were organised to protect the position of their members in the labour market from those without proper apprenticeship credentials. After the 1850's the largest concentrations of capital and labour were to be found in either mining or pastoralism, so the developing colonies had a demographic pattern that was skewed by the mass immigration of young males during the gold rushes. This produced a society where masculine values were paramount, and the competition between these immigrants and the Chinese miners contributed to a racist legacy.

Tradesmen and mechanics coming from Britain established craft unions in the building and engineering trades, hoping to ensure that the inequitable old-world employment relationships would not be reproduced in Australia.

The early labour movement was much broader than the trade unions. As there was no social welfare, many workers and their families were members of a friendly society to insure against sickness, accident or unemployment. In fact unions had a far smaller membership than did friendly societies in Australia. According to authors Green and Cromwell <sup>39</sup>“at the turn of the 20th century, when the friendly societies were serving well over 30% of the population, fewer than one worker in 10 (2.5% of the total population) was a trade union member.” Reports of community events and labour processions regularly detailed the active pursuit participation of trade societies and friendly societies.

Bowden argues that there was more to the support for unionism than a simple automatic response to economic relationships between workers and employers. Workers sought a variety of different outcomes from unionism, which they did not see as solely for the purpose of economic advancement.

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<sup>39</sup> Green and Cromwell, 1984

They were also interested in positioning themselves in the labour market in a place of privileged employment. For other unionists the collective organisation of workers was seen as a springboard from which society at large could be changed, not just workplace arrangements.

The following Victorian quotes set the scene for the rise of Mechanics Institutes in all of Australia:

Collingwood Observer 01/05/1865: "The locality devoid of an institution for the promulgation of knowledge must be regarded as still in a state of barbarism".

Castlemaine Advertiser 15/02/1859: "The necessity for a Mechanics' Institute in every town is so well appreciated nowadays, that a long disquisition on the merits of such a question, are altogether unnecessary".

Portland Guardian 07/01/1843: "The object of such an institution shall be the intellectual improvement of its members. Of the advantages desirable from a well-conducted institution, there can be little diversity of opinion".

The objects of the Mechanics Institute were directed specially towards promoting the intellectual culture of the operative classes, mechanics and workman, but as time went on their appeal spread to the middle class. The reason why this may have occurred is that the social and political landscape of Australia was vastly different to the much older society of Britain. Immigrants who were members of the upper working class in the middle class of England arrived in huge numbers in search of a better life and class distinctions were blurred as a consequence as there was hope that with hard work and perseverance a person could improve their lot in life in the new colony.

Thus the focus of the Mechanics Institutes and related organisations changed, becoming less about education of the working classes and more about providing vital infrastructure and services especially in the form of public building in the new communities. They provided a social focus in a town where dances were held, lectures were presented and there was a venue for weddings and funerals thus their establishment served a wide range of the population and provided a focus for all members of the community.<sup>40</sup>

## **Discussion and conclusions**

I began this study after asking myself the question 'Why was it that some goldfields Masonic Lodges remained extant in the face of the decline of other types of fraternal association?' Subsequent research revealed that my question had been asked from a perspective of ignorance concerning what had actually happened on the goldfields. Seeing that so many other fraternal organisations were founded almost simultaneously with Freemasonry, and existed alongside them until quite recently, I probably should have been asking 'Why was it that goldfields Freemasonry endured into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, while other fraternal organisations declined?'

While shifts in populations contributed to the decline in membership and the eventual closure or amalgamation with sister organisations in nearby towns and districts, was there more to the disappearance of fraternal organisations than population demographics?

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<sup>40</sup> Baragwanath, P., 2011 (issue number 1526, 9 November 2011) Mechanics' Institute's role in Australia's history; article in The Guardian, The Workers Weekly, Communist Party of Australia

The eminent English philosopher Bertrand Russell began the first of his Reith Lectures by saying: ‘the fundamental problem I propose to consider in these lectures is this: How can we combine that degree of individual initiative which is necessary for progress with the degree of social cohesion that is necessary for survival?’<sup>41</sup> Significantly Russell’s lecture series entitled ‘Authority and the Individual’ was banned by the wartime British Government but defiantly delivered in Russell’s stead by Robert Smillie, the leader of the Miner’s Federation. Russell’s argument was that human life was in part inevitably governed by the community and in part by private initiative. He believed that the private portion should only be restricted when it becomes predatory, otherwise he thought, everything ought to be done to make it as great and as vigorous as possible.

Freemasonry had major a role in community life as we have seen and so did the mutual benefit societies. While historically, the provisions of mutual aid were first the responsibility of friendly society health funds and other mutual societies unemployment benefits, if not those of health, have now largely passed into the realm of government control. In the decades following the Second World War the number of individuals belonging to organisations that conducted ritualised fraternal ceremonies has decreased alarmingly. Masonic Lodges have not been immune from a decline in participation and membership at a rate that causes concern amongst many of the members.



Friendly Societies became rather unfriendly when their economic wellbeing was threatened by the introduction of Government welfare.

Humans have always been gregarious, and individuals in most societies exhibit a need to socialise. The quest for direct human contact is a path travelled by most individuals and, in some instances, may be sought within the religious sphere. A non-religious alternative opportunity for social contact is provided by Freemasonry, which develops friendships that spread the light of peace, love and harmony; these sentiments must have assisted in unifying society on the goldfields amongst miners with varied backgrounds, languages and social position. Then, as now, Freemasons hold the view that we can best praise the GAOTU by giving service to our fellow humans through being tolerant and adopting honesty as being the best policy in all our socialising.

As we have seen the institutions and mutual benefit societies whose primary focus was on mutual aid and economic support, found themselves becoming less and less relevant as the years passed. Membership within these groups became less important as state aid increased and government legislation began to protect employment conditions through various welfare programs that replaced the subscription-funded benefits provided by the benevolent societies. There is no doubt that there was a place for ritual and ceremonial within most benevolent societies and organisations and thus they provided opportunities for the development of moral principles and ideals amongst the

<sup>41</sup> The inaugural Reith lecture was given in 1948 by the philosopher Bertrand Russell. The lectures were named after Lord Reith the first director-general of the BBC who maintained that radio broadcasting should be a public service designed to enrich the intellectual and cultural life of a nation.

membership. For some reason, this focus was overtaken by concerns about diminishing membership numbers or was pushed aside for other reasons when the emphasis on mutual aid and benevolence diminished. Thus, these organisations, whose primary focus was mostly on mutual aid and benevolence, ultimately saw the benefit of amalgamating to increase their economic base, which allowed them to recruit a broader membership. Eventually of course, these societies became almost purely commercial enterprises.



There is no doubt that both society and Freemasonry have evolved since the time of the gold rushes however, is there anything from those turbulent times that we might consider to be sustaining and applicable to the advancement of Freemasonry today?

### **What did Freemasonry offer the diggers?**

What was it that separated Freemasonry from the dozens of similar institutions and what was it that resulted in Freemasonry continuing to exist into the present century while many, no, the majority, of the other institutions either changed their complexion completely or dwindled away into oblivion? I propose to seek some answers within two themes; one strand I consider covers an individual's personal traits while the other strand affected not only the individual but also the wider community.

### **Making masonry relevant today**

Whilst many of the non-Masonic orders and organisations were swallowed up in the social security net, or became amalgamated to evolve into the mutual societies that continue to survive today, Freemasonry remained aloof from these mergers of associations. Being a society of free men that seeks to strengthen within its members and in communities the social and moral sentiments of peace, practical brotherhood and idealism, Freemasonry attempts to make those who are obedient to its precepts into law-abiding citizens who uphold the redeeming ideals of society thus making righteousness and the will of God prevail. No other institution that was established on the goldfields offered what Freemasonry did and so it endured where other organisations did not. Most fraternal societies offered two main strands of activity; the provision of economic support and benevolence, which I intend to ignore in this essay, and a second strand that focused on ritualised ceremonial which gave emotional and spiritual succour and is of some considerable importance. The points mentioned below can be gleaned directly from or by reading between the lines of the information in appendix 1.

Many modern-day Masonic writers concentrate on suggestions for increasing membership and recruiting potential Masons, but there may be more to the modern decline in membership of

Freemason's Lodges than a simple failure in recruiting strategies. The following several points seem worth considering in this light:

- An understanding that the practice of brotherly love, relief and truth is the primary aim of modern Freemasonry should be developed in candidates because, now, as in the past, embracing these aims encourages individuals to feel that they are somewhat out of the ordinary and potentially, morally superior to many others in society.
- Masonic ceremonies help to provide social contacts by uniting men from diverse backgrounds, different cultures and different languages. The 'work' undertaken in a Masonic Lodge cuts across social, economic, racial, religious and political lines, forging bonds between men who, outside of Masonry may otherwise not meet together; In the words of a young and relatively inexperienced Mason, ... "The Lodge whose members' ... hearts are filled with brotherly love [will] stand forever strong against the test of time."
- Freemasonry's rites contain lessons that encourage members to respect the dignity of work and to bring one's social aspirations to fruition in a morally constructive way, thus contributing to a social philosophy that will lead to overall community well-being.
- Freemasonry has long made a crucial contribution to society through its charitable activities. It should continue to be an Order not obsessed with itself, but one that is convinced that its *raison d'être* addresses real and important aspects of the society in which it exists, and it should inform the community that it tries to do this.
- It is only through cooperative effort that a Lodge is able to flourish and move on and advance into the future.
- The building of King Solomon's Temple, which is the central metaphorical and allegorical story behind Freemasonry's ceremonial agenda seems always to have been a potent and meaningful symbol for both society in general and Freemasons in particular. There is some suggestion that the usefulness and social potential of Freemasonry is emphasised by the structures with which it is represented in communities. If this is the case, then it is essential that Masonic buildings are well maintained and present an outward appearance suggestive of a vibrant organisation meeting within. It is not clear which situation gives rise to the other, but within the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales, lodges with declining numbers of members meeting in buildings which are visibly deteriorating have regressed to a point where the only chance of the group's survival involves amalgamation with another lodge in a nearby town.

## **Acknowledgements**

Significant assistance in researching this project was received from Beryl Armstrong (Australian Unity), VWBro Athol Cairn and VWBro Neil Morse.



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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/objectsthroughtime/de-boos-chinese-medal/>

## Appendix 1

### Benefits of Freemasonry to diggers and society

Fraternal Societies offered two main strands of activity. One was an aspect of mutual aid that provided economic support and benevolence while the other was a ritualised ceremonial that gave emotional and spiritual succour.

What was it that separated Freemasonry from the dozens of similar institutions and what was it that resulted in Freemasonry continuing to exist into the present century while many, no, the majority of the other institutions either changed their complexion completely or dwindled away into oblivion? I propose to seek some answers within two themes; one strand I consider covers personal traits while the other strand affected not only the individual but also the wider community.

#### Individual traits

Amongst the personal traits that might be developed by being a Freemason may have been: respectability, the sense of belonging, self-advancement, increased self-confidence and the opportunity to participate in uplifting spiritual ritual.

*Respectability.* The ideal of respectability was one of the most powerful forces working for social transformation among immigrant communities in pre-Federation Australia. Drawing on the work of British social historians, Janet McCalman has observed that a cluster of social traits associated with the idea of respectability (including self-reliance, independence, and self-discipline) were popularised among all classes during the British Industrial Revolution before being transplanted to Australia 'by immigrants hoping for dignity and prosperity in a new land'. The struggle for respectability crossed class, gender and ethnic lines among the urban communities that staffed and ran the factories, utilities, wharves, warehouses and markets of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Australian cities. Immigrants who did not harbour aspirations for modern respectability before they arrived were not long in acquiring them once they had landed. Children of immigrants from the pre-industrial counties of Ireland for example, struggled to escape the stigma that attached to the name 'Bog Irish'. Incentives for achieving respectability were particularly strong in Australian societies where migrating settlers from England, Scotland, and Ireland mixed with one another (and with the occasional Russian or Chinese) to a degree rarely replicated in their countries of origin. Opportunities beckoned not only for prosperity but also for achieving equal recognition for themselves, their families and their particular religious and ethnic communities.<sup>42</sup>

*Sense of belonging.* Generally, people join an organisation that is secular, multi-faith or cross-denominational and which shares some of their own values. Freemasons and like-minded potential candidates knew or were introduced to the concept that Freemasonry offers opportunities to make lifetime friendships, to foster personal development, to establish a lifetime framework in which contemplation can provide new insights into the vicissitudes of life and to have new experiences shared in common with like-minded individuals. In the words of a young and relatively inexperienced Mason, ... "The Lodge whose members' minds are filled with knowledge and whose hearts are filled with brotherly love stand forever strong against the test of time."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p97101/mobile/ch06.html>, and

<http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p97101/mobile/chapter-notes.htm>, accessed February 2016.

<sup>43</sup> Bro Stephen F W, Lodge Germania 1036 UGLNSW&ACT; Towards a New Golden Age of Masonry, The Educator, July 25, 2016

*Self-advancement.* Freemasons have long recognised that masonry tries to make them into the best person that they can become by refining their thoughts, enhancing their dreams, broadening their outlooks and the like. Dedication to high moral ideals, subduing wild passions, bringing light out of darkness and making every hope more radiant are the products of the simple practice of masonry.

Unlike in the times of the gold rushes, self-improvement stimulated by Masonic membership today applies primarily to developing positive aspects in one's character. This is enhanced through the practice of brotherly love relief and truth. Understanding that this is the primary aim of modern Freemasonry should be made clear to candidates because, as in the past, it encourages the feeling within an individual that he is somewhat out of the ordinary and potentially, morally superior to many others in society.

*Self confidence.* Participation in Masonic activities boosts an individual's self-confidence but it is hardly likely that the miners on the Australian goldfields became Freemasons for this reason. They already had sufficient self-confidence and experience to allow them to seek each other out and form associations in the first place. It is difficult to look back in time and analyse what society as a whole may have thought about Freemasonry, which in the 1860's, was very much a 'secret society'. During periods when the Fraternity suffered persecution for political reasons, it was obviously prudent to be discreet about one's membership in the group; most enlightened societies are now tolerant and accepting of Freemasonry and the social benefits it provides.

*Participation in ritual.* Involvement in ceremonies and ritual seems to be an important aspect of human nature. Masonic ceremonies have long helped to bring together men from diverse backgrounds, different cultures and having different languages. The 'work' undertaken in a Masonic Lodge has always cut across social, economic, racial, religious and political lines, forging bonds between men who, outside of Masonry may otherwise not have met together. The Masonic Lodge, private in nature and closed to outsiders, provided a refuge within which members could avoid the strife and struggle of the exterior world and leave aside contentious arguments about politics and religion. The main tenets of Freemasonry have always been 'brotherly love' and 'relief,' in more modern terms 'affiliation' and 'altruism'. Although some researchers have questioned the necessity for ritual in our lives, it is easy to find 'habits' in our everyday lives that could easily be described as ritual behaviour.

### **Freemasonry's Benefits to the Wider Community**

Traits that could be developed in an individual which flowed over into the wider community included things like a strengthened work ethic, altruism, regard for law and order and egalitarianism.

*Engendering a work ethic.* Freemasonry's rites encourage members to respect the dignity of work and to bring one's social aspirations to fruition in a morally constructive way, thus contributing to a social philosophy leading to overall community well being. On the Australian goldfields and no doubt at many similar places of frantic industry throughout the world, there were numerous tempting opportunities that no doubt lead to theft, cheating, even murder and other antisocial crimes as well as large-scale corruption. Perhaps evidence may be found that Freemasons on the goldfields thought that by shying away from the surrounding criminal atmosphere and by considering their labour as a contribution to the building of a symbolic structure of great moral character, they were establishing what would be an earthly representation of a house not built with hands eternal in the heavens. No doubt they understood that individuals needed to use the skills given to them by the GAOTU so that ultimately they could secure a better future for themselves and for their families that would flow on into the society in which they lived.

*Altruism.* Freemasonry has long made a crucial contribution to society both through its charitable activities and by establishing a setting for mutual support amongst the membership thus encouraging individual Masons to greater self-improvement. Participation in one's community through volunteering, donating to and becoming engaged in social activities, places of worship and government – both local and regional, was then, and is now, encouraged by Freemasonry. It would take considerable research to discover whether individual Lodge members from the time of the gold rushes were involved in their community in these ways, although hints that at least some of them were, appear in Lodge histories. More research is needed to confirm the extent to which this occurred. Strong social cohesion, often described as a form of social capital, is critical in today's society just as it was during the gold rushes. It provides a route for alleviating poverty and sustaining human and economic development. The works of the early goldfields Lodges of Freemasons, shown by the substantial buildings they erected at the time, indicate that it was their desire to establish long-lasting organisation within their communities, and by extension, also provide the social conditions just mentioned.

*Strengthening law and order.* During the gold rushes Freemasons saw that by establishing and strengthening brotherly ties, Masonry could work on behalf of law and order. Although it is difficult to find written confirmation thereof, surely Freemasons at that time recognised that only through cooperative effort is a society able to flourish and move on to better things. No doubt they aspired to build their newly adopted country into the best environment possible to provide for the security, prosperity and advancement of all.

*Egalitarianism.* Large numbers of the miners that came to the Australian goldfields arrived from California where they had worked at the same tasks they were now undertaking in central Victoria and on the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales. Much earlier, the group of men who framed the Constitution of the United States of America included Freemasons amongst their number and they, perhaps inspired by Masonry, had asserted the divine right of men to "life, unity, and the pursuit of happiness, to secure which, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the government." Freemasonry has always stood in support of those who wished to discard the yoke of tyranny and demanded the universal rights that belong to citizens. We have seen that similar sentiments were held by other groups of immigrants (amongst whom were numbers of Freemasons) into the new colonies of Australia.



# *Transactions* of the **Discovery Lodge of Research**

**No. 971, United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory**

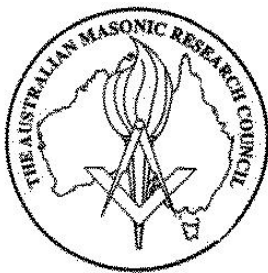
*direct descendant of the Research Lodge of New South Wales  
and the Sydney Lodge of Research*



The lodge generally meets in the  
Sydney Masonic Centre  
on the first Thursday of the month  
March (Installation), June, August & November, at 7pm.  
Dress: lounge suit, lodge tie, regalia.

Master Rt WBro (Hector) Stewart Grant  
Secretary VWBro Ian Shanley  
email: [secretary@discoverylodge.org](mailto:secretary@discoverylodge.org)

website: <http://www.discoverylodge.org/>



*Foundation member of the*

***Australian & New Zealand  
Masonic Research Council***

website: <http://anzmrc.org/>





## From The Editor

*Dear Sir and Brother,*

*This issue contains two papers. The first is the paper given by the ANZMRC Touring Lecturer for 2017 (John Belton) whilst in Sydney.*

*If you wish to purchase a copy of his Tour book containing all 18 papers please email me and I can arrange a copy to be mailed to you - \$35 each.*

*The second paper is an entertaining piece by our resident theologian Br Tom Hall on the figure of Jephthah from the Second Degree.*

*The next meeting will be on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at the Sydney Masonic Centre. Our second international speaker in a row Br Granville Angell (Lord Crannock) - from the UK enlightening us on the history of Masonic VC recipients.*

*NB the unusual date of the meeting - in order to align with Br Granvilles visit. Hope to see you there.*

*Yours fraternally,*

*Ian Shanley*

*Secretary*

*Email: [secretary@discoverylodge.org](mailto:secretary@discoverylodge.org)*

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## Officers for the year 2017-2018

Worshipful Master-elect	RtWBro Stewart Grant	<a href="mailto:sgrant.ggl@bigpond.com">sgrant.ggl@bigpond.com</a>
Immediate Past Master	VWBro Alan Gale	<a href="mailto:agale@iinet.net.au">agale@iinet.net.au</a>
Senior Warden	VWBro David Slater	<a href="mailto:dbslater633@gmail.com">dbslater633@gmail.com</a>
Junior Warden	WBro Phillip Lye	<a href="mailto:philliplye@aol.com">philliplye@aol.com</a>
Chaplain	RtWBro Samuel Tov-Lev	
Treasurer	VWBro Neil Morse	<a href="mailto:morse@netspeed.com.au">morse@netspeed.com.au</a>
Secretary	VWBro Ian Shanley	<a href="mailto:secretary@discoverylodge.org">secretary@discoverylodge.org</a>
Director of Ceremonies	RtWBro Geoff Ludowyk	<a href="mailto:jludowyk@bigpond.net.au">jludowyk@bigpond.net.au</a>
Senior Deacon	Bro Stephen Hodgson	<a href="mailto:stephen_hodgson@yahoo.com.au">stephen_hodgson@yahoo.com.au</a>
Junior Deacon	VWBro Stephen Hayne	<a href="mailto:HayneS@belmonttimber.com.au">HayneS@belmonttimber.com.au</a>
Steward	WBro Tom Hall	<a href="mailto:theologist@icloud.com">theologist@icloud.com</a>
Inner Guard	WBr Justin Patety	<a href="mailto:jmpatey@aapt.net.au">jmpatey@aapt.net.au</a>
Tyler	On Rotation	

# The International Compact of 1814: a bicentennial update

Presented on 24 August 2017

*by Bro John Belton*

## Introduction

The very covert nature of the International Compact and the fact that it was only known to exist in the Minutes of the Grand Lodge of Ireland meant that there was probably little more to add to what Bro Chetwode Crawley wrote in 1914. But such beliefs, for example, that there are no further primary sources, tend to stifle even the thought of searching for them. However, at a meeting of Quatuor Coronati Lodge held in Sheffield, in June 2010, at which John Mandleberg delivered a paper on the subject of the 'Lodges of Promulgation and Reconciliation', there was a response from Bro James Daniel. He said, that in spite of having being Grand Secretary, that he had previously known nothing of the International Compact, and said in relation to it;

Intrigued, I wrote to Bro John Hamill to see what he knew about it and he replied: 'In a black file box in the Library safe, labelled International Treaties, there is a blue bookcase holding the draft agreement in the hands of William White with marginal notes of amendments made during the discussion.'<sup>1</sup>

So there was the gift of knowledge, and its location,<sup>2</sup> stated 'on a plate' so to speak, of a truly magical document – and it clearly IS the source referred to by Bro Sadler in 1893 in *The Freemason*. It has since then lain unregarded in a box file until the approaching occasion of the bicentenary of the Compact meeting in 2014. [The author promises that the full implication of Bro Daniel's words did not strike home until 2012, and it has taken only two years to write the paper rather than Bro Crawley's 17 year gestation period].

The event of a meeting and agreement between the three Home Grand Lodges was another aspect of the struggle to bring order and structure to the masonic world of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In the British Isles, these attempts had met with varying success but each Grand Lodge had approached the problem in a different way. The Compact was the way in which all the problems got discussed around the table and at least partly addressed by the three Grand Lodges of the British Isles.

Scotland had never been a stranger to the independence of thought and action among its daughter lodges and was more constantly aware of what could and could not be achieved and chose the occasion of the Unlawful Societies Act of 1799 to clamp down on the 'insubordination' of its daughter lodges. It also threatened lodges with the withdrawal of their warrants if they failed to report their member's names in accordance with the Act and pay the test fees (dues) to Grand Lodge. Its resolution to seek an order (and of course control) negotiated a return of the 'errant' Mother Kilwinning and the Lodge of Perth and Scone back into the fold of Grand Lodge by 1807.

Ireland tried another route and aimed mainly to bring the practice of other degrees under control of the Grand Lodge but the decisions made by the masonic rules within 'the pale' of Dublin were sadly out of touch with lodges outside the pale; the result was a total grand rebellion which lasted a decade.

The situation in England was also complicated, but in a different way, because once the Antients and Moderns had reached the imperative need of Union, then the matter of other degrees also had to be dealt with. All the Grand Lodges were also concerned with how to deal with those hard to manage parts of their organisations, the military lodges and also those lodges in the far-flung parts of the British Empire. One only has to study the flow of correspondence to Grand Secretaries to understand the effort this must have required – and still, there were complaints of non-reply from HQ.

One can also see this as an attempt by the Hanoverians to keep their dynasty on track, by the government to have an organisation to act as a social focus in the outposts of Empire and give men and wives a reminder of their (tribal) home in the British Isles. But mostly, reading the clauses, one has to conclude the concerns were mainly masonic ones. The clauses largely represent the concerns of those ruling masonry.

Thus there was perhaps an inevitability that such a meeting should take place as part of an ongoing process of bringing order and structure to a freemasonry that had become filled with other orders over the previous half century.

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<sup>1</sup> James W Daniel quoted in C John Mandleberg, Promulgation and Reconciliation, *AQC* 123 (2010) 105. It should be noted however that the above statement is not entirely correct; the body of the text is in a secretarial hand while the amendments are in the hand of William White, Grand Secretary

<sup>2</sup> In the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London. Grateful thanks are also recorded to the provision of the images and for kind permission to publish both the images and to draw upon the text

## The Prelude to the International Compact

The Duke of Sussex had negotiated, cajoled and 'bullied' his way through to the Articles of Union being signed on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 1813 and thence to the grand jamboree on the 27<sup>th</sup> December to give public acclamation to the already signed sealed and delivered Union of the Antients and Moderns Grand Lodges into the United Grand Lodge of England. The Duke was a meticulous planner and strategist and he knew that just as he had made peace between the English Grand Lodges regarding 'pure Ancient Masonry' he had to achieve a similar position of harmony with the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland for the benefits of the English Union to have real value.

The signing of the Articles of Union on 25<sup>th</sup> November and their ratification by both Grand Lodges on 1<sup>st</sup> December were followed by a joint letter on 7<sup>th</sup> December from the Dukes of Sussex and Kent. Two copies were sent, one by each of the Grand Secretaries, just to be sure!

A mere SIX days after the despatch of this letter the Grand Lodge of Ireland had convened an Extraordinary Meeting of Grand Lodge.

Grand Lodge of Ireland  
On Emergency  
Hon'ble Abram Hely Hutchinson DGM on the Throne

The Grand Lodge of Ireland from the recent receipt of the Communications, and the consequent shortness of interval previous to the Festival of St John, laments that on its part Brethren cannot be appointed whose presence in London that day might with certainty be expected, but the Grand Lodge of Ireland while it regrets not being represented at the august assembly on the 27<sup>th</sup> December, is anxious to express its sincere desire to co-operate in the completion of the Great Work, so highly interesting to the Whole Fraternity and will therefore depute at any time subsequent to the 27<sup>th</sup> Inst; which their Royal Highnesses the two Grand Masters may deem most proper and convenient to appoint approved and skilful Brethren to meet those of Scotland, and the Brethren selected by the Grand Lodges of England, for the purposes of finally and effectually ascertaining and establishing a perfect Union of Obligation and Discipline to be hereafter maintained upheld and practiced throughout the Masonic World.

(signed) W F Graham DGSecy.<sup>3</sup>

This letter is remarkable because after the congratulations Ireland expresses a 'desire to co-operate in the in the completion of the Great Work', to do so quickly and to 'establish a perfect Union of Obligation and Discipline to be maintained and upheld and practised throughout the Masonic World'. It was clear that Ireland had a larger agenda than a mere agreement on 'matters which can neither be written nor described'. There were further exchanges between England and Ireland. On 20<sup>th</sup> December 1813 William Graham DGS sent a further missive to London stating

Brethren likely to be delegated by us, it would most suit their convenience to attend in London as shortly before the Festival of St George as would allow sufficient time for the discussion... many of the Grand Officers will then be attending their Parliamentary duties.<sup>4</sup>  
(signed) Graham

On 3<sup>rd</sup> February there was a reply from London which laid out part of their agenda:

We trust we shall have the satisfaction to meet your Brothers together with Brothers from Scotland and we indulge the belief that many points of regulation for the good of the Three Sister Grand Lodges may at that time be considered and settled particularly with regard to the granting of Certificates and the recognition of the acts of one another.<sup>5</sup>

Lest anyone doubted determination of Ireland's Masons the Grand Lodge passed a special resolution on 7<sup>th</sup> July addressed to Lord Donoughmore in which it asked him

...to continue to watch over the interest if the Craft in general and the Masons of Ireland in particular and to assist by his profound knowledge and mature experience of the Laws and Customs of Masonry, the

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<sup>3</sup> Library & Museum of Freemasonry, London HC 12/A/62

<sup>4</sup> Library of Freemasonry, London HC/12/A/63

<sup>5</sup> R E Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge of Ireland* Vol.2 (1957) 20

efforts of our Most Worshipful Grand Master towards the establishment of a general system of regulation in the practice and intercourse of the Three Grand Lodges of England, Scotland & Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the whole process of the Union of the English Grand Lodges, there are repeated references to things having to be done with the agreement of Scotland and Ireland. The absence of delegates from either of these nations in London on 27<sup>th</sup> December meant that some meeting had to be convened to deal and resolve this issue. There is probably little doubt that of the three Grand Lodges it was Ireland that felt most in need of a conference to deal with matters of organisation and discipline. It was effectively the junior partner in this triumvirate and Irish Lodges (and the Irish in general) were less well regarded, and especially military ones, who were a constant source of ill harmony wherever they were based and letters of complaint a perpetual thorn in the sides of all the Grand Secretaries.

There were perhaps other additional reasons for seeking good order; for these were nervous times, the French Revolution was still in living memory, the United Irishmen still a problem, and Napoleon not yet defeated. But added to that there were other major factors to be taken into account. The Hanoverian dynasty to be secured, traditional governance to be maintained secure, and especially considerations of Empire where harmony among the white builders of Empire, be they English, Irish or Scottish would be a decided advantage. The 1821 visit of the recently crowned George IV was to be the first visit by a British monarch to Scotland since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland had only been created a few years earlier in 1800 is indicative.

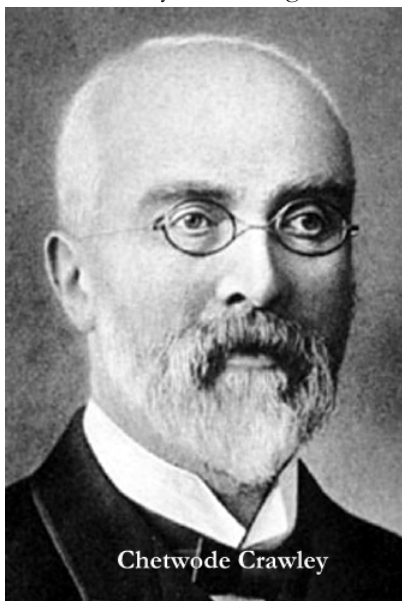
### The International Compact of 1814 in masonic literature

When one reads the paper by Bro W J Chetwode Crawley published in AQC<sup>7</sup> one would be forgiven for thinking that this was the first publication of the text of the Compact, actually not so. As was often the case *The Freemason* got there first and published an article in its Diamond Jubilee Issue on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1897<sup>8</sup>. This fact was duly noted by Begemann<sup>9</sup> in his (German language) book but getting hold of a copy of the article from *The Freemason* proved remarkably difficult. Luckily it was privately reprinted and a copy of the booklet was found. It is perhaps remarkable that Bro Crawley then hung onto his discovery for a further 17 years before it came to AQC as a centenary of the

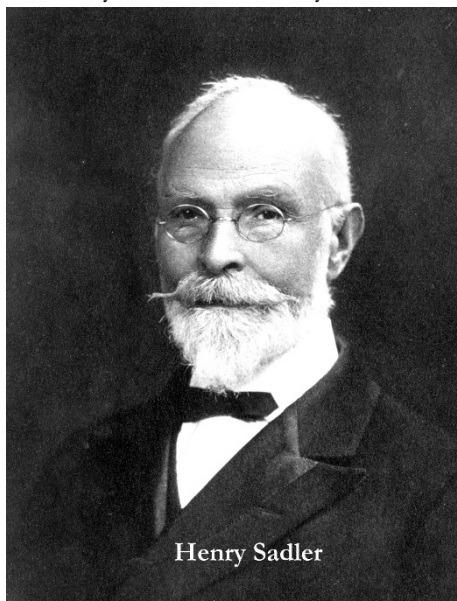
‘event’ in 1914.

At the end of his article in AQC Bro Crawley refers to the ‘late Brother Sadler’ (1840-1911) in an article written by Sadler in *The Freemason* of 18<sup>th</sup> March 1893 and says

He there quoted, from the *Minutes* in his well stocked Archives, that part of Resolution VII that bears on the Ulster Schism, and hinted that at some more convenient time he might publish the rest of the document. Alas! The hand of Death removed him before that hint was carried into effect<sup>10</sup>.



Chetwode Crawley



Henry Sadler

Reading this 1893 article Sadler actually quotes the preamble to the Compact and Clause 5 verbatim. Where did he get this material? Clearly, Crawley did not give it to him so he must have had sight of another copy. The question will be answered in this paper in full, and Sadler’s source displayed – some 120 years after his first tantalising preview!

There are very few other references to the International Compact of 1814 in any context and these are listed in the Appendix. For such a significant document the lack of interest it has elicited among researchers is strange.

<sup>6</sup> R E Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge of Ireland* Vol.2 (1957) 21

<sup>7</sup> W J Chetwode Crawley, The International Compact, 1814. *AQC* Vol.28 141-55

<sup>8</sup> W J Chetwode Crawley, The International Compact of 1814, in *The Freemason Jubilee Issue* (3 July 1897). This was later reprinted in a 14 page booklet. Sadly at the time of writing the Masonic Periodicals Online accessed from the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London does not have this issue in the database. Some of the other special issues are also said to be missing.

<sup>9</sup> W Begemann, *Vorgesichte und Anfänge der Freimaurer in England*, Berlin (1910) 532; quoted in A Bernheim, *England, Scotland, Ireland and The International Compact of 1814*, *The Square* (June 2013) 19-22

<sup>10</sup> H Sadler, The Grand Lodge of Ulster, in *The Freemason* (18 March 1893) 144

## **The Irish record of The International Compact of 1814**

Letters of Invitation to the meeting were issued from London and both Grand Lodges responded, although only the reply from Ireland remains in the archives. The letter of 7<sup>th</sup> April 1814 from the Deputy Grand Secretary W F Graham reads as follows:

That the following Noblemen and Gentlemen Brothers be appointed Delegates to represent this Grand Lodge at the Grand Communication in London  
His Grace the Duke of Leinster M W Grand Master  
Rt Honble Earl of Donoughmore M.W. P. Grand Master  
Hon'ble Ab<sup>m</sup> H-Hutchinson R.W.D. Grand Master  
R W John Boardman Esq. Grand Treasurer  
Rt Honble Lord Henry Sey<sup>r</sup> Moore Master Lodge 857  
(Signed) By Order W F Graham DGS

It is interesting to note that of those nominated to represent Ireland only the Grand Master and Past Grand Master attended on the Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June. We also know that John Boardman, the Grand Treasurer of Ireland attended the meeting held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1814 to install the Duke of Sussex as Grand Master and further that no brother was there representing Scotland. What was Boardman doing in London? Well, we know that he was on a mission to the United Grand Lodge of England because he died in The Strand (the main street in), London on 29<sup>th</sup> May<sup>11</sup>. It is fair to assume that he was doing the pre-negotiations on behalf of Ireland. But whether any Brother came from Scotland to perform a similar task we cannot know.

One matter which has caused me considerable puzzlement is the apparent ignorance of each party about the practices of the other. This was apparent on Boardman's part when clearly being totally unfamiliar with the situation of the Antients with respect to the Royal Arch and Knights Templar. Again it took a letter from Scotland to William White to alert him to the fact that the relationship of the Royal Arch to Grand Lodge of Scotland was totally different. There are other examples as well. It is not that the missing understanding was superfluous, rather that those in charge just seem somewhat divorced from the reality of what lodges did and what was actually going on in the masonic world around them

The preamble to the Compact records that the Conference was held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June<sup>12</sup> and continued by adjournment to Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1814. This 'extended period' may be caused by one very simple reason. Meeting on the first day the parties present presumably intended to agree on a final form of words. We know for certain that a form of words had been pre-prepared for discussion on the 27<sup>th</sup> June and thus, of course, any changes would have to be reflected in a final version which would have to be produced longhand by good secretarial hands and in at least three copies to allow each party to take away a signed copy.

Where the noble brothers resided during the week we cannot guess but there was a second reason. The Duke of Sussex had arranged for his Chapter, The Chapter of Restoration No.1, to meet (and only for the third time since its reopening) at which the delegates to the Conference would attend. It is interesting to note that only one delegate, Lord Donoughmore, was already exalted and that both Antient and Moderns Companions were present although the Chapter officers were Moderns. This seems an indication that the Duke of Sussex considered the Royal Arch an important part of Masonry, rather than simply trying to sweep it under that table.

## **The Manuscript version of the International Compact of 1814**

It is exceptionally rare to have the working precursor to any treaty and the working notes of those negotiating the treaty as marginal notes or crossings out. In this case, there are somewhere there are two or even three crossings out and nature and details can show the flow of the argument and discussion on that 27<sup>th</sup> June. One is also able to infer the importance they attached to getting the exact form of words to express the required intent of those present. For that reason, the marginal notes and clauses are reproduced in either facsimile or text and some commentary attached. The International Compact was an important document because it stood, without amendment, for 95 years. It was only amended by a separate Compact of 1906 and subsequent amendments to that of 1964 and 2005 (these will be dealt with later in the text). What is evident from the manuscript alterations, however, is that the event and the Compact were far more than a 'victory parade' for the Duke of Sussex and the new United Grand Lodge of England and that there was real negotiation round the table.

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<sup>11</sup> There is a plaque erected to his memory in St Patrick's (Protestant) Cathedral in Dublin by the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, the two Grand Wardens and Grand Secretary which records this fact. It is interesting to note also that the printing premises of his friend Bro. Thomas Harper were also located close to The Strand so maybe this was where he was staying.

<sup>12</sup> This is of course St John's Day in Summer and an eminently suitable masonic date on which to meet!

As Crawley notes, that in spite of the stated intent of the final clause, the intention to publish and circulate the Compact to all lodges this was never done by any of the Home Grand Lodges. No signed version of the Compact is known, the manuscript version does not indicate any intent to add signatures and neither does the Irish version record that there were signatures on the copy that was transcribed.

### **The Matters Brought to the Table**

On the face of it, the Compact can be read simply as a reiteration of established practices but it is informative to look at what issues each of the Three Home Grand Lodges brought to the table

#### Issues brought by England

- a) That the Three Home Grand Lodges 'were perfectly in unison in all the great and essential points of the Mystery and Craft' (Preamble)
- b) The inclusion of the Royal Arch (Clause 1)
- c) That Constant Correspondence as per the 1772 agreement 'is forever maintained' (Clause 2). The achievement of this was probably a 'Moderns' obsession.
- d) The granting of Certificates

#### Issues brought by Ireland

- a) That certificates signed A. Seton are spurious (Clause 5)
- b) Only one Grand or Mother Lodge in each of the three Countries (Clause 5)
- c) The matter of Catholic Persecution of Masons and their families in Ireland (Clause 7)
- d) The establishment of a general system of regulation.

#### Issues brought by Scotland

- a) Scotland's letter refers to the Royal Arch (Preamble marginal note)

#### Issues of General Concern that were dealt with

- a) Each Grand lodge shall preserve its own limits (Clause 4)
- b) Freedoms of military lodges defined (Clause 4)
- c) 'that the present practice with respect to lodges established in distant parts under either of the Three Grand Lodges shall continue on the present footing'
- d) No right of benevolence without proofs (Clause 5)
- e) No admission, as a matter of right, into lodges of either of the other two Grand Lodges

**Note:- In order to make the handwritten amendments on the manuscript both readable and understandable in transcript form, a specific convention has been adopted of indicating in the text additions in *Italics*. The final deletion is shown with a ~~striketrough~~ of the word and a previous deletion using a ~~double striketrough~~. Notes in the margin which are part of the actual text are shown in the text and pure marginal notes shown separately.**

### **Preamble - Scotland and the Royal Arch**

In the preamble, there are two marginal notes made in pencil. All the others were in ink and the content of those indicates they were made at the time of the discussions. The two pencil notes were probably made earlier. In the paragraph referring to the reading of the letters appointing the deputations is the note 'The Letter from GL Scotland especially speaks of the Royal Arch'. The next paragraph deals with the examination 'the great and essential points of the Mystery' and the Grand Lodges being 'perfectly in unison'. The pencil note reads 'This declaration is not correct if the Royal Arch be not recognised'. Sadly the letter from Scotland is missing in London, but fortunately recorded in the Minute Book of the Grand Lodge of Scotland for December 1813:

3<sup>rd</sup>. That the Grand Lodge of Scotland feels the high importance in common with the Sister Grand Lodges of Unity of Obligation, Of Discipline, of Making, Passing and Raising, Instructing and of Clothing – in short the pure and unsullied system being observed throughout the whole Masonic World so well expressed in the Third Article of Union. And as the Grand Lodge of Scotland has hitherto only acknowledged the Ancient Order of St John's Masonry of Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master Mason, without including that of the Holy Royal Arch, which not as recognised by the Grand Lodge of England. The Grand Lodge of Scotland would gladly communicate with the United Grand Lodge of England upon this subject from an anxious desire to remove if at all possible every shadow of difference between them.



### Preamble: 'Neither Written nor Described'

Before the delegates got down to their negotiations the preamble records that they conducted a 'strict masonic examination on matters which can neither be written nor described, it was ascertained that the three Grand Lodges were perfectly in unison in all the great and essential points of the Mystery'. The strict masonic examination was provided by the members of the Lodge of Reconciliation probably in much the same manner as was done on the 27<sup>th</sup> December first meeting of the United Grand Lodge of England. During the period between February 1814 and August 1814, there were no meetings of the Lodge of Reconciliation because of the forthcoming visit by Scotland and Ireland. Presumably, the intention was that there would not be any unexpected surprises delivered to the ears of the guests during the 27<sup>th</sup> June presentation!

### 1<sup>st</sup> Clause: Concerning 'pure Ancient Masonry'

The first clause, and presumably in that position because of its prime importance, states:

1<sup>st</sup>. 0- It is declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees, and no more, viz. those of the Entered Apprentice – the Fellow-Craft and the Master Mason *including in the latter Supreme Chapter of the Holy Royal Arch - x*

There is also a marginal note which reads

*This latter part the undersigned Grand Officers of the said relative to the Supreme Chapter the undersigned promise to state to their respective Gr: Lodges, when they will communicate to the M.W.H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex the result of their proceedings for the information of His Gr Lo:*

That any mention to the Royal Arch is absent could be attributable to the presence of John Boardman on his mission because Boardman would know that the wording of Clause 2 of the Articles of Union could not be acceptable to Ireland because they had totally failed to achieve such an objective.

One is also drawn towards drawn to a conclusion that the Duke of Sussex was determined to nail this issue once and for all. One can almost see William White writing the start of the marginal note and Sussex interrupting and telling him "NO Brother White; it is their opinion on the Supreme Grand Chapter we need, cross that last bit out and let's start again!" The original manuscript clause was never going to pass muster with the Antients (or probably with Sussex either come to that) without some mention of the Holy Royal Arch. And clearly, it proved so. However calling it a fourth degree would not please Sussex or the Moderns nor Scotland or Ireland, neither would Scotland accept that a Supreme Order as being part of pure Ancient Masonry (for they threw out all other degrees from Grand Lodge in 1800), and Ireland were still in the final throes of a failed attempt to bring the Royal Arch within the Grand Lodge of Ireland..

The image shows a handwritten manuscript snippet. The main text is written in cursive and reads: "1<sup>st</sup> - It is declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three Degrees, and no more, viz: those of the Entered Apprentice - The Fellow-Craft and the Master-Mason including in the latter Supreme Chapter of the Holy Royal Arch - x". To the left of this text, there is a vertical marginal note written in cursive: "This latter part the undersigned Grand Officers of the said relative to the Supreme Chapter the undersigned promise to state to their respective Gr: Lodges, when they will communicate to the M.W.H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex the result of their proceedings for the information of His Gr Lo:". The text is written on aged, slightly yellowed paper.

They could, however, all agree that a Supreme Chapter would be a good thing and it could part of 'pure Ancient Masonry'. England either already had one or would have one, Scotland did not but could accept that there being one was alright – but of course it would not have to be anything to do with their Grand Lodge. The Irish view might have been much the same but after almost a decade of sheer misery on the matter, it is probable that Ireland merely wanted to avoid this issue completely.

The Duke of Sussex wanted response regarding the Royal Arch, but it is not known if Scotland ever made a response. Ireland did read the minutes in Grand Lodge on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1814 and their response to Sussex was a political avoidance of his question.

Read communication from the R W The Grand Lodge of England

Ordered that the communication be entered on the transactions of this Grand Lodge with the answer as now agreed on which is to be transmitted to His Royal Highness The Duke of Sussex<sup>13</sup>

Chetwode Crawley delightfully writes that Ireland's report to the Duke of Sussex was rather 'Like Olaf's chapter on snakes in Ireland, the Duke of Leinster could only report that he had no report to make'. The reality of Ireland's oblique response was that it was a polite diplomatic evasion based upon their internal necessities.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Clause: 'Each Grand Lodge shall preserve its own limits'**

Chetwode Crawley confines himself to the section of this clause that deals with military lodges, and he is correct that this is 'peculiarly interesting to Irish Freemasons'. He comments that the first attempt of limiting the jurisdiction of military lodges to its own jurisdiction came in the Irish Code of 1768. Military lodges were always causing headaches to Grand Secretaries who had to deal with all the complaints so any degree of order would be welcomed.

There are however two other parts worthy of attention. The first is that the clause starts with the sentence 'That each Grand Lodge shall preserve its own limits, and no Warrant shall be Granted or Revived by any one of these parties for the holding of a Lodge within the jurisdiction of either of the others'. This, for example, forced the closure of the Scottish Lodge in Carlisle for the benefit of any Scots living and working there, but it would also stop members of an Irish military lodge when they had left the army, but remained living in England, of applying for an Irish warrant. The issue of establishing territorial limits had already been dealt with by the Moderns in their 1770 exchanges with the National Grand Lodge of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. The Netherlands Grand Lodge requested that they are acknowledged as such and also that England does not constitute any new lodges within the Holland jurisdiction.

The second and more enigmatic one is

...that the present Practice with respect to Lodges established in distant parts *under either of the Three Grand Lodges* shall continue on the present footing.

The words in italics were added by the same secretarial hand as the rest of the document, so were probably not done on the day of the meeting, but at a prior time. There is no way of knowing if the words were an omission by the secretary being corrected or added after some subsequent discussion. The words could be understood to refer to distant parts as a way of describing the increasing number of Lodges in the far-flung parts of the British Empire where Lodges under three (previously four of course) Grand Lodges coexisted, albeit sometimes uneasily. As far as can be determined the Three Grand Lodges continued to treat the colonies of the British Empire as 'open territory' in which any of them were free to grant warrants for lodges. The start of the use of the term 'open territory' has sadly eluded the author, but it is today a guiding principle.

It has not proved to unearth just what that 'present footing' might have been but given the other content of the clause it must be referring to private lodges in the colonies and the rules or practices that enabled them to keep some sort of peace among themselves.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Clause: Guarding the Funds of Benevolence**

Today we all take it as normal that once you become a Master Mason that a Grand Lodge Certificate is issued – a document essential to help gain admission into lodges elsewhere. To a Grand Lodge, it was its chance to monetise the work of the lodges for their own financial benefit but ALSO requiring the production of a Grand Lodge Certificate would allow lodge to guard against 'irregular and improper applications for relief'. This was a major concern within the Craft and thus the exact wording, even to the pre-negotiated clause took place. What attracted their attention were the terms under which Certificates or Diplomas should be issued.

And that no Certificate nor Diploma shall be granted ~~except the~~ *to any* Brother applying for the same ~~shall have been a Member of his Lodge for twelve months at least or without producing and shall have received a Certificate from his said Lodge of his good Conduct therein. And or~~ *without his producing a Certificate signed in open lodge by the Master Wardens & Secretary specifying the respective days on which he received the various degrees after due examination as to his qualifications and it is expressly agreed and Resolved that no Member of any one of the Three Grand Lodges or of Lodges holding of them respectively shall be entitled, as a matter of right, to admission into the Lodges of either of the other two, or to relief from their Funds of Benevolence without*

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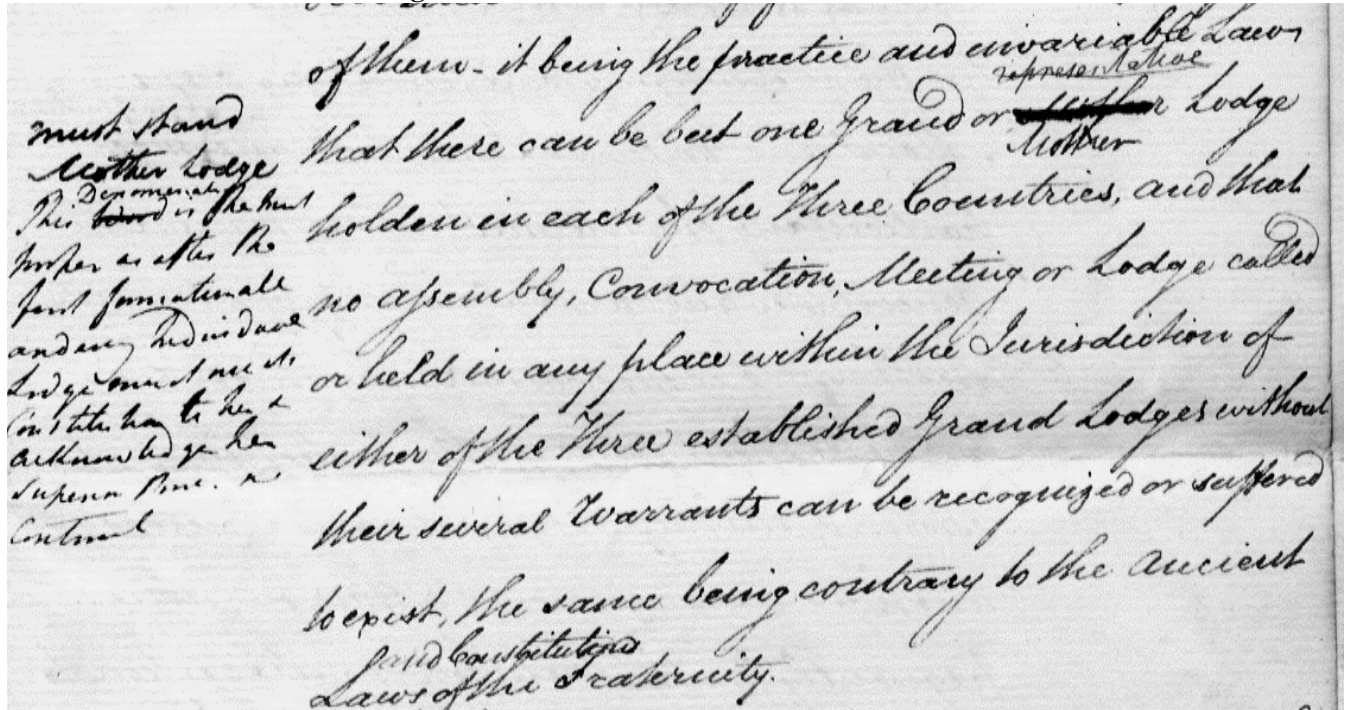
<sup>13</sup> Transactions of the Grand Lodge of Ireland for 1<sup>st</sup> December 1814. However Chetwode Crawley in *The Freemason* wrote the following:

Ordered That the International Commission be entered on the Transactions of Grand Lodge, with the same care as now agreed on: which is to be notified to His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex. (Signed)

being furnished with a Grand Lodge Certificate or Diploma from the Grand Lodge to which his particular Lodge belongs-

The parts of the Clause that dealt with admission into lodges passed without change as did that section which dealt with stating that only Irish Certificates of the Grand Lodge of Ireland were acceptable – those signed ‘A. Seton’ of ‘The Ulster Grand Lodge’ were not to be countenanced.

#### 5th Clause: Grand or Mother Lodges



The fifth clause is a composite one. It starts by agreeing that every brother needs a diploma but in order to guard against ‘irregular and improper applications for relief; and sets out the fact that there will be a charge for the diploma under which no Grand Lodge Certificate shall be granted nor without a Certificate signed by the Master, Wardens and Secretary. It then goes on to state that there will be no admission into the lodges of the other two (Grand Lodges) not to ‘relieve from the Funds of Benevolence’ from a brother’s Grand Lodge.

Ireland, after more than a decade of Alexander Seton, were determined to place another nail in the coffin of the Grand East of Ulster and they did this by getting agreement to a clause which stated that there could be

but one Grand or ~~Mother~~ representative Mother Lodge holden in each of the Three Countries, and that no assembly, Convocation, Meeting or Lodge called or held in any place within the jurisdiction of either of the Three Established Grand Lodges without their several warrants can be recognised or suffered to exist, the same being contrary to the Ancient Laws and Constitutions of the Fraternity.

Upon that point they all wished to agree of course; England had had two Grand Lodges for sixty years, Kilwinning had been without the Grand Lodge of Scotland for sixty years and Freemasonry in Ireland almost totally rent asunder. The matter which they did debate was how they described their Grand Lodge.

The draft said that ‘there can be but one Grand or Mother Lodge’, but the debate struck out the word Mother and replaced it with ‘representative’ which was then again replaced with the word ‘Mother’... The marginal note reads:

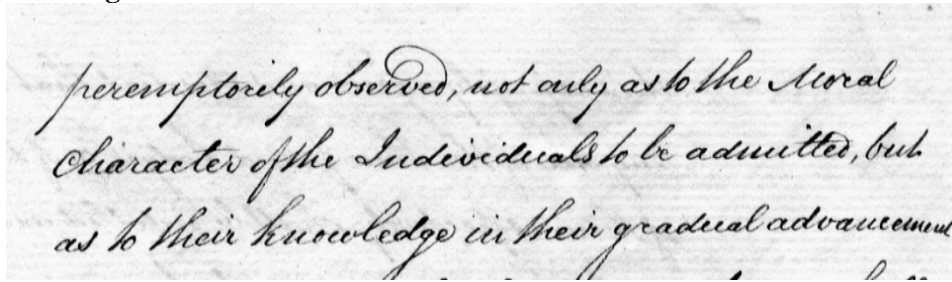
Mother Lodge must stand.

This ~~word~~ Denomination is the most proper as after the first formation all and every Individual Lodge must owe its Constituting to her & acknowledge her Superior (place? Or power?) & Control.

The side note indicates that there was some debate regarding just what a Mother Lodge was. It can only be a pure guess of course but one might wonder if England and the Duke of Sussex were keen that they should be THE

Mother Lodge (of everywhere) but eventually they reached agreement that each Grand Lodge actually constituted the Mother Lodge for that territory.

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Clause: Knowledge in their Gradual Advancement



This clause starts as follows:

That it being of vital importance to the well-being of the Craft that the ancient Rules for the initiation of Members be most strictly and peremptorily observed, not only as to the Moral Character of the Individual to be admitted, but as to their knowledge in their general advancement...

There were no alterations relating to this clause but what is worthy of note is the expectation that every member admitted should gain knowledge as they advance. Any reference by any Grand Lodge regarding the need for members to be taught or mentored is a real rarity and thus worth a mention because it may be the first recorded mention of a need to educate new brothers.

#### 7<sup>th</sup> Clause: Ireland and Religion

Clause the 7<sup>th</sup> starts with a marginal note which was incorporated at the start of the final article. Again additions to the starting manuscript text are in italics and deletions are struckthrough.

7<sup>th</sup>. *In consequence of a communication under date of the 8<sup>th</sup> April last, made at this Conference by the M.W. the Duke of Leinster, and the M.W. Past Grand Master the Earl of Donoughmore, the undersigned call upon the Brethren to attend most particularly to these Resolutions,* the importance of ~~these Resolutions~~ which must be evident to the Fraternity *in general,* who from motives of attachment to the welfare of the Craft at large, as well as to the value necessarily entertained to each individual Brother in regard to his own private Character, are interested that it should be known all over the surface of the Inhabited Globe, that their Principles, absolutely discountenancing in ~~their private meetings every question relative to Religious subjects or of any Political tendency,~~ all their meetings every question that could have the remotest tendency to excite controversy in matters of religion, or any political discussion whatever, have no other object in view but the encouraging and furthering of every Moral and Virtuous Sentiment ~~and, as also, of nurturing~~ most particularly the warmest calls of universal Benevolence and mutual Charity one towards another.

The letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> April 1814 from W G Graham DGS consists of an extract of the from the Grand Lodge of Ireland's Book of Minutes. In the extract the two Irish Grand Masters, Leinster and Donoughmore, are charged as representatives of the Grand Lodge 'at the ensuing Masonic Congress in London' be & are hereby authorised and required to state to that assembly the many & grievous vexations to which Roman Catholic Brethren are exposed...<sup>14</sup> When one reads this list of complaints it is possible to start to appreciate and understand how we come to have our masonic strictures on matters of politics and religion. For the sufferings of the brothers in Ireland was real and in spite of the care done in the pre-negotiations this was a debated and amended clause. The letter from Dublin is a greatly sobering one to read.

There would seem no doubt that the Duke of Leinster made his case strongly but whether it was ultimately reflected in the final wording one might have some doubts.

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<sup>14</sup> W F Graham DGS, Dublin, in a letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> April 1814, to London. Library & Museum of Freemasonry, London HC/15/A/19. They were required to state 'the many and grievous vexations to which the Roman Catholic Brethren are exposed & particularly that the Pulpits and Communion tables teem with anathemas against them – the Rites of the Church are withheld & the last consolation of religion refused to such as will not renounce Free Masonry & reveal it's Mysteries- the Masons wife is debarred purification after childbirth & her infant prohibited Baptism'.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Clause: Royal Patronage confirmed

The clause goes on to state that freemasonry and its values had ‘procured for them, for ages, the protection and esteem of mighty Monarchs and Princes...’ and then went on to note the role of the Prince Regent. In doing so however there were a few subtle changes to the wording of the clause. It is not possible to know from where these debates were raised but the 7<sup>th</sup> clause does give an indication that the 27<sup>th</sup> June was not merely a treaty parade of honour but that there was real discussion on important issues of the day and that they were closely debated.

This clause seeks to set out the law abiding and ‘reasonableness’ of the Society by offering the Princes’ patronage, and couples this statement to the support of the Prince Regent. The final wording used perhaps indicates that the general view of acceptable phraseology indicated less subservience than the one first chosen.

#### ORIGINAL DRAFT

...than by the great condescension, evinced by His Royal Highness The Prince Regent, on two late occasions, when His Royal Highness most graciously accepted their Dutiful, Loyal and fraternal addresses, and in granting them His Royal favour and protection allowed himself to be styled and looked up to, by them, as the Patron of Free and Ancient Masons.

#### FINAL VERSION

... than by the great condescension, evinced by His Royal Highness The Prince Regent, on two late occasions, when His Royal Highness *not only* most graciously accepted their Dutiful, Loyal and fraternal addresses, ~~and~~ *but* in granting them His Royal favour and protection *also* allowed himself to be styled and looked up to, ~~by them,~~ as the Patron of Free and Ancient Masons, *after having for twenty two years previously presided over the Craft as Grand Master*

### The Final & 8<sup>th</sup> Clause

That these Resolutions be reported to the THREE GRAND LODGES, entered in the Records thereof, and printed and circulated to all the Lodges holding of them respectively. Probably the most strange aspect of this Compact was that it was only ever entered in the minutes of the Grand Lodge of Ireland; that no single signed copy of the Compact is known to exist, and even the Dublin copy does not mention any signatures in its text. Neither was any printed copy known, for surely if it had been printed then even with a limited circulation a copy or copies would have survived somewhere. One has to conclude that it was not in the interests of any of the parties to make the contents widely known.

### 1905 Compact and later amendments of 1964 and 2005

As a matter of formality it needs to be noted that a compact was signed on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 1905 regarding members suspended or expelled, the right of attendance of Installed Masters at Installations in the other two Constitutions and of the recognition of a new Grand Lodge in any Colony or Territory. This was to require at least two-thirds of the Lodges of each jurisdiction working there to be in agreement. This was a response to events in Queensland.

There was a further amendment in 2005 which altered the proportion of lodges needed to create a new Grand Lodge overseas by the addition of ‘or such other proportion as the three Grand Lodges shall agree in the light of local circumstances’.

### Epilogue

Once more I have to proffer my thanks to the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London for permission to quote from and use images of the text and from the United Grand Lodge of England for their approval to use this material.

It is often said that we ‘stand on the shoulders of giants’ and I am especially grateful for the work of Brothers William John Chetwode Crawley<sup>15</sup> and William Sadler.<sup>16</sup> They both waited to publish – Chetwode Crawley waited 17 years to time his AQC paper nicely while Sadler waited 18 years but alas the Great Architect called him before he could publish (or had permission to publish anything on the International Compact). Fitting therefore to remember them both a century on from the paper by Chetwode Crawley on the subject in AQC.

### Appendix I

#### References to the International Compact in Masonic Literature

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<sup>15</sup> W Wonnacott, In Memoriam William John Chetwode Crawley (1844-1916), *AQC* Vol.29 (1916) 239-42

<sup>16</sup> R F Gould, Proposing a vote of sympathy to the family of Henry Sadler (1840-1911), *AQC* Vol.24 (1911) 277-79

Considering the significance of this event for the Home Grand Lodges there are remarkably few occasions on which mention is made of the International Compact and then only largely in respect to ritual uniformity or change. Other aspects seem to have been pretty much ignored.

H Sadler in The Grand Lodge of Ulster, *The Freemason* (18<sup>th</sup> March **1893**) 144

W J Chetwode Crawley, The International Compact of 1814, in *The Freemason Jubilee Issue* of 3<sup>rd</sup> July **1897** and also later reprinted in a 14 page booklet. It is also mentioned in passing in the introduction to Fasciculus II of *Caementaria Hibernica* also published in **1897**.

W Begemann, *Vorgesichte und Anfänge der Freimaurer in England*, Berlin (**1910**) 532

W J Chetwode Crawley, The International Compact, 1814, *AQC* Vol.28 (**1914**) 141-55

R E Parkinson, *History of the Grand Lodge of Ireland* Vol.2 (**1957**) 19-24

T O Haunch, It is not in the Power of any Man..., *AQC* Vol.85 (**1972**) 203 (on ritual uniformity).

C F W Dyer, In search of Ritual Uniformity, *AQC* Vol.86 (**1973**) 147 (regarding demonstration of new ritual in August 1814).

C F W Dyer, The Williams-Arden Manuscript *AQC* Vol.87 (**1974**) 175 (mention of Ritual).

F H Smyth, The International Compact of 1814, *AQC* 103 (**1980**) 258-59 (regarding the statement of the ranks of Kinnaird and Rosslyn who attended).

H Mendoza, The Articles of Union and the Orders of Chivalry, *AQC* Vol.93 (**1980**) 67, (regarding the dropping of the Orders of Chivalry Clause that was in the Articles of Union).

H Mendoza, Masonic Qualifications for the Royal Arch, *AQC* Vol.96 (**1983**) 61, (In a comment by P J Dawson (actually an incorrect interpretation)).

G Markham, Some Problems of English Masonic History, *AQC* Vol.110 (**1997**) 5 (regarding ritual uniformity).

A Bernheim, England, Scotland, Ireland and The International Compact of 1814, *The Square*, (June **2013**) 19-22.

## Appendix 2

**The manuscript text of the International Compact with annotations in the Library & Museum of Freemasonry, London.** <sup>17</sup>

Note: The full text of the International Compact as extracted from the minutes of the Grand Lodge of Ireland can be read from either of these two sources:

Chetwode Crawley WJ, The International Compact 1814, *AQC* Vol.28 (1915) 141-155

<https://archive.org/download/ArsQuatuorCoronatorumVol.281915/Aqc281915.pdf>

A Bernheim, Une Certaine Idee de la Franc-Maçonnerie in the *Pietre Stones Library of Freemasonry* and viewed online November 2013.

[www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/compact.html#compact](http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/compact.html#compact)

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<sup>17</sup> Reproduced by kind permission of the Library & Museum of Freemasonry, London





15/A/19

Grand Lodge of Ireland  
Dublin 7<sup>th</sup> April 1814

The letter from the R. W. D. S. Master to D<sup>r</sup> O'Reilly titular Primate of Ireland - the result of an Interview between them & D<sup>r</sup> Troy titular Archbishop of Dublin - as well as several communications from Lodges & Brethren in this Kingdom, complaining of the persecutions carried on by many Roman Catholic Priests against such of their persuasion as were Free-Masons - having been taken into consideration -

Resolved - That the R. W. Brethren appointed to represent the Grand Lodge of Ireland at the ensuing Masonic congress in London, be & are hereby authorized & required to state to that assembly the many & grievous vexations to which the Roman Catholic Brethren are exposed & particularly that the Pulpits & communion Tables teem with anathemas against them - the rites of the Church are withheld & the last consolations of religion refused to such as will not renounce Free-Masonry & reveal

its Mysteries - the Mason's Wife is debarred purification  
after child birth & her Infant prohibited Baptism -

And the R<sup>d</sup> Worshippful Brethren are required  
to follow up such statement with their best efforts to  
obtain redress of those grievances & protection against the  
persecution of which our injured & oppressed Catholic  
Brethren so loudly & so justly complain -

A true Extract from the Book of  
The Grand Lodge of Ireland

Wm. J. Graham  
D.G.M.





# **“By thy words thou shalt be condemned”**

## ***Musings on the History of Jephthah***

Presented on 7 October 2017

*by Bro Tom Hall*



Masonic teaching refers us to “the history of Jephthah, the Gileaditish leader, and a Judge in the land of Israel.” It speaks of him in glowing terms as a “renowned general” and as a patient, clever and resourceful military tactician. My purpose in this short paper is to show this to be a selective reading of his story, and to provide a better-rounded account of Jephthah - a more nuanced insight into the kind of man he was. Indeed, I shall venture to suggest that far from being a Freemason’s role-model, he was a man severely disfigured by the unsightly excrescence of vice, from whose mistakes we learn far more than from his limited achievements.

An important starting point is to note that Jephthah was - or, at least, became - a Judge. This locates him in an unruly and turbulent time in Israel’s development before there was any King in the land, no real federation of the Hebrew tribes, and no solid rule of law. It was, as the Book of Judges itself acknowledges, a ruthless age where “the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes” (Jud 21.25). During this period, whenever insurrection or large-scale skirmish erupted, God would raise up a charismatic, temporary leader to deal with the situation. In all, we are told the names of twelve so-called Judges, of whom Deborah, Gideon and Samson are probably the best known. Some

were enduring, unifying figures that provided relative peace and security for forty years or more. Jephthah, despite his enhanced Masonic reputation, was a minor Judge who managed only six.

Ever since the Jews had entered into the Promised Land, their victory over local indigenous forces (Philistines, Canaanites, Moabites, etc) had been patchy and incomplete. The immediate context for Jephthah's story is a resurgent threat from the Ammonites, outlined in Judges 10, where we read how they "crushed and oppressed the Israelites... for eighteen years" so that the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim were "greatly distressed" (vv. 8,9 NRSV). Eventually the situation became so desperate that the people cried out for a liberator, vowing that whoever was up to the Ammonite challenge could become their leader.

This is how the Volume of the Sacred Law begins the tale in Judges, chapter 11.18

*Ch 11* Now Jephthah of Gilead was a great warrior. He was the son of Gilead, but his mother was a prostitute.<sup>2</sup>

Gilead's wife also had several sons, and when these half brothers grew up, they chased Jephthah off the land. "You will not get any of our father's inheritance," they said, "for you are the son of a prostitute."<sup>3</sup> So Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Soon he had a band of worthless rebels following him.

<sup>4</sup> At about this time, the Ammonites began their war against Israel. <sup>5</sup> When the Ammonites attacked, the elders of Gilead sent for Jephthah in the land of Tob. <sup>6</sup>The elders said, "Come and be our commander! Help us fight the Ammonites!"

<sup>7</sup> But Jephthah said to them, "Aren't you the ones who hated me and drove me from my father's house? Why do you come to me now when you're in trouble?"

<sup>8</sup> "Because we need you," the elders replied. "If you lead us in battle against the Ammonites, we will make you ruler over all the people of Gilead."

<sup>9</sup> Jephthah said to the elders, "Let me get this straight. If I come with you and if the Lord gives me victory over the Ammonites, will you really make me ruler over all the people?"

<sup>10</sup> "The Lord is our witness," the elders replied. "We promise to do whatever you say."

It's not a very auspicious start, is it? Jephthah is, quite literally, a bastard, and he never gets to live it down. The literary nuance of the author is telling. Jephthah's mother is designated a prostitute, which means she would have almost certainly been a foreigner - maybe even an Ammonite herself. By assigning his father the name *Gilead* (the region where he lived) we are left to wonder exactly who it was; it could have been any bloke in the country! The boy has no pedigree, no status, no identity. Jephthah is disowned by his family, run out of town and forced into the bush, where he gathers around himself a ragtag of louts. Here is the stereotypical teenage dropout; it isn't all his fault by any means, but it doesn't auger well for the future.

He certainly learns to grow up tough, which is how he gets drafted into doing a job nobody else wants: rousing up an army and fighting a bloody battle. And, despite invoking the name of the Lord as a kind of afterthought in verse 10, it's a grubby, disingenuous deal. "Look, we don't like you; you're scum. But if you go and take on these Ammonites and somehow manage to win, we'll let you be our ruler. Really, truly. We promise!"

Despite this crass expediency, Jephthah accepts the fraught and desperate proposal. Somewhat surprisingly, he does not plunge immediately into war, but attempts to negotiate with the King of Ammon by sending him a long message, pointing out that the Israelite people had been in the neighbourhood for 300 years (Jud 11.26). Essentially, he claims that Yahweh had granted the land to Israel, and that

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<sup>18</sup> Unless otherwise noted, Biblical quotations are from the *New Living Translation* (NLT), 2007.

possession constituted ten-tenths of the law. The Ammonite King naturally declines to accept this unsophisticated religious argument, and so the scene is set for a fight.

However, just at this moment the ancient author gives us a fascinating and highly significant titbit of information. In Judges 11.29 he solemnly declares “now, the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah” (NASB). A portentous flash of divine intervention; surely Jephthah must have felt something! This is the biblical way of telling us in advance that this war is essentially going to be over before it starts, the result is predestined. The next thing we are told is that Jephthah passes through Gilead and Manasseh, and in no time flat, he has assembled an enthusiastic army. In the space of a single verse, everything comes together; the situation is transformed from hopelessness to certainty in the twinkling of an eye.

The theological clue we are meant to catch here is simply that God has already given the Ammonites into Jephthah’s hands. As St Paul was to say centuries later, “if God is for us, who can ever be against us?” (Rom 8.31). But, alas, this divine assurance isn’t enough for Jephthah. Possibly because of his tragic upbringing and lifelong experience of rejection, he can’t trust God, and he can’t trust himself. He feels he must do something more... so he does something *monumentally stupid!*

<sup>30</sup> And Jephthah made a vow to the Lord. He said, “If you give me victory over the Ammonites, <sup>31</sup> I will give to the Lord *whatever* comes out of my house to meet me when I return in triumph. I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering.”<sup>19</sup>

“Whatever comes out of my house.” As Barbara Ferguson notes in her commentary (1998, p.100) the precise meaning of this rash oath is, perhaps deliberately, ambiguous. “Whatever” may be translated “whoever” and “sacrifice it” could be rendered “sacrifice him.” It beggars belief that even a ruffian like Jephthah could contemplate a human holocaust, but for the moment we are left to wonder with bated breath.<sup>20</sup> In any case the vow is both rash and superfluous: God does not ask for it, and would not want it. In fact, another scholar, Anne Stewart has pointed out “the text makes clear that (this) vow greatly angered God, for it opened the possibility of an inappropriate sacrifice” (2012, p. 133).

Nevertheless, the promise implicit in the gift of the Spirit upon Jephthah stands, and the account of the battle is reported in just a few words...

<sup>32</sup> So Jephthah led his army against the Ammonites, and the Lord gave him victory. <sup>33</sup> He crushed the Ammonites, devastating about twenty towns from Aroer to an area near Minnith and as far away as Abel-keramim. In this way Israel defeated the Ammonites.

The sheer brevity of this description indicates that the military conflict itself, despite the big build-up it gets, is not the principal focus of the narrative. No, the writer is more interested in the moral conflict that Jephthah has created, so he rushes on to tell us what happens:

<sup>34</sup> When Jephthah returned home to Mizpah, his daughter came out to meet him, playing on a tambourine and dancing for joy. She was his one and only child; he had no other sons or daughters. <sup>35</sup> When he saw her, he tore his clothes in anguish. “Oh, my daughter!” he cried out. “You have completely destroyed me! You’ve brought disaster on me! For I have made a vow to the Lord, and I cannot take it back.”

<sup>36</sup> And she said, “Father, if you have made a vow to the Lord, you must do to me what you have vowed, for the Lord has given you a great victory over your enemies, the Ammonites. <sup>37</sup> But first let me do this one thing: Let me go up and roam in the hills and weep with my friends for two months, because I will die a virgin.”

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<sup>19</sup> Emphasis added.

<sup>20</sup> Human sacrifice still existed among pagan tribes; cf. Dt 18.9-12, Ps 106.38.

38 “You may go,” Jephthah said. And he sent her away for two months. She and her friends went into the hills and wept because she would never have children. 39 When she returned home, her father kept the vow he had made, and she died a virgin.

Well, if we feared the worst when we heard Jephthah’s stupid oath, we certainly get it. Despite the Bible’s repeated prohibitions of human sacrifice as an absolute abomination in God’s sight (Lev 18.21; 20.2-5; 2 Kgs 23.10; Jer 32.35) that is exactly what Jephthah does. As we have seen, he could not have been hoping that the first thing he saw on getting home would be the family dog (which he could not have offered as it was an unclean sacrifice). No, Jephthah perversely knows that “the costliest sacrifice brings the highest honour” (Esler, 2006, p. 185) and he is prepared to do anything for his political advantage and prestige. So, when his lovely little girl - his only child - comes tripping out of the house with her tambourine, his reaction is to put the blame on her: “YOU have destroyed ME! YOU have brought disaster on ME!” These are not the words of a “renowned general” but the ravings of a self-absorbed cad.

In his major work on the Book of Judges, Dennis Olson (1998) calls this a “tragic and troubling text” (p. 833). David Hodge (2003) in his informed psychological reading of the script, goes further and says that this is really a story about two abused children (pp. 95-97). Jephthah is abused and maltreated by his family and peers as a youngster, and now, as so often happens still today, he becomes the abuser as he berates, banishes and finally incinerates his daughter. Jephthah’s daughter. The girl with no name. Worthless, as she dies without husband or offspring. A disposable commodity to be burnt like scraps.

Those of you who are familiar with the Order of the Eastern Star may know in that para-masonic society for women, Jephthah’s daughter is given a name, Adah. She is the first of five heroines in the Order, joining Ruth, Esther, Martha and Electra in forming the points of an emblematic ‘star.’ In the context of an OES initiation, she is lauded for her “fidelity, loyalty and intelligence” (The Mason’s Lady, 2015). Her chief virtue, it appears, is her willingness to fulfil an obligation - a perennial Masonic obsession - but here, I think, grotesquely disfigured. Adah, if we may call her that, is not a free moral agent making an informed choice; she is bullied, manipulated and victimised by a selfish and idiotic man.

If this story has any value as a “cautionary tale” it is not about the unconditional inviolability of a man’s oath, but the avoidance of unnecessary, vain and ridiculous oaths. The Torah acknowledged man’s propensity to make stupid vows. Jephthah was not the first or last guy to fall into that trap. I won’t bore you with the technicalities, but Leviticus 5.4-6 provides that if someone hastily vows to do something that proves to be silly (or worse, sinful) they are to confess the fault and consult a priest who would make a suitable sacrifice - certainly not a human one - in reparation. Jephthah was either too ignorant or too arrogant to avail himself of this sensible provision. It is also worth noting that his daughter’s self-esteem is likewise compromised, for she sees herself as merely her father’s possession. As Barbara Miller (an expert in Jewish midrash) observes, she could have sensibly chosen to seek refuge in another clan, or claimed protection under Hebrew law (2005, p. 113).

The sordid tragedy of Jephthah and his daughter is all airbrushed from Craft ritual. We acknowledge that he has a history, but tactfully omit everything that is incriminating or embarrassing. Freemasonry concentrates on only the last instalment of Jephthah’s activity - his dealing with the Ephraimites in the aftermath of the Ammonite war.

Ch 12 Then the people of Ephraim mobilized an army and crossed over the Jordan River to Zaphon. They sent this message to Jephthah: “Why didn’t you call for us to help you fight against the Ammonites? We are going to burn down your house with you in it!”

2 Jephthah replied, “I summoned you at the beginning of the dispute, but you refused to come! You failed to help us in our struggle against Ammon. 3 So when I realized you weren’t coming, I risked my life and went to battle without you, and the Lord gave me victory over the Ammonites. So why have you now come to fight me?”



4 The people of Ephraim responded, “You men of Gilead are nothing more than fugitives from Ephraim and Manasseh.” So Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and attacked the men of Ephraim and defeated them.

5 Jephthah captured the shallow crossings of the Jordan River, and whenever a fugitive from Ephraim tried to go back across, the men of Gilead would challenge him. “Are you a member of the tribe of Ephraim?” they would ask. If the man said, “No, I’m not,” 6 they would tell him to say “Shibboleth.” If he was from Ephraim, he would say “Sibboleth,” because people from Ephraim cannot pronounce the word correctly. Then they would take him and kill him at the shallow crossings of the Jordan. In all, 42,000 Ephraimites were killed at that time.

As any preacher (and any lawyer) knows, stories are readily skewed by the way they are told. It is interesting for the Masonic student to see how the ritual manages to falsely ennoble Jephthah’s image and sully that of the Ephraimites by adding a few interpretative phrases.

The ritual assumes that Jephthah invited the Ephraimites to accompany him in the campaign against Amon. However, Judges 11.29b clearly tells us that he only “went throughout the land of Gilead and Manasseh, including Mizpah” when he recruited troops. He never crossed the river into Ephraim, so when Jephthah tells the Ephraimites “I summoned you at the beginning of the dispute, but you refused to come” (Jud 12.2) this is probably a bald-faced lie. On three previous occasions the men of Ephraim had responded readily enough when other Judges had asked for their assistance (Jud 3.27; 4.5; 5.14). The ritual also claims that the Ephraimites were jealous over the spoils from the war – but again, there is nothing in the text to indicate this – they felt spurned and ignored. By my reading, they are justifiably upset – when they threaten to burn down Jephthah’s house, have they perhaps heard what he has just done to his daughter?

The Ephraimites are said to have a reputation as “a noisy and turbulent people.” This insinuation has stuck with Freemasons to the extent that I have heard brethren use the term “Ephraimite” as a synonym for the rowdy and uncouth, especially in a boisterous Lodge South! However, apart from an earlier incident where Ephraim expresses genuinely hurt feelings to Gideon (8.1-3) there is no consistent pattern of unruly or temperamental behaviour. Indeed, Ephraim was one of the most prestigious of Israel’s tribes, so that by the mid-eighth century BCE, the name of Ephraim becomes in Scripture “an alternate literary designation for the whole northern kingdom” (Ehrlich, 1993, p. 190).

In an even greater contradiction with the Biblical record, the ritual maintains that “Jephthah, unwilling to turn his sword against (Ephraim), tried to pacify them with lenient measures.” Where? When? How? Let us re-read verse 4b again: “Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and attacked the men of Ephraim and defeated them.” There is no real attempt at pacification or dialogue, just lies and obscurification.<sup>21</sup> Jephthah then lashes out and slaughters masses of his own people. We need to be conscious of this as an act of genocide. Ephraim was one of the Twelve Tribes, the chosen People of God. Butchering Ammonites was one thing, but turning against your own kith and kin over a domestic argument is another. For some reason, Masonic tradition chooses to sanitise and whitewash an overwhelmingly loathsome character. The only slim mitigation of his latest crime is that the figure of 42,000 fatalities is patiently inflated. The Hebrew here can be emended to read 42 units, or divisions, or contingents (Fallon, 2009, p. 325), which is less striking but far more realistic.

Nevertheless, many more innocent lives are lost because of Jephthah’s impulsive and impetuous decisions. People slaughtered because they mispronounce a single word.

Words play an important part in this sorry tragedy from beginning to end. A careless vow seals Jephthah’s fate as a man without future and without hope. His daughter’s meek and misguided response to his callous sentence brings about her death - a death that might easily have been avoided. The word-play on “shibboleth” (legendary as it may be) is merely an excuse for more blind killing.

Freemasonry prides itself on being “the most moral institution in existence.” To uphold the character of Jephthah as any kind of moral example is ridiculous. A critical and intelligent reading of

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<sup>21</sup> Gideon displays far better diplomatic skills with the Ephraimites in Jud 8.1-3 where he treats them with grace and humility – securing a happy outcome.

the biblical story demonstrates the Masonic interpretation to be at best pious and naïve... and at worst, a cover-up of manipulation, arrogance, shallow ambition, misogyny, falsehood, brutality and breathtakingly poor judgement.

It is little wonder that the so-called history of Jephthah ends on a distinctly flat note:

7 Jephthah judged Israel for six years. When he died, he was buried in one of the towns of Gilead. Six meagre years. One more inevitable death. An anonymous grave in an unknown town.

Goodbye, Jephthah. And, in my estimation, good riddance, too. As Brian's mother summed it up in Monty Python's classic film, *"He's not the messiah. He's just a very naughty boy."*



Map: The Judges and their locations

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### *Scriptural Quotations*

Unless otherwise indicated the principal text  
(chosen for its clarity and suitability for reading aloud)  
is the *New Living Translation* (NLT) 2004, revised 2016

(NRSV) indicates the *New Revised Standard Version*, 1989

(NASB) indicates the *New American Standard Bible*, 1999



