

MISSOURI YORK RITE BEACON



**Happy President's
Day**

Volume 4
Issue 2
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Grand York Rite of the State of Missouri

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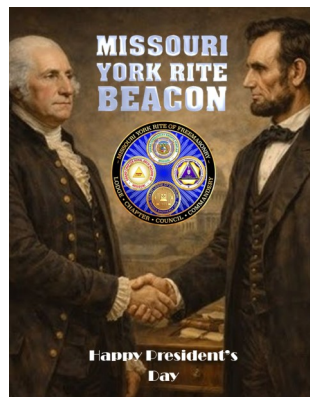
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Submissions: All submissions of photographs should include a 40 to 50 word article telling who, what, when, where and why. Pictures should be high resolution jpg (s) from a camera (at least 300 dpi). Phone pictures should be set to high resolution.

Cover Artwork by: REC Larry Wilson & REC Donald MacCormick



Articles to be considered for publication should be e-mailed to:

<https://moyorkrite.org/missouri-york-rite-beacon-news-submission-form/>



***M.:E.: O.: Kevin M. Ritter
Grand High Priest
of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch
Masons of the State of Missouri***



Greetings, Companions!

Wow, it's February already! We ended the month of January with a successful Table Chapter in Lebanon for Regions 4, 6, and 7. I'm pleased to report that the event raised over \$3,000 for RARA! Well done, Companions! I'm looking forward to seeing more Table Chapters raising money in the coming months!

My travels outside the state have begun, with Masonic Week at the beginning of the month in Washington, DC. It was great to visit with several Companions from other states, and great to see and talk with some of the Grand High Priests and Grand Masters in attendance. I'm looking forward to attending Louisiana at the end of February as well and seeing good friends in Arkansas a few weeks later at their grand session in mid-March.

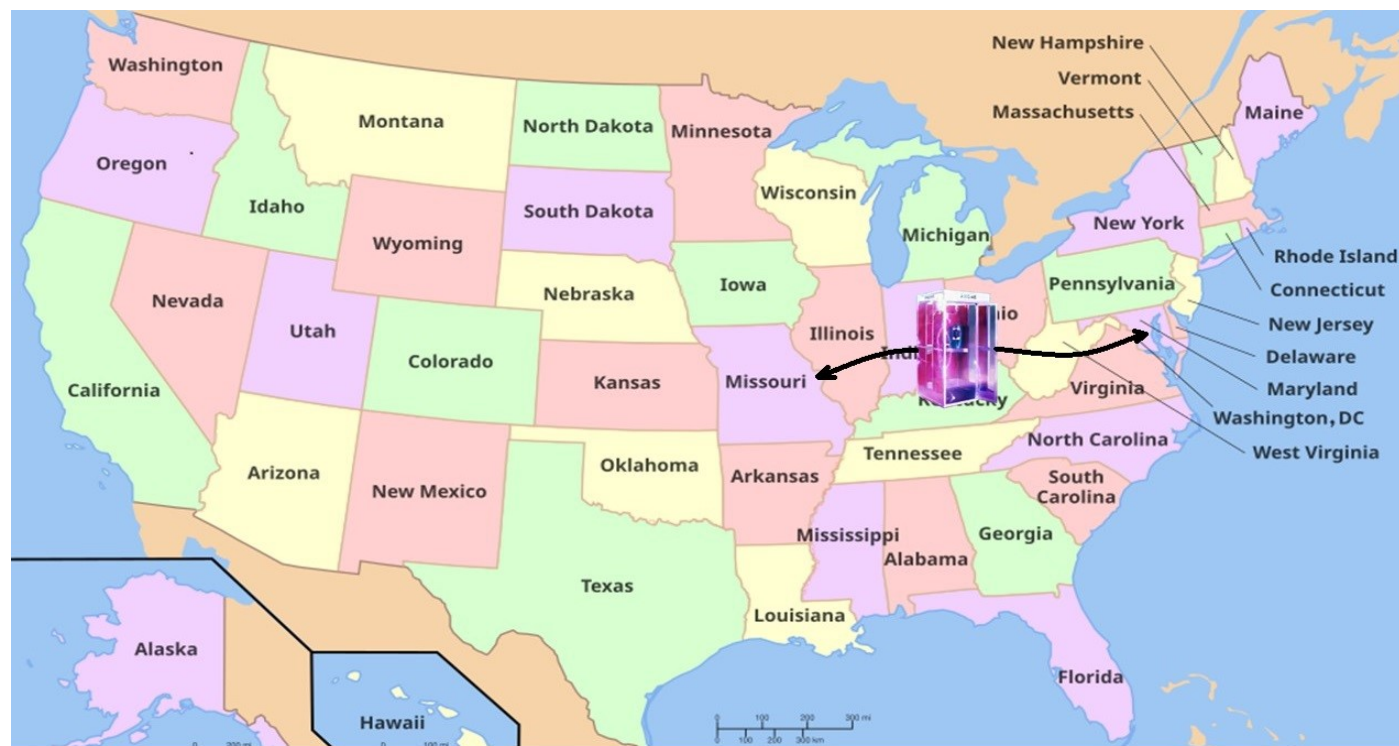
Please look around at the Companions in your regions who are doing great things and submit a nomination for a Lewis and Clark award. I'd love to have a large stack of nominations to review and select some worthy Companions to recognize at Grand Session this year. Please also make sure that your Chapters are submitting your Honor Chapter forms – the deadline will be here before you know it!

Make plans to attend the Grand Master's Royal Arch Day on Saturday, March 7 in Jefferson City! The Grand Lecturer has been working hard to make this year's event a memorable one, with exemplary ritualists conferring the Most Excellent Master and Royal Arch degrees. Please make sure to bring your candidates who need to complete the Chapter degrees! Most Worshipful Brother Emmett Bryson will also be in attendance with several of his Grand Lodge officers.

Take care of yourselves and each other, Companions, and remember to always BE EXCELLENT TO EACH OTHER.

Fraternally,

Kevin Ritter
Grand High Priest





***M.:I.:O.: Dennis W. Houck
Grand Master of the Grand Council of
Cryptic Masons of the State of Missouri***



Greetings Companions,

I sometimes wonder whether we, as leaders, are making the right choices to improve our Missouri York Rite. Let us examine some of the changes we have implemented. This year we moved from the traditional Regional Conferences to a single State Conference. This benefited your Grand Officers' time by eliminating the need to travel across our state to present the same information at those briefings. Inevitably, this enabled us to join with more Councils and events, and enjoy those one-on-one conversations with our Companions.

The Grand Council Line also started having a Pre-Grand Session meeting. This allowed the Deputy Grand Master to meet with his officers and share his plans and expectations for the upcoming year. Allowing the upcoming year to run smoothly. I would highly recommend this to the leadership of our other two York Rite bodies if they are not already doing this.

My travels this past month were very educational. I had the pleasure of visiting the resting place of M.I.C. Anthony O'Sullivan. Our First Grand Master of Cryptic Masons of Missouri. I would like to thank V.I.C. Jacob Thompson for taking the time to share this with me. I would recommend this experience to anybody who get the chance to visit Bellefontaine Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri. There is an extensive litany of Masonic history here.

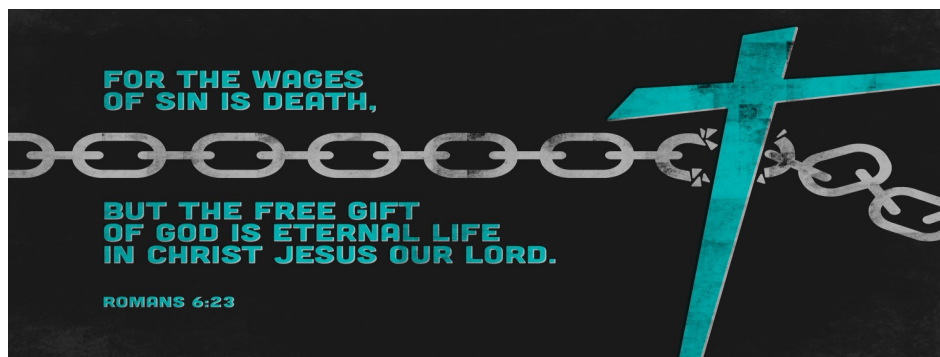
After paying my respects to our departed Brethren, I had the pleasure of making my official visit to Jeremiah Council Number 48. This Council operates at the lodge in Webster Groves. If you get a chance, please visit it. This is because it is a beautiful building and a wonderful Council to visit. As always it was my pleasure to meet Jeremiah's new Companions. It is an experience that I am not normally afforded to do due to time constraints at our State functions. While I was there, I was greatly impressed by the work they did to learn our ritual. Keep up the good work Companions. This was followed by a wonderful visit to Ezra Council Number 32. An additional note, they will be hosting the Grand Master's Chapter and Cryptic day practices on Saturday, February 21st .

As my term is now on its downhill slide, I look forward to my future travels in the upcoming months. One such visit will be to attend our practices on Saturday, February 21st . Following this event, I will be traveling to Louisiana for their York Rite Grand Session. My hope is to see you all at our Grand Master's Chapter Day on Saturday, March the 7th, in Jefferson City.

Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord,"

Fraternally,

M.I.C. Dennis W. Houck
Grand Master of Cryptic Masons
State of Missouri





*SK Ronald L. Skiles
Right Eminent Grand Commander
of the Grand Commandery of Knights
Templar of the State of Missouri*



Sir Knights and Companions all,

As we move through another month, I wanted to take a moment to thank each and everyone of you for your dedication and support of our Commanderies. Your presence, participation, and commitment to the principles of our organization are what helps keep it vibrant and strong.

This month gives us another opportunity to renew our focus on fellowship, service, and leadership. Whether through attending meetings, supporting our charitable efforts, or simply checking in on a fellow Sir Knight and Companion, every contribution—large or small—makes a difference.

Each new month reminds us that our work is not measured only in the meetings we hold or the duties fulfilled, but in the spirit with which we serve. Our Commanderies stand stronger because of your faithfulness, your integrity, and your willingness to walk this path together.

In a world that often pulls people apart, we are called to stand firm in unity, guided by our shared values and strengthened by true fellowship. Every act of kindness, every moment of service, and every word of encouragement reflects that light we strive to carry.

Let us make this month one of renewed purpose. May we look for ways to uplift one another, extend a helping hand where it is needed, and lead by quiet example. When we support one another, we honor both our obligations and the legacy that is entrusted to us.

I encourage everyone to remain engaged, attend upcoming activities, and extend a hand of fellowship to those who may be unable to join us as often as they would like. Together, we strengthen not only our Commanderies, but the bonds that unite us all.

Thank you for your continuing dedication, your loyalty, and your brotherly spirit. I am proud to serve alongside you and look forward to the work we continue to accomplish together.

Fraternally yours,

Ronald Skiles
Right Eminent Commander



Freemasons keep our charities a secret better than we keep our secrets a secret

As CMMRF Month (March) approaches here are some things to keep in mind as you discuss CMMRF with others. Hopefully outside of the fraternity too.



Start with the purpose and solution, “the WHAT”, is not the name or the place, “the WHO or WHERE” ... Work your way back from the solution to the name of the charity. “HOW, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, and lastly, WHO”.

- Stem Cells Save Lives vs. the Cryptic Masons Medical Research Foundation.
- Indiana University (IU) will suffice over the Indiana Center for Vascular Biology and Medicine (ICVBM). Know the function of CMMRF. It does NOT do research.

- ⇒ It funds research at ICVBM
- ⇒ Be familiar with the areas of work. CMMRF has many, but you do not want to inundate a potential donor. Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms (AAA) and Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) are the big pushes right now.
- ⇒ Talk about the technology
- ⇒ The Encapsulator – which was purchased with CMMRF funds, puts a protective sheath around the stem cells, so the patient’s body does not reject them.
- ⇒ The Bio-pencil- developed at ICVBM, allows the physician to pinpoint and place the stem cells in the patient.
- ⇒ The 3D printer - developed at ICVBM. 3D prints/recreates small bone replacement using

biogenetic (stem cell) material.

You will discover, as you discuss the charities OUTSIDE of freemasonry, that people can relate to what is being done at IU.

- ⇒ A researcher we invited to the Purple Gala also researched the effects of chemo on the heart muscle cells. One of the areas of work at IU.
- ⇒ The executive director at the Kansas City’s Veteran’s Administration hospital lost her father to AAA.
- ⇒ A client’s husband recently lost his leg to PAD.

The research our charity is helping to fund is making a difference in people's lives. Here are some great talking points to start a discussion about our great charity.

- Stem Cells are Saving Lives... How? By the research being conducted at Indiana University.
- What’s the research? Cures and alleviation of cardiovascular diseases like AAA, PAD, wound care, and heart failure.
- Where is it being conducted? Indiana Center for Vascular Biology and Medicine.
- When? Since 1986 and still going strong
- Who funds the research? We do. The Cryptic Masons Medical Research Foundation. It is the #1 funder of the research conducted by ICVBM.



Commit to CMMRF

CRYPTIC MASONS MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION



*We request the honor
of your presence...*

**175TH ANNIVERSARY OF
SPRINGFIELD CHAPTER NO.15
R.A.M.**

**CHAPTER REDEDICATION
CEREMONY**

CONDUCTED BY GRAND CHAPTER
OFFICERS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
GRAND LECTURER

**SATURDAY
16 MAY, 2026
AT 10 O'CLOCK AM**

**RSVP TO:
SPRINGFIELDYORKRITE@GMAIL.COM
INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND NUMBER
OF GUESTS**

**1930 W CATALPA
SPRINGFIELD MO 65807**

Picture This.....

The Regions 4, 6, and 7 Table Chapter were held Friday Evening, January 30th, at the Laclede County Shrine Club in Lebanon.

It was a memorable event that included families, and a fundraiser to benefit Royal Arch Research Assistance (RARA). RARA is the charity of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the State of Missouri, and is dedicated to advancing research and solutions for those affected by Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD).

The Evening included a delicious meal, a mixing of a Military Grog, including a Non-Alcohol version of the Grog. An enjoyable evening was had by all, and the fundraiser for RARA was a huge success.

Many Distinguished guests were present, and were recognized. Special Guests were Most Excellent Companion Kevin Ritter, Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the State of Missouri, Most Illustrious Companion Dennis Houck, Grand Master of the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the State of Missouri, and Most Worshipful Brother Emmett Bryson, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Missouri.

Thank you to all who worked and supported this wonderful event. A special thank you goes out to members and supporters of the Laclede County Shrine Club, and the Table Chapter Committee, including Committee Chairman Very Excellent Companion Michael Estright, DDGM of Region 4.





Companion Perry A. Davis, Sr. starting his York Rite journey and being welcomed into Orient Chapter No. 102



Welcome to February's issue of your Beacon Magazine. With the winter storms in our rearview mirror, or eyes turn toward spring. And spring cannot come fast enough for us all.

This winter weather has slowed, cancelled, or continued most Masonic Events so far. However, here at you publication committee we continue to strive forward in every condition of weather.

Thank you all, your continued support, articles, and feedback. It had been wonderful. You are all a dedication to our Craft.

If there was any shortcoming, it would be the lack of photos from events in our Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies. Please your gatherings to the Grand Secretary as he places them into our Facebook account and thus forwards it to your Publication Committee.

In this issue, we have numerous wonder articles. From Brother President Washington and President Lincoln in celebrating their birthday, to our ongoing Capitular Development Course. As you read through this issue, you will find articles on Tactics and the Manual of Ceremonies, The Gliblim: Master of Craft and Dedication, and one of my favorite the Writer's Corner.

Upcoming Events include the York Rite Cruise and 175th Anniversary of Springfield Chapter Number 15. Hurry up and register for all events as there is limited space. Both raise monies for our charities.

Once again, thank you all for everything you do. It makes our job so much easier. Keep up the good work, as it continues to benefit the craft.

Well, that wraps up another month. May the Blessing of Heaven rest upon you and your families. May Brotherly love prevail, and we will be seeing you all on down that dusty trail.

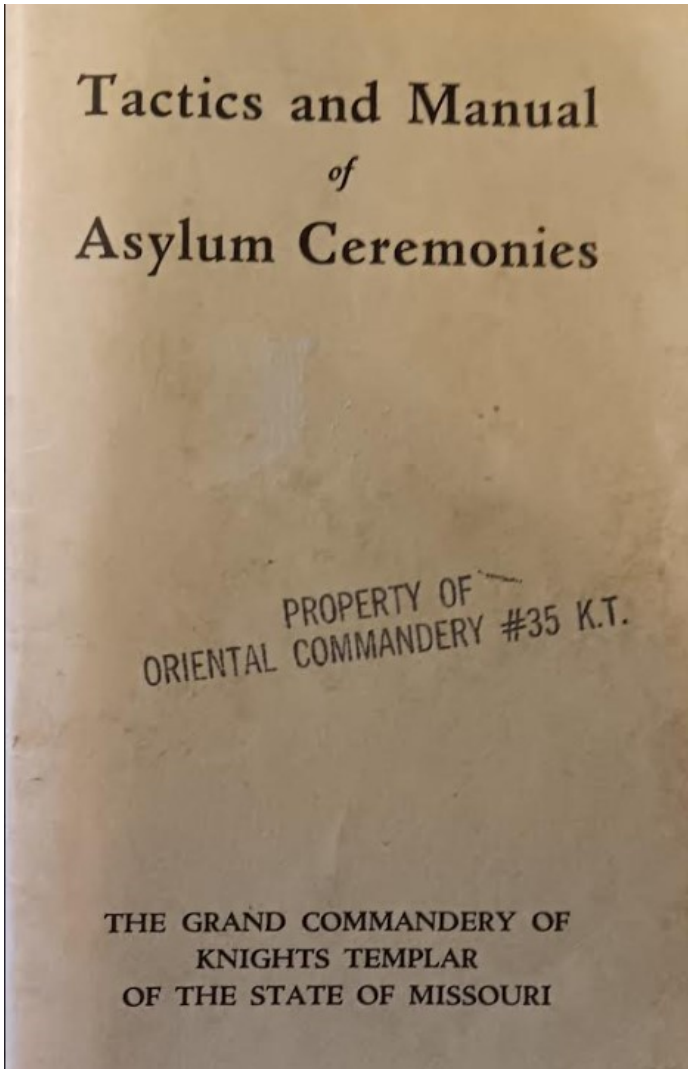
Editor



Tactics and the Manual of Ceremonies

Corey B. Huntsucker, KTCH
Grand Lecturer

I often wonder how many Sir Knights have read our Tactics and Manual of Ceremonies of the Grand Commandery of Missouri (the Green Book). Many of the Green Books have been misplaced over the years or have gone home with various Sir Knights who never returned them.



The "Tactics and Manual of Asylum Ceremonies" is the ritual of the State of Missouri. The Grand Encampment has an overall ritual which encompasses much of our work. However, each state is granted permission to add their own version of the ritual/tactics. Much like Blue Lodge ritual, Commandery ritual may vary from state to state. Parts of the Tactics book; opening, closing, and pass in review coincide with the Grand Encampment

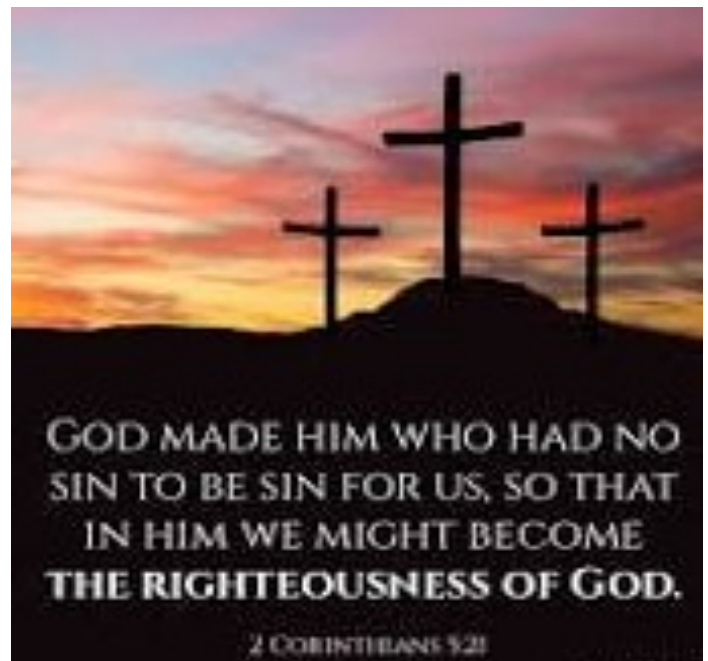
ritual and takes a little time to learn. The rest is in plain English.

Here is an excerpt from the Grand York Rite website, under Grand Commandery documents, Section III. Please read and enjoy. Pay particular attention to the first four general rules. Section III; Tactics and Manual.

I also enjoy the short but powerful paragraph in the Foreword. Something to keep in mind moving forward in your commanderies:

In order to stimulate interest in the ceremonies and to acquire a high degree of proficiency, the officers should become thoroughly familiar with commands and movements, before attempting to open the Commandery. It is bound to discourage the most enthusiastic Knight if he is compelled to stand at attention while the officers learn their work, and the Officer who believes that it is the duty of Sir Knights to attend the conclaves should remember that the Knights have a right to expect the same Officer to know how and when to give commands before attempting to do so. Preliminary practice in the Asylum by the officers, individually or collectively, will amply reward them.

Please look through your commandery's archives for the Green Book or ask a more "seasoned" Sir Knight if they have a copy. Read it and look for ways to improve your commandery's Tactics (ritual).



I O R G



Job's Daughters

M I S S O U R I

★★★★★
DEMOLAY.



The original 9 and other pioneering members
of the Order of DeMolay in 1919, Kansas City MO.

*THE
ROAD
BEGINS
HERE*

THE ROAD BEGINS HERE

THE MASONIC JOURNEY CONTINUES





Lincoln's Birthday and his Connection to Freemasonry

Library of Congress & other sources

Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States, was born in a single-room log cabin on Sinking Spring Farm in LaRue County, Kentucky on February 12, 1809. He was the son of Thomas Lincoln, an illiterate pioneer farmer, and Nancy Hanks Lincoln, who died when Abraham was nine years old. It was Thomas Lincoln's second wife, Sarah Bush Johnston who, while illiterate herself, recognized Abraham's "uncommon natural talents" and encouraged his famous bookishness.

Self-taught and from humble origins, Abraham Lincoln became one of the most revered and uniquely appealing United States Presidents. Known as Honest Abe, the Rail-splitter, and the Great Emancipator, Lincoln was a skilled orator who preserved the Union during the American Civil War and issued the Emancipation Proclamation. His assassination in 1865 contributed to Lincoln's legendary place in American history and culture.

Despite his stature among many Americans as one of the greatest United States presidents, only a small number of U.S. states, including Connecticut, Illinois, Missouri, and New York, observe Lincoln's birthday on February 12 as a legal, public holiday. In other states, Lincoln's birthday is celebrated in combination with President George Washington's birthday on the third Monday of each February. The combined federal holiday is officially named Washington's Birthday but is also known as Presidents Day.

Washington's Birthday was first declared a federal holiday in 1879 by an Act of Congress. The Uniform Holidays Act of 1968 changed the date of commemoration from Washington's actual birthday on February 22 to the third Monday of February. Because of this Act, and the fact that President Lincoln's birthday falls on February 12, many people now refer to the holiday as "Presidents Day" and consider it a day honoring all American presidents. However, neither the Uniform Holidays Act nor any subsequent law changed the name of the holiday from Washington's Birthday to Presidents Day.

Several Lincoln devotees have attempted to create a holiday in honor of the sixteenth President. In 1873, Julius Francis External, a shopkeeper from Buffalo, New York, proposed a holiday celebrating President Lincoln. Francis, a bachelor and collector

of Civil War and Lincoln memorabilia, declared that his campaign for a Lincoln holiday was "my wife and my life." Francis sent Congress elaborate memorial pamphlets as part of his campaign and organized the first public celebration of Lincoln's birthday in Buffalo. Until his death in 1881, Francis held annual celebrations of Lincoln's birthday, renting a hall and organizing speakers, poets, and musicians to celebrate the martyred president. His attempts to persuade Congress to establish a legal Lincoln's Birthday holiday were not successful, but in 1877 Francis organized the Buffalo Lincoln's Birthday Association to continue the campaign after his death.

In 1951, Californian Harold Stonebridge Fischer formed a Presidents Day National Committee and lobbied Congress for the creation of a holiday to honor the office of the president rather than a particular president. He proposed March 4, the original Presidential Inauguration Day, as the date for "Presidents Day." The bill was defeated in the Senate Judiciary Committee, but several state governors subsequently issued proclamations declaring March 4 "Presidents Day" in their states.

Even in locations where it is not a legal holiday, many groups and individuals celebrate Lincoln's birthday, and annual wreath-laying ceremonies take place at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. and at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site in Kentucky. The ceremony in Washington has been conducted every year since the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial in 1922. Activities in other locations include re-enactments, parades, concerts, and readings of the Gettysburg Address.

Even though Abraham Lincoln was never a initiated member of the Freemasons, we are told that he held a high regard for the organization and shared many of its core values, such as charity, morality, and equality. He considered joining our Fraternity, but declined to formally petition for Freemasonry as he felt that the application would be seen as a political maneuver during his presidential campaign.

Many of Lincoln's closest friends and political allies were Freemasons. During his campaign against Stephen A. Douglas, Lincoln was heard to say, I am not a Freemason, though I have great respect for the institution.



**Capitular Education 2025-2026
Greg Walker, Chairman
Committee:**

**REC Donald MacCormick, VEC Lloyd Lyon, VEC Nick Young,
VEC Doug Rose, VEC James Bell**

Companions all,

We are reaching the beginning of the end of this educational series. This installment marks the beginning of a study of the Royal Arch degree. While this study will not be completed before our Grand Master's Royal Arch Day in March, we will at least have started the study. It's difficult to believe that January has come and gone...which means June will be here before we know it.

Grand Chapter Capitular Education Series - February 2026

Royal Arch Degree

As the Royal Arch degree is the final degree in Capitular Masonry, it is fitting that the amount of information is in abundance. The study of this degree has been broken into four sections, each decently long. We have attempted to keep the readings between 13-15 pages each.

Your reading for this first section will cover the following topics:

- Brief History (quite extensive)
- The Royal Arch in the United States
- Overview of the Degree
- Opening and Closing
- Preparation of the Candidates (I found this small section of peculiar interest)
- Two Altars

Our education series will follow this schedule:

February 2026: Royal Arch Degree

March 2026: Royal Arch Degree, continues

April 2026: Royal Arch Degree, continues

May 2026: Royal Arch Degree, completion including quiz

June 2026: Wrap up of education for the year and a short expose on a passage of scripture from the Royal Arch Degree ritual from the role of Jeshua, the High Priest.

This schedule may not fit all Chapters perfectly, but it is suggested that your members come prepared with a copy of The Beacon in hand, print or digital, to your meetings so that they may take part in the group readings and discussion that follows.

Capitular Development Course

The history of the Royal Arch has been outlined in the Background and History of the Capitular Degrees at the beginning of this course. However, it is important to consider a few points specific to the origin of the Royal Arch Degree itself.

The Origins of the Royal Arch are hard to determine. There appear to be two major movements. The first suggests that it was imported from Ireland by the Irish Masons living in England – especially around London – and was part of the reason that the Antients seceded from the Moderns, since the latter appeared not to want to work it. This, it is claimed, is why the Antients worked the Degree while the Moderns did not, and why Laurence Dermott called it the “very root, heart and marrow of Freemasonry.” This does seem to run into trouble when we study the private correspondence of prominent Moderns, however, and we have already quoted James Heseltine, Grand Secretary of the Moderns from 1769 who wrote that “many of the Fraternity here belong to a Degree in Masonry... called the Royal Arch.” So the Degree was by no means unknown to the Moderns, notwithstanding it was not ‘officially’ recognized until the Act of Union in 1813.

We mentioned briefly earlier, there is another view which suggests that, in fact, the Royal Arch not only existed prior to the Third Degree, but that the reason we do not see much mention of it until much later in historical terms is because there was no Royal Arch degree originally – at least not called by that name – for it was the Installation Ritual of a Master. This becomes a problem, since if we cannot trace it by name, how are we to identify its origins? The answer is, we cannot. However, this does not prevent us from exercising our deductive skills in asking ourselves whether there are any hints of its existence prior to 1717.

Historically, the times leading up to the formation of the Premier Grand Lodge in 1717 were, to say the least, tumultuous! James I of England (VI of Scotland) had come to the throne in 1603, had given us the King James Bible, and was succeeded in 1625 by his son, Charles I. This unfortunate monarch was beheaded in 1649 following the battles

with the Cromwellian forces in the civil war of England, and following this regicide, Cromwell ruled as king in all but name, imposing his dour Protestantism upon the English people until 1659.



Figure 68 - Satirical cartoon showing the Roundheads (Cromwellian forces) against the Cavaliers (forces of the Monarchy)

The restoration of the monarchy came in 1660, and Charles II ascended to the throne. Most of the English were sick and tired of the measures imposed by Cromwell and his supporters. Despite the present-day view of the English as being self-controlled and uptight, opposite was true in those days, and England was known for ribald behavior and merrymaking. Under Cromwell, churchgoing had been compulsory; horse racing and cockfights banned, as were drunkenness and blasphemy. Plays, brothels and gambling houses were banned, and many ale houses closed. It was not long before the public decided they hated armies and Puritanism even more (which is why they came to the United States!).

Life was fun under Charles II, but when James II came to the throne in 1685, his attempt to reintroduce the Roman Catholic faith and to rein in the excesses of his father's reign met with strong opposition, and led to his fleeing the country (and therefor assumed to have abdicated) in 1688, being replaced by his elder Protestant daughter, Mary II, and her husband William III from Orange, a region of Holland. Their short reigns were followed by the equally short reign of their daughter, Mary, and by

1714 they were already casting around to find another successor, since it was clear that Parliament would not consider any progeny of James II, especially since his son had attempted to invade England thought Scotland in 1708, and again in 1715, the year after George I ascended the throne. His grandson, Bonnie Prince Charlie, or the Young Pretender, also organized an invasion via Scotland in 1745, which was unsuccessful, since he was defeated at the battle of Culloden, and that ended the Jacobite claims to the English throne. George I continued to rule until his death in 1727, during which time he never spoke a word of English.



Bonnie Prince Charles the Young Pretender

The point we should draw from all this British history is the incredible state of flux England found itself in during that short period of time. It had gone from and apparently stable monarchy in 1649 through a period of hardship under a Commonwealth run by a virtual dictator (Cromwell) for a period of 10 years. This was followed by a self-indulgent 25 years under Charles II, during which time a great plague affected London in 1665, followed by the Great Fire which razed most of the center of London in 1666. Sir Christopher Wren and others were tasked with rebuilding the city in stone, and suddenly Masons from all over England were invited to come to London to help with the rebuilding, being offered Freedom of the City by the Crown after seven years of labor. Now, many churches and major buildings had Lodges attached, either to maintain the buildings (one may see this tradition continued today at the cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City) or to rebuild them following the Great Fire of London. It is a fact that Sir Christopher Wren belonged to the Lodge attached to St. Paul's Churchyard. In 1689 the English saw their King depart from England and a new Protestant couple come from Holland to rule them. But at least Mary was dead and now they took a German prince (in



The London Great Plague of 1665

fact Hanoverian, since what is now Germany was a collection of Electorates or local Princes at the time) to be their King. Within a year they were being attacked by Jacobite forces, which were repelled, and within two more years the Premier Grand Lodge was being established. To the average English native, it must have seemed like the end of the world. For most of them little of consequence had happened on English soil since the Wars of the Roses some two hundred years earlier, and most famous battles had been fought overseas in mainland Europe. But now their land had seen tyrants rule, kings beheaded, plagues, conflagrations, exiles, monarchs seemingly invading from Holland and Germany, all in the space of a few years. Each change in government brought new foes, and those who were one's friends, employers or work colleagues could be the 'enemy' the following year.



The London Great Fire of 1666

The atmosphere at that time was perhaps not unlike the McCarthy period in America, where



King George I

everyone in this case was looking at their neighbor, wondering if they were secretly harboring sympathies for the exiled Jacobite Royal family! No wonder the new Grand Lodge felt it necessary both to show clear loyalty for the King (while their antecedents were most likely to have been supporters of the house of Stuart), and divest themselves of any indication that they might have had prior connections to earlier royal dynasties. For one thing, it was important that their history began then, in 1717, after the attempted revolutions.

Imagine being born into a wealthy family in London, say in 1640, under an apparently stable monarchy. You saw your monarch executed when you were 9 years old, and lived the next 10 years of your life in fear of persecution as being a Cavalier (we all remember the famous painting 'And when did you last see your father' by William Frederick Yeames, portraying the young boy standing before his Roundhead inquisitors). At 19 the monarchy is restored and life seems to be good! And yet within five years your very life is being threatened with a deadly plague, and a year later to you see your beloved city burn to the ground. Fortunately, being



Yeames' painting "And when did you last see your father?"

of wealthy stock you spent most of 1665 on the country estate, and in 1666 you have returned to a stone mansion on the outskirts of London City. During this period, you enjoy the blessing of nearly twenty peaceful and entertaining years, and then, when you turn 49 the King departs and you see a succession of three foreign monarchs within the space of a few years, and throughout this time you are under suspicion of being a possible Jacobite sympathizer. You have to watch everything you say and do, the company you keep where you travel how you live. There are spies everywhere. And every time the Pretenders attempt to invade England the hysteria breaks out again. Finally, in 1715, when you turn the great old age of 65, you find yourself one final time having to prove your loyalty. You had been a Freemason for many years, and it mattered not that you spoke not at all about politics in Lodge: despite the wonderful times you spent, and the deep philosophical discussions you enjoyed, you were aware that your friends in Lodge comprised both Protestants and Catholic, and this was a factor which drove the need to tile the meetings and keep your conversations secret. Finally, in your winter years, you see the Craft you so enjoyed as a haven from all the nonsense going on around you during your life transformed into a shadow of its earlier self, a body determined to seek patronage from the incumbent royal family, and prove its loyalty to a little know minor German prince. Part of this process include pretending you didn't exist prior to this time; and...by abandoning some of the most beautiful teachings of Freemasonry.

Of course, this image is fictitious; but it is intended to show some of the currents behind why the new Grand Lodge might have decided to invent a new ritual – the Third Degree – which records indicate strongly was not created until the mid-1720s; and deemphasize some of the colorful ritual associated with earlier times.

A close study of the third Degree clearly shows that it is incomplete. It ends with the conferral of a

substitute word and substitute actions, and given that the whole of Freemasonry emphasizes the importance of the numbers three, and the fact that this number features so heavily in its symbolism, it makes almost no sense that the crowning moment of the Master Mason Degree should involve two men grappling as if seeking to find comfort in one another while they whisper a seemingly meaningless word into each other's ear. Once we arrive at the Royal Arch degree we see the importance of the number three restored, as well as the word; and instead of groping almost blindly at one another, three men now come together in an elegant manner to exchange what is no longer a meaning less word, but perhaps the most important word in Western history. The first thought that many new Mason have when they have completed the Third Degree is: when do I get the real word?



Early London Table Lodge

There are two main hypotheses concerning the Royal Arch Degree. Either it was the completion of the earlier Master Mason Degree; or it was an Installed Master Degree, which a Fellowcraft elected to govern a Lodge received in order to qualify him for the position, when there was only one Master Mason – the Mason who ruled his Lodge.

Now, the main objections point to the fact that it is well-known the Third Degree did not come into existence until the mid-1720s. Surely, then, if the Third Degree didn't exist prior to that time, the Royal Arch could not have existed either? However, an alternative explanation could be that what the Grand Lodge was attempting to do was to replace the existing Third Degree.

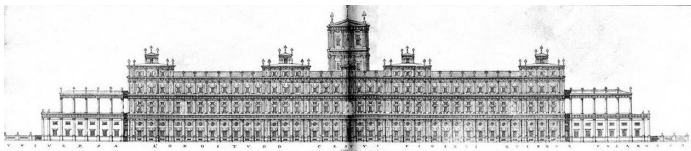
Now, the completely fictitious story of Hiram's death was introduced (nowhere is it mentioned in the Bible) and a new word and signs substituted to create a completely new Degree. To do this the old Degree, which contained a straightforward story of the Temple's completion and the conferral of the

True Master's Word had to be dropped. This new Third Degree had to be presented as though it was 'new' and was not replacing anything which had come before. Consider the important Questions which are currently asked at the opening of all Festive Boards in England, which indicate there were Three Grand Lodges, the first being the Holy Lodge at the foot of Mount Horeb, the Second or Sacred Lodge held on Mount Moriah by King Solomon, and the third or Royal Lodge held in Jerusalem, and presided over by Zerubbabel (we shall see this in more detail later). There is every evidence from its separation from the rest of the ritual and from the fact that it is in form of a catechism – an early device – that it may be of great antiquity. If so, and if the Royal Arch was based on the story of Zerubbabel, it would make sense for the 'new' Third Degree to be based upon the story of the Second grand Lodge, which had been formed for the purpose of building King Solomon's Temple. By homing in on an earlier Biblical event perhaps the intention was to make the 'new' Degree appear older; just as the Antients who formed in opposition to the practices of the Premier Grand Lodge took that title to give the impression that they had been around longer (and perhaps, if the Royal Arch was the senior Degree, in principle they had)?



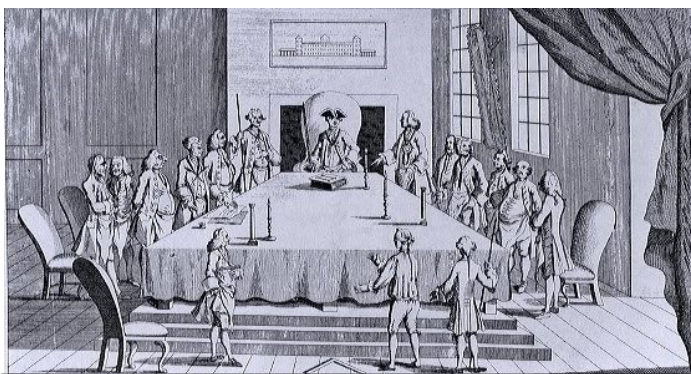
Mount Horeb

Further, Gehard Schott's huge set of King Solomon's Temple, designed for Christian Hienrich Postel's opera in Hamburg about the destruction of the Temple, had been displayed in a number of European cities following the production. One of these was London, where it was on display for a number of years where it no doubt caught the attention of Freemasons of the time. An engraving of the design also became the most common depiction of Solomon's Temple in Bibles engraving of the



Engraving of Solomon's Temple from a 1767 Baskett Bible

design also became the most common depiction of Solomon's Temple in Bibles printed in England for nearly 100 years and also featured hanging on the wall in numerous Masonic engravings of the mid- to late 1700s. With this double influence of a physical representation of the Temple exhibited in London, and the Royal Arch catechism, we have two possible sources of the 'new', or what a number of contemporaries called the 'casual' Master Mason Degree.



Early engraving of a meeting in London –Note the image on the wall is of Schott's Solomon's Temple

So, we can conclude that there was possibly a movement around the time that the Grand Lodge was established in 1717 to create a Third Degree which was not associated with the previous roots, and indeed within a handful of years this new society was attracting both aristocracy and even members of the (new) Royal family. It is therefore no surprise that a number of contemporary Freemasons who lived in and around London, but whose roots were decidedly more pro-Stuart – especially those of Irish decent, who remembered their country's Masonry – should consider the adoption of a new Degree, at the expense of one they held dear, one of the major reasons they decided to secede and form their own, Antient, Grand Lodge.

The Royal Arch in the United States

As we have seen, much of this was either unknown or a matter of indifference to American Freemasons. We have seen that the first global reference to a Royal Arch Meeting was in Fredericksburg, Virginia in December 1753. We also know that many Lodges were established by Antient Charters or by traveling military groups which

established Lodges which would have practiced the Antient Degrees. To this we can add those who had traveled to Europe, to England, France, Spain, Germany, Ireland and Scotland, for pleasure or trade, and either joined Lodges there or visited Lodges having been initiated in the colonies; and who brought back their experiences of visiting those Lodges and Chapters. Finally, we know that a number of groups were practicing Royal Arch rituals prior to the establishment of the General Grand Chapter in 1797 and the codification of the rituals by Thomas Smith Webb. For example, there is evidence that Independent Royal Arch Lodge, No. 2, in New York City was practicing a form of Royal Arch Ritual early on; as well as Ancient Chapter No. 1, formerly Old Chapter, whose origin tradition fixes to be 1763, since its early records were lost through fire. 'Old Chapter' was old enough to refuse immediate admission to the Grand Chapter of New York when it formed in March 1798 and had issued its own Charters to Chapter in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut prior to that date. The new Grand Chapter held it in sufficiently high regard to keep the number '1' open until such time as it decided to join eight years later, in 1806.

We are therefore fortunate that our roots are heavily in the Antient tradition, since the Royal Arch was largely lost and forgotten by the Moderns by then, while the tradition of preserving the True Word was very much alive in the former Grand Body and its missionaries, the military Lodges.

Overview of the Degree

The Degree is quite long and complex. Before we examine each section in detail it might be useful to have a general overview of the Royal Arch degree:

- A. The Candidates receive some instruction on the History of the Degree prior to entering the Chapter.
- B. The Candidates are prepared and enter the Lodge 'under a Living Arch.'
- C. The Candidates pray, then rise and circumambulate, when they are challenged by the Captain of the Host.
- D. The Candidates take their Obligation at the West Altar.
- E. The Candidate performs six more circumambulations, during which they see the burning bush, learn the password, and are taken to the first (closed) veil.
- F. The Candidates pass each of the veils, with the Principal Sojourner answering the challenges on their behalf.
- G. On access to the High Council the Candidates,

Sojourners as they wish to sojourn with their fellow Israelites, are armed with a crow, pickaxe and spade, and sent to clear the rubbish.

- H. They make three important discoveries: a keystone, three squares, and the Ark of the Covenant. These are discovered buried in a vault and brought to the light of day.
- I. The Sojourners bring their discoveries to the High Council.
- J. Inside the Ark the High Council finds the Book of the law, Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod, as well as a scroll.
- K. Reading the scroll and deciphering the strange writing in the Masonic Alphabet around the Ark, the High Council rediscovers the Lost Master's Word and the Great and Sacred Name.
- L. As a reward the secrets of the Degree are conferred upon the Sojourners and the method of forming the Living Arch demonstrated.
- M. Several Instructional Lectures on the Apron, the History, the Masonic Alphabet and the Banner are given.
- N. The Ceremony concludes with an Address and the Charge.

Furniture and Dress

Companions wear white aprons bordered with red, with a Triple Tau emblem in red upon the flap of the apron. We are told in the opining that the color red is the appropriate color of Royal arch Mason, since it symbolizes "that fervency and zeal which should even actuate all Royal arch Masons." Incidentally, you will sometimes see Royal Arch Masons signing their letters with WFZ, meaning 'with fervency and zeal'; just as many Blue Lodge Masons sign off with S&F, or 'sincerely and fraternally'.



The Officers up to the Captain of the Host also wear swords, and whenever interacting with a senior officer will draw their sword and salute that officer. The only exception is the Principal Sojourner, and this is more on account of the fact that he carries a staff, which reminds us of the staff carried by Moses.

There is a suggestion that the staff is also descended from early days in operative Lodges, where the rulers of the Lodge carried wands or staves to indicate their status. This practice may also be seen in churches, where the church wardens traditionally carry rods. Similarly, Black Rod and White Rod are officers in the House of Parliament in England; and Marshalls and other commissioned officers carry wands in the armed forces. It is believed that, as the line of Officers expanded within Lodges, and the lesser duties of the senior officers were delegated to the Deacons, they now carry the staves to indicate their delegated powers. Vestiges of these staves may also be seen in those carrying the four banners under the control of the Royal Arch Captain and three Masters of the Veils.



BEATING THE BOUNDS IN LONDON.

Beating the Bounds, and ancient ceremony where the bounds of the parish are indicated by willow sticks carried by the priest and church wardens, to teach the children-sometimes forcibly-the edges of their parish



The Triangular Altar normally resides in the East of the Chapter Room, and bears the Holy Bible. Each of the four Degrees has a prescribed passage to which the Bible must be opened for each Degree; and the Square and Compasses are in their usual position when the Chapter is opened. The four passages used are:

- Mark Master Degree (blue ribbon) – Matthew Chapter 20: the first 15 verses tell the story of the man who hired laborers to work in his vineyard, the story read by the Right Worshipful Master during the Closing of the Degree.
- Virtual Past Master Degree (purple ribbon) – Ecclesiastes Chapter 12: This is the passage also used during the Obligation of a Master-elect in a regular Blue Lodge.
- Most Excellent Master Degree (red ribbon) – 2 Chronicles 6: This is the passage describing King Solomon's dedication of the Temple at Jerusalem.
- Holy Royal Arch Degree & Regular Communications (white ribbon) – Ezra Chapter 1: This contains the Proclamation of King Cyrus and the list of the treasures taken from the First Temple which the Jews Carried back with them.

In addition to the banners of the Royal Arch Captain and the Masters of the Veils, each chapter should have its own Chapter banner. The Royal arch Banner of Standard is effectively that of the Antient Grand Lodge of England, establish in 1751. In its center it is composed of the banners of the four tribes Judah, Reuben, Ephraim and Dan, surmounted by the Ark of the Covenant, and flanked by two Cherubim. The Antients motto is often seen on them as well, which is Holiness To The Lord (originally in Hebrew on the Antient's banner). The Banner will normally also bear the name and number of the Chapter.

The other furnishings are covered in the appropriate passage in the following sections.

Opening & Closing

Regardless of which of the four Capitular Degrees is being worked, the Chapter will always open on the holy Royal arch Degree. If necessary, the Lodge will then be lowered to the appropriate Degree. When a Degree other than the Holy Royal arch is being worked, care should be taken to remove those elements which are specific to that Degree (the four Banners, the Veils, the Ark, the Candelabra, etc.).

When a Chapter is about to open, there are nine essential Officers present. These are the High Priest, King, Scribe, the Captain of the Host, Principal

Sojourner, Royal arch Captain, and the Three Masters of the Veils.

In the East is the High Priest who presides, with the King to his right and Scribe to his left. These three compose the High Council. The Treasurer and Secretary occupy their usual stations. The Captain of the Host occupies the seat used by the Senior Deacon in Blue Lodge, and the Principal Sojourner that of the Marshall. Down the South side of the Chapter are four seats, occupied from East to West by the Royal Arch Captain, Master of the Third Veil, Master of the Second Veil, and Master of the First Veil. The Sentinel is outside, fulfilling the role of Tiler.

Behind the Royal Arch Captain is the white banner upon a save. Behind the Master of the Third Veil is the red banner; behind the Master of the Second Veil the purple banner; and behind the Master of the first Veil the blue banner. In the East is the triangular altar, bearing the Holy Bible.



The Chapter Opening largely follows the order of opening a Blue Lodge. After a purging of the Chapter, the Sentinel is informed the Chapter is about to open and guards the Outer Door. Since the Junior Officers are armed, the Royal Arch Captain is saluted by the Veils as he passes to interact with the Sentinel, and again on his return. The Captain of the Host is then challenged in a catechism with the High Priest and proceeds to the rehearsal of the Officers' duties. These duties are a summary of those given at length during the Holy Royal Arch Degree. Again, each Officer steps forward and salutes with his sword when questioned.

At this point the Officers lead a procession of all the Companions around the Chapter and end up forming a circle about the Triangular Altar, joining hands, right arm over left, to form a Chain of Fraternal Union. They are then joined by the High Council and a prayer offered. Following the Prayer, they bounce (the archaic word is 'balance') their arms three times and break the Chain.

Note how the words used during the opening are almost like a mantra. Also, while the lines don't completely rhyme (except 'three' and 'agree') the meter is very poetic, and reminds us of early Degrees which used to communicate in rhyming verse, such as the Royal Order of Scotland. This suggests this formula, whose style does not really fit exactly with the rest of the Opening Ceremony, may be very old.

Now they form in groups of three to 'raise the Royal Arch'. Here we realize the Royal Arch is not just a reference to the arch of masonry held in place by the keystone in the East. The Royal Arch is a living Arch, made up of living stones. The threes form a triangle with their feet, and two triangles with their left and right hands, again emphasizing the idea of 'three times. In this position, they then repeat the High Priest's words. It is interesting to note that, traditionally, those forming the Royal Arches do not look directly at each other but turn their heads to the left and look over their left shoulder. While it is not certain where this tradition comes from, it is most likely simply because oral hygiene wasn't very good two or three hundred years ago, and this was to spare the other two Companions from the stench of acute halitosis!

Once the word is exchanged in syllables three times, the Royal Arches are broken, and the High Priest instructs the Captain of the Host to have the Bible opened and the Sentinel informed that the Chapter is open. He instructs the Principal Sojourner to open the bible and the Royal Captain to inform the Sentinel. Note that it is appropriate of the Principal Sojourner to open the Bible, since in the Royal arch degree he is both the Candidates' guide, and also the expounder of biblical passages during their travels. Similarly, as the guardian of the fourth and final veil and therefore responsible for protecting the High Council, it is appropriate that the Royal Arch Captain also defends the Outer Door.

Once the Chapter is opened, the Captain of the Host and Royal Arch Captain process to the West of the Chapter, where the Captain of the Host occupies the Senior Warden's chair and Royal Arch Captain the Junior deacon's Chair (this is why the Royal Arch Captain is the only Officer to interact directly

with the Sentinel). If there is an alarm at the Outer Door, the Royal Arch captain brings it to the attention of the Captain of the Host, who reports it to the High Priest. The High Priest's instructions are communicated to the captain of the Host, who communicates them to the Royal Arch Captain. Note that, unlike Blue Lodge, there is no direct communication between the Presiding Officer and the Royal arch captain. This is similar to the point in the opening of Lodge when the Worshipful Master communicated his intention to open the Lodge to the Senior Warden, and he to the Junior Warden.

Preparation of Candidates

The Candidates are clothed with white aprons as Master Masons, and also with sandals on both feet. They wear hoodwinks and a cabletow seven times around their waist.

They are Master Masons since they will now receive the true word and become Companions, which is the perfected state of a Mason. He is more than a Brother, which suggests a blood tie of obligation: he is now a Companion, a fellow traveler on the great journey of life, and his Obligations extend far further than mere family: now the entire human family has become his kin, and he labors for all mankind. There is a saying among those who follow the path of Transcendental Meditation (TM), that if only a small percentage of people, a number as little as 5%, practice TM, there would be no war, since the work of those few would affect all humanity. In a way, we are being asked to practice our tenets, and by our adherence to our values amongst our fellow man we are given the ability to leverage a change which would vastly supersede our numbers.

As we will see, the removing of shoes and putting on sandals is integral to the Degree ceremonies, and the cable tow in this instance refers to an event rather more powerful in symbolism to its use in prior Degrees. We are told that the High Priest entered the presence of the Lord but once a year, when he uttered the Sacred Name of God in order to reestablish the link between heaven and earth. His garment was fringed with small bells, and a rope was tied around him the end leading out of the Holy of Holies and held by the Kohenim or Levites. He uttered the Name while the priests and people made a great noise. However, this was a most dangerous operation, and if something went wrong – and the implication was that if the High Priest was in some way impure or mispronounced the Name of God – his dead body could be pulled from the Holy of Holies by aid of the rope.



So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. **TAKE YOUR SANDALS OFF YOUR FEET**, for the place where you stand is holy ground." (Exodus 3:4-5)

In Blue Lodge English Freemasonry, there is a line which effectively states that if the Candidate had attempted to escape the Lodge he would have been accomplice to his own death by strangulation, and in a way the cabletow therefore is a reflection of this binding to obligation, and the serious consequences to a person who does not behave according to his vow.

Two Altars

In the Degree of Holy Royal Arch we find two altars: one in the East, and one in the West. The one in the East is the regular triangular Altar which normally doubles as the Altar of Incense.



In English Domastic Ritual the Royal Arch Altar is a white double cube

However, in some instances – for example the Dedication or Rededication of a Chapter – the ritual

calls for three altars: a Western one, the familiar Eastern triangular one, to which the Holy Bible is carried and deposited, and a third Altar of Incense, which is traditionally a white double cube approximately following the description in Exodus.

Why the Eastern Altar should be triangular (which is unique to the United States: in almost all other countries it is a double cubical white altar) is a matter for debate. The most likely explanation is more prosaic than symbolic. It was probable that, at some point, it was decided to have a three-sided altar to emphasize the number three, and to distinguish the paraphernalia used in the Holy Royal Arch from that used in a Lodge Room.

The Obligation is taken facing West. Unusually it is not administered by the High Priest, but by the Captain of the Host, which in a Lodge analogy would be like being Obligated by the Marshall! Why is this? We must remember that Officers of a Lodge or Chapter often take on multiple roles, just as the Worshipful Master becomes King Solomon at certain points of Blue Masonry. In this instance, the Western part of the room represents Babylon, and the Captain of the Host is King Cyrus, while the Council represent Jeshua, Zerubbabel and Haggai, the High Priest, King and Prophet or Scribe. Following the Obligation, the Candidates Will start to travel towards the light, or East in a Chapter Room, and towards Jerusalem.

Now, the Temple of Solomon was laid out so that one entered the outer courts in the East and progressed West towards the Holy of Holies. While the key passages in II Chronicles and I Kings do not explicitly tell us the Temple's orientation, we find it mentioned in Ezekiel 8:16 "And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east' and they worshipped the sun toward the east." What this is saying is that those men in the Temple had their backs to the Holy Place and were facing the East to worship the rising sun. In other words, they were committing idolatry. Therefore, the entrance to the Holy Place must have been in the West.

This means the priests of Levites, who were the only ones permitted to enter to Holy Place, would return from the place which only they were permitted to enter, in order to instruct and educate the common people. This movement from the profane world in the East to the Holy Place in the West is exemplified in the story of the return from exile. Having been taken from their homeland to the

foreign and alien city of Babylon, whose name means 'confused' in Hebrew. Symbolically, therefore, the people move from a lower plane (country) of profanity and confusion to a higher plane (country) of peace and contentment, and closeness to God. The symbolism of the Order of the Red Cross in the Templar Orders, for those who are considering continuing the York Rite journey, expresses this transition from one state to another even more forcibly.

This does raise one odd point regarding our Lodges and Chapters. Although they are set up for us to move from West to East in search of light, more light, further light, in fact the original journey from the outer court of the Temple, or the allegorical journey from Babylon to Jerusalem, both involved traveling from East to West!

Why is this?

Well, this may well be a situation where certain symbolism trumps other symbolism.

We are almost hard-wired to know the sun rises in the East. Symbolically the link between physical light and symbolic Light has been made is just about every civilization on the face of the earth. This is a strong symbol. Similarly, the orientation of all synagogues, mosques, and churches towards the East – meaning towards Jerusalem – has been the practice for many centuries. Remember that the 'known world' was West of the Middle East for most of this period; also, Moslem tradition states that for the first thirteen years of Islam, mosques or prayer meetings were oriented towards Jerusalem, before Mohammad received a message from God to re-orientate towards Mecca.

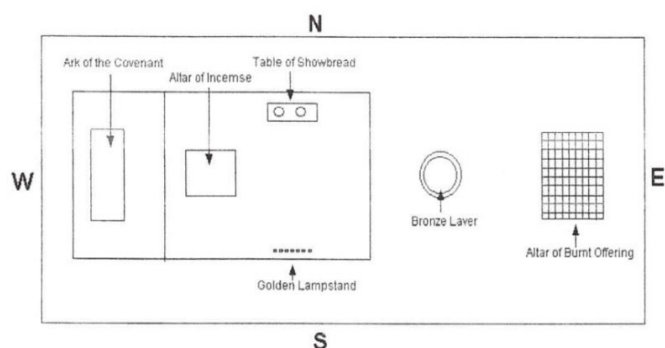


Figure 83 - Simplified Temple layout showing the entrance in the East and the Holy of Holies in the West (www.christian-restoration.com/fmasonry/temple.htm)

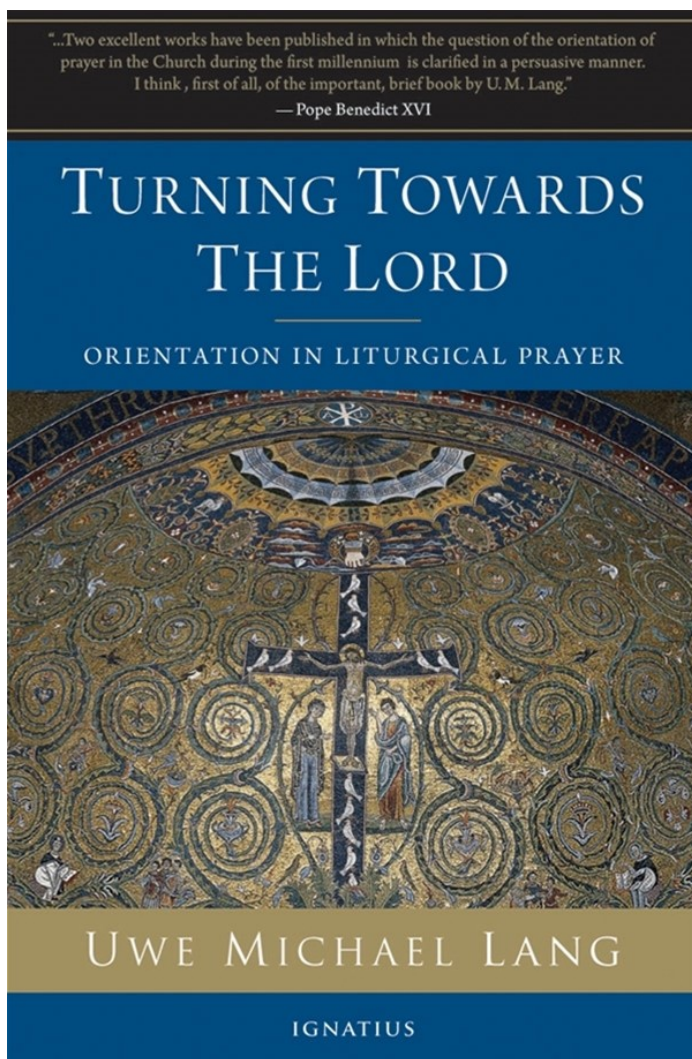
This brings us to one of the many bizarre accusations leveled against Freemasonry by people who have either too much time on their hands, see a conspiracy under every bed, or who are adept at

misreading the Volume of the Sacred Law. It was mentioned above that Ezekiel criticized those who turned East to worship the sun. The point being made in the passage to any reasonable reader is that they were turning their backs on the place where God dwelt in order to worship a pagan concept of God. Since Jerusalem was considered an omphalos or nevell of the world where the realms of heaven and earth met, where Adam had been formed and where Abraham had been called to sacrifice his son, it was less important which way the Temple was oriented, and indeed the first Temple was probably built along the most expedient axis given the hilly nature of the region. To give an example from one such site: "God's instructions were that His Tabernacle faced WEST – contrary to the pagan temples which all face the sun in the east. As Masons face east toward the 'Worshipful Master' they face the symbol of the sun."

This is a curious claim of two counts.

Firstly, there is no explicit mention in Chronicles or Kings that God determined the orientation of the Temple. Secondly, one had to assume these people have curiously oriented places of worship, since as we noted, every church, synagogue (and formerly mosque) was oriented to Jerusalem, towards the East in Europe and the Americas, as they have for upwards of two thousand years or more, towards that point where God first communicated with man. Perhaps these anti-Masons face the West and the setting sun when they pray, which is of course their right in a country which allows both freedom of religion and freedom of expression.

From a Christian point of view, for example, Bishop Edward Slattery said: "...we find that the priest and the people faced in the same direction, usually toward the priest and the people faced in the same direction, usually toward the east, in the expectation that when Christ returns, He will return "from the east." At Mass, the Church keeps vigil, waiting for that return. This single position is called ad orientem, which simply means "toward the east." In Turning Towards The Lord, Lang says: "Despite all the variations in practice that have taken place far into the second millennium, one thing has remained clear for the whole of Christendom: praying towards the East is a tradition that goes back to the beginning." And further: "Modern man has little understanding of this "orientation." Judaism and Islam, now as in the past, take it for granted that we should pray towards the central place of revelation, to G who has revealed himself to us, in the manner and in the place in which he revealed himself."



A book which examines the orientation of believers when praying.

Returning to the Royal Arch Degree, we note that later in this ritual the High Priest instructs the Sojourners that: “some more of the rubble be removed from the eastern part of the ruins”, and it is

there that they discover the Ark of the Covenant, which should properly be found in the Western part of the ruins.

So our religious experiences and our physical experiences tell us to seek light in the East. The fact that our Masonic experience runs contrary to this is probably secondary, and it simply made no sense to our forefathers to build Masonic Temples which faced West rather than East. And there it is Probably as simple as that!

Again, consider again the layout of the Temple. The entrance was in the East, and you traveled West to the Holy of Holies. While the physical sun rose in the East, true knowledge was to be sought at the place of the setting sun, which is where you also sought the body of Hiram Abif. “You cannot see my face, for no man may see me and live”, said God (Exodus 33:20). To gaze upon pure, perfect, undiluted Truth we must ourselves pass beyond the veil of life. This profound Masonic teaching we will return to later. In the allegory of the Temple, we travel from East to West in fact, through the two columns, into the Middle Chamber, into the Holy Place, where we receive a substitute for Truth, being barred from the Veil(s) which separate us from the Holy of Holies. Finally, in the Royal Arch degree we pass through the veil and into the Divine Presence, whose very gaze strikes us dead. But we have a secret: as Companions we know His Name. “And the Truth shall set you free” (John 8:32).



**MWB Emmett J. Bryson Grand Master &
MEC Kevin M. Ritter Grand High Priest
invite you to experience the first two Degree of the Royal Arch!**



THE GENERAL GRAND CHAPTER OF ROYAL ARCH MASONS INTERNATIONAL

Organized October 24, 1797

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73rd Triennial Convocation



Official Call

To all members of the
General Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons, International

The General Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons
International will convene its 73rd Triennial Convocation
on **Monday, August 31, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. EDT** for the
business at hand at the **Capitol Hilton Hotel** in the city of
Washington, District of Columbia, USA

Registration information will be [sent](#) to the Grand Secretaries
and posted on the dedicated Triennial website:
yrtriennial.org.

All resolutions effecting changes to the Constitution and Standing Regulations of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons International, in order to be considered by the delegates at this Triennial convocation, must be received **on or before February 28, 2026**, in the office of the General Grand Secretary, P.O. Box 34037, Little Rock, AR 72203 USA.

Given under my hand,
this tenth day of December 2025
In the city of Little Rock, Arkansas:

Teko A. Foly
General Grand High Priest

Attest:

Dick E. Browning
General Grand Secretary

Retention Corner: Cognitive Biases

Vic Gerald Hill

Although many of us like to believe that we are rational and logical, the fact is that we are continually under the influence of biases. Most humans are very subjective. This is based on experience, upbringing, perceptions, and emotions. In order to grow as men and Masons, we must learn to be more objective and look at things through other people's eyes rather than our personal lens.

There is an extensive list of Cognitive Biases and we could brainstorm well over a hundred of them in only a matter of minutes. However, I am going to cover just a few of them that I did for a leadership conference a couple years ago. Being aware and making others aware of their biases may help you keep valuable members who may not share your idea or beliefs.

The **Conformation Bias** is favoring and remembering information that supports our beliefs while ignoring contradictory evidence. If you have ever participated in a debate, especially if you were on a debate team and given a side you opposed. We humans have a tendency to be tribal, defending sports teams, political teams, military branches, the list goes on.

Respecting those that think different than you whether you agree with them will always have benefits in personal and organizational growth.

The **Anchoring Bias** is the reliance on the first bit of information received. Taking in new information as a baseline can have a negative affect. People trying to sell you something often throw out their first number as their anchor. In the early stages of group development the first ideas often sets the scope of discussions. It is important on new committees to brainstorm a variety of ideas without any judgment. Then evaluate later to avoid this trap.

The **False Consensus Effect** is the tendency people have to overestimate how much other people agree with their own beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, and values. When we do this it helps our self-esteem. It allows us to feel "normal" and maintain a positive view of ourselves in relation to other people.

This can lead people not only to incorrectly think that everyone else agrees with them, it can sometimes lead them to overvalue their own opinions. It also means that we sometimes do not

consider how other people might feel when making choices. This is where groups and Peer pressure may lead us astray and keep us from doing things best for our organization.

The **Halo Effect** is the tendency for an initial impression of a person to influence what we think of them overall. Oftentimes we assume if someone is confident they must also be intelligent and competent. Which may not be the case.

One factor that may influence the halo effect is our tendency to want to be correct. If our initial impression of someone was positive, we want to look for proof that our assessment was accurate. I have seen this many times when appointing officers to the line in Masonic Organizations.

The **Self-Serving Bias** is a tendency for people tend to give themselves credit for successes but lay the blame for failures on outside causes. When you do well on a project, you probably assume that it's because you worked hard. But when things turn out badly, you are more likely to blame it on circumstances or bad luck.

This bias does serve an important role in protecting self-esteem. However, it can often also lead to faulty attributions such as blaming others for our own shortcomings.

The **Availability Heuristic** is the tendency to estimate the probability of something happening based on how many examples readily come to mind. To avoid this trap, use structured decision making based on data and not assumptions. Always get as much data as possible when making assessments for important decisions.

The **Optimism Bias** is a tendency to overestimate the likelihood that good things will happen to us while underestimating the probability that negative events will impact our lives. Essentially, we tend to be too optimistic for our own good. The flip-side of this one is The **Pessimism Bias**.

Can we eliminate these biases? Nope, and their not meant to be totally eliminated. They are survival mechanisms and are part of our being. Awareness however, will benefit us on this rough and rugged journey of human life and our organizations will reap the rewards. God Bless.

George Washington. Freemason



Although there are many stories of Washington attending Masonic lodge meetings, other events, or supporting the Craft in some way, this chronology contains only those that are documented by letters, lodge minutes, objects, or other artifacts.

1752 — November 4: Washington is initiated an Entered Apprentice Freemason (First Degree) in the Lodge at Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg, Virginia. Records also show he pays 2 pounds, 3 shillings and no pence when he joined.

1753 — March 3: Washington Passed to the Degree of Fellow Craft Freemason (Second Degree) in the Lodge at Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

1753 — August 4: Washington Raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason (Third Degree) in the Lodge at Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

1753 — September 1: Washington attends the Lodge at Fredericksburg.

1754 — June 28: Letter from Daniel Campbell to Washington; includes mention of Lodge at Fredericksburg; election of officers and meetings.

1755 — January 4: Washington attends the Lodge at Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg, Virginia, in part to witness his close friend and comrade, James Mercer's Third Degree.

1782 — December 27: The minute book of Solomon's Lodge № 1, Poughkeepsie, New York, record Washington attending the lodge's St. John the Evangelist celebration.

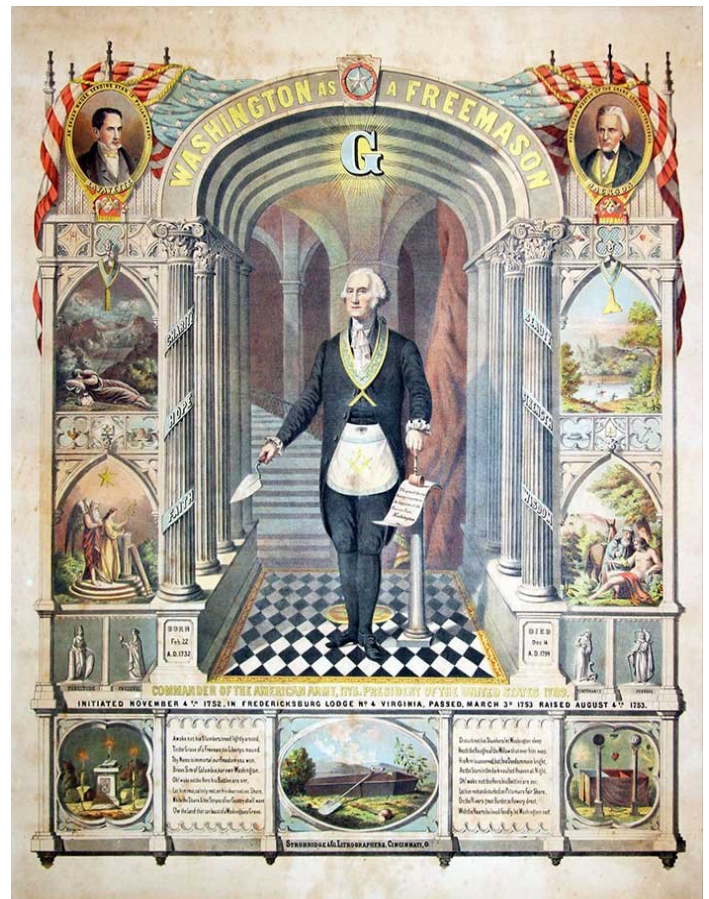
1783 — February 12: Washington receives a Masonic Oration from Continental Congressman James M. Varnum, South Kingston, Rhode Island.

1783 — December 5: Fredericksburg Lodge № 4 sends an invitation to Washington to attend its St. John's Celebration in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

1783 — December 26: Letter from Alexandria Lodge № 39, Alexandria, Virginia, congratulating Washington on his happy homecoming and inviting him to attend St. John the Evangelist's Day celebration.

1783 — December 28: Washington replies to the Master and Wardens of Alexandria Lodge № 39, regrettfully declining the invitation.

1783: Washington receives Masonic Orations from Joseph Webb, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Boston.





1784 — June 19: Washington replies and accepts invitation from Alexandria Lodge № 39, to attend St. John the Baptist Day celebration.

1784 — June 24: Washington attends Alexandria Lodge № 39 Feast of St. John the Baptist Day and is elected honorary member of the lodge.

1784 — August 17-29: Lafayette visits Mount Vernon. He presented Washington a Masonic Apron.

1784: Washington receives a Masonic Address by Peter W. Yates of Schenectady, New York.

1785 — January 21: Freemasons in Newport, Rhode Island send a letter and an address to Washington seeking support to regain lodge charter. There is no record or indication that Washington replied.

1785 — February 12: Washington records in his diary that he walked in the Masonic funeral procession of Bro. William Ramsay, Alexandria Lodge № 39, Alexandria, Virginia.

1787 — June 18: During the Constitutional Convention Washington receives a delegation from the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania who give him a copy of their 1783 Grand Constitutions.

1788 — January - March: A committee from Alexandria Lodge № 39 calls on Washington at Mount Vernon. They ask him to serve as “Charter Master” of the lodge as it seeks to move from under the authority of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania

and be re-chartered by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Washington agrees.

1788 — April 28: Edmund Randolph, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, grants a charter to Alexandria Lodge as the twenty-second lodge in Virginia. The charter names George Washington as the lodge’s Worshipful Master. This charter is still in use by Alexandria-Washington Lodge № 22.

1788 — December 20: Washington re-elected Master of Alexandria Lodge № 22 for one year: 27 December 1788 to December 27, 1789.

1789 — March 7: Officers and members of Holland Lodge 8, New York, send a letter to Washington informing him of his election as honorary member and enclosing a membership certificate.

1789 — April 30: In New York City, George Washington is inaugurated President of the United States using a Bible from St. John’s Lodge № 1. The oath is administered by Chancellor and Grand Master of New York, Robert R. Livingston. Inaugural Bible owned by St. John’s Lodge № 1, New York, New York.

1790 — August 17: The minutes of King David’s Lodge № 1 of Newport, Rhode Island, record a unanimous resolution to present Pres. Washington a Masonic letter and address. Letter and address drafted, approved and delivered to Washington.





1790 — August 22: Washington replies to King David's Lodge № 1, Newport Rhode Island, stating in part: ". . . I shall always be happy to advance the interests of the Society, and to be considered by them as a deserving brother."

1790 — August 23: Samuel G. Dorr of New York City, late of Dumfries, Virginia, in poverty and in need of assistance, sends a letter to Washington asking for his "masonic munificence." There is no record or indication of Washington replying to letter.

1791 — April 13: Washington receives a letter with a Masonic manuscript from Deputy Grand Master of Virginia John K. Read, Richmond, Virginia.

1791 — April 20: Welcome address to Pres. Washington from officers of St. John's Lodge № 2, New Bern, North Carolina.

1791 — April 20: Washington's reply to St. John's Lodge № 2, New Bern, North Carolina.

1791 — April 30: Welcome address to Washington from Georgetown Lodge № 16, Georgetown, South Carolina.

1791 — April 31: Washington's reply to Prince George Lodge № 19, Georgetown, South Carolina.

1791 — May 2: Washington is greeted by Grand Master of South Carolina, Gen. Mordecai Gist and is given a letter, Charleston, South Carolina.

1791 — May 4: Washington replies to Grand Master Gist and Grand Lodge of South Carolina, Charleston, South Carolina.

1791 — May 14: Washington is greeted by Grand Master of Georgia George Houston and is given a letter, Savannah, Georgia.

1791 — May 14: Washington replies to Grand Master Houston and Grand Lodge of Georgia, Savannah, Georgia.

1791 — July 14: John Brett Kenna, a former officer in the Continental Army, sends a letter to Pres. Washington asking for Masonic charity and mentioning other Freemasons Washington might know. There is no record of Washington replying or contributing to Kenna's relief.

1791 — December 26: Washington receives an invitation to attend Harmony Lodge № 53, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

1792 — January 2: Letter and Address written by the Rev. Dr. William Smith from the "Ancient York Masons" of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, in person to Pres. Washington at his house in Philadelphia. The Rev. Smith had given the sermon at the St. John's service Washington attended December 28, 1778.

1792 — January 3: Washington replies to the "Ancient York Masons" of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

1792 — March 13: Washington receives a letter from Freemason Joseph Wanton Rhodes, Walpole, Massachusetts.

1792 — December 27: Grand Master John Cutler and other officers of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts send a letter and enclose copy of its newly published Grand Constitutions to Pres. Washington.

1793 — January 22: Washington replies to Grand Lodge of Massachusetts' letter and its Grand Constitutions.



1793 — March 13: Samuel Brooks of Philadelphia, sends a letter describing himself as a “poor widow’s son” to Pres. Washington seeking a position as an engraver in the U.S. Mint. There is no record or indication of Washington replying to letter and no evidence Brooks secured a position at the Mint.

1793 — August 29: Letter from the Master and officers of Alexandria Lodge № 22, Alexandria, Virginia to Pres. Washington requesting he sit for portrait artist William Williams. No reply from Washington is known but he did sit for Williams and the portrait was completed in September 1793.

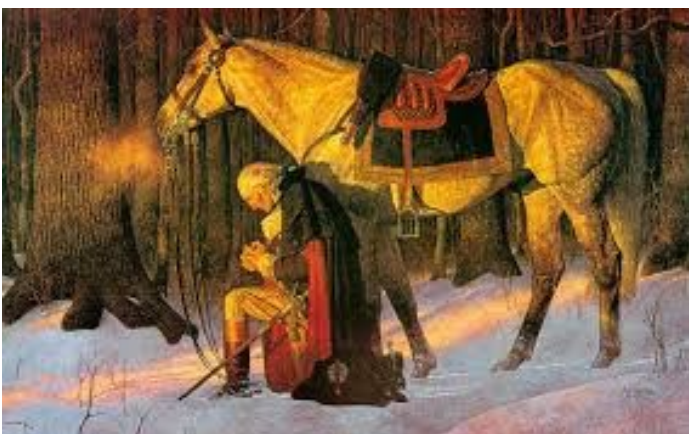
1793 — September 18: The cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol is laid by three Masonic Lodges, Potomac Lodge № 9 and Federal Lodge № 15, under the Grand Lodge of Maryland, and Alexandria Lodge № 22, under the Grand Lodge of Virginia with Pres. Washington presiding as “Acting Master” of the ceremony.

Items Used at the Cornerstone Ceremony: Silver Trowel with Ivory handle made by John Duffy owned by Alexandria-Washington Lodge № 22, Alexandria, Virginia.

Wood T-Square and Level own by Alexandria-Washington Lodge № 22, Alexandria, Virginia.
Marble Gavel with wood handle, made by John Duffy owned by Potomac Lodge № 5, Washington D.C.

It is generally accepted that Washington wore the Watson-Cassoul apron sent to him in 1783 to the ceremony. In 1812, Lawrence Lewis, nephew of Washington, gave it to Alexandria-Washington Lodge № 22, Alexandria, Virginia where it remains today.

1793 — October 16: Abraham Forst, passing through Alexandria, sends a letter to Washington asking for Masonic charity and enclosing a list of those brother Masons who have helped him and a certificate for Washington’s review. There is no record of Washington replying or contributing to Forst’s relief.



1793 — December 27: President and Mrs. Washington contribute to the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania’s Relief Charity Fund, Philadelphia.



1793: Washington receives a copy of Josiah Bartlett’s A Discourse on the Origins and Design of Free Masonry.

1795 — January 23: Washington receives copies of Sentimental and Masonic Magazine, published in five volumes in Dublin, Ireland, July 1792-December, 1794, from John Jones. Jones requests permission to dedicate a sixth volume to George Washington and to include a portrait. There is no record of Washington replying to Jones.

1795 — June 24: Washington receives a letter and Masonic sermon from the Rev. Samuel Miller, New York, New York.

1796 — December 28: Washington replies to Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

1797 — January 23: Letter from Thomas Farrington, Past Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, to Pres. Washington containing the following salutatory “Sentiment, Masonic” composed July 25, 1792: “When we recognize that Starr, which in ancient Times, appeared in the East, to point out a Savior to Mankind; Let us gratefully remember a Washington, who, in later Times, appeared in the West, & led the Armies of America, to Victory & Glory.”

1797 — March 21: Grand Master Paul Revere and officers of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts send a congratulatory letter to Washington.

1797 — March 28: At Mount Vernon, Washington receives a Masonic delegation of Dennis Ramsay and Phillip G. Marsteller of Alexandria Lodge № 22, with an address and invitation to dine with the lodge.

1797 — April 1: Washington dines with Alexandria Lodge № 22 and presents a reply to the lodge's address.

1797 — April 24: Washington replies to Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, with cover letter apologizing for the delay.

1797 — September 30: James Asperne sends George Washington a letter and a printed flyer "Masonic Miscellanies" with advertisements for the Masonic Pocketbook. There is no record of Washington replying to Asperne.

1798 — March 14: William Scales of Sutton Town, New Hampshire, sends a letter to Washington stating his concerns for America's future and fears of "clerical and masonic deceptions and villainy." There is no record of Washington replying to Scales.

1798 — August 22: The Rev. G.W. Snyder of the Reformed Church, in Fredericktown, Maryland, sends his first letter to Washington regarding the Illuminati and Freemasonry in the United States. He encloses a copy of John Robison's Proofs of a Conspiracy against all the Religions and Governments of Europe, carried on in the Secret Meetings of Free-Masons, Illuminati and Reading Societies, etc., Collected From Good Authorities (Edinburgh: 1797).

1798 — November 5: When in Baltimore, Washington receives William Belton, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Maryland, the Deputy Grand Master and other brethren, who hand-deliver a letter and a gift of the Grand Lodge of Maryland's 1797 edition of George Keatinge's The Maryland Ahiman Rezon of Free and Accepted Masons, (Grand Constitutions).

1798 — November 8: Washington replies to William Belton, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Maryland.

1799 — December 14: After a more than a day and night of suffering, George Washington dies at 10:20 p.m.

1799 — December 18: Washington is buried at Mount Vernon with Anglican Christian Burial Rite accompanied by a Masonic funeral ceremony conducted by members of Alexandria Lodge № 22. The Bible used at Washington's funeral is owned by Federal Lodge № 1, Washington, D.C.

1800: Grand Lodge of Virginia Proceeding's necrology lists Washington as a deceased member of Fredericksburg Lodge № 4.

1800 — January 11: John Warren, Grand Master, and other officers of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts send a letter conveying the sorrow and sympathy to Martha Washington on the death of her husband, and requesting a lock of his hair as "an invaluable relique of the Hero and Patriot . . ."

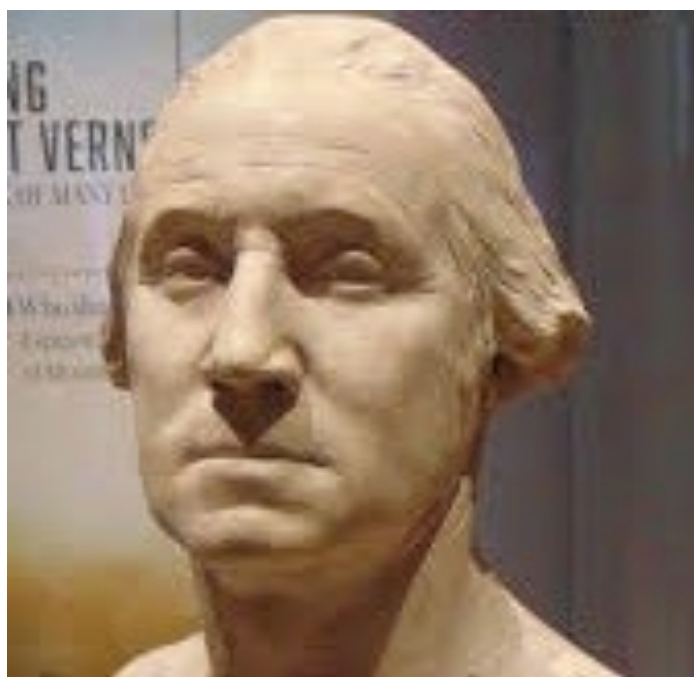
1800 — January 27: Washington's private secretary, Tobias Lear, replies for Martha Washington to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts thanking them for their sympathy and support and enclosing a lock of Pres. Washington's hair.

The Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts keeps lock of hair in a gold urn made by Paul Revere in 1800.

1800 — March 15: On January 1, 1800, French Lodge L'Amenite № 71, Philadelphia, conducts a Lodge of Sorrow for Pres. Washington. After the ceremonies, the lodge Orator, Simon Chaudron gives an oration on Washington. This is followed by an address by the lodge Master, Joseph De La Grange. On March 15, 1800, three English translations of the oration with a cover letter are sent to Martha Washington.

1800 — May 15: Washington's private secretary, Tobias Lear, "in compliance with Mrs. Washington's request. . . acknowledge the receipt" of the oration and gratefully recognizes the Lodge's "sympathy in her affliction and irreparable loss."

1802 — May 22: Martha Washington dies at Mount Vernon.





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Haven Penthouse	430-433 / 84-87	2	\$6,419.00 p/p*	
Club Balcony (ma)	249-361 / 41-101	4	\$2,710.78 p/p	\$887.39 p/p*
Balcony(ba)	214-367 / 38-108	3	\$2,498.07 p/p	\$887.39 p/p*
Inside (ia)	135-362	2	\$1,612.05 p/p	

Single balcony and single studio cabins are available These cabins do sell out, call for pricing. *Price may increase. These specials are available if booked now: "More free at sea" FREE beverage package has A \$210.00 p/p gratuity charge, free 3 specialty dinning package for Balcony & above has a \$60.00 p/p gratuity additional charge.

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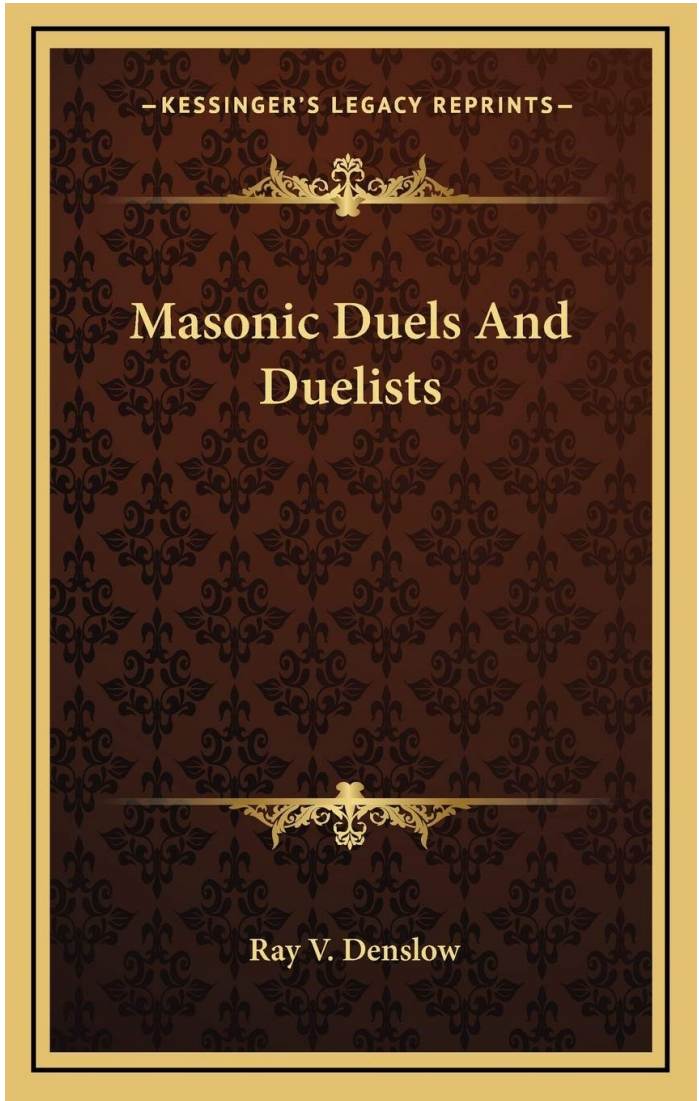
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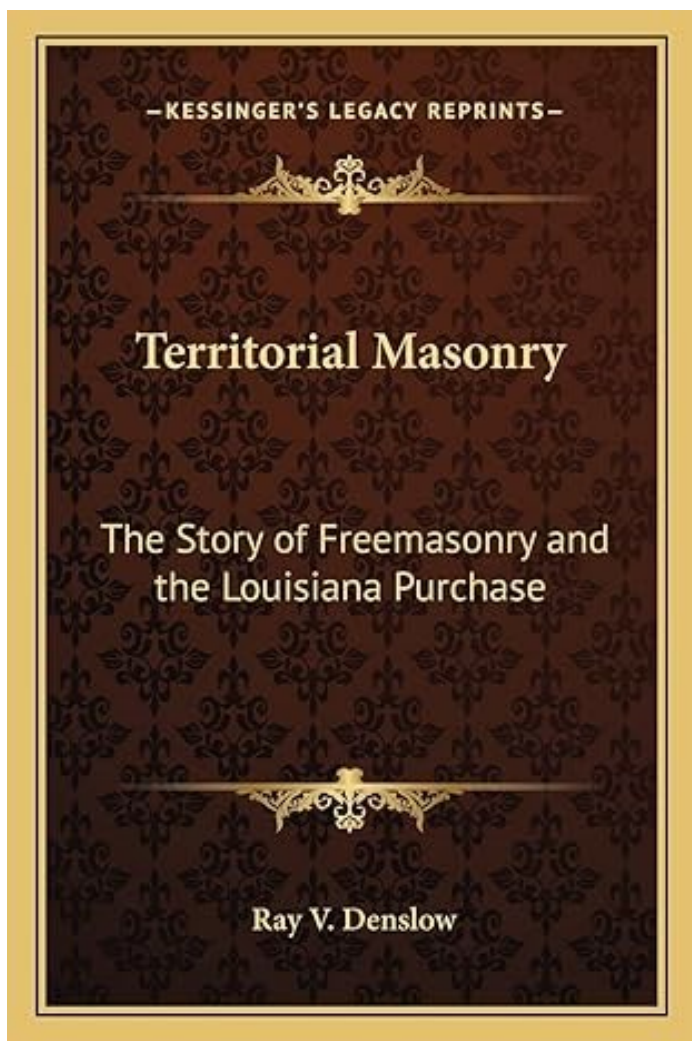
Freemasonry And The New World Order is a book written by Ray V. Denslow that delves into the history and influence of Freemasonry on the development of the New World Order. The book explores the origins of Freemasonry, its symbols and rituals, and the role it has played in shaping the political, economic, and social landscape of the world. Denslow examines the connection between Freemasonry and the Illuminati, and how both organizations have been implicated in various conspiracy theories. He also discusses the influence of Freemasonry on American history, including the founding of the United States and the development of its democratic institutions. The book provides a comprehensive overview of the history and philosophy of Freemasonry, and its potential impact on the future of the world. It is a must-read for

anyone interested in the history of secret societies and their impact on world events. An Address Delivered At The Conference Of Grand Masters, Washington, D.C., February 1942. This scarce antiquarian book is a facsimile reprint of the old original and may contain some imperfections such as library marks and notations. Because we believe this work is culturally important, we have made it available as part of our commitment for protecting, preserving, and promoting the world's literature in affordable, high quality, modern editions, that are true to their original work.



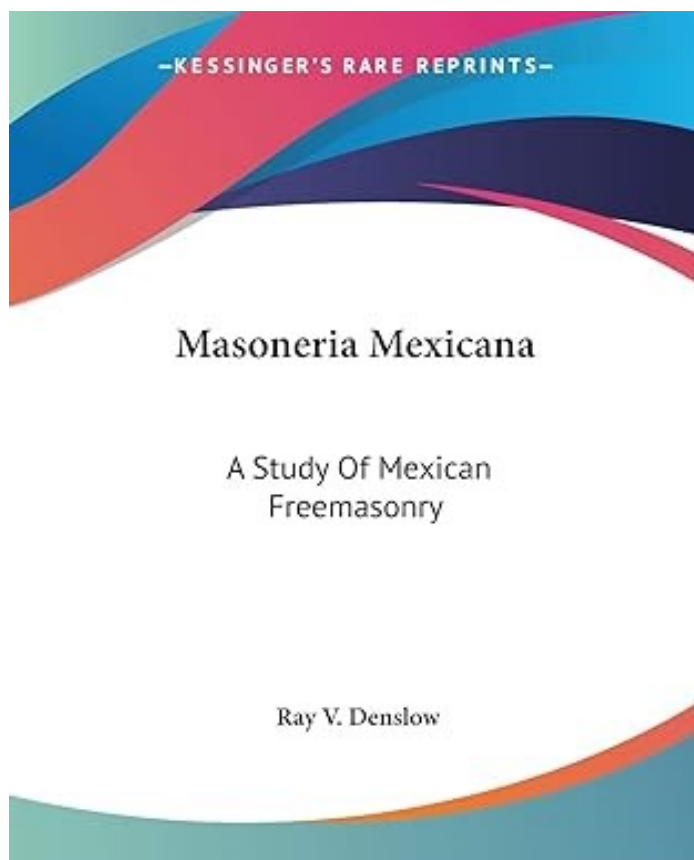
Masonic Duels and Duelists by Ray V. Denslow is a book that explores the history of dueling within the Masonic community. The book covers various

incidents of Masonic duels that took place in the United States during the 19th century. It provides readers with a detailed account of the events leading up to each duel, the participants involved, and the aftermath of each duel. The author also delves into the reasons behind these duels, which range from personal disputes to disagreements over Masonic matters. The book offers a fascinating insight into the social and cultural dynamics of the Masonic community during this period. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of the Masonic order or the history of dueling in general.



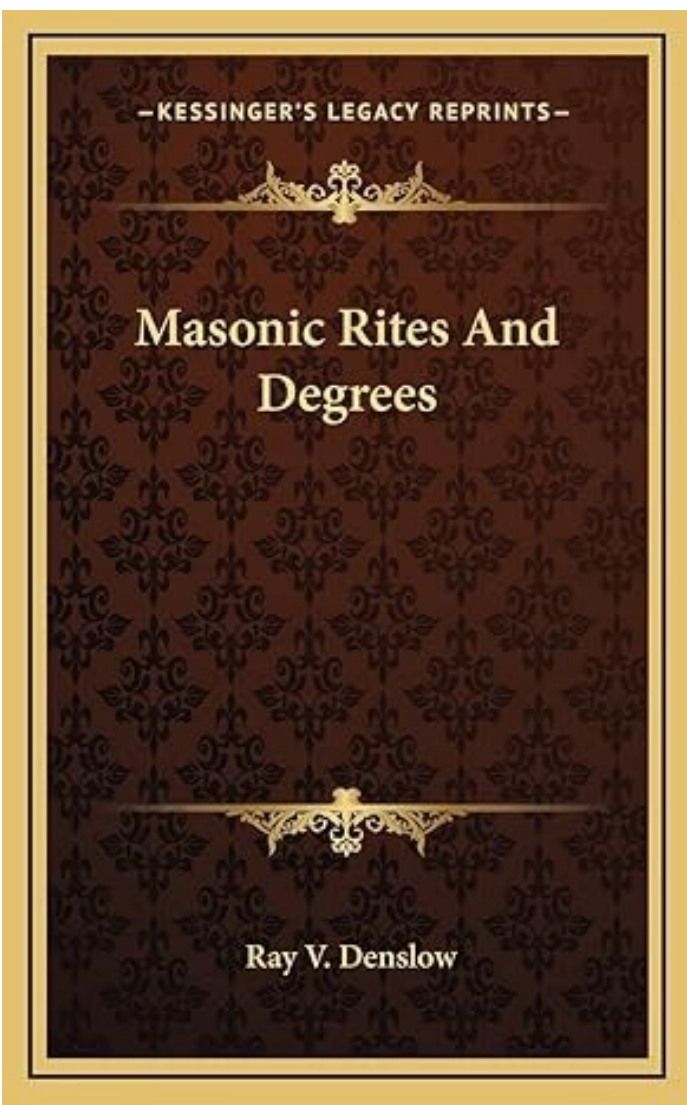
Territorial Masonry: The Story of Freemasonry and the Louisiana Purchase is a historical book written by Ray V. Denslow. It explores the relationship between Freemasonry and the Louisiana Purchase, which was a land deal between the United States and France in 1803. The book delves into the role of Freemasonry in the political and social landscape of the time, including the influence of Masonic lodges on the decision-making process of the Louisiana Purchase. It also examines the history of Freemasonry in the United States and the growth of the organization in the early 19th century. The

author provides a detailed account of the events leading up to the Louisiana Purchase and the impact it had on the expansion of the United States. The book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the history of Freemasonry, the Louisiana Purchase, and the early years of the United States. Contents: Masonic Pathfinders, Pioneers, and Military Leaders; Duelists; The Mother Lodge of the Mississippi Valley; Freemasons and the State Constitution; the First Grand Lodge; plus much more vital information on Freemasonry's connection to the Louisiana Purchase. This scarce antiquarian book is a facsimile reprint of the old original and may contain some imperfections such as library marks and notations. Because we believe this work is culturally important, we have made it available as part of our commitment for protecting, preserving, and promoting the world's literature in affordable, high quality, modern editions, that are true to their original work. ""Masoneria Mexicana: A Study of



Mexican Freemasonry"" is a comprehensive analysis of the history, beliefs, and practices of Freemasonry in Mexico. Written by Ray V. Denslow, a renowned expert in the field of Masonic studies, this book provides a detailed examination of the role of Freemasonry in Mexican society, from its origins in the early 19th century to the present day. The author explores the various lodges, rituals, and symbols of Mexican Freemasonry, as well as its relationship to other Masonic traditions around the

world. Drawing on extensive research and firsthand accounts, Denslow offers a fascinating glimpse into the inner workings of this secretive organization, shedding light on its values, goals, and impact on Mexican culture and politics. Whether you are a Masonic scholar, a history buff, or simply curious about this enigmatic fraternity, ""Masoneria Mexicana"" is an essential read. This scarce antiquarian book is a facsimile reprint of the old original and may contain some imperfections such as library marks and notations. Because we believe this work is culturally important, we have made it available as part of our commitment for protecting, preserving, and promoting the world's literature in affordable, high quality, modern editions, that are true to their original work.



Masonic Rites and Degrees is a comprehensive guide to the various rites and degrees of Freemasonry. Written by Ray V. Denslow, a renowned Masonic scholar, this book delves into the history, symbolism, and significance of the Masonic rituals and ceremonies. It covers the different degrees of Masonry, including the Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason degrees, as well as the higher degrees such as the Scottish Rite and York Rite. The book also

explores the various Masonic rites, such as the Royal Arch and Knights Templar. With detailed explanations and illustrations, Masonic Rites and Degrees is an essential resource for Masons and anyone interested in the history and traditions of this ancient fraternity. This scarce antiquarian book is a facsimile reprint of the old original and may contain some imperfections such as library marks and notations. Because we believe this work is culturally important, we have made it available as part of our commitment for protecting, preserving, and promoting the world's literature in affordable, high quality, modern editions, that are true to their original work.



Illustrious Brother Denslow was a true star of Missouri Masonry. As a co-publisher with his father of the Trenton Daily News, he left to become Assistant Postmaster in Trenton, Missouri, until 1921. After this, he devoted his entire time to Masonic work, serving as Grand Master of the State of Missouri in 1931. His permanent contribution in the Masonic world was the creation of the 'The Royal Arch Magazine' when he was General Grand High Priest of this organization in 1941. He was the editor from its beginning until 1946 when his son, William, became business manager. He and his son William, are only the 4th father and son combination to hold the office of Grand Master of Masons in Missouri and Grand High Priest of Royal Arch Masons in Missouri.

RW Brother Denslow acted in his capacity as Chairman of the Foreign Relief Committee of the Masonic Service Association, in improving communications between Grand Lodges all over the world. He took an active part after WWII to investigate various reactivated Grand Lodges and Helped establish their regularity, traveling to Europe in 1945 and in 1949 and reporting on post-war conditions there.

He was the first Grand Master of Missouri to open the Lodge out of state when he presided over a meeting at the dedication of the George Washington National Memorial on Wednesday may 11 1932.



Royal Arch Research Assistance (RARA) – FAQs

Q: What exactly does RARA fund?

A: RARA funds scientific research on Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD) through grants to early career researchers at universities and medical centers. We don't fund treatment centers or hospitals directly, but rather the scientists discovering new treatments and diagnostic methods.

Q: How is RARA different from other hearing related charities?

A: Most hearing charities focus on deafness or hearing loss. RARA specifically targets CAPD, where hearing is normal but the brain can't process sound correctly. It's a unique focus area with limited funding sources.

Q: Who reviews research grant applications?

A: RARA partners with the Hearing Health Foundation, which uses a rigorous peer review process with medical experts. Only the most promising research receives funding.

Q: How much does RARA give in grants each year?

A: RARA awards approximately \$500,000 annually in research grants, typically funding 10-12 researchers per year at \$40,000-\$50,000 per grant.

Q: What is the leverage ratio?

A: RARA grants serve as "seed funding" that helps researchers qualify for much larger federal grants. On average, every \$1 RARA donates results in \$27 of total research funding. This multiplier effect maximizes our impact.

Q: Has RARA research led to actual treatments?

A: Yes. RARA funded research has contributed to:

- ⇒ New diagnostic protocols now used in clinics nationwide
- ⇒ Non-surgical treatment options for children with CAPD
- ⇒ Better understanding of CAPD's relationship to autism
- ⇒ Reduced need for invasive procedures

Q: How long has RARA been around?

A: RARA was established in 1974 at the General Grand Chapter Triennial meeting. Over 50 years of supporting research that changes lives.

Q: Is my donation tax-deductible?

A: Yes. RARA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. EIN: 23-7410576. You'll receive a tax receipt for your donation.

Q: Can I designate my donation in memory of someone?

A: Absolutely. Memorial and honor gifts are welcome. We'll send acknowledgment to the family and recognize the memorial in our records.

Q: Does RARA help adults or just children?

A: While CAPD often presents in childhood, research helps all ages. Many veterans with traumatic brain injury experience CAPD like symptoms. RARA research benefits everyone affected.

Q: What percentage of donations goes to research?

A: RARA operates with minimal overhead through volunteer leadership and General Grand Chapter support. Approximately 92% of donations go directly to research funding.

Q: Can non-Masons donate to RARA?

A: Yes. While RARA is sponsored by Royal Arch Masons, donations from anyone are welcome and appreciated.

Q: How can I learn more about current research?

A: Visit www.givetorara.org or www.hearinghealthfoundation.org/rara to see current grant recipients and research summaries.

Q: What happens if I sign up for monthly giving and need to stop?

A: You can cancel anytime with a simple phone call or email. No questions asked, no hassles. We understand circumstances change.

Q: How does Missouri's fundraising compare to other states?

A: Missouri has tremendous potential. Some states raise \$50,000+ annually. With 30+ chapters and thousands of members, Missouri can become a top contributor to RARA research.



Philanthropy of Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the State of Missouri, and the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons, International.

All money collected is used to research: Heart Disease, Diabetes, Blindness, Regenerative Medicine, Leg Circulation, Wound Healing, Arthritis, Stroke and more...

THE PROBLEM

Arteriosclerosis is a disease affecting the blood vessels which carry blood from the heart to all parts of the body. It is commonly called “hardening of the arteries”, and is a process which results in the narrowing of these vessels. It is gradually progressive, and eventually interferes with the flow of blood. When an artery supplying the muscle of the heart is affected severely in this manner, it results in a heart attack. When a major artery supplying the brain is involved it results in a stroke; if the large artery of the leg is greatly narrowed by this process, gangrene occurs (the tissue dies) and the leg often has to be amputated, as the only method of satisfactory treatment.

THE WORK OF CRYPTIC MASONS

Freemasonry seeks to improve the community by improving the individual. Therefore, Councils of Cryptic Masons are found working with Lodges, Chapters, and Commanders, giving more opportunities to improve one's skills in leadership, public speaking, interpersonal relationships, and administration. This empowers Masons to become better leaders in their career, church, and community. Councils also work with these and other Masonic groups in community service projects to demonstrate Masonic teachings as a way of life.

The General Grand Council established the Cryptic Masons Medical Research Foundation to give Cryptic Masons an opportunity to turn Masonic philosophy into a living practice. Issues like diabetes, stroke, poor circulation, heart failure, wound healing, and many other diseases share the

common denominator of blood vessels, so vascular research is a vital part of treating many different kinds of illnesses. Supporting the ICVBM's research has the potential to help millions of people.

THE INDIANA CENTER FOR VASCULAR BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE

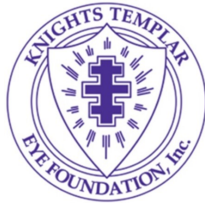
The Indian Center for Vascular Biology and Medicine is committed to researching the mechanisms of vascular wellness and disease, and to developing leading-edge medical therapies to improve the care of patients with vascular problems. The ICVBM includes more than 40 investigators from a range of basic and clinical disciplines, and approaches vascular research and development from a highly cross-disciplinary perspective. This faculty, as well as the staff and students, work together as a team to complete the primary mission of rapid development and clinical application of new interdisciplinary research in vascular biology. The ICVBM emphasizes reaching patients as quickly as possible so that they can benefit from ongoing developments of gene, molecular, cell- and device-based therapies.

Since 1986, CMMRF has been working with Indiana University & ICVBM. The foundation funds the research & since its inception has contributed more than \$4,500,000 to ICVBM.

All monies sent to the ICVBM is used to research:

- Heart Disease
- Diabetes
- Blindness
- Regenerative Medicine
- Leg Circulation
- Wound Healing
- Arthritis
- Stroke
- and more...

You can send your contributions to your local Recorder, or, contributions can be sent to the Grand Recorder, CMMRF, 107 S. Williams Street, Fayette, MO 65248-1047. Checks should be made out to the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of Missouri, with CMMRF written on the memo line.



The mission of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. is to provide assistance to those who face loss of sight due to the need for surgical treatment without regard to race, color, creed, age, sex, or national origin provided they are unable to pay or receive adequate assistance from current government agencies or similar sources and to provide funds for research in curing diseases of the eye. This includes the correction of strabismus (cross-eyes) in children up to the age of 16 years.

Funds for the operation of the Eye Foundation are obtained in part from an annual assessment of each Knight Templar, contributions made by Masons from throughout the Masonic Family, fund-raising activities, memorials, wills and bequests, and donations from endowment funds or similar sources. Special award programs for contributions include the Grand Master's Sword of Merit (\$25,000), Golden Chalice (\$10,000), Grand Master's Club (\$1,000), Grand Commander's Club (\$1,000 in \$100 annual installments), Patron Certificate (\$100), Associate Patron Certificate (\$50), and Life Sponsor (\$30). Those who are designated as a Life Sponsor or above are relieved from the annual assessment.

Since 1956, over \$98 million has been spent on approved cases, and applications have been received from 80,000 people. Research Grants totaling in excess of \$9.2 million have been awarded to researchers working in the fields of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Ophthalmic Genetics.

Application for assistance from the Foundation can be made through a Knight Templar who is a member of one of over 1,200 Constituent Commanderies of the Grand Encampment. Information is available from the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., 1000 East State Parkway, Suite I, Schaumburg, IL 60173, Phone (847) 490-3838; Fax (847) 490-3777. The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. is a co-sponsor of the Seniors Eye Care Program (formally known as the National Eye Care Project) with Eye Care America, a Public Service Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology. The Seniors Eye Care Program helps those persons 65 years or over who do not have an Ophthalmologist. Anyone wishing to contact the Seniors Eye Care Program may do so by calling 1-800-222-EYES and telling them you were referred by a Knight Templar.

The Knight of Siloam special award program in Missouri was created by Sir Knights J. Edward Blinn, REPGC, and Danny L. Ferguson, REPGC, during the 93-94 Templar year as a means of recognizing those Missouri Sir Knights who make substantial contributions to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, and to encourage others to do so. A special medal and patent is presented to those who donate \$500.00 or more to KTEF either in a lump sum or in installments. The jewel is designated as a meritorious service jewel and may be worn on the Knight.



The Knights Templar Educational Foundation, Division of the Grand Commandery of the State of Missouri, provides financial assistance in the way of low cost student loans to college juniors and seniors, as well as trade school students.



The Missouri Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund is used to pay the expenses of sending a Minister to the Holy Land under the provisions of the Grand Encampment. The Holy Land Pilgrimage Committee of the Grand Commandery can provide more information about qualifying Ministers.

The Missouri Holy Land Pilgrimage Endowment Fund is an endowment, the interest of which is used to generate income for the Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund (above). Commandery Recorders are to ask each Sir Knight on their annual dues statement to remit at least \$3.65 towards the Holy Land Endowment Fund, and Commanderies are encouraged to have fund raisers to generate money for this fund.



York Rite Bulletin Board

Interactive Maps for Local York Rite Bodies

Exciting news all!!! The Grand York Rite of Missouri has now added interactive maps for Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies to help you easily find a meeting location, and find directions to assist you in planning your travels. We hope they help

You can find those maps at the following webpages:

<https://moyorkrite.org/royal-arch-chapters-in-missouri/>

<https://moyorkrite.org/councils-in-missouri/>

<https://moyorkrite.org/commanderies-in-missouri/>

Your Help is Needed!!!

Did you know that you can make changes to your own MMS Profile Page? You can!

Simply click this link: <https://www.masonic-web.com/mms/memberbio/default.aspx> and use your membership number which can be found on the side of any of your York Rite dues cards with your name and date of birth. You have only one Profile Page which links to each Chapter, Council, and/or Commandery where you have a membership.

The information on your Profile Page helps us stay in contact with each of you. Please carefully check the information on your Profile Page:

- Full name: First, Middle, and Last Name (No Abbreviations) with any prefix or suffix.
- Birth location: City and State.
- Current Address: Where mail comes.
- Phone Numbers: Home and/or Cell.
- Email Addresses: Home and/or Work.
- Spouse's name: First, Middle, and Last Names.
- Her Date of Birth: Month and Day (We like to send birthday cards!)
- Your children's Names: First and Last Names
- **Information about your job** (Optional)

Our office will not share this information with any person, business, or other institution. This is YOUR Profile Page. Thank you for your time.

Past Grand Officers

History is a wonderful thing. It reminds us of our great accomplishments and mistakes. Either way, we learn something from both. However, below are links to our Past Grand High Priest, Past Grand Masters, and Grand Commanders here in Missouri. Take a look, one of them might be a relative you did not know had been honored by these great positions.

Past Grand High Priests:

<https://moyorkrite.org/past-grand-high-priests/>

Past Grand Masters:

<https://moyorkrite.org/past-grand-masters/>

Past Grand Commanders:

<https://moyorkrite.org/past-grand-commanders/>



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Your one stop shop for all your Masonic merchandise! We offer a variety of items for your Masonic Lodge, Ceremonies or to show off your Masonic Pride. Lapel Pins, Car Emblems, Decals, Daggers, Swords, Rings, Ties, Bow Ties, Cravats, Bolo Ties, Pocket Watches, Watches, Briefcases, Rod Toppers, Tablet Covers, Coins, Garment Bags, Wallets, Tie Bars, Tie Chains, Button Covers, Officer pins and much much more!

Masonic Lodge
Collars
Aprons
Apron Briefcases



York Rite
Collars
Aprons
Medals/Jewels



Most items can be customized. Aprons personalized under the flap or make your own design. Decals or metal name plates for your briefcases. Nametags of all shapes and designs. Please contact us with your orders or to set up at one of your events.

Grand Officers Coins for Sale

The Grand York Rite has numerous items for sale. One of which is the Grand Officers coins. For a small donation of \$20.00 you may obtain their coin or \$60.00 for all three coins through our Grand York Rite Offices (660) 248-5100.



2025-2026

MEC Kevin M. Ritter, Grand High Priest Coin



2025-2026

MIC Dennis W. Houck Grand Master Coin



2025-2026

SK Ronald L. Skiles, Right Eminent Grand Commander Coin

These coins are in limited production. So, hurry and purchase one now as they will soon be out of stock. All donations go to the Grand Officer's charity. Thank you for your consideration.



Distinguished Chapter Award

Chapter Secretaries and current High Priests will soon be able to access the updated Distinguished Chapter Award Form, which will include the new addition of the Chapter Proficiency Ritual Card section.

Every proficiency card newly earned or renewed will earn **100 points for the Chapter**. These points are unlimited.

This is being added to highlight one of MEC Ritter's goals for the year - his own goal of earning his Part 1 Ritual Card.

The Chapter Proficiency Ritual card plan can be found on the moyorkrite.org website.

Chapter Proficiency Certificate Plan:

<https://moyorkrite.org/DocsChapter/Chapter%20Proficiency%20Certificate%20Plan%202023.pdf>

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