



21st  
Annual  
Grand  
Masonic  
Day

**SATURDAY MARCH 1, 2003**

# The District Deputy Grand Master

## A role at the crossroad

PRESENTED AT THE VANCOUVER GRAND MASONIC DAY, MARCH 1, 2003  
BY M.W. BRO. JACK T. HARPER, P.G.M.

When Wor. Bro. Keith Godfrey asked me to address the subject of the District Deputy Grand Master at this Grand Masonic Day, my immediate reaction was, "What more can I say about the office that has not already been said before?" And upon reflection, I further determined that I really didn't have anything new to present, except perhaps one suggestion, and that is the need for all freemasons to be active advocates for quality leadership. So with that in mind, I decided that my talk should be about three things.

It should be about re-examining the issue of leadership; it should be about an attempt to stimulate your thinking on this topic; and with any luck, it should be about 15 minutes.

At the Grand Lodge Communication in Harrison in 1998, a brother made reference to the selection of the Junior Grand Warden being tantamount to "buying a pig in a poke." The brother's comment was not well received, but in my opinion, there was a strong element of truth in what he said, and he certainly caused us to think about the way in which we choose our leaders. As one of those "pigs in a poke," I can understand the frustration he felt with the leadership selection process, which I believe relates to all levels of leadership within our Craft. Near the end of his life Sir Isaac Newton, a member of the illustrious Royal Society, and possibly a freemason, said, "I do not know how I appear to others, but to myself I seem to have been only a small boy playing on the shore, and diverting myself, in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than the ordinary, while the whole ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

While the shells and pebbles that I have picked up on this subject may appear prettier to me, they are not necessarily smoother or prettier than those picked up by others. What follows therefore, for your consideration, are my opinions only, opinions that are no more or no less important than yours. And the whole ocean of truth lies out there. To explore the issues of leadership and the role of the DDGM, I want to touch on the following: the definition and importance of capable leadership, a review of the history of selection practices for the office of DDGM, a consideration of some basic premises about the role of DDGM in transition; and on the basis of this, some personal conclusions. There's an old Chinese proverb that says the fish rots from the head, first. Clearly, it is our formal leaders, from the Worshipful Master to the District Deputy Grand Master to the Grand Master, who by their actions or inactions, play important roles in determining whether our Craft grows and flourishes, or whether it wallows in inertia. It is therefore incumbent upon us to pay attention to the quality of our leaders.

You have heard it said over and over again, "There is no substitute for quality." How true that is. If good leadership is present, our lodges will be strong. If our lodges are strong and healthy, there will be challenging and informative substance to enlighten us. If there is meaningful masonic substance in our meetings, there will be interest among our brethren. And if there is interest among the brethren, they will attend, participate, and become the leaders of our future. It is this cyclical concept that has the power to ensure the relevance of

Freemasonry today and in the days to come. And an essential element in this cycle is the District Deputy Grand Master.

Historically, the job of the DDGM has generally been interpreted as being a ceremonial and administrative one, rather than a working office designed to improve conditions within the district. Perhaps this emphasis on ceremonial and administrative aspects of the job has something to do with the fact that the only qualification for the position mentioned in our *Book of Constitutions* is that the DDGM shall be a member of a lodge in the district to which he is appointed. Nowhere is it stated that the nominees for the office should be well qualified, active in their lodges and district, knowledgeable and articulate about Freemasonry and its workings, held in high regard by their brethren, and committed to the concept of building a stronger institution. Since our constitution is silent on these matters, it is therefore up to each DDGM to define his rôle within the constitutional framework, and in consultation with the PDDGMs, to submit to the Grand Secretary by January 1st, the names of three or more brethren who, in his opinion, best meet the needs of his district, from which the incoming Grand Master may, if he sees fit, select a nominee. Now let's for a moment look at a scenario which occurs every January when the Deputy Grand Master receives from the Grand Secretary the names of those brethren from our twenty seven districts who are recommended for the position of DDGM. Every incoming Grand Master knows how important this selection is, because it is on the DDGM he will depend to deliver the message about his initiatives and programs for the year. Since he has an obligation to carry out the wishes of the Grand Master, the chosen brother must be proactive and committed to the goals of the Grand Master. Obviously, if the Grand Master does not have like-minded DDGMs to represent him, his jurisdictional plans will surely fall on deaf ears. In choosing such brethren, the incoming Grand Master must consider many qualities, not the least of which is the ability through strength of personality and credibility, to mobilize men into action. If he possesses those qualities, the DDGM is in the best position to foster growth at the district level. So how does the incoming Grand Master select the best man for the job, given the fact that he is likely not familiar with the names of many of the nominees? How does he reconcile the fact that districts have different methods and different criteria for their recommendations? For instance, some districts recommend strictly on a lodge rotation basis, with seniority being the determining factor. Other districts try to recommend the best men from the lodge whose turn it is. Still others have an election amongst the PDDGMs. A few districts recommend the most capable brethren who they feel can best serve the needs of the district for that year, regardless of what lodges they belong to or whose turn it is.

As you can see, district methods are varied and for the Grand Master the selection process can be very time-consuming and demanding. Since a great deal of trust is placed in the hands of the incumbent DDGM, to a large degree our leadership talent in the jurisdiction has as much to do with the DDGM as it has to do with the

Grand Master. The saddest case of all, of course, is the DDGM who is not suited for the role and is therefore unwilling, uninspired or unable to perform the job with dedication and imagination. In 1996, the Masonic Advancement Committee developed a list of desirable leadership characteristics for incumbent DDGMs to consider when identifying their successors. This list seems to have fallen into disuse. A major concern for talented brethren in large lodges is that for many, the opportunity to become a DDGM is diminished by the sheer weight of numbers. As a theoretical example, if a district has eight lodges and there are five Past Masters senior to another Past Master in one of those lodges, it could take up to forty years for that brother to become DDGM, given the use of the strict lodge rotation system. How many capable leaders do we lose as a result of this selection method?

This leads me to four basic premises about leadership:

First, everything depends upon leadership. Not some things. Not most things. Absolutely everything. The old saying, "How goes the leader, so goes the organization," is so true because it is human nature to take a cue from the one who is in charge. What then is leadership about? Simply stated, it is about influence. It is about setting a direction in a way that inspires others to want to follow. To do this, a leader must be so clear about his vision that he is able, through passion and logic, to convince people about the value and the benefits of better ideas and better methods.

Second, leadership skills can be learned. Everyone has leadership potential in some way. Leaders provide opportunities for others to use their talents. In this way, the leader becomes the catalyst for progress.

Third, leaders invest in people. Freemasonry is a people organization. Good masonic leaders instinctively know that when opportunities to lead are encouraged within the ranks, a sense of ownership develops within the Craft, and with that ownership comes motivation, pride, and ultimately, action through the power of people.

Fourth, active, informed leadership at the district level is the key to our success. It is at the district level that improvement strategies are best implemented. If such is the case, then it follows that the DDGM is in the most strategic position to lead the charge to get things done. The most important leadership we get from Grand Lodge is in the selection of the DDGM, and the most important decision an incoming Grand Master can make for the jurisdiction is to appoint DDGMs who are progressive and ready to lead. With these basic premises in mind, it seems to me that the rôle of DDGM is in a state of transition, now more than ever before, as we attempt to move from the *status quo* of pomp and ceremony, to a new approach where we see the traditional hierarchical forms of leadership slowly yielding to a model that focuses on enhancing the personal growth of members and the quality of our institution, through a combination of teamwork and personal involvement in decision making. This is the new, emerging approach to leadership, and I believe that by appointing DDGMs who embrace this model we can deal with the mounting external challenges of adapting to a new society, as well as solving the internal problems caused by diminishing numbers, an aging membership, and a decline in morale.

Now, let's examine and imagine the form and substance of future forward-looking districts. To begin with, it seems to me that it needs to be acknowledged again that the future of Freemasonry in this jurisdiction is in the district, because it is here that active change is best managed.

How will this come about? I see the office of the DDGM given to men who possess the qualities, the desire, and the ability to lead. I see prospective DDGMs being required to complete a course in leadership, or at the very least, attend one of the Grand Lodge Leadership Workshops. I see well-respected freemasons appointed to the office,

men who have a record of accomplishment, complete with a sense of mission, strong people skills, and a style that emphasizes inclusion and teamwork. I see the DDGM encouraging, supporting and assisting lodges to revitalize. I see the DDGM and his successor working together to achieve results over a multi-year period. I see DDGMs networking with their counterparts and working together to support each other with their district initiatives. As a result of this kind of collaboration, I believe it would be possible to develop a kind of "best practices" kit for lodges to draw ideas from and to try out. It would also be possible for district resource teams and guest speakers to be made available where needed, to kick-start struggling lodges, and to take good lodges to higher levels. Central to all of this is the DDGM who should be the focal point in stimulating the brethren within his district to work towards the concept of continuous lodge improvement. I see our districts adopting a proactive approach to the idea of growth and improvement by being involved in the process of self-examination. I see district studies conducted to learn more about new methods of identifying and training leaders, and of finding new ways of blending the rôles of traditional ceremony and meaningful substance. I see pilot projects being launched on issues such as broadening the base of consultation for recommending the appointment of the DDGM, and on the announcement of successors earlier in the year, perhaps in January, with an expectation of formal transition periods for these successors. I see district vehicles, such as special committees, created to bring lodges together for the purpose of coördination in the areas of future planning, leadership programs, education, lodge accountability, and other items in need of district attention. I see districts involved in making recommendations to Grand Lodge, through constitutional amendments if necessary, for the purpose of considering such issues as the election vs. the appointment of the DDGM, and the expansion of the number and type of Grand Lodge ceremonial offices so that the leadership office of DDGM is not compromised by the appointment to that position of men who are unqualified for it, but who rightfully deserve to be honoured for their dedication and service with a ceremonial Grand Lodge office. I see a master plan for the district—one that would be discussed and developed in lodges as part of the educational process. I do not see this work being done in isolation by small groups. This lodge process, to my way of thinking, would be a step along the way to encouraging individual ownership. I see districts thinking globally, using the resources of the Research Committee and the internet to access new, successful ideas practiced in other jurisdictions around the world. I see districts creating interest and excitement by trying out new concepts along the lines of Kent Henderson's "Lodge Epicurean." And I see, as an end result, lodges committed to the highest standard of ritualistic excellence, inter-lodge support, and community relevance. Grand Lodge could then function as a support system for the work of the lodges in the districts, and it could demonstrate that support by showcasing the success stories around the jurisdiction.

It is clear to me that to achieve the highest possible quality of leadership, it is increasingly urgent for the rôle of DDGM to be redefined. However, we must first identify the expectations for the job, so that we don't wind up putting men into situations they may not be prepared to handle. The definition needs to include not only the reason for the change but also an outline of the increasing demands that will be placed on DDGMs of the future, and of the qualities they will need to meet these challenges. Unfortunately we are not there yet, and until we have a system that recognizes the importance of appointing forward-thinking men with identified leadership skills, and arming them with a mission of substance, then it is probably best to leave well enough alone and

continue with the present system. Let it be said that if we truly believe that the future of Freemasonry is at the district level and that the DDGM is the key to making Freemasonry grow in our jurisdiction, then it is up to us to be the catalysts.

The vehicle is there which could allow us to be creative. We have every right to adopt whatever measures we wish, within the bounds of the *Constitutions* and in consultation with the Grand Master, to recreate the rôle for our districts. We don't have to wait for Grand Lodge to do it for us. You see, Grand Lodge is both a leader and a follower. Grand Lodge expects us to provide the enthusiasm, the energy and the impetus. It is a matter of record that Grand Lodge tends to take a conservative approach to local initiatives and ideas, and accepts them only when there is a groundswell of interest and there are proven results. Meaningful change comes from all of us. Grand Lodge's adoption of the Victoria-Columbia Lodge Mentorship Program is a prime example of the effectiveness of grass-roots leadership. A capable DDGM listens to the brethren in his lodges and then does his best to help them achieve their wishes. In other words, the rôle of the DDGM is to do for the brethren what they cannot, in the larger picture, accomplish on their own. This emerging approach to leadership and service is called servant-leadership, a model that, in my opinion, we in Freemasonry should consider adopting.

Make no mistake; the quality of our leaders is our responsibility. As such, we have a right to an informed process that will support that responsibility. We have a choice. Will it be "a pig in a poke," or an informed decision? Now for a moment, let us give thought to what is perhaps a controversial idea in Freemasonry, that of consciously encouraging men of talent, who are considerably younger than those of us currently in command, to take on key positions in leadership. Why?

Perhaps the answer is found in the distinguished lecture delivered by Dr. Leo Esaki entitled, *Innovations and Evolution: Reflections on a Life in Research*. In this lecture, Dr. Esaki indicated that most of the great discoveries and innovations by Nobel Laureates occurred at the average age of 32. Furthermore, Dr. Esaki indicated that the peak creativity of most people occurs in the decade around that age. It seems that as one grows older, experience increases but creativity steadily decreases. It may interest you to know that when the two minor Grand Lodges of this jurisdiction came together to form the Grand Lodge of British Columbia in 1871, there were major differences in form and substance to deal with; differences which required compromise and creativity to make the union possible. The two men who designed the plan and brought us together were Israel Wood Powell (our first Grand Master, who was 34 years of age at the time) and Robert Burnaby (our first Immediate Past Grand Master, who was 43). If the most precious, creative, and innovative period in human life is in the ten year period on either side of the age of 32, then perhaps we should discard the Dudley Davis notion that men in their thirties should not be seriously considered for masonic membership, because they are more interested in playing softball than in being part of an institution that focuses on character-building and self-improvement!

In conclusion, I would like to relate to you an interesting riddle I heard recently on the radio. Five birds were sitting on a wire. One bird decided to fly away. How many birds were left on the wire? The answer, of course, is five. Deciding to do something has no value or meaning until it is followed by action. Perhaps the message for freemasons is to be short on talk and long on action, rather than the other way around, as we are often accused of being. Let us reach out for the ideal! If we strive for perfection, we cannot go too far wrong!

# The Order of Women Freemasons: Lodge Victoria No. 124

PRESENTED AT THE VANCOUVER GRAND MASONIC DAY, MARCH 1, 2003  
BY R.W. BRO. STEPHEN GODFREY, P.M. HAIDA LODGE NO. 166

In March 2001, W Bro. William Down, Past Master of Henderson Lodge No. 84, presented to me a case and a box. In the case were articles of clothing, some masonic regalia and several ritual books and papers. In the box were books further ritual books and some masonic literature books. Both items had been given to him by Mrs. Phyllis McDougall, a member of the Oak Bay Chapter of Eastern Star, [wife of the late Bro. Mel McDougall P.M. of Malahat Lodge No. 107 G.L. of B.C. & Y.]. Mrs. McDougall had herself been given the case and box, with contents, by the nephew of a lady who was a member of Eastern Star and a woman freemason. This lady was Mrs. Annette Pohl, who was the charter Secretary of the Lodge Victoria No. 124 when it came into being in April 1960.

The purpose of the paper is to give a brief history of the Order of Women Freemasons, some detailed history of Lodge Victoria No. 124 and to present officially to the Victoria Lodge of Education and Research, the books and paraphernalia to be placed in the archives of this lodge.

From the early life of any freemason in Freemasonry, it is clearly understood that no woman can be made a freemason, and it is not surprising that this fact is adhered to since no one sees women attend our masonic meetings and join in our work. But to many it is a surprise that, in our long and varied history of Freemasonry, there has been the occasional story when a woman has been made a freemason. The celebrated story of Hon. Elizabeth St Leger, daughter of Viscount Doneraile, County Cork, Ireland for example is probably the most well known of all stories, and I will only suggest to the reader that he look at the end of the paper in the bibliography for references and enjoy the reading of these stories at another time. (Carr: 1985, pp.282-3)

The fact is that historically, very few women have become freemasons, and have become freemasons of lodges for men and all of them usually under some special circumstances. This evening, however, I give you the story of the Order of Women Freemasons, which began in England about 100 years ago, an order which is a complete duplication of our Masonry in every way possible, with the one exception – all their members are women. The Order is so exact a copy of our Freemasonry that even concordant bodies for Women have all been established parallel to those we have as our concordant bodies, with the equivalent Grand Lodge bodies ruling them as well.

The Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Masonry is open to all women of full age (over 21 years), of good report and who believe in a Supreme Being. It is a:

“...genuine Masonic organization, exclusively for women, and...claim that Masonic secrets came into our possession of the Order in a clear and regular way, given freely to women by Masons.” [*Golden Jubilee Souvenir* 1958]

Let me briefly dwell on two words in that quote, regular way. This phrase immediately causes me concern. How regular a manner did they receive the masonic material and all of the esoteric work of our rituals? If we had adhered to our obligations in our EA degree—I will not write, indite, print, stamp, stain, cut, carve hew, mark or engrave them—then perhaps the Order of Women Freemasons would not have

even started. And if we also adhered to the promise of never divulging any of our secrets but keeping silent, then again perhaps we would not have had an Order of Women Freemasons. Someone, somewhere gave to them access to ritual, or spoke to them about our work. That is not regular; that is very irregular! However, for the sake of this paper only, accept the fact that this Order does have some knowledge of Freemasonry as we know it today, and let us enjoy the story of this remarkable group of women, and their even more remarkable work.

In its present day organization, where did it start? In 1882 *Les Libres Penseurs* (The Free Thinkers) lodge in France decided that women should become freemasons by being initiated into its lodge. The first female initiate was a lady by the name of Mlle. Maris Desraimes. Once this action, had taken place, the lodge was clandestine and hence could not go back to its original status. So it did the next best thing, it separated itself from its Grand Lodge (La Grande Loge Symbolique de France) and formed a new Grand body known as La Grande Loge Symbolique Ecossaire. This body was under the direction of a Charter from the Ancient and Accepted Rite (Scottish Rite), and the development of this lodge and subsequent lodges under this Charter became known later as the Universal Order of Co-Masonry. Interest in Co-Masonry spread quickly because by 1902 the movement was first known in England when the first Co-Masonry Lodge formed on 26th September of that same year.

Several years passed and a small group of members of the Co-Masonry did not appear satisfied with the governance of their lodge with their parent body (The Supreme Council in France). The desire of the dissatisfied group was to have a Grand Lodge of their own, similar to the United Grand Lodge of England, “exactly parallel...both in constitutions, ritual and in breath of interpretation,” [*Golden Jubilee Souvenir*, 1958], but for Co-Masonry only. The Rev W. F. Geikie Cobb D.D., Rector of St. Ethelburga's. Bishopsgate, in London, was selected as Grand Master. Three Lodges were formed:-

- Golden Rule No. 1
- Emulation No. 2
- Lodge of Unity No. 3

And all three were consecrated on June 20, 1908.

The Grand Master, similar to the United Grand Lodge of England, remains in office until he/she decides to step down. Following Grand Master Cobb, all Grand Masters thereafter were women.

In the first few years of operation, it seemed logical for men to seek membership in a lodge under the United Grand Lodge of England and not under the clandestine Grand Lodge of England (Co-Masonry). I speculate as to the reasons for such a consideration. First perhaps the United Grand Lodge of England may have made a clear statement to its membership that suspensions would be waiting for any brother who chose to join the Co-Masonry. Second, perhaps those initiated into a regular masonic lodge learnt quickly that if they treasured their masonry, that they should not consider joining Co-Masonry, recognizing that it had to be clandestine since it was contrary to the obligations taken. In any case, I suspect that in England it was very difficult to find men to

join. So the Grand Lodge of England (Co-Masonry) agreed that any men who were members of their Grand Lodge at that time were allowed to stay whilst later applications were directed to a lodge under the United Grand Lodge of England. Apart from two original male charter members of the Co-Masonry lodges, all members thereafter were women, and thus it has been since. Since that time, the name of the Order is, The Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Masonry: The Order of Women Freemasons.

In time the number of lodges under this Grand Body began to grow, as did the need for the Order to have its own temple. Today their temple is at Pembridge Gardens, Bayswater, London. The lodge room is typical of any lodge room you would see around the world, with the Master's chair in the east and the altar directly in front of the Master (English style). Paneling from floor to ceiling graces the four sides of the room. Two large square columns attached to the south and north walls support wooden beams across the lodge. The floor is completely checkered. The Senior and Junior Warden's pedestals are in the appropriate places. The Grand Master's chair is a Venetian throne and believed to be from the Palace of a Bishop or Doge. It has a tall back with carved sides, back and top. Arms are beautifully carved, as is the base of the chair, which appears to be solid. There are the suggestions of four legs, but the spaces between them are filled with further panels of wood. All of it is the colour of gold, except the back, which is a dark blue cloth behind the elaborate wooden carved panel. The whole probably stands about 6-7feet high. [See black and white photo Vol. 37, No. 133, May 1966.] The Grand Lodge Room is indeed grand and worthy of the center of Women Freemasonry.

During the first twenty years of its life, ten lodges were formed—and all in England. In 1928 the Order decided to spread itself beyond the boundaries of England. Lodge Mercury No. 11 was consecrated as a traveling lodge, similar in style to military lodges in England and Ireland. The purpose was for this lodge to travel to centres where some women were already known as masons, to set up a lodge and initiate other women until such time as sufficient numbers were ready to form their own lodge. To give you an idea of the extent of the work of Lodge Mercury No.11, in 1958 a new Lodge Mercury No. 111 was formed to cover the northern part of England, whilst Lodge Mercury No. 11 continued its work “south of the River Trent only.” [*Golden Jubilee Souvenir*. p.23]

In 1948 Lodge Mercury No. 11 traveled to Scotland, the first time a lodge under this order had gone outside the country of England.

During the post war years, traveling became easier, and many women, visiting England and having knowledge of the Women Freemasons, began to inquire if they could become members while visiting the country. In 1950, a special lodge named Lodge Voyagers No. 40 was formed for those from overseas to be installed as masons and to be connected with the order in England through membership of this lodge while residing in their own countries. This concept became so popular that at the consecration of Lodge Voyager in December 1950, 425 members formed its founding membership.

It is the membership of this lodge that spurred women to begin to form small pockets of Women Freemasons about the world, not as lodges but simply as clubs and meeting groups. Later several would apply to England for their own lodge, and this happen to Canada. The first four lodges in Canada were:-

- Lodge Pioneer Hope No. 72 Toronto (No. 1 in Canada) consecrated in October 29th, 1954,
- London Lodge of Accord No. 78 London Ontario (No. 2 in Canada) consecrated in May 29th, 1955,

- Lodge Trillium of York No. 79 Toronto (No. 3 in Canada) consecrated May 30th, 1955.
- Lodge Heritage No. 84 Oshawa (No. 4 in Canada) consecrated May 9th, 1956.

And we have to wait for another four years in Victoria before a group of ladies in our city begin to make requests for their own lodge on the Pacific coast. One can only surmise that ladies in Victoria had been members of Lodge Voyagers No.40 and/or members from lodges in Ontario who moved to Victoria to create a core group interested in forming their own lodge here in our capital city of British Columbia. This part of the history of Lodge Victoria No. 124 is not available, but it would certainly be worth seeking other sources to find out the names of members of Victoria Lodge who were the sponsors of this lodge. Some can be found from the list of early members in *The Gavel*, the official Journal of the order.

What history found of the Lodge Victoria No. 124 has been gleaned from the Grand Lodge Journal, *The Gavel*—the appendix lists the copies that are at hand—and some of the other books and papers in the packages given to me. In Vol. 31, No. 118, dated May 1960, [the first reference to Lodge Victoria No. 124], the journal reports of the various ways that members of the Grand Lodge of the order, and members of the Lodge Voyagers No. 40, made their way to Victoria to be present at the Consecration of Lodge Victoria. Three brethren (ladies) left England on the S.S. Saxonia—probably landing in Montreal—flew to Calgary, then by train to Vancouver, and finally by boat to the Island. Seven Brethren traveled from Ontario by bus leaving Ontario on April 13th arriving five days later. (For England this was big news; such traveling time across one country was unheard of.) Three others traveled by train from Ontario and took “equipment” needed for the ceremony. The Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master had flown to Amsterdam and then by polar route to Vancouver. They both had a day to relax and plan and then through morning, afternoon and evening sessions they initiated, passed and raised 29 members. “The group will stay at the Empress for 10 days,” reported the *Daily Colonist*, dated April 19th, 1960. As a matter of interest, following the consecration in Victoria, they all packed and set off to Vancouver to initiate, pass and raise another 17members and consecrate Vanguard Lodge No. 125, in Vancouver. [*Gavel*, May 1960 p.5] (It has to be noted that another organization began in Victoria first before organizing a lodge in Vancouver!)

The Consecration of Lodge Victoria No. 124 occurred on April 26th, 1960. Most Worshipful Grand Master, Miss Mary Gordon Muirhead Hope, (photo in the *Golden Jubilee Souvenir*. p. 48) and her Deputy, Miss Dorothy Allen Taylor arrived in Victoria for the initiation of 29 ladies for the lodge. Reaction to this event is found in an article from the *Daily Colonist* dated April 19th, 1960. RW Bro. T. D. Robinson, the District Deputy Grand Master of District No. 1 said, “Such an organization could not possibly be recognized by our members.” Mrs. Doris Watson, Grand Matron of the Order of the Eastern Star said that she had never heard of the Women Freemasons. “We...are an order of relatives of Freemasons.”

In responding to those comments, the Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Mary Hope, said, “We are not a subsidiary or auxiliary of masculine Masonry.” She then explains that there were at that time 126 lodges throughout the Commonwealth including Canada. They were an order auxiliary to masculine masonry admitting female relatives of masons, but then reported that they also “admit women of good standing, on their own merits and not on those of relatives.”

No records are available of the installation of the officers of that

first Victoria Lodge. Information of who the Worshipful Master, Treasurer and Secretary again can be found in copies of *The Gavel*. In the latter pages of each edition is a list of each lodge identifying its place of meeting, the three officers, (Worshipful Master, Treasurer and Secretary in that order) their addresses, and a list of meetings that had been held during the year since its last reporting period. Each meeting is a single line description of the program of the evening. For example:-

8th Regular Meeting, February 10, 1961 3<sup>o</sup> Bros. Joyce Eleanor Baggaley and Gladys Eleanor Jones.

9th Regular Meeting, March 10, 1961 1<sup>o</sup> Mrs. Jemima D. Florence

10th Regular Meeting April 14, 1961 2<sup>o</sup> Mrs. Jemima D. Florence [*The Gavel*: Vol. 32, No. 121.]

Several editions of *The Gavel*, (printed in March, May and November, and later just in May and November), have the full slate of officers of the lodge listed. [November 1961, May 1962, November 1962, November 1964]

In March 1961 edition, [*The Gavel*, No. 120, Vol.32 p.85] the following entry is made for Lodge Victoria No.124 (No 5 Canada)

Meeting at the Knights of Pythias Hall 723 Cormorant Street, Victoria BC

W.M.	Mrs. E.R. Figg	address and phone number
Treas	Mrs. J.A. Coates	address given
Sec	Mrs. A. Pohl	address given

...then a list of meetings at the reporting time, including the name of an initiate Mrs. Joyce Eleanor Baggaley, possibly the first initiated that the lodge had after it being consecrated.

A list of Installed Officers appears in Vol. 33, No. 122, dated November 1961.

W. Bro. Harriett M. Finbow	W.M.
Bro. I. R. Randall	S.W.
Bro. D. K. Kitt	J.W.
Bro. E. Little	Chaplain
Bro. L. McBurney	Treasurer
Bro. A. Pohl	Secretary
Bro. M. Leheim	D of C
Bro. H. McLaren	S.D.
Bro. D. A. Davis	J.D.
Bro. I. R. Van Clieaf	Asst. D of C
Bro. P.B. Bingham	Almoner
Bro. H. Kinloch	Asst. Sec.
Bro. E. Weydert	I.G.
Bros. O.M. Caughlin, D.E. D. Dunbar, R.D. Fuller, F.M. MacDonald, F. White and B. L. Whitney	Stewards
Bro. M. A. Anderson	Tyler

...a total of 20 ladies.

On the reverse of a small pink ticket in the collection [the ticket is for an entry to an Eastern Star function], is a list of officers for 1963-1964.

WM	Pohl
SW	Davis
JW	Shade
IMP	Randell
Tres	McLauren
Sec	Wilson
SD	Archer
	(Hilda, wife of RW Bro. Vern Archer (Malahat Lodge No. 107)
JD	Leheim
DoC	Dunbar

Act. DoC	Kitt
Chap	Kinloch
Alm	Bingham
IG	Caughlin
T	Calman

...and under the list a line drawn across the card where three further names are written: Weydert, Coates, Adams.

In the collection of books and papers is an Installation program dated April 22nd 1972—the Installation of Bro. V.J. Marshall as Worshipful Master. Installing Master is W. Bro. Hilda V. Archer, P.A.G.Purs. assisted by W. Bro. F. Butler (SW) W. Bro. E. Thomas (JW) W. Bro. D. Dunbar, P.A.G. St.B. (Chaplain and Secretary) W. Bro. M. Shade, P.A.G.Purs., (DoC), and W. Bro. M. Burt (IG)

Officers of that year are:

WM	V.T.Marshall
IPM	F. Butler
SW	H. Archer P.A.G.Purs.
JW	E Thomas
Chap	H. Bingham
Tres.	D Shalo
Sec.	H. Marsden
DoC	D. Davis
SD	K. Watson
JD	S. Tuttle
Almn.	R. Moffat
IG	W. Hilling (?)
Stew	—
T	M. Shade P.A.G.Purs

On some odd pieces of paper in books, one finds first names of officers and instructions for them on floor work.

In the edition of *The Gavel* dated May 1965 [Vol. 36, No. 130] the information about each lodge under the Grand Lodge of Women Freemasons was printed for the last time. Thereafter only the list of lodge name and number in alphabetical order was given. At that time, in 1965, the lodge was still meeting in Cormorant Street in the Knights of Pythias Hall. W Bro. Marjory Agnes Shade was Worshipful Master, Bro. Hazel McLauren was Treasurer, and W Bro. Isabelle Randall, Secretary. I have heard that they met later at the Norway House on Hillside Avenue.

As I have mentioned, the work of the members of Lodge Voyagers No. 40 is probably the initial start of Lodge Victoria No. 124. From what I have read through several editions of *The Gavel*, it is these women who, having been initiated in the lodge in England, did yeoman service to bring Women Freemasonry to many other countries. Lodge Voyagers was acting similarly to a military lodge in 18th and 19th centuries. The difference being that these ladies were not a lodge unto themselves meeting regularly in a lodge hall, but met as groups of women with similar interests. They also traveled for the purpose of assisting Grand Lodge officers to consecrate new lodges by assisting Grand Lodge officers initiating, passing and raising members for a new lodge, and then consecrating the lodge formally. But following the consecration of a lodge, what did it do?

In copies of *The Gavel*, we can gather small snippets of information and make some sense of what this lodge for Women Freemasons was doing. Clearly they acted as a typical lodge as we know it: regular meeting and practices, initiating, passing, and raising candidates to become members. RW Bro. Vern Archer, Past Master of Malahat lodge No. 107 G.L. of B.C. and Yukon, had informed me that most of the members came from those ladies who had been members of the Order of the Amaranth in Oak Bay.

In the article from the *Daily Colonist*, dated April 19th, 1960, the Grand Master, MW Bro. Hope “explained that special charitable work outside of the Order was mainly [with] hospitals and home for the aged. ‘Our very special protégé is the Florence Nightingale Hospital in London. There are more, but another where we do a lot of work is a convalescent home in the north of England. We try to choose hard-up hospitals.’”

Lodge Victoria No. 124 decided to support similar charitable work by purchasing items for the local special care facilities in town. The following information can be found from photographs printed in *The Gavel* and from the captions accompanying them. Some time in early 1965, the lodge purchased a heat lamp for therapy for the patients of the Gorge Hospital. [*The Gavel*. Vol. 37, No. 131]. In 1969, the lodge presented a cheque for a special shoulder wheel to the George Pearkes Clinic for Handicapped Children, [*The Gavel*. Vol. 41, No. 142, November 1969]. The money had been raised in 1967-1968 but the clinic had not been opened until 1969, so the presentation was delayed for that purpose. Another photo of lamps presented to Gorge Hospital in 1971 is illustrated. It is in the caption of this photo that we read The Gorge Hospital “is the Lodge Victoria’s local charity.” [*The Gavel*. Vol. 41, No. 146]. A special wheelchair for double amputees was presented in 1972, [*The Gavel*. Vol. 41, No. 148]. A cheque for \$300 for pulsating mattresses, was presented in 1973, [*The Gavel*. Vol. 41, Vol. 150], and \$700 cheque presented to Glendale Hospital in 1975, [*The Gavel*. Vol. 41, No. 153]. For their efforts, the Lodge Victoria won Charity Sashes—recognition from England for their charitable works. Lodge Victoria was mentioned twice over the years of the lodge’s existence having received this award.

One of the trends brought from England, was for each lodge to have a unique banner representing the lodge. Lodge Victoria made its own banner. The photo was printed in the journal of May 1971, [*The Gavel*. Vol. 41, No. 145]. The photo was black and white but there is a description of the banner on page 13 but under the title Lodge Victoria No. 134(*sic*) (British Columbia) No. 5 Canada. The design is interesting. It makes every effort to describe the location of the lodge. The banner was dedicated by R. W. Bro. I. Mullen, Asst. G.M. on April 23rd, 1969. The following is a description of the banner:-

It is hand embroidered on dark blue satin and white ribbon with gold braid trimming. The dogwood flower is shown in the top left corner and the Maple Leaf in the right top corner. The crown and royal cipher, (VR) reminds us that the city of Victoria took its name from Queen Victoria. The insert is surrounded by a rope [the ends tied together with a reef knot] symbolizing the long naval traditions associated with Victoria. [An old fort bastion represents Fort Victoria.] The Pacific Ocean with the setting sun and the mountains of Vancouver Island in the background, showing we are the furthest point west.

[*The Gavel*. Vol. 41, No. 145, p.13]

Two columns, J and B, are placed left and right side of the banner creating the borders of the design. On the bases of each are a level and a plumb. A tessellated pavement stretches between the columns from the base of the columns towards the centre, where it meets three steps, each smaller than the one it rests on. On the top step is the open Bible with the S & C. Finally, in the centre of the rod, which holds the banner at the top, is a five-pointed star, with the apex pointing to the heavens. The star is not that of the Eastern Star logo.

In *The Gavel* dated November 1976, W Bro. Dorothy Dunbar, P.A.G.St.Br., informed London that the reception of the journal, “is

enjoyable as it links Victoria with the rest of the Masons. We are so far away and now that our Lodge Victoria No. 124 is not working we are scattered and rarely meet,” [*The Gavel*. Vol. 43, No. 156]. The last reference to Lodge Victoria No. 124 is in the list of lodges under the Order of Women Freemason in November 1979, [*The Gavel*. Vol. 45, No. 162.] Less than 20 years of life, this small group of women played an active rôle in our community as charitable ambassadors, and gave much enjoyment for themselves in the philosophy of Freemasonry, exactly as we practice it.

Their ritual books are emulation work—Nigerian Emulation Work. They wore aprons like ours and officers wore collars as we do. Their dress was usually a long white gown over a black skirt and white blouse. Past Grand Lodge Officers wore dark blue aprons as we do, and with gold trim if a Grand Lodge Officer. Their lodge was identical to ours. They knew all our secret work.

In England the order also created their own Royal Arch Chapters with a Grand Chapter governing body, Mark Masons lodges, Cryptic Degrees (Royal and Select Masters), the Order of the Knights of the Red Cross of Babylon, the Royal Order of Scotland, Red Cross of Constantine and the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre and St. John the Evangelist, The Religious Order of the Temple and the Order of Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta, the order of the Rose Croix of H.R.D.M., Grand Elected Knight Kadosh (30° of Scottish Rite), Royal Arch Knight Templar Priest. In all they were exactly like us, except, we are male and they were female. Masonically what we know, they knew. What ritual we learn, they learned too. The degrees we present, they presented also.

We have a copy of the by-laws of Lodge Victoria No. 24. Dated March 1962, it has nine articles. The first gives time and place of meeting. I have already mentioned the location of their hall. They met on the 4th Monday of April (Installation), May, October, November, January, February and March each year. They had a lodge council [similar to a GP Committee] consisting of the Master, Immediate Past Master, Wardens, Treasurer, and Secretary. Three formed a quorum.

RW Bro. Archer, in a talk at the Official Visit of the DDGM in November 2001, mentioned that the demise of the lodge was due to a lack of interest in the lodge and no young members being initiated. Their source of new blood was limited if it was to come from the Order of the Amaranth since it itself has been small in recent years.

As an anecdote, the tessellated carpet, which sits in Malahat Lodge No. 107, is a gift from the Lodge Victoria No. 124 to Malahat Lodge. RW Bro. Vern Archer, whose wife, Hilda, was a Past Master of the Lodge Victoria, probably encouraged the gift. When the lodge folded, the tessellated carpet found a new home. What happened to their other furniture is a mystery, although I know there might be several members of lodges in Victoria, who might know. They may have their own stories to tell of the Women Freemasons.

I inquired of Bro. John Hamill, of the United Grand Lodge of England, when he was touring our part of Canada in October 2000, if the Order of Women Freemasons was still in existence, and he confirmed that it was. He quickly pointed out that the United Grand Lodge of England does not recognize them officially. It can’t under the Landmarks. But he did say that the members of the UGLE do meet socially with the Women Freemasons, and that the United Grand Lodge does acknowledge the tremendous work the women perform for charity under their name, Order of Women Freemasons. Other than that, they are not recognized.

The Journal of the order, *The Gavel*, has some remarkable articles



in them, which could be used for further education at this lodge and any other lodge. The topics are good masonic education of a general nature. At this time, I present all the material to the Victoria Lodge of Education and Research and trust that what books there are in this collection will be of use to members of this lodge. I ask that they be identified as from W. Bro. Annette Pohl, via her grandson, Mrs. Pohl, the charter Secretary of Lodge Victoria No. 124, Order of Women Freemasons.

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to the Victoria Lodge of Education and Research, Victoria B.C.,  
on March 19th, 2002.



# Three questions about Freemasonry

## What is Freemasonry? When did it start? Why 1717?

PRESENTED AT THE VANCOUVER GRAND MASONIC DAY, MARCH 1, 2003  
BY BRO. KENT JOHANSEN

### What is Freemasonry?

In order to trace the ancient roots of Freemasonry and to determine when the whole idea originated, it is necessary to define what Freemasonry is. Lots of “masonic” symbolism can be found on Mayan vases, Celtic cauldrons, Egyptian tombs and in Greek temples. It is very tempting to postulate that a freemason would have been very comfortable with the “degree work” happening in ancient Egypt. The symbolism of the two pillars originates here, and the temples with the starry ceilings ring a bell of recognition in any Freemason.

Last week, I visited the museum where a Cimmerian cauldron made of silver is kept. One of the motives is the goddess Kybele dipping wounded/bent warriors in a cauldron, whereafter they ride away on horses, reborn. These very cauldrons of the Cimmerians are thought to be the root of the Holy Grail myth. The cauldron is from around 200 BCE.



Lots of other traces of “masonic symbolism” are found in other places of the world.

The Chinese used the symbols of the level and the square in exactly the same way as we do: In a book called “The Great Learning”, written in 500 BC, it is stated “A man should abstain from doing unto others what he would not they should do unto him, and this is called the principle of acting on the Square.”

Confucius, the great Chinese moral teacher, born about 550 BCE and Mencius, his pupil, arranged an orderly system of moral teaching. From the sixth volume of the work on philosophy, I quote: “A Master Mason in teaching his apprentices, makes use of the compasses and the square. We who are engaged in the pursuit of Wisdom must also make use of the compasses and the square.”

Mencius also wrote: “Men should apply the compass morally to their lives, and the level and marking-line besides, if they would walk in the straight and even path of Wisdom, and keep themselves within the bonds on honor and virtue.”

In Peking, in China, there is a place called the Temple of Heaven, one of the few ancient relics of the Chinese monotheistic faith. It is constructed in the form of a square, with special seats in the east, the west and the south. There is an altar in the very centre. There are three circular platforms of diameters of 90 feet, 150 feet, and 210 feet. Note that these are in the ratio of 3, 5 and 7. The temple was rebuilt in 1420, but the altar is considered to be 4000 years old.

There was a society called HUNG, or “The Brotherhood of Heaven

and earth,” which can be traced back to 386 CE. It had a supreme Grand Master, a Senior and Junior Warden, and many subordinate lodges. In the lodge ceremonies, the initiate knelt at the altar, with the Senior and Junior Wardens kneeling at his right and left, each holding a sword overhead to form a right angle over the candidate. The lecture given by the Worshipful Master taught that all are equal, that they must live uprightly and justly, that they must help a brother in distress, preserve his secrets, respect the chastity of his wife, and that they must obey the Worshipful Master. The three great principles of the Hung lodge were Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

In 1879, when moving Cleopatra’s Needle, the foundation contained a rough ashlar, a perfect ashlar, a square, a trowel, a trestle-board and a hieroglyph (meaning temple), all placed in such position as to show that they were used as symbols.

Another example from the other side of the world is a Mayan vase from 550-950, depicting a kneeling candidate and the lodge officers. Even the signs are recognizable. Depending on our chosen definition of Freemasonry, this might prove some select and lucky Mayans, Egyptians and Chinese Freemasons. If we define Freemasonry as a recognizable “peculiar system of moral, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols,” it seems that Freemasonry may have existed thousands of years ago. With a little artistic freedom and a 300-year-old image of the World, it is not far fetched to say that Freemasonry originated with Adam.



At this day and age, however, this is not an acceptable answer for a serious historian. Similar systems may have existed around the world, using the same archetype symbols and teachings, even the same symbolic meaning for operative tools. But the question should possibly be rephrased to:

How far back can we trace *our* particular roots. And where did we come from?

### When did it start?

The compound term “Freemason” occurs first in 1375—according to a recently found writing, even prior to 1155<sup>2</sup>—and, contrary to Gould<sup>3</sup> means primarily a mason of superior skill, though later it also designated one who enjoyed the freedom, or the privilege, of a trade guild. In the former sense it is commonly derived from freestone-mason, a mason hewing or building in free (ornamental) stone in opposition to a rough (stone) mason.<sup>4</sup>

This derivation, though harmonizing with the meaning of the



term, seemed unsatisfactory to some scholars. Hence Speth proposed to interpret the word freemasons as referring to those masons claiming exemption from the control of local guilds of the towns, where they temporarily settled.<sup>5</sup> In accordance with this suggestion the "New English Dictionary of the Philological Society" (Oxford, 1898) favors the interpretation of freemasons as skilled artisans, emancipated according to the medieval practice from the restrictions and control of local guilds in order that they might be able to travel and render services, wherever any great building (cathedral, etc.) was in process of construction. These freemasons formed a universal craft for themselves, with a system of secret signs and passwords by which a

craftsman, who had been admitted on giving evidence of competent skill, could be recognized. On the decline of Gothic architecture this craft coalesced with the mason guilds.<sup>6</sup>

It is a very difficult task to distinguish between the operative guilds and the speculative freemasons. Looking at the Kirkwall Scroll, carbon dated to the 15th century, which hangs in Kirkgate Kilwinning No. 38(2), any Scottish Rite freemason would be strongly reminded of his 18th degree. But according to UGLE, this is a good 250 years too early. So did the scroll originate from a craft guild with an 18th degree?

During my visit in Denmark last week, my good friend and archeologist Bo Madsen, explained to me how his extensive research of the old Danish craft guilds had made him understand, that all of the craft guild *mainly* dealt with personal development, virtues and enhancement of human qualities. This included cobblers, shipbuilders, chimneysweeps, weavers, fullers and carpenters.

In order to find our "peculiar system of morality" it is necessary to look at the guilds.

The earliest traces of guilds in England are found in the laws of Ina in the seventh century. These guilds were formed for religious and social purposes and were voluntary in character. Subsequent enactments down to the time of Athelstan (925-940) show that they soon developed into frith guilds or peace guilds, associations with a corporate responsibility for the good conduct of their members and their mutual liability. Frith is often translated as "peace" but goes beyond that. It encompasses peace, but includes kinship and brotherhood. It is related to the words *friend* and *free*. Frith was to our forebears the "power that makes them 'friends' towards one another, and free men towards the rest of the world." "Frith is something active, not merely leading kinsmen to spare each other, but forcing them to support one another's cause, help and stand sponsor for one another, trust one another... The responsibility is absolute, because kinsmen are literally the doers of one another's deeds." [8, pp 42-43]

Very frequently, as in the case of London in early times, the guild law came to be the law of the town. The main object of these guilds was

the preservation of peace, right, and liberty. Religious observances also formed an important part of guild-life, and the members assisted one another both in spiritual and temporal necessities.

The oldest extant charter of a guild dates from the reign of Canute, and from this we learn that a certain Orcy presented a guild-hall (gegylde-halle) to the gyldschiipe of Abbotsbury in Dorset, and that the members were associated in almsgiving, care of the sick, burial of the dead, and in providing Masses for the souls of deceased members. The social side of the guild is shown in the annual feast for which provision is made. In the "Dooms of London" we find the same religious and social practices described, with the addition of certain advantageous commercial arrangements, such as the establishment of a kind of insurance-fund against losses, and the furnishing of assistance in the capture of thieves. These provisions, however, are characteristic rather of the merchant guilds, which grew up during the latter half of the eleventh century.

During this next phase of the guilds, municipalities were run almost entirely by the merchant guilds. The craftsmen, ever increasing in numbers, struggled to break down the trading monopoly of the merchant guilds and to win for themselves the right of supervision over their own body. The weavers and fullers were the first crafts to obtain royal recognition of their guilds, and by 1130 they had guilds established in London, Lincoln, and Oxford. Little by little through the next two centuries they broke down the power of the merchant guilds, which received their death-blow by the statute of Edward III which in 1335 allowed foreign merchants to trade freely in England.

In the system of craft guilds the administration lay in the hands of wardens, bailiffs, or masters, while for admission a long apprenticeship was necessary. Like the merchant guilds, the craft guilds cared for the interests both spiritual and temporal of their members, providing old age and sick pensions, pensions for widows, and burial funds. The master craftsman was an independent producer, needing little or no capital, and employing journeymen and apprentices who hoped in time to become master craftsmen themselves.<sup>7</sup> Many of the guilds still exist as charitable organizations in London.

This development of the guilds suggests a somewhat surprising reversal of the usual order of things:

The guilds started around King Athelstan (925-940) as speculative organizations, striving towards making good men better. Operative masonry adopted the guild construction to improve their members. In other terms:

The symbolism and organization of Operative Freemasons sprang out of Speculative Guilds. When the building boom of the Gothic cathedrals ended, the guilds gradually returned to their original state, keeping the masonic elements.

And Freemasonry was born.

As with all new insights of Freemasonry, this is actually old knowledge. I recently managed to obtain the so-called "suppressed" 48 pages of the original Anderson Constitution. These pages were in the original 1723 version, printed in very few copies – but disappeared in the first volume production in 1734.

The pages talk about how Adam "no doubt" taught his sons Geometry and, just as I have done in the first pages of this paper, discuss how the basic concepts must have been known at all times. Then he rather flatteringly states that the Danes were responsible for destroying many of the records and proceeds to tell the Legend of the Craft. Namely that King Athelstan's youngest son Edwin took a liking to the Masons' Guild because of their knowledge and teachings—and that he joined as the first non-mason. Edwin then purchased a free Charter

from King Athelstan, which gave the guild the right to judge and correct among themselves. There is an ongoing discussion whether Edwin was the son or the brother of Athelstan. But I think the basic outline of the story, as presented by Anderson, is in very good accordance with the story of the Guilds as it is known today.

The guilds contained the marrow of Freemasonry, and I feel no doubt that this is where it all started.

The gradual transformation of the Craft Guilds (back) into speculative Freemasonry is very well documented. This is mainly Scottish history, starting with the lodges of Kilwinning, Scone (Scoon) and Perth. Considering the political strength of the guilds, combined with the privileges of the freely traveling guild of masons (sent out in the World in 1160 by the pope, naming them freemasons), this was a good place to be, to learn and to hide.

This was in a time when both crown and church practiced burning people for "calculating." The freemasons may very well have attracted people on the run, or people who had unhealthy interests enabling them to calculate a horoscope: Knight Templars (1307), Albigensians (1209-1255) as well as Jacobites (- 1745).

Even parts of the ritual would have been political dynamite at the time. I quote the 1st degree Q&A:

A: "The Sun being at the centre and the Earth revolving around the same on its own axis...."

This was known as the Galilean heresy. Not a thing to perform in public. Just as it is today, the secretive organizations of freemasons may have provoked a certain nervousness among the non-members.

## Why 1717?

It is, or at least has been for a long time, the firm official opinion of UGLE, that Freemasonry started in 1717, St. Johns Day, at the Goose and Gridiron when four lodges decided to form the Grand Lodge.

This strikes everybody who hears it as a contradiction in terms. Why impose something like that on seekers of truth and knowledge? In my Mother Lodge in Denmark, it is still largely forbidden (by the Grand Lodge) to lecture on anything before 1717, unless you specifically call everything operative freemasonry. I have often wondered why. Many different explanations have been offered.

Bro. Dr. Robert Lomas, author of *The Hiram Key*, *Uriel's Machine* etc. kindly sent me a paper he wrote for United Grand Lodge of Queensland. In it, he very convincingly argues that the real reason for the date 1717 being set as the start of Freemasonry is because of the Jacobite Rebellion. It is true, that claiming to be a freemason in London, Anno 1717 would have been equivalent to declaring yourself one of the recently defeated Jacobites. The Hanoverian crown would consider themselves duly invited to have you drawn and quartered as a traitor<sup>9</sup>. After the 1715 Jacobite rising, the Whig government branded Tories and freemasons as Jacobites and disturbers of the peace.

I am highly inclined to believe a separation in Hanoverian and Jacobite Freemasonry is valid. I suggest you read the paper, I know people are working on getting the whole information package from UGLQ, and it will be available on the website.

But I do not believe it was all done for political reasons. The role of UGLE today is very much that of setting a standard for regular



# A Mock Masonic Trial: Jacob's Letter

PRESENTED AT THE VANCOUVER GRAND MASONIC DAY, MARCH 1, 2003

BY BRO. MARK S. DWOR

This "Mock Masonic Trial" is not really a trial with witnesses and courtroom arguments. The three of us, VW Bro. Mike Edwards, the Head of the Trial Commission, Bro. Dwight Ross, who has prosecuted Masonic Charges, and I, who have defended Masonic Charges, will discuss with all of you the issues raised in this story. At the end you will decide which, if any, of these charges will be successful.

The story that follows is made up, but much of the factual details are based on real, yet completely unrelated occurrences. You all know the topic is about masonic secrets, but there is no secret about the individuals portrayed in this story but most of them were well meaning and acting for what each thought was the best interests of the Craft.

A few years ago in a smaller metropolitan centre in British Columbia an article appeared in the local newspaper. A well known citizen, named Scott, had died and the details of his standing room only funeral were reported. The emotional climax of the article was the description of how a frail elderly man gave a eulogy which started off with this man, Jacob, mentioning that Scott had been his close friend and showed him brotherly love when he needed help, then Jacob proceeded to eulogize Scott, without notes, with the most poignant sentiments the reporter had ever heard. The reporter transcribed it verbatim and this eulogy was published in its entirety.

The reporter did not know that Scott and Jacob were both freemasons and had belonged to the same lodge for decades. The reporter did not know that the poignant eulogy was really a major portion of the *Address to the Brethren*, known typically as the *Ideal of a Freemason*. The reporter did not know that this portion of the *Address to the Brethren* had originally been written by Otto Klotz and published as an addendum to his two part "History of Freemasons," in *The Craftsman*, published March 15, 1868. Nor did the reporter know that a previous Grand Master had ruled that neither the *Address* nor any part of it could be delivered outside the ritual of the annual Installation of Officers. Nor did the reporter know that the text of this part of the *Address to the Brethren* was posted on the Grand Lodge website.

The reporter would find out all of the above as the story unfolded. The reporter would also find out that in this city there was one lodge hall housing two lodges, Number 228 and Number 306. The reporter would learn about Masters of lodges, Secretaries, District Deputy Grand Masters and even something about masonic secrets.

A few days after the article was published, Lodge No. 306 had its regular meeting at which time a memorial service was held for the late Bro. Scott. During that meeting the Immediate Past District Deputy questioned the appropriateness of the use of the *Address to the Brethren* at the funeral, contrary to the immediate Past Grand Master's edict. It just so happens that Lodge No. 306 had embarked on a programme to be more responsive to their members' needs including sending the minutes of the meetings to all the members in the next monthly notice after the minutes had been approved. Thus, there typically was a two month time lag between the actual meeting and the mailing of the minutes. The members had all requested detailed minutes, so the Past District Deputy's comments were to be duly

included.

A week before the next regular meeting, Bro. Jacob died. At that next meeting, after the memorial service for Jacob, the Master of the lodge read out a letter from the late Bro. Jacob. This letter had been sealed in an envelope that Bro. Jacob had requested be stored in the lodge's safety deposit box some years earlier. The instructions on the envelope were that the contents were to be read, in open lodge, with the Master's approval, at the first regular meeting after the death of the last to die of Scott and Jacob.

A synopsis of the letter was as follows: Jacob and his wife were Jewish survivors of the German concentration camps who married after the war and emigrated to Canada to start a new life. A few years after settling in this city, he had been asked to join Lodge No. 228. He was very pleased; he believed in all the values espoused by Freemasonry and he really appreciated being accepted as a brother. He and Scott were raised at the same time and gradually they both became stewards. At the first meeting after the installation of officers, after carrying out a command of the Worshipful Master, Jacob as a new steward resumed his seat and, due to his nervousness, dropped his staff on the floor, instead of in the holder. After he had corrected his mistake, he sat down, and a brother on the sidelines leaned over and whispered to him "You people cause trouble wherever you go; too bad the German's didn't finish the job and now you come and live amongst us." Jacob was devastated. A few days after the meeting, he phoned the Master of the lodge and told him that he had to resign his position of Steward due to business pressures and that he wasn't sure how often he could attend the lodge.

He didn't attend lodge, and Scott, who had become a bit more than an acquaintance would drop by for coffee a few times a week. Gradually, Scott realized that Jacob was not attending the lodge for reasons different than he had told the Master. Gradually, Jacob started to trust Scott and finally told him of the incident.

Scott was very angry, and urged Jacob to raise a stink and have the offending brother punished or expelled. Jacob said he had been through enough tumult in his life. He hadn't even told his wife because he knew how much pain the story would cause her. Scott then said that he could never sit in Lodge No. 228 with that brother because he was at variance with him, and that he (Scott) would start visiting other lodges. He finally settled in No. 306 and a year or two later Jacob joined him. Both had exemplary masonic careers; both were Master of the lodge in due course. Jacob avoided visiting No. 228 until Jacob was made District Deputy. Jacob had almost refused to be District Deputy as he felt that the Grand Master's representatives should never be in a position where he had to remove himself from a lodge because he was at variance with a brother. Scott, again came to the rescue, as he could prove satisfactory to Jacob that the offending brother would not be in any lodge in the District during Jacob's year as DDGM. Jacob wrote that he made a point of obscuring some details of this, as he never wanted anyone to know who this offending brother was. He said his story was not about recrimination, but rather about redemption.

At the end of the letter he said that he had never told his wife about this incident because of her high regard for all freemasons and the pain the original incident would have caused. He didn't want her joy of his acceptance tarnished. She had predeceased Jacob. He also asked that if Scott's widow was alive when this was read in open lodge, that an enclosed copy of the letter, with some personal comments be delivered to her. This was done.

The emotional impact of this account on the brethren about the lodge was immediate and transcendent. The Master directed that the letter would be re-typed and distributed to all the brethren in the lodge, with the next regular notice.

For those who are keeping track, this notice included the minutes of the meeting with Scott's memorial and the query regarding the appropriateness of the *Address to the Brethren* portion being used at a funeral.

Scott's widow called the reporter because at last she could shed some light on Jacob's eulogy. By the time the reporter visited, the lodge notice, which was still being sent by the Secretary, had arrived with the retyped Jacob Letter and the minutes of the meeting in which the Scott Memorial occurred. The widow gave the whole envelope to the reporter. Scott's widow had requested to be kept on the notice list because of her attachment to the brethren of the lodge.

The reporter wrote the story but some questions had cropped up at the paper. The reporter wanted to know why such a nice piece of writing should be precluded from being used at a funeral. The reporter also wanted to know how someone as bad as the offending brother had been could become and remain a freemason, and finally, who are these guys anyway? The reporter's boss wanted to know if the freemasons would offer an apology not just to Holocaust survivors, but to all victims of racism—and sexism too. The widow Scott directed the reporter to phone Grand Lodge and the reporter finally spoke to the Grand Lodge Librarian who explained the history of the *Address to the Brethren* in some detail and told the reporter about the Grand Lodge website and the posting of this section of the *Address to the Brethren* on the website. The librarian explained the question raised in the minutes about the appropriateness of the eulogy. The librarian also explained, as best he could, the edict from the Past Grand Master, but didn't discuss the rightness of the edict. He did however, inform the reporter that freemasons were pretty independent and that he was not surprised that this wonderful piece of writing became part of eulogies. As for matters regarding jurisprudence, etc., the reporter was referred to the Grand Secretary or the District Deputy Grand Master. The librarian then informed the Grand Secretary of what had transpired.

The Grand Secretary met with the Grand Master, who, had just received No. 306's notice, and was so taken by Jacob's letter that he directed it to be published in the *Bulletin*, as soon as possible. The Grand Secretary and the Grand Master had a three-way phone call with the District Deputy who was not aware of much of the story. He lived in a town about one hour away from Scott and Jacob's lodge and did not subscribe to the original local newspaper. He himself had just moved from Vancouver a few years earlier and had been a Grand Steward before his move. It was his new lodge's turn to have a DDGM and he was the best available, so he got the job. He really didn't know very much about the district and its personalities. Given all that, he listened to the Grand Secretary and the Grand Master discuss Jacob's letter. They discussed the masonic Ideal of making good men better, which was based on a notion that we are all imperfect but perfectible. They also discussed the impossibility of the Craft apologizing to unknown people for the words of any freemason. In conjunction with that part of

the discussion, the Grand Secretary mused that it would be impossible to prove anyway, because every one was dead.

The reporter interviewed the District Deputy Grand Master who explained as best he could, the nature and effect of a Grand Master's edict. He explained how the Grand Lodge couldn't apologize to an unknown group for the comments of one of the brethren. He tried to explain the perfectibility of man using the examples of the Rough Ashlar and the Perfect Ashlar. This explanation caused more confusion than clarity and in order to extricate himself from the reporter's questions, the DDGM said this was all too hypothetical because no one including the Grand Master had any proof that the incident in Jacob's letter ever took place.

When the librarian's comments and the DDGM's comments were reported—it was not good news for the Craft.

The letters to the editor were full of questions wondering what kind of organization was it where it is okay to ignore the rules? Maybe the same kind of organization where the leader decides to publish an emotional story about a member, while cynically, the leader doesn't believe the story is true? And who are these guys anyway?

This was really, really not good news.

Except of course, to some brethren in Lodge No. 228. They had felt unfairly, collectively wronged by the accusation in Jacob's letter, and they were happy that the Grand Master himself had questioned the truthfulness of Jacob's letter.

This was incomprehensibly bad news.

The Grand Secretary then wrote to all the lodges in the jurisdiction advising, rather cryptically, of the necessity of adhering to *audi, vide, tace*: hear, see, be silent. This motto has been on the Coat of Arms of the United Grand Lodge of England since 1815. The whole quote is: hear, see, be silent if you would live in peace.

This would have been the end of this, except that the reporter's boss wanted more material. The paper was getting good publicity and the letters to the editor were now very lively.

So, the reporter went back to the widow Scott for more information. The only person the widow could recommend was old Tom in the retirement home. She knew he had been the Secretary of lodge No. 306 for years and that he knew everything. What the widow Scott didn't know was that old Tom had managed to alienate all his old masonic friends—the final straw had been when he refused to accept that Lodge No. 306 only paid him 1/3 of the secretary's honorarium of Lodge No. 228, which happened to own the building and was rolling in cash. He didn't care about that fact, he had become obsessed that his rival in No. 228 was shown to be worth three times more than he was. He left the Lodge in a fury one night, never to return. He had become what his doctor described as terminally cranky—and he gave the reporter an earful.

Old Tom was opposed to everything that his old lodge was doing, including sending the minutes in the mail. Most of his rantings were so bad that the reporter couldn't possibly use them without discrediting the newspaper. The reporter was able, however, to piece together enough substance, from the idea that non-masons were "profane" to the debate over the minutes and secrecy. The reporter and editor needed something in the story because old Tom named the brother who he was certain had offended Jacob. Old Tom also took a swipe at the Grand Master, which was printed, implying that if the Grand Master had known this brother, he would not have doubted Jacob's story. The newspaper named that brother—after all, even if old Tom was wrong, the named brother was dead, and couldn't sue for libel. The paper's position was that the dead have no protection.

The DDGM received a call from a Master of another lodge in his district who read the article to him. The DDGM did not know old Tom but was so frustrated and frazzled that he said, "The blankety, blank old Tom." The DDGM also did not know that the Master was old Tom's nephew. After the phone call, the Master decided that for the good of the Craft and to defend his uncle's honour he had to repeat the DDGM's comment to not only his uncle, but also to all the brethren in his lodge. Of all the brethren at the lodge, Bro. Steadfast was aghast at what had transpired and went to the DDGM to repeat what had been said in the lodge about the DDGM, and urged the DDGM to lay masonic charges against old Tom's nephew. The DDGM refused to do so for three different reasons: (a) the Grand Master had been explicit to him in particular to keep his head down; (b) he wanted the controversy to die down, not inflame it; (c) he believed that the message in Jacob's letter was to resolve these problems as best you could through fellowship, etc.

Bro. Steadfast thought about this and grappled with the problem that if the DDGM wouldn't defend himself against the injury to him, how would Bro. Steadfast make sure this temporary madness ceased. He analysed the situation as follows. When he took his Obligation it was to protect the secrets of the Craft, from time immemorial to the end of time. He thought the newspaper was wrong, the dead did have rights—the rights to their secrets had to live on, otherwise the notion of secrecy would be temporary, not 'til the end of time. After all, Jacob did not want his secret to die with him. Steadfast believed that all masonic secrets belonged to all the Craft and every brother had an obligation to protect the secrets and private conversations. The ability to un-secret something or to un-private a conversation diminished the necessary protection of the secrets. Bro. Steadfast was helped in this analysis by the fact that whenever the Grand Master made an official visit he was

preceded by a brother carrying an open *Book of Constitutions* symbolizing that everyone, including the Grand Master, was subservient to the Constitution. All brethren were told that British Columbia was unique in such a symbolic representation, therefore this was the best place to start the end of the slide into becoming a service club.

With all that in mind, Brother Steadfast instituted the following charges against the following Brothers.

1. The Master of Lodge No. 306: for directing the retyping and distribution of Jacob's letter.
2. The Secretary of Lodge No. 306: for sending out the minutes by mail and for sending out the notice including the minutes to a non-mason, the widow Scott.
3. The Grand Lodge Librarian: for talking to the reporter about masonic rituals and for giving the reporter an opinion on a Grand Lodge matter that should only have been raised in open lodge.
4. The Grand Lodge webmaster: for making available, to the whole worldwide web, ritual that had been determined to be private by a Grand Master.
5. The Grand Master: for directing the publication of Jacob's letter in the *Bulletin*.
6. The District Deputy Grand Master: for repeating part of a private conversation and for not bringing charges against old Tom's nephew.
7. Old Tom: for discussing private lodge matters with the reporter, and for slandering the name of a dead brother.
8. Old Tom's nephew: for repeating part of a private conversation.

Do you think any other charges could be or should be brought? Keep in mind the questions we are dealing with may not be easy to answer: what are masonic secrets?; who owns masonic secrets? (if they are ownable) and who has the right or obligation to protect them?

*The following paper, not received by press time, can be found on our Grand Lodge website  
<[http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/Writings/vgm\\_day21.html](http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/Writings/vgm_day21.html)>*



# Fun With Forms and Funds

**BY R.W. BRO. R. LAWRENCE M. PARENT, GRAND LODGE SECRETARY**







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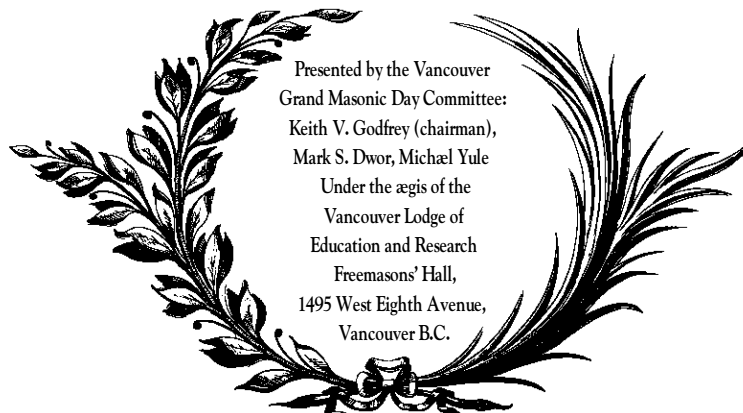
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