



The Educator



Interesting Masonic History

Anonymous

Taken mostly from "*The Truth is Stranger than Fiction*,"
By Bro. Alphonse Cerza, Masonic Service Association, 1934.

- At one time, Golden Lodge #5, Stanstead, Canada occupied a lodge room, which straddled the boundary between Canada and the United States. There were entrances on both sides of the border.
- Washington Chapter #3 of Portsmouth, NH announced its meetings via the town crier, who received from 6 to 25 cents for his work.
- In 1872 the Commissioner of Patents held that the Masonic emblem could not be used in a trademark or trade name for commercial purposes.
- In *Hammer v. State*, 173 Indiana, 199 (1909), the Supreme Court ruled that it was a criminal offense to wear the emblem of any society or organization of which one is not a member. The court based its decision on the fact that the membership in such societies is the result of fitness and selection and that the wearing of such emblems by non-members is a deceit and false pretense.
- In *Robinson v. Yates City Lodge*, 86 Illinois, 598 (1877), a court ruled that an expelled Mason was not entitled to the return of his degree fees. The court held that the plaintiff voluntarily paid the fees and the expulsion under the provisions of the rules of the organization does not constitute the rescission of a contract under which the fees were paid.
- Frederick A Bartholdi, a freemason, designed the statue of Liberty which stands in NY harbor. The Grand Lodge of NY laid the corner stone on August 5, 1885.
- Bernard Pierre Mangam, Marshall of France and Senator was appointed Grand Master of the Grand Orient of France and served from 1862 to 1865. This is unusual because he was not a Mason. He was appointed by Emperor Napoleon III.
- The letters of the English word GOD are the first three letters of Hebrew words for beauty, strength, and wisdom. G in Gomez, O in Oz, D in Dabar.
- In 1860 in Limerick, Ireland, there as found a stone in a small chapel, dated 1517, with the following inscription: "I will serve to live with love & care, upon the level, and by the square."
- Francis Stephens, the Duke of Lorraine, received the first two Masonic degrees in 1731 in a special lodge convened at The Hague, Holland, becoming the first known royal freemason. Later he received the third degree in England. In 1735 renounced his title.
- Dr. Joseph Ignace Guillotine was a member of Concorde Fraternelle Lodge of Paris and a member of the French Assembly. He obviously invented the device that bears his name and was later executed with one.



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- The Rev. William Dodd, first Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of England, was hanged for forgery on June 2nd, 1777.
- In 1839 the Mormons left Missouri and settled in the area of Nauvoo, IL. On October 15, 1841, the IL Grand Master issued a dispensation to form a Lodge at Nauvoo. On March 15th, 1842, Joseph Smith received his first degree and the others shortly after. Certain irregularities were reported - in five months the lodge initiated 256 candidates and 243 were raised. After investigation, the Grand Master revoked the dispensation, but the lodge continued to work. On April 5, 1844, the Mormon masons dedicated a Masonic Temple. IL Masons got in trouble for taking part in the ceremony. Opposition to the group and internal dissension led to the assassination of Joseph Smith and the removal of the Mormons from IL.
- Operative Lodge #150 in Aberdeen, Scotland is unusual in that it is only open to operative stonemasons.
- Dr. Edward Jenner, in 1789 discovered the vaccination process against smallpox. He was worshipful master of Faith and Friendship Lodge #270 in Berkeley, England at the time.
- In July 1863, Confederate raiders rode into Versailles, IN, capturing the local militia and stealing the county treasury. The next day, General John Morgan (CSA), learned that his men had also made off with the jewels of the local lodge. They were returned the following day. Morgan was from Davies Lodge #22, Lexington, KY.
- Wheelock Commandery No. 5 in Texas had all 55 of its members killed serving in the Confederate Army. The Commandery ceased to exist. Missouri's first Confederate Capitol was the Masonic Building in Neosho, MS. From here the legislature passed the Act of Secession.
- USA General Thomas Benton, also Grand Master of Iowa, ordered Federal troops to protect Albert Pike's home and prevent the library from being burned, when his troops took Little Rock, AR.
- July 2, 1751, Ferdinand VI of Spain issued an edict against Freemasonry. Father Jose Torrubia secured a special dispensation from the Pope, joined a lodge, secured the names of its members, and proceeded to have them arrested. Hundreds were arrested, persecuted, and imprisoned.
- When Mussolini gained control of Italy, Masonic lodges were declared illegal and the Grand Master was arrested, tried, and imprisoned, where he died. Mussolini also ordered all Masonic references removed, including the emblems on the base of Garibaldi's monument in Rome. After the restoration of the republic, fascist emblems were removed and the Masonic emblems restored.
- In Fascist Spain under Franco, it was a crime to be a freemason. Masons convicted had to serve prison terms equal in years to the number of Masonic degrees possessed. Master Mason 3rd Degree = 3 years.
- Winnedumah Lodge #287 of Bishop, CA holds its meetings at 270 feet below sea level, the lowest lodge in North America.



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- In 1954 Martin's Station Lodge No. 188 of VA was opened 952 feet below the surface of Cumberland Mountain in Cudjo's Cave, which lies between Cumberland Gap, Tenn. and Middleburo, KY. 345 Masons were present and a MM degree was conferred.
- Chicago, IL has three American Legion Posts whose memberships are entirely Masonic.
- All four Presidents of the Republic of Texas, David Burnett, Sam Houston, Mirabeau Lamar, and Anson Jones, were Masons.
- Between 1737 and 1779 two sailing ships of interest operated off the U.S. eastern seaboard, Freemason and Master Mason. The Freemason caught fire and sank in Marblehead Harbor, Mass in 1779.
- On November 10, 1928, the Grand Lodge of California held a special communication at Culver City, to lay the corner stone of the Masonic temple. The lodge room was so crowded that the Grand Lodge officers were unable to enter. They retired to the Ladies' powder room to open the grand lodge for the ceremony.
- In 1801, Czar Alexander I of Russia banned the craft. In 1803 he rescinded the order and became a Freemason. But in 1822 he again ordered Freemasonry banned in Russia.
- In May, 1843, a group of representatives from fourteen Grand Lodges met in Baltimore, MD, with the view of adopting uniform ritual. The meeting was presided over by John Dove of VA; Charles W. Moore of Mass. prepared the proposed ritual. The convention's work was not generally accepted.
- In 1799, Barton Lodge in Upper Canada accepted "good merchantable wheat" in payment of lodge dues.
- Lodge St. George in Bermuda has rented an old state house since 1816 from the Governor for the sum of "one peppercorn per year."
- Abraham Jones served as Grand Master of Kentucky 1833-34 and Grand Master of Illinois, 1840-41.
- Dr. Carlos Rodriguez-Jimenez was grand master of the grand lodge of Venezuela in 1947. In 1957 he became the grand master of the Grand Lodge of Japan.
- In 1892, the tallest building in the world was the Masonic Temple at Randolph and State Streets, Chicago, IL
- Brother William Brockmeier (1866-1947) of St. Louis conducted 5586 Masonic funeral services.
- Thomas Jacob Shryock served as Grand Master of Masons in Maryland for 32 years. He died after being elected to serve his 33rd Term.
- The largest Master's chair is in Ophir Lodge #33 Murphys, CA. It is 15 feet long and can seat the Master, living Past Masters, and visiting dignitaries.



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- On June 7, 1921, Mystic Lodge #21 of Red Bank, NJ had conferred half of the MM degree on brother Lyman C. Van when the power went out. He didn't receive the rest of the degree for several weeks, making him for a time, a "two and half degree" mason.
- When the great Obelisk of Alexandria (Cleopatra's Needle) was moved to New York in 1880, there were discovered certain emblems on the original foundation and pedestal. One is clearly a square, causing some to conclude that Masonry existed in ancient Egypt. This issue is still open to debate.
- The two structures in the U.S that have elevators which move sideways, in addition to up and down are the Arch in St. Louis and the George Washington Masonic Memorial in Alexandria.
- The Grand Master of Mass. commanded rebels at Bunker Hill while the Grand Master of England commanded English forces. The G.M of Mass. was killed.
- On August 23, 1879, Lodge #239 of France held a meeting in a balloon flying over Paris, at which time a candidate was initiated.
- On his famous solo flight across the Atlantic, Charles Lindbergh wore a square and compasses on his jacket as a good luck piece. He was a mason.
- Richard E. Byrd and his pilot Bernt Balchen, both brothers, dropped Masonic flags over the north and south poles. Brother Balchen also tossed his Shrine Fez on the South Pole.
- Gordon Cooper, in his Mercury capsule, carried a Masonic coin and a blue Masonic flag on his 22 orbit flight, which he later presented to his mother lodge.
- Montana's first livestock brand was the Square and Compasses and is still in use. It was registered by Poindexter & Orr of Beaverhead County, MT in 1873.
- Andrew McNair, a Philadelphia Mason, rang the Liberty bell in Independence Hall of July 8, 1776 to call the people together to hear the reading of the Declaration of Independence. The bell developed a crack when it was rung for the death of Chief Justice Marshall, Past Grand Master of Virginia.
- Grand Masters generally have the power to make "masons at sight," which means the Master can do away with the formalities such as filing of petitions, waiting periods, etc. Some famous Masons who were made include: William H. Taft, General George Marshall, and General Douglas MacArthur.
- In the 1800's several grand lodges established Masonic colleges. The most successful of which was in Hannibal, MS in 1847. Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Georgia all tried it but all were eventually closed due to lack of support.
- In the spring of 1966, brother Dallas Coleman of Denison Lodge #373 of Kansas was digging a pond when he came across an overturned gravestone marked with the Square and Compasses. Research lead to a determination that



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it belonged to Brother Henry Craig (1832-1862) of Valley Falls Lodge #21. The brethren of the lodge reset and cleaned the monument and erected a fence around it to keep livestock away and continue to maintain it.

- Lyndon Johnson took the first degree of Masonry on October 30, 1937 but never progressed any further.
- Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House took his first degree on August 7, 1922. He died in 1961 without receiving the second.
- Warren G. Harding was initiated on June 28, 1901 and it took him 19 years to complete the other two.
- Lodges in Mass. have no numbers.
- In Penn. there are 11 lodges that have numbers but no names.
- In Georgia there are two lodges with the number 1.
- In Maryland, Tennessee and Penn. there is no lodge with the number 1
- Masonic Place Names in the US: Anchor, IL, Beehive, MT, Boaz, AL, Charity, MS, Circle, MT, Cowan, TN, Emblem, WY, Eureka, WV, Faith, SD, False Pass, AK, Fidelity, IL, Five Points, AL, Freeborn, MN, Grand Pass, MS, Hiram, MA, Hope, AK, Jachin, AL, Justice, IL, Lodge, SC, Mason, KY, Masonic Home, KY, Masontown, WV, Square, MT, Steward, IL, Symbol, KY, Temperance, MI, Tyler, TX
- Hiram Abiff Boaz, born Dec. 18 1866 in Murray, KY. Received his degrees in 1922 before an unusually large crowd and served as Grand Chaplin (TX) in 1953.
- Joseph A. Gilmore (1811-1867), former governor of N.H. was made a Mason at sight on April 28, 1863. He received Scottish Rite degrees and was awarded 33rd degree on May 7, 1863 - only 9 days later.
- Between 1890 (when it became a state) and 1951, every Governor of Wyoming, except one, was a Mason. The one, Mrs. William A. Ross, was the wife of a mason and a member of Eastern Star.
- Every President from Tenn. was a Mason (Jackson, Johnson, Polk)
- President FDR raised two of his sons on the same night, Nov 7, 1935 - Architect Lodge #519 in NY.
- In 1951, while President, Harry Truman served as Master of his lodge.
- Sacramento Chapter #3, Royal Arch Masons has supplied 4 governors of CA. (J. Neeley Johnson, Lantham, Pacheo, Hiram Johnson)
- William Hesketh Lever Lodge #2916, England was the only lodge named for a non-mason, the first Viscount of Leverhulme (the soap manufacturer) who was first initiated there and later formed Leverhulme Lodge #4438.



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- Paul Revere was a Mason, as was his cohort, Robert Newman, who hung the lantern in the Old North Church.
- Angelo Soliman, was born in Africa in 1721 and brought to Europe as a slave at the age of ten. He was educated, married, and became a favorite in the royal court in Vienna. Somewhere before 1771 he became a mason. When he died 1776, the Emperor had his body stuffed and mounted in the Natural History Museum, becoming not only the first black of African birth to become a mason, but the also the first mason to be stuffed, mounted, and displayed.
- John Aasen of Highland Park Lodge No. 382 in Los Angeles, CA was the largest known MM ever raised. At the time he was 8.5 feet tall and weighed 536 pounds.
- Charles Stratton, a.k.a. Tom Thumb, was 24 inches high and weighed 16 pounds when raised in 1862.
- Theodore Parvin was Grand Secretary for Iowa from 1844 to 1901, except for 1852- 53 when he was Grand Master.
- When asked of Masonry, President William McKinley explained: "After the battle of Opequam, I went with the surgeon of our Ohio regiment to the field where 5,000 confederate prisoners were under guard. As soon as we passed the guard, the doctor shook hands with a number of prisoners and began passing out his roll of bills. On the way back to camp I asked him, 'Did you know those men?' 'No' 'But you gave them a lot of money, do you expect to get it back?' 'If they are able to pay me back, they will. It makes no difference to me; they are brother masons in trouble and I am only doing my duty.' I said to myself, 'If that is Masonry, I will take some of it myself.' "

Comment

Sometimes papers can be long and sometimes boring. With that in mind.

I am sharing this paper with you as it not only shares some very interesting stuff.

But it is also more relaxing that what I normally share.

True it is all American History but reality is that the Largest of my audiences resides in the United States and to that I say Thank You.

Many Thanks to the over 1200 Registered Readers World wide.

Have a wonderful Day & God Bless,

Norm