

FABLES FALLACIES AND FICTIONS RESPECTING FREEMASONRY

Every Masonic student seeking after truth respecting the origin of Freemasonry knows that the Legend of Hiram Abif is not to be found in the Books of the Kings or Chronicles, nor will you find it in the works of Josephus or any other Hebrew historian. What little is to be found in these ancient records has been clothed and embroidered by the imagination of many later writers.

One more modern theologian, Dr. John Lightfoot (1602-75) famous for his Hebrew scholarship even went so far as to assert that "Heaven and earth, centre and circumference, were created all together, in the same instant and clouds full of water, --- this work took place and man was created by the Trinity on October 23, 4004, BC at nine o'clock in the morning." From what facts Dr. Lightfoot came to this interesting conclusion has never been revealed and so it is with many other legends and fairy tales respecting Freemasonry.

Dr. James Anderson, in his "Constitutions", placed the date one year later (4003 B.C.) and William Hutchinson in his "Spirit of Masonry" generalized this theory by asserting that Freemasonry had existed "from the very beginning of the world". Unfortunately, he gave no further particulars, date or other details.

Rev. Dr. George Oliver in his "Antiquities" made an even more profound statement and asserted that "the science and art of Masonry existed before the creation of this globe, and was diffused amidst the numerous systems with which the grand empyreum of universal space is furnished!" William Preston in his Illustrations did not attempt to outdo Oliver but contented himself with the statement that the Craft was introduced into England by Julius Caesar, a patron of the Order! Unfortunately, he also neglected to cite the source of his information.

Needless to say, such preposterous statements have helped to hold the Masonic Order up to the ridicule of the whole world.

Around Freemasonry in the course of centuries, have grown up certain "fables" and "false notions" which persist. Perhaps they do no harm, some of them are even entertaining but the fact remains that they are pure fiction, misleading not only to ourselves but ridiculed by the world outside.

Let me mention a few; and, as the Queen of Sheba said: "The half has not been

told."

1. **THAT ADAM WAS A MASON** --- pure fiction.

The Rev. Dr. George Oliver (1782-1867) highly esteemed and prolific writer on Freemasonry actually made this claim. Dr. Oliver was too credulous and readily accepted the crude theories of previous writers and cited documents and records which subsequent researches have led all present day scholars to doubt or deny as absurd.

Dr. Oliver had a warm imagination which led him to accept without hesitation almost anything he wanted to believe. His theory was that Adam founded the Order; and that Seth, his son, taught his descendants, including Tubal Cain, who practised the art under the name of Primitive or Pure Masonry. It passed on to Noah, to Solomon and thence to the present day. He taught that on the dispersion of mankind following the Flood, Masonry was divided into two kinds, Pure, which was later to become strictly Christian in character and Spurious Masonry, which was corrupt in its teaching.

Some have said jokingly that Oliver was right for if you read the 7th verse of Chapter III of the Book of Genesis, you will find it recorded that Adam and Eve "sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons."

If you can accept that as "evidence" then it may be argued that Eve was likewise a Mason!

Now a learned Archbishop of Dublin (Dr. James Ussher, 1581-1656) by calculations based on the ages of Adam, and his descendents as found in the Old Testament, came to the conclusion that the Creation of the World took place 4004 years before the Birth of Christ. If you look in many Bibles you will find that date, 4004, on the margin as the date of creation itself. Ussher therefore dated everything in the Old Testament from that time. And in Oliver's day, it became the practice and still is in most Grand Lodges the custom to add 4000 or 4004 to the current date in Masonic Documents and records and so this year is 5990 or 5994. Anno Mundi, year of the World or Anno Lucis, year of Light, dating the Craft back to the time when the Creator of the Universe said "Let there be light."

Modern science declares that this old world of ours is several billions of years older than that, notwithstanding the calculations of Ussher and Oliver.

2. THAT FREEMASONRY WAS INVENTED OR PRACTISED BY THE MAYAS, 20,000 YEARS AGO.

The Mayas were an American Indian people inhabiting Yucatan and Guatemala in Central America. They built large cities and schools, had hospitals and doctors, knew astronomy, and mathematics. Their civilization spread to Peru (Incas) and Mexico (Aztecs). Their language may still be found today in some areas of Central and South America. The earliest authentic date in Mayan history is 179 AD, a Frenchman, LePlongean, saw Maya stones in a museum in San Diego, California and invented the whole story citing hieroglyphic inscriptions in support of his theory. Mayan civilization did not have even the remotest connection with Freemasonry --- not even a trace. The claim is another fiction.

3. THAT THE DEFINITE HISTORY OF THE MASONIC ORDER GOES BACK TO THE TIME OF THE BUILDING OF KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

While it is true that much of the symbolism of Masonry, as well as some of its forms and ceremonies, is of great antiquity, this is not true of the organization itself, which probably is a development from the guilds of the Cathedral builders of the Middle Ages. The oldest known Masonic document is dated about 1390 A.D. the Regius Poem.

There is not the slightest evidence of any connection of King Solomon with the Craft except what is found in the Old Charges --- which merely recite our legendary history of the building art. These legends take our history back to the building of the Tower of Babel, but there is not the faintest evidence in the Bible and other records which give the legend any support whatever.

4. THAT FREEMASONRY WAS FOUNDED BY FRENCH KNIGHTS TEMPLAR ABOUT 1314.

There are two versions of this fictitious assertion;

(1) As our histories inform us, Jacques DeMolay, the last Grand Master of this Crusading Order of Chivalry, along with two of his Lieutenants, at the order of Pope Clement V and Philip the Fair, King of France, were burned at the stake in Paris in

1314, and the Order suppressed everywhere.

The claim is made that before his death he appointed John Marc Larmenius as his successor with power to appoint his successor forever.

This Charter of Transmission signed by Larmenius is the basis of the Templar Order in France, and provides a line of descent until in 1705, it reached Philip, Duke of Orleans and since his time to 1804, when it was signed by Bernard Raymond Fabre.

This Charter is beautifully executed on a large folio sheet of parchment, in medieval Latin cipher. The original is now in possession of the Great Priory of England. (See *Ars Quat. Coron.* Vol 24)

As many of the earliest signatures are those of men who could not write their names, and in one or two instances, the date of the alleged signature is a year or two after the death of the signatory, the Charter is considered by most authorities a forgery, believed to be the work of an Italian Jesuit, Father Bonami, a learned antiquary and designer, and closely associated with Philip of Orleans.

(2) The other story of descent of Masonry from the Templar Order alleges that one Peter d'Aumont and seven others fled to Scotland after the death of DeMolay, disguised as operative masons, and there under the name of Freemasons founded a new Order.

Instead of conquering Jerusalem or rebuilding the Temple, they were to erect spiritual temples.

No evidence whatever has been found to support this story although several Masonic degrees are based on this story.

Freemasonry would seem to have evolved out of the Craft guilds of Cathedral builders of the middle ages, which had their legends and ancient charges, and can be traced back into centuries to other builders associations, but as Kipling says "that is another story."

5. THAT THE "ANCIENT" GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND WAS OLDER THAN THE "MODERN" GRAND LODGE.

The first Grand Lodge founded in England was organized in London in 1717, the Grand Lodge of Ireland in 1725 and the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1736.

About 1740, some Irish Brethren in London formed a committee which in 1751 was turned into another Grand Lodge of England. Because of many exposes, published about this time, the first Grand Lodge founded in 1717, made a number of changes in the modes of recognition and discontinued the ceremony of installation of a Worshipful Master.

The new Grand Lodge announced in 1751 declared themselves as The Grand Lodge of England "according to the Ancient Institutions granted at York by Prince Edwin in 926 A.D." and called themselves the "Ancient" Grand Lodge and dubbed the older Grand Lodge as the "Moderns" and they "got away with it." The Ancients were long characterized as the Schismatic Grand Lodge, but their origin was not due to any schism within the ranks of the older Grand Lodge. The two Grand Lodges were rivals until 1814, when they united to form the present day United Grand Lodge of England.

6. THAT THE UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND IS THE MOTHER GRAND LODGE OF FREEMASONRY.

This claim is denied by the Irish and Scottish Freemasons as a distortion of the facts.

Neither the Grand Lodge of Ireland formed in 1725 nor that of Scotland organized in 1736, included a single lodge of English origin.

A considerable number of Scottish Lodges date back to the sixteen hundreds and when in 1736, they organized a Grand Lodge in the Northern Kingdom, the sanction or assistance of the Grand Lodge of England was not sought. The same is true of the Grand Lodge of Ireland.

Each Grand Lodge was formed independently of England and was composed entirely of Lodges native to the soil of Ireland and Scotland.

7. THAT THE JESUIT ORDER FOUNDED FREEMASONRY

Mackey says (in his Encyclopedia) that a library of books has been written on this subject in Germany and France.

The facts would seem to be that the Jesuit Order was driven out of France, Spain, Portugal and other Roman Catholic countries and suppressed by the Pope in

1773. They were permitted, however, to retain their organization in Prussia and Russia.

In 1776, a former Jesuit, Adam Weishaupt, organized an order in Bavaria, which he called the Illuminati, which was modelled on the Masonic Order and proved very popular; but it had no connection whatever with organized Masonry.

It was the theory of one Nicolas de Bonneville (1750-1828) a French historian and bookseller who published a book on the subject in 1788, that the Knight Kadosh degree of the Scottish Rite had been invented by the Illuminati to promote the doctrine of vengeance for the murder of DeMolay. As the Grand Kadosh degree originated at Lyons in 1743, twenty years before the founding of the Illuminati, the convention seems to lack support.

The theory that the Jesuits founded Freemasonry may have been due to the confusion arising from the fact that the Jesuit College of Clermont was in the same neighborhood as the College of Clermont established in 1754 to promote a series of seven degrees in Freemasonry.

Whatever the facts, it is certain that the story that the Jesuits "founded" Freemasonry is a fable and a fairy tale.

8. FREEMASONS CAUSED THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN 1791.

About 1920, one Bernard Fay, a French historian and the author of several Books on American history, came to the United States, ostensibly to write a biography of Benjamin Franklin. The Grand Lodge of New York extended to him every courtesy, and he later wrote such a biography, but full of distorted facts. He also took advantage of his opportunity and wrote another book entitled "Revolution and Freemasonry", published in 1935 which attempted to prove that the French Revolution was the result of a Masonic plot, a book based on a tissue of falsehoods and forgeries.

His real purpose was to furnish the Germans with a list of Freemasons to aid Hitler and Ludendorf in their crusade against Jews and Freemasons.

In the New York "Times" of Dec 1, 1946, we read "Bernard Fay, former professor of American Civilization at the College de France and writer on Franco-American relations, was sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labour, today after his connection on a charge of intelligence with the enemy, Mr. Fay has been

charged with publishing documents and lists of the Freemasons for the Vichy (Nazi-dominated) government of France. This had the result according to the prosecution, in deportation or death for thousands of them."

As we all know, the French Revolution was due to causes other than Freemasonry. The Craft was practised both in Royalist and Revolutionary circles, and there is not the slightest evidence of any Lodges in that period promoting rebellion against the Government.

9. THAT FREEMASONS ARE ALLIED WITH ATHEISTS.

It may surprise many, but such an allegation is common in France, Spain and Italy, and is a preposterous falsehood.

Historically, Freemasonry is a survival of the brotherhoods existing among the operative masons of the middle ages, who built the great Churches and Cathedrals of those days. On admission to the operative guilds, charges were addressed to the new member, "in the Name of God, and the Holy Church."

When the operative period was over and the Craft assumed its present speculative character the Craft in England was re-organized largely by a Presbyterian divine, Dr. James Anderson, and a Huguenot clergyman, Dr. John T. Desaguliers. They also were authorized to "digest the old Gothic constitutions in a new and better method." In their report to the Grand Lodge, entitled "The Book of Constitutions," it was declared that a belief in the existence of God was an essential point in Speculative Masonry, and that no atheist can be made a Mason.

The very first question put to a candidate on his initiation is "In Whom do you put your trust?" If this reply is a negation of the existence of God, then he cannot proceed further.

Our Canadian Grand Lodges recognize about 100 other Grand Lodges, all of which require a belief in a Supreme Being and the obligation of all candidates on the Holy Book of the faith of the candidate, whether Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, Buddhist or other faith.

The Grand Lodge of France and the Grand Orient of France do not require an obligation to be taken on any such Book nor a declaration of a belief in a Supreme Being, and no Canadian Grand Lodge or any other Grand Lodge in fraternal relations

with us, recognizes the so-called Freemasonry of these Grand Lodges.

10. FREEMASONRY IS A SECRET SOCIETY

This assertion so worded is intended to bring Freemasonry into disrepute and suggest to others such groups as the Carbonari of Italy, the Ku-Klux Klan, the Mafia, who stop at nothing in their plots against humanity and lawful government. Freemasonry is **NOT** a Secret Society.

- (1) Its membership lists are published by many Grand Lodges and by individual Lodges, and may be had for the asking.
- (2) Its ritual may be purchased at nearly any book-store.
- (3) Its meetings, anniversaries and public occasions are publicized in every day journals.
- (4) Its officers are known to everybody.
- (5) Good deeds of charity and benevolence, its homes for the aged, the orphans and underprivileged are well known.

To suggest that these characteristics are evidence of underground activity or malice is ridiculous.

Only the means of recognition are secret and for good reasons.

11. FREEMASONRY IS A DISGUISE UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE JEWS OF THE WORLD WHO ARE PLOTTING TO OVERTHROW CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION.

This preposterous claim was the invention of Baron Von Ludendorf, the German Field Marshal who organized an anti-Masonic crusade after World War I and convinced Adolf Hitler of an alliance between Freemasonry and Jewry.

Only stupendous ignorance could connect the two. True, the Old Testament and Jewish history provide a basis for much of the legends and for the ritual and there are many Jews who are influential members of the Craft, but that the controlling

powers in Freemasonry are Jewish is fantastic to say nothing of a plot to rule the world of which you and I know nothing.

Baron Erich F. W. Ludendorf (1865-1937) German General in World War I in association with Hindenburg were responsible for Russia's defeat, and his plan of campaign on the Western Front almost crushed the Allies. In the years before the Second War he was fanatical in leading crusades against the Jews, Catholics, Freemasons and Protestants.

12. THAT WILLIAM MORGAN WAS MURDERED BY THE MASONS FOR DISCLOSING THEIR SECRETS.

This is one of the most persistent falsehoods used by the enemies of Freemasonry.

The fairy tale respecting his murder is cut in stone on a huge monument in Batavia, New York State, erected in 1882 by the National Christian Association, which to this day persists in circularizing the membership of the Craft with their pamphlets, especially the new initiates.

Many Masonic Scholars write that Morgan was not murdered, but that he made his way to Smyrna in Asia Minor, where he placed himself under the protection of the British Consul; that about 1840, he was in Hobart, Tasmania and that the story of his "murder" was the invention of ambitious politicians who used the story for their own personal ends to the serious injury of the Craft in the United States and Canada in the period of 1827-37. It was a hoax of the first magnitude.

13. THAT MASONIC LODGES BAR FROM MEMBERSHIP THE ADHERENTS OF A PARTICULAR CHURCH OR CREED.

There is no such restriction. A belief in a Supreme Being is required of initiates, but their particular sect, creed or religion is not regarded as the concern of the Lodge. Under some foreign Grand Lodges, however, those in the Scandinavian countries for instance, only Christians are admitted to membership.

Roman Catholics are not barred anywhere by the Masonic Order itself but the

Roman Church forbids its members to join Freemasonry, but 95% of Masons in France and Italy are from that Church, and similarly in South and Central America. In Costa Rica, several Roman Catholic priests have been Grand Masters.

In India, we frequently find at least two and sometimes three or four Sacred books on the Altar for the obligation of candidates.

14. THAT FREEMASONRY IS AN INSURANCE ORGANIZATION, BENEFIT SOCIETY, AND THAT IT MAKES DEFINITE PROVISION FOR THE CARE OF ITS MEMBERS IN ILLNESS OR POVERTY.

The Masonic Order has no insurance feature, nor system of sick or funeral "benefits." It is not like the Knights of Columbus, the Foresters, or Oddfellows and other fraternal societies with assessment and insurance features.

The Masonic Order does have institutional care, benevolent funds and other forms of assistance, such as orphanages, hospitals, homes for the aged, scholarship funds etc., for its members and families.

The Grand Lodge of England has a home for boys, another for girls; another for the aged members and their wives and widows, and also a Royal Masonic Hospital. Scotland has two homes for the aged.

There are 33 homes for the aged in the United States, including Puerto Rico. Ireland maintains two schools for boys and girls, each with about 100 students. Also 20 homes for orphans of Masonic families.

Nova Scotia is the only Grand Lodge in Canada with a Masonic Home for the aged Masons and their wives or widows.

15. THAT MASONIC LODGES, LIKE MANY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, HOLD "MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGNS" FOR THE PURPOSE OF SECURING AN INCREASE IN NUMBERS.

Not only is this untrue, but it is contrary to the ethics of Freemasonry for any

member of the Order to solicit an application for membership from a non-Mason. Each must seek membership "of his own free will and accord," "Uninfluenced by mercenary motives or improper solicitation." We must enter Freemasonry "Voluntarily and not as a result of canvassing or solicitation" and a membership campaign would be a most unmasonic procedure.

16. THAT "ONCE A MASON, ALWAYS A MASON" AND WHEN A MAN BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE ORDER, HE IS ENTITLED TO BENEFIT FROM THAT MEMBERSHIP FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

Most of the material advantages of membership are connected with affiliation in a particular Lodge. Every Lodge has its dues, and if a member becomes unaffiliated through failure to pay these dues, or by demission from the Lodge, he forfeits his right to such advantages and privileges as membership in that lodge may give him.

The dictum means that Freemasonry is indelible, and that it is not necessary to be initiated again if you are suspended, excluded or demitted from a lodge. In such cases you lose some privileges, but you will never have to be re-initiated.

17. THAT MASONIC LODGES HAVE A GOAT, WHICH THEY EMPLOY IN THEIR INITIATION CEREMONIES.

While usually referred to in jest, some people are so credulous as to believe the lodge goat is a reality. Some are even inclined to give credit to picturesque tales to the effect that Satan sometimes presides in person over lodge gatherings.

Mackey says that these were originated in the superstitions of antiquity. The Greeks and Romans portrayed the god Pan with horns and hoofs and a shaggy hide and called him "goat-footed." Christianity modified the idea, and the devil was represented by a he-goat with horns, beard and cloven hoofs.

Witches were depicted as riding a goat, and to the vulgar mind Freemasons were believed to raise the devil. So says Dr. Oliver. Also a group called the Gormogons which were a secret society established in England in 1724 in opposition to Freemasonry. One of its rules was that no Freemason could be admitted until he first degraded and then renounced the Masonic Order. One of their main public displays was to dress up as Masons and have one of their members dressed in the regalia of the Master of the Lodge and have him riding on a goat.

The belief has long since died out, but the saying still remains, and when used it degrades the fraternity and the Brothers who spread this vulgar information.

18. THAT TO RECEIVE CERTAIN HIGH DEGREES, MASONS OF THE UNITED STATES OR CANADA MUST GO TO SCOTLAND OR TO THE "OLD COUNTRY."

That is not true. Only one organization of Masons, the Royal Order of Scotland, has bodies in Canada which are under a "foreign" jurisdiction, and that Order has no degrees which are not conferred in the United States or Canada.

The belief that Scotland is the home of the Scottish Rite also exists in some quarters and of course, it is not true, any more than the assertion that York (England) is the home of the so-called York Rite.

It is certain that the Scottish Rite as now established did not originate in Scotland and the "Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite for Scotland" is exactly on the same footing as any other recognized Supreme Council in the world, including that for Canada, autonomous and supreme within its jurisdiction.

19. THAT THE ORDER OF THE MYSTIC SHRINE IS THE HIGHEST BRANCH OF MASONRY.

Although membership in the Order of the Mystic Shrine is confined to those who are Knights Templar or 32 degree Scottish Rite Masons, the Shrine is not itself a Masonic organization.

It merely confines its membership to members of the Craft who have shown their interest in the Craft and the so-called higher degrees. Actually the highest degree in Freemasonry is the Third degree, the Sublime degree of a Master Mason.

20. THAT IF A MEMBER OF THE FRATERNITY IS NOT BURIED WITH MASONIC CEREMONIES, THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING AMISS WITH HIS RELATIONS WITH THE ORDER.

Preston says "No Mason can be interred with the formalities of the Order unless it be by his own special request communicated to the Master of the Lodge in which he

died a member or by the request of his family." It is so stated in the burial ritual of most Grand Lodges. No Lodge can force a Masonic funeral on a family which does not want one.

21. THAT SCOTTISH RITE MASONS AND KNIGHT TEMPLAR MASONS ARE A HIGHER SORT OF MASON, WITH AUTHORITY OVER THE ORDINARY MASONS.

All so-called higher degrees are really "side" degrees which amplify the teaching found in the first three degrees and they are adjuncts to the original plan of Masonry.

The Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia has jurisdiction over ALL Masons resident in Nova Scotia whether members of a Nova Scotia Lodges and whether suspended or demitted from their respective Lodges.

Other concordant bodies select their members from this larger group and confer their degrees upon them. If these members are suspended in their Craft Lodge, they are automatically suspended in all other concordant bodies.

Craft Masonry is the root and foundation of all Masonry and the Grand Lodge of any State or Province is the highest Masonic authority in that State or Province.

22. THAT THERE IS, SOMEWHERE, A MYSTERIOUS HEAD WHO CONTROLS THE FREEMASONRY OF THE ENTIRE WORLD.

This is a wholly false notion. Each of the Grand Lodges is entirely independent of any Masonic power or authority. Each may or may not as it pleases, maintain fraternal relations with other Grand Lodges, and each is subordinate to no organization or man, other than its own Grand Master. In foreign countries and in the higher degrees the situation is similar.

There are about 100 regular Grand Lodges in the world and there is and never can be a super-Grand Lodge or a Supreme Grand Master over the whole world.

Some years ago a Grand Master of Nova Scotia directed that on a certain evening, all the Lodges in the Province should hold a re-dedication service, in their Lodge rooms at the same hour. Some newspapers had a reference to it, and a few days later the then Grand Master met a certain clergyman and a conversation followed, which ran thus:

Q:Who is your Grand Master now?

A:Mr. N. T. Avar

Q:No I don't mean him;he is only your nominal Grand Master, just a figure-head.

A:That, my friend, is not so. I was Grand Master as you know and I know that there was no higher authority in Freemasonry, than myself in Nova Scotia, at that time.

His answer was; "I'm afraid you don't know anything about it. You are just the tool of an unseen and unknown directing hand; you get your orders from somewhere and someone, and when the signal is given you are bound by your oath and at his command to carry out his orders even if it means death. It's right in your ritual."

This man went on to blame Freemasonry for all the trouble that were brewing in the world at that time. The Grand Master gave up for no amount of arguement or cold facts can convince or concert such a man to the truth, and I challenge anyone to name or prove the existance of a world Grand Master.

I have given you 22 of these fables, falicies and fictions and they are not all, probably not more than half of them. They are just samples of the kinds of stories that our enemies and our friends start about a subject about which they are ignorant and misinformed.

Yes Masonic Education is needed everywhere, both inside the Order and outside as well. Let us have more of it!.