

June 2025



June 2025 Issue 6

CORONATIO QUADRANS

SUMMER SOLSTICE

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Published 2025

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A Few Words from the Editors

Dr Harrison was honoured to address Cornerstone Lodge, when it met at Castlegate House in York on the 24th May. He gave a talk on the York Grand Lodge, the independent Grand Lodge that flourished during the eighteenth century. The Grand Lodge had its own ritual and a unique five degree system that attracted enquiring Masons to its lodges. The paper he presented can be read in this edition of CQ, and it was well received by the lodge.

Dr Lomas also attended the meeting hoping to have a quiet day out listening to David's talk in the place which had once housed that Grand Lodge. However, when he rang WBro Eddie Wildman, Cornerstone's Organist to say how much he was looking forward to hearing Eddie play, he learned Eddie couldn't attend and got roped in to play instead. He did say he enjoyed sitting in as guest organist at Cornerstone Lodge and offered greetings from Coronation Lodge.

The Lodge room at Castlegate is magnificent. The meeting invited none-masons and family members to hear the talk, and was followed by lunch. David's talk was well delivered and well received.

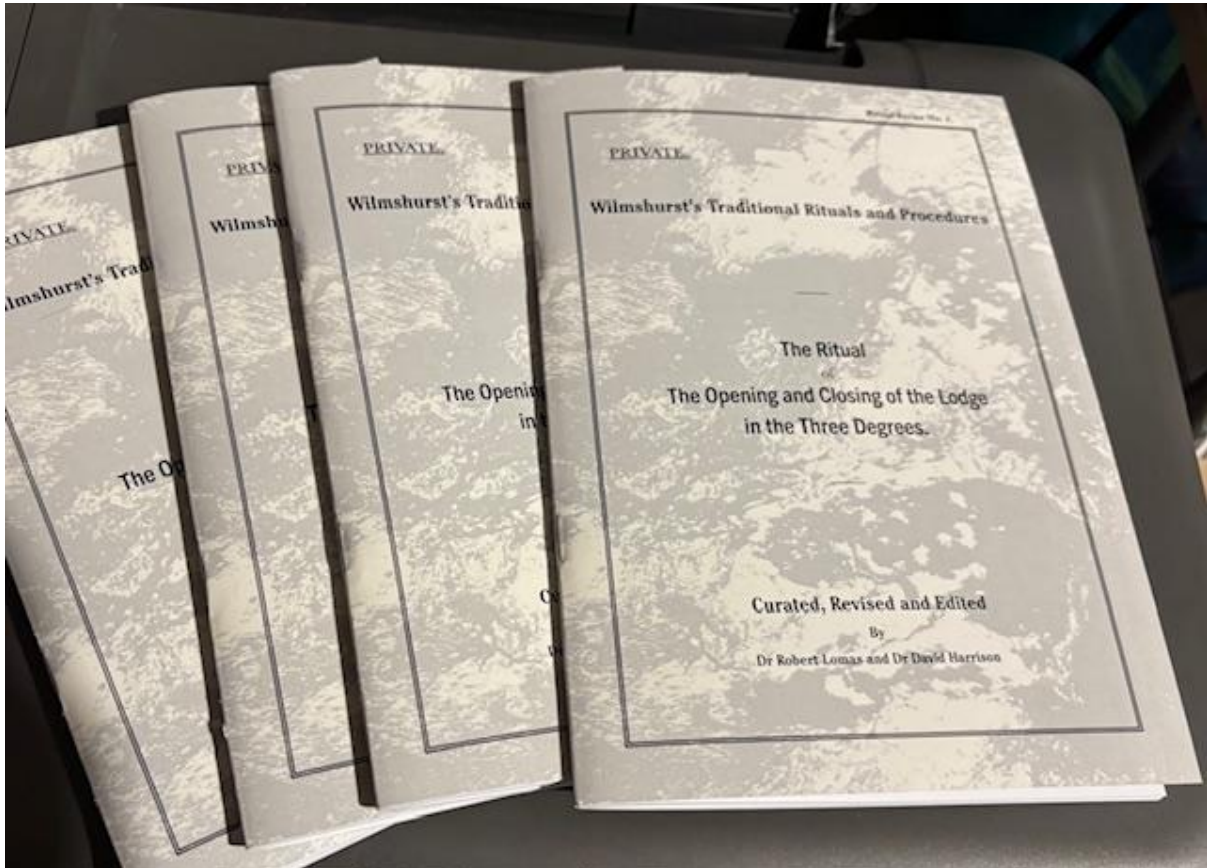


Cornerstone Lodge also has esoteric leanings and uses ceremonial elements from W.L. Wilmshurst, such as the Censing of the Lodge, which they incorporate into their opening.

This brings us onto the publication of the Opening and Closing of the Lodge based on Wilmshurst's original ceremonies, a copy of which Drs Lomas and Harrison gifted to all Members Coronation Lodge at the March meeting.

This ritual book, which is the first of five planned, gained international interest following David's posts on social media. It presents Wilmshurst's opening and closing, in an up-to-date print format, for the first time. We hope that Coronation Lodge will see more visitors coming to our lodge to experience this beautiful opening and closing ritual.

After the meeting our representatives of the CQ Editorial Cooperative presented Cornerstone's WM and Secretary with copies of Ritual Series No 1 as a gesture of fellowship between Coronation Lodge and Cornerstone Lodge.



If any visitors, associates or friends of lodge members would like to obtain a copy of this privately printed Ritual Series No. 1 - Wilmshursts Traditional Rituals and Procedures. The Ritual of The Opening and Closing of the Lodge in the Three Degrees, copies can be bought from Bro Sec. John Karran karranjohn@hotmail.com with proceeds going to lodge funds.

The CQ Editorial Cooperative

Notes from the Secretary of Coronation Lodge

Fraternal Greetings Brethren

Thank you to all of you for your continued support for Coronation Lodge

We continue to move forward with more members and a brother from Finland will be joining our merry bunch this month, welcome to all.

The Coronation Lodge Ritual, based on the Wilmshurst version from the Lodge of the Living Stones is moving on. The Opening / Closing is complete, and ritual books are ready for distribution after Robert Lomas's kind gesture last meeting in donating a copy for each lodge member. Please see me for your ritual book if you have not already received one. Then they will be available for purchase for Associate Members, then any other interested brethren. Work is in progress for the Third Degree (which is almost complete) and the Installation ritual. These Ritual books again will be available soon. There are also plans for all the degrees from Wilmshurst's collection being worked upon. Hopefully by the end of this year we will have the Wilmhurst degrees Collection ready, thanks again to Robert Lomas and David Harrison.

We plan on a Third Degree at our next meeting in September. We are still in the process of 'fine tuning' it, but we will be ready to Raise our Fellow of the Craft, Bro. Ian Thomas, at the Autumnal Equinox meeting.

We have decided that no alms will be given in the Lodge, as per Wilmshurst principles, to respect the sanctity of the Lodge. We will continue to give alms at the Festive Board and look for other ways to give to charitable causes. Any input will be appreciated on how, and also suggestions to where funds should be distributed. W.Bro Peter Whalley our Charity Steward is the main contact.

The Associate Membership of the Lodge, for brethren who live too far away from Runcorn, is progressing well with well over 40 members from all over the Globe. The Journal of the lodge is called; 'Coronatio Quadrans' is available all members and Associate Members via the OpenLodge portal. We actively encourage you to use the OpenLodge portal for both Coronation Lodge general business (summons, minutes, etc) but also, and perhaps more importantly, for use of the educational side, the Lectures, the Papers, the Discussion Board, etc. We have an upcoming online lecture in the next month or so and details will be forthcoming, one to watch out for.

Our home of Runcorn Masonic Hall has been very helpful and patient with us and we thank the hall for all their assistance and understanding. We are very lucky to have W.Bro Tony Stringer as a lodge member. There have been some changes in the way the Hall is managed but we will adapt and be a little more proactive in the setting up of Festive Board. The wider plan is to see Runcorn as an 'esoteric centre' for those who are interested.

We will continue to look for new and innovative ways to practice our Freemasonry within the Constitution, with the goal of Truth and the 'Return to the Centre'.

We look forward to seeing you all and if you have any other interested brother who would like to visit and / or join us on the journey, feel free. Our mantra is: 'to get more Freemasonry into men'.

God Bless,

John

A Message from The Worshipful Master of Coronation Lodge

WBro Dan Wilson

Dear Brethren,

As we approach the summer solstice, let us rejoice! For Brotherly Love is like summertime under an azure sky of deepest summer. And like summertime, we should cherish the sun while it lasts and when it does, go outside and see your brothers.

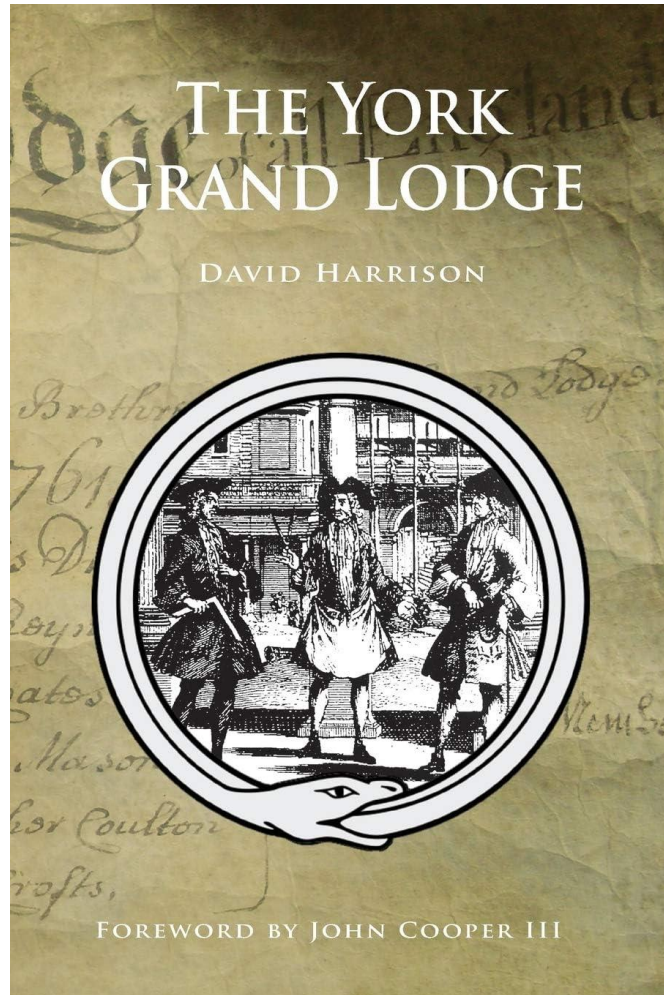
My first paper defined what an Esoteric Lodge is and how it works. It suggested a method of interpreting ritual that we can use as a Foundation Stone for our exploration of Freemasonry. This gives our Lodge direction, yet it is but one of many approaches which may be explored by future Masters of Coronation Lodge.

I am excited for our June meeting, where our Lodge Mentor, Dr. Robert Lomas, will present his answer to this quarter's Questions from the Chair Tradition, where the Worshipful Master gives a written question to Dr Lomas "the harder, the better", he says, "as it helps take me out of my comfort zone and think more deeply about our Craft." and he writes an answer that appears in our journal, *Coronatio Quadrans*. I hope a most interesting Q&A and discussion session will then ensue.

I look forward to enjoying your company again soon.

The York Grand Lodge

Dr David Harrison



One of the first leading localities that declared itself independent from the 'Premier' Grand Lodge of England was York, and on the 27th of December 1726, a new title of *Grand Lodge of all England held at York* was declared, based on a tradition that began in 926 AD. In this year, Prince Edwin supposedly presided over a meeting of Masons in York, which was seen as the first Grand Lodge in England. The fact that York was an ancient Roman City which was littered with the remains of classical architecture also influenced local Freemasons, Francis Drake for example drawing upon the ancient ruins for inspiration for his groundbreaking history of York; *Eboracum*.

York, like its other northern Roman City Chester, has a strong tradition of medieval Mystery Plays associated with the ancient city's trade guilds, and has possible early references to 'speculative' Freemasonry dating to the 1660s. Chester also has a number of early references to Freemasonry going back to the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, all featuring prominent local families, merchants and tradesmen. The York Grand Lodge kept this traditional link to the Freeman merchants and tradesmen, for example a grocer named Seth Agar was made a Freeman in 1748, became Sheriff in 1760 and Grand Master of the York Grand Lodge in 1767. In 1693 a Masonic document mentions

six people who are members of a Lodge in York, and a mahogany flat rule, now held at the York Masonic Hall, displays Masonic symbols, dating to 1663, and mentions three prominent York figures; John Drake, William Baron and John Baron.

John Drake seems to have been collated to the Prebendal Stall of Donnington in the Cathedral Church of York in October 1663, and was probably a relation of Francis Drake who was a prominent figure behind the later revival of the York Grand Lodge. Though records reveal the York Grand Lodge was only officially named in 1726, perhaps as a reaction to the London based 'Premier/Modern' Grand Lodge, Gould, in his *History of Freemasonry*, suggested that it had its foundations much earlier giving 1705 as a date in which the York Grand Lodge began, despite only meagre evidence. In 1725 however, it seems the York brethren began to use the term 'Grand Master' instead of 'President', and a year later, they claimed superiority over the 'Premier/Modern' Grand Lodge of 1717, thus adding legitimacy to its status and producing the absolute title of the Grand Lodge of *all* England held at York.¹ As Francis Drake put it in his famous speech delivered in the Merchant Adventurers' Hall in York in 1726: '*we are content they enjoy the Title of Grand Master of England; but the Totius Angliae we claim as our undoubted Right*'.²

The power struggle that lay behind the formation of independent 'Grand Lodges' in the eighteenth century seems to reflect a strong reaction from a localised elite against the audacity of the London based 'Premier/Modern' Grand Lodge. The York Grand Lodge was controlled by leading local gentlemen, such as Sir George Tempest, Baronet, who is listed as being 'President' in 1705. The Right Honourable Robert Benson, Lord Mayor of York (later Baron Bingley) who is also listed as being 'President' in 1707, and Admiral Robert Fairfax, MP in 1713 and Mayor in 1715, are just a few of the local elite controlling the York Grand Lodge in the early years. The majority of the gentlemen and tradesmen involved in the Grand Lodge served in local government as Alderman, Mayor, Sheriff and as Members of Parliament for York and the surrounding area, such as Sir William Robinson who was 'President' in 1708 and became MP for York in 1713, William Milner, who also served as a Member for York, and Edward Thompson Esq., who actually served as MP during his time as 'Grand Master' in 1729.³

This strong and close 'clique' of powerful local gentlemen seemed to rule the York Grand Lodge completely in the early decades of the eighteenth century. The Freeman tradesmen within the York Grand Lodge also had family connections within Freemasonry such as Leonard Smith, who was also an operative mason. His son followed in his footsteps and also became an operative mason and a lodge member. John Whitehead, a Freeman Haberdasher who became Chamberlain in 1700 and Sheriff in 1717 was the great-great-great uncle of York Grand Lodge historian T.B. Whytehead. Other members who had relatives within the Grand Lodge include Thomas and Josiah Beckwith, George and John Palmes, and the aforementioned Francis Drake FRS, to name but a few.⁴

Despite this seemingly harmonious image of close family ties within the 'Grand Lodge' structure, it is interesting that Charles Fairfax, who held Jacobite sympathies, was fined and subsequently imprisoned for recusancy in 1715. His house was searched and his gun confiscated, and he was

¹ Gould, *History of Freemasonry*, pp.407-8. Also see T.B. Whytehead, 'The Relics of the Grand Lodge at York', *AQC*, Vol.XIII, (1900), pp.93-5.

² Anon., *The Antient Constitutions of the Free and Accepted Masons, with a speech deliver'd at the Grand Lodge at York*, (London: B. Creak, 1731), p.20.

³ Gould, *History of Freemasonry*, pp.407-8, and Whytehead, 'Relics at York', *AQC*, Vol.XIII, pp.93-5.

⁴ Gould, *History of Freemasonry*, pp.407-8, and Whytehead, 'Relics at York', *AQC*, Vol.XIII, pp.93-5

eventually brought before Robert Fairfax (who was Mayor at the time), Sir Walter Hawksworth and Sir William Robinson, all members of the old York Lodge. Another local gentleman present at Charles Fairfax's hearing was Sir Henry Goodricke, who married the daughter of another old York Lodge member, Tobias Jenkyns, who happened to be Mayor twice in 1701 and 1720. Jenkyns also served as MP for York in 1715, beating fellow candidate and old York Lodge member Sir William Robinson.⁵

Dr Francis Drake FRS also had Jacobite sympathies, though, as far as can be ascertained he did not become actively involved in any agitation.⁶ However, his friend and associate Dr John Burton did become involved in Jacobite intrigues, being imprisoned for a time. A later visitor to the York Grand Lodge who held Jacobite sympathies was local Catholic and Freemason William Arundell, famous for removing the skulls of executed Jacobites from the pinnacles of Micklegate Bar in York in 1754. Arundell spent time in gaol for his actions, and, though having visited the York Grand Lodge, he was blackballed when he was proposed as a member of the 'Punch Bowl' Lodge, which came under the sway of the revived York Grand Lodge. In his all-important speech to the Merchant Adventurers Hall in 1726, Drake commented that *'the whole Brotherhood may be called good Christians, Loyal Subjects, and True Britons'*,⁷ perhaps asserting that the York Brethren were as loyal as the staunch Hanoverian London based 'Modern' Brethren. Despite this assertion, it is suspicious that the York Grand Lodge became quiet during the 1740s and 1750s, the period of the Jacobite uprising.⁸

Of all the local gentlemen involved in the York Grand Lodge, Dr Francis Drake FRS was perhaps one of the most important. Drake was the son of a Yorkshire clergyman who had been the Vicar of Pontefract, and became involved in Freemasonry at an early age, being a passionate champion of the ancient traditions of the York Grand Lodge. Drake zealously expressed the mythical links with King Edwin's first Masonic assembly at York Cathedral.⁹ He was critical of Desaguliers' and Anderson's changes to the Craft, and like his southern counterpart, William Preston, Drake was a historian, writing a History of York which was published in 1736. Drake also presented to the York Grand Lodge the Parchment Roll of Constitutions, which had been supposedly found during the demolition of Pontefract Castle, and would have given Drake increased status within the close circle of York Masons. Indeed, even in a mid nineteenth century edition of Paine's *Origins of Freemasonry*, this document is mentioned in the preface of the work when the editor comments on the rebellions and rivalries within Freemasonry:

*'These two lodges (London and Scotland) soon began to quarrel about precedence; each endeavouring to prove its priority by existing records of labouring masons...established many centuries before. The Yorkites, it is believed produced the oldest documents.'*¹⁰

Drake played a major role during the 'resurrection' of the York Grand Lodge in 1761, being Grand Master until 1762. He died in 1771.¹¹

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Anon., *The Antient Constitutions of the Free and Accepted Masons, with a speech deliver'd at the Grand Lodge at York*, (London: B. Creake, 1731), p.20.

⁸ Neville Barker Cryer, *York Mysteries Revealed*, (Hersham: Barker Cryer, 2006), pp.267-8. Barker Cryer certainly supports the view that the Jacobite Rebellion had an effect on the York Grand Lodge, forcing its members to cease their meetings until the political climate had eased somewhat.

⁹ Anon., *The Antient Constitutions of the Free and Accepted Masons, with a speech deliver'd at the Grand Lodge at York*, (London: B. Creake, 1731), p.20.

¹⁰ Paine, *Origins of Freemasonry*, p.217

¹¹ Gould, *History of Freemasonry*, pp.407-8, and Whytehead, 'Relics at York', *AQC*, Vol.XIII, pp.93-5.

The lack of official York Masonic records during the 1740s and 1750s has led Masonic historians of the nineteenth century, such as Gould, to suggest that the York Grand Lodge quickly went into decline. It has therefore been accepted that the York Grand Lodge became dormant during this period, but was hastily revived in 1761 when it became apparent that the 'Modern' Grand Lodge of London had spread its influence and invaded the territory of the old York Grand Lodge. The founding of a 'Modern' lodge by a company of actors within the city walls at a tavern called the 'Punch Bowl', seemed to have triggered a reaction from a small group of original York Grand Lodge Masons, who quickly ejected the 'Modern' lodge, replacing it with their own lodge.¹²

The revival of the York Grand Lodge was the result of the involvement of six local gentlemen, led by Drake, and it soon began to flourish again, with ten lodges founded under its jurisdiction. Though during the official 're-launching' of the York Grand Lodge, a number of brethren were present from the usurped 'Modern' lodge, some of whom had actually joined the re-launched York Grand Lodge. The majority of the new lodges were located in Yorkshire, but one lodge was founded in Lancashire, and one lodge, the 'Duke of Devonshire', was founded as far away as Macclesfield in Cheshire.

The Lancashire lodge, situated in Hollinwood, near the cotton producing town of Oldham, was called the Lodge of Fortitude, and was mentioned in the minutes of the Oldham based 'Modern' Lodge of Friendship. The minutes refer to various visiting brethren from the 'York' lodge attending the Oldham based Lodge of Friendship up until 1795, and various members of the 'York' lodge who were also members of the 'Modern' lodge were mentioned into the early nineteenth century.¹³ These visits provide an insight to the relationship between localised 'Modern' lodges and 'York' lodges, reminding us that despite the antagonism between Grand Lodges, Freemasons from all backgrounds could still relate to each other at local level. The York Grand Lodge continued to include prominent local gentlemen, such as William Siddall Esq., who served as Mayor the same year he served as Grand Master in 1783, Sir Thomas Gascoigne, Bart., and William Blanchard, who was Grand Secretary, and owned the York Chronicle.

Blanchard was also the custodian of the minutes and documents of the York Grand Lodge after its demise, and became the main source of information for Masonic historians in the early nineteenth century. Blanchard presented the Records of the York Grand Lodge to the York based 'Union' Lodge in 1837.¹⁴ The York Grand Lodge continued officially until 1792, but may have survived into the early years of the nineteenth century, though no documents are in existence to substantiate this, the last entry in the minute book being on the 23rd of August, 1792. After this date, the surviving York Grand Lodge members, such as Blanchard, the Grand Chaplain Rev. John Parker, and the last Grand Master Edward Wolley, became increasingly involved with the 'Union' Lodge, finding sympathy in a lodge which had been founded on the principles of union.

The 'Union' Lodge was founded in York in 1777 by both 'Antient' and 'Modern' Freemasons and became a bastion to the memory of the York Grand Lodge.¹⁵ The brethren were still using the York

¹² Gould, *History of Freemasonry*, pp.413-5, and Whytehead, 'Relics at York', *AQC*, Vol.XIII, pp.96-7.

¹³ Visiting brethren from the Lodge of Fortitude are mentioned in the Minutes of the Lodge of Friendship, no. 277, on the 16th of February, 1791 – 23rd of September, 1795, and associated Fortitude brethren are mentioned until 1811. Masonic Hall, Rochdale. Not listed

¹⁴ G. Benson, *John Browne 1793-1877, Artist and the Historian of York Minster*. (York: Yorkshire Philosophical Society, 1918), p.5.

¹⁵ The York Grand Lodge Minute Books dating from March 17, 1712 and ending August 23, 1792 are in the possession of the York 'Union' Lodge. There are no Minutes however from 1734-1761. Other York Grand Lodge

Working of the ritual in 1822 when the lodge finally agreed to adopt the new system, as taught by the Lodge of Reconciliation, which had been set up by the United Grand Lodge. Despite this, the 'Union' Lodge decided to continue the York Working as no member of the lodge had seen the new system demonstrated.¹⁶ The York architectural historian John Browne, who joined the 'Union' Lodge in 1825, was heavily influenced by Antient York Masonry and studied the Antient ritual, ensuring its survival. Despite this, in a similar fashion to its earlier manifestation, the York Grand Lodge seemed unable to compete with the might of the 'Modern' and 'Antient' Grand Lodges, fading away in the opening years of the nineteenth century.¹⁷

relics, including furniture, jewels and the original Warrant for the Lodge of Fortitude, are all held at Freemasons Hall, Duncombe Place, York, which is the current residence of the York 'Union' Lodge No.236.

¹⁶ Wood, *York Lodge No. 236*, p.20.

¹⁷ Gould, *History of Freemasonry*, pp.419-21. Also see Waite, *New Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry*, Vol.II, p.482. Gould stated that the 1780-92 volume of Minutes from the York Grand Lodge was missing at the time of his writing. As stated above, these Minutes can currently be found at Freemasons Hall, York

Göbekli Tepe: The Dawn of the Patriarchal Sun God

WBro A Umit Iris – WM Internet Lodge, Corresponding Associate of
Coronation Lodge

Göbekli Tepe, the enigmatic archaeological site in southeastern Turkey, has revolutionized our understanding of prehistoric spirituality. Dating back to around 9600 BCE, it is the oldest known temple complex, predating Stonehenge by several millennia. While scholars often highlight its role in early organized religion, an overlooked yet compelling perspective is that Göbekli Tepe may represent the transition from a matriarchal, Earth-centred belief system to a patriarchal, solar-oriented one. In this context, the temple's massive stone pillars and intricate carvings may signify the earliest recognition of a patriarchal Sun God, superseding the long-standing worship of creator goddesses linked to fertility and the Earth.

Matriarchal Goddess Worship and Prehistoric Societies

Before the rise of Göbekli Tepe, early human societies predominantly revered goddesses associated with fertility, nature, and the cycles of life. This is evidenced by Paleolithic and Neolithic figurines, such as the famous Venus statues, which emphasize fertility and motherhood. These representations suggest a widespread belief in an all-encompassing, nurturing female deity who embodied creation and regeneration.

The goddess-centred worldview was deeply tied to the rhythms of nature: the Moon, the tides, and the fertility cycles of plants, animals, and humans. Within this framework, the Earth was seen as a living, giving entity—a mother figure who provided sustenance and life. It is no coincidence that early agricultural societies, which depended on seasonal cycles and the fertility of the land, continued to venerate these divine feminine figures.

Göbekli Tepe and the Emergence of a Sun God

The temples of Göbekli Tepe mark a stark departure from these earlier traditions. The site is composed of massive T-shaped pillars arranged in circular formations, featuring carvings of animals, abstract symbols, and humanoid figures. Unlike the fertility-centred female figurines of prior ages, these structures appear to celebrate power, order, and celestial influence—elements often associated with the Sun and male deities.

One striking feature of Göbekli Tepe is its orientation. Some researchers suggest that its design may align with celestial bodies, particularly the rising and setting of the Sun. If this is the case, the site may represent one of the earliest manifestations of solar worship. The Sun, as a force of light, order, and life-giving energy, became the primary deity, gradually displacing the feminine, Earth-based spirituality that had dominated for tens of thousands of years.

The carvings at Göbekli Tepe reinforce this shift. The prevalence of predatory animals—lions, vultures, scorpions—suggests a move toward a more hierarchical, warrior-like spiritual system. The T-shaped pillars, often interpreted as stylized human figures, lack feminine characteristics and may symbolize male ancestors, deified heroes, or even a supreme male deity. This iconography suggests an ideological transition toward a more centralized, masculine divine power.

The Matriarchal Counter-Revolution

However, the rise of the patriarchal Sun God did not go unchallenged. Evidence suggests that Göbekli Tepe was deliberately buried and partially demolished, an act that may indicate a conservative matriarchal counter-revolution. This deliberate burial could signify a societal rejection of the emerging patriarchal religious structure, with remnants of earlier goddess-worshipping cultures seeking to restore the balance of power. The notion of an ideological struggle between patriarchal and matriarchal forces is further supported by the resurgence of goddess worship seen in later Neolithic sites.

By around 7500 BCE, nearly 2000 years after the abandonment of Göbekli Tepe, we see the re-emergence of the Great Mother Goddess in sites such as Çatalhöyük. Here, the dominant deity was Kybele-Sybill, a powerful fertility goddess associated with nature, birth, and regeneration. Unlike the rigid, solar-aligned structures of Göbekli Tepe, Çatalhöyük's art and architecture reflect a return to a more communal, Earth-centred religious practice, emphasizing the nurturing aspects of the divine feminine.

The Implications of This Religious Shift

If Göbekli Tepe represents the rise of a patriarchal Sun God, then its deliberate burial and the later resurgence of goddess worship at Çatalhöyük suggest an ongoing struggle between these spiritual ideologies. The shift from goddess-centred fertility cults to a dominant, celestial male deity correlates with broader societal changes. As hunter-gatherer groups transitioned to settled agricultural communities, new social hierarchies emerged. The domestication of plants and animals may have reinforced concepts of control, dominance, and order—values that align more closely with patriarchal structures.

Furthermore, this transition likely paved the way for later organized religions that emphasized a supreme male deity, such as those in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and eventually the Abrahamic faiths. By establishing a solar, masculine divine archetype at the dawn of civilization, Göbekli Tepe may be the missing link between early matriarchal fertility worship and the patriarchal religious systems that later dominated human history.

Conclusion

Göbekli Tepe stands as a monument to an era of transformation—not just in architecture or social organization, but in the very fabric of human spirituality. The site may represent the world's first large-scale temple devoted to a patriarchal Sun God, marking a departure from the longstanding veneration of Earth-centred goddesses. However, its eventual burial and the resurgence of goddess worship at Çatalhöyük suggest that this ideological transition was not absolute. If this interpretation holds true, then Göbekli Tepe is not just the cradle of religion, but the battleground of a fundamental struggle in the way humanity understood divinity, power, and the cosmos.

Questions from the Chair of Coronation Lodge

Question for June 2025

"The objective of all esoteric spiritual traditions seem to have a similar goal, be it Knowledge and Conversation with the Holy Guardian Angel; union with the Higher Self; reception of the beatific vision; finding the Holy Grail; union with the Augoeides; Henosis with the One of the Soul or the monad; Theosis with the Father; or Gnosis of the Pleroma. Wilmshurst said the goal of Freemasonry is to reach the Centre.

What is unique or particular to Freemasonry's goal and approach to this ultimate objective?

Do Wilmshurst rituals encode instructions to reach this goal, or does reaching the goal rest upon solemnly performing the ritual in itself, vis-a-vis, is the ritual theurgic?"

Robert Lomas

Link to Video Presentation of this Paper <https://youtu.be/DrzdjlamLsY>

I have spent many years thinking about the issues that our WM's question raises. In this paper I want to summarise the main points of nearly forty years of study.

Only when I realised that Cosmic Consciousness is real, did I not start to take a serious interest in how Walter Leslie Wilmshurst came to believe that it was the ultimate object of Freemasonry. This led me to consider how he tried to incorporate ways of achieving an experience of Awareness of The Centre into his rituals.

This mystical phenomenon, which is at the heart of all the major religions, centres on a personal encounter with a form of Supreme Being by either the religion's founders or its more senior exponents. A common thread runs through many of these experiences, and that is a reoccurring association of a Divine Presence manifesting during a thunderstorm.

At our first online Associate's meeting Dr Harrison traced this experience back through history and myth to a meeting of Moses with God on a mountain during a thunderstorm, as described in the Old Testament. You can find his paper in the CQ portal.

The essence of our WM's question is, does Freemasonry have some special insight into the nature of this phenomenon, and if it does, how did Walter Leslie Wilmshurst come to realise it?

Let's start by looking at Wilmshurst the man the lawyer, and the Freemason.

Wilmshurst taught that Freemasonry's greatest secret is not something that can be seen or depicted, given away or stolen, but is an experience that can only be felt and understood by an individual. He said that such awareness is the key to an inner transformation and the dawning of the enlightenment that Masonry aims to impart. So, how did he discover a path to this knowledge of his true self and his relationship with the Supreme Being, so that he could encourage others to follow him?

Walter's Uncle Ben, who became his substitute father after Walter became estranged from Archibald, his real father, had Masonic and Royal connections with London Society. Walter's mother died when he was five, so his father packed him off to boarding school and quickly remarried. Walter, who disliked his stepmother, never again lived with him, preferring to stay with Uncle Ben.

When Walter left school, at fifteen, Uncle Ben sent him to the Inns of Court in Holborn. London for an intense course in legal matters. The Inns of Court were seminaries where promising boys were prepared for the legal profession. Each Inn had its own Inns of Chancery, and after receiving preliminary education, given in residence in the Inn of Chancery, successful students were permitted to enter an Inn of Court, or seek an articled apprenticeship with an existing legal practitioner. This was offered on a fee-paying basis to suitable candidates. With Uncle Ben's money, and Masonic contacts to smooth the way, young Walter was easily accepted on a preparatory course in one of the Law Inns of Holborn. After spending a summer learning basic legal concepts and passing the requisite exams, young Walter was properly prepared to be articled to a Huddersfield Solicitor. This was Mr Henry Moseley, a friend of Uncle Ben's, dating back to the time when Ben served his own apprenticeship with a Huddersfield printing business. Uncle Ben enjoyed his life in Huddersfield which then was a prosperous cloth manufacturing centre and regarded as a bit more aristocratic than the surrounding manufacturing towns of Bradford, Leeds and Halifax.

Ben gave Walter letters of introduction to his friends, many of whom attended the church of St John the Evangelist in Birkby, the parish church of the area of Huddersfield known as Fartown. There he met Emma Hanson, the sixteen-year-old daughter of Henry Hanson, a Commercial Traveler and member of Huddersfield Lodge No 290. Walter wasted no time in joining the congregation at St John's. His first action was to volunteer to become secretary of St John's Sunday School. By coincidence, Emma happened to be a teacher there.

As his final law exams approached to bring an end to his apprenticeship, he began to think of his future as a fully qualified solicitor. He asked about a possible partnership with Henry Moseley but that was not offered.

He considered how else to increase his profile in the town, and one option was to become a Freemason. He told his daughter that his interest in Freemasonry started at the age of seven, when he was fascinated by the regalia displayed in a shop window which he used to pass regularly on his way to the Choir School in Chichester. Uncle Ben advised him to join the craft as soon as he could. But this would have to wait until he was twenty-one years of age and was free of his apprenticeship. On the 1st of May, 1889, he was added to the roll of attorneys at law.

He had made several friendships through, St John's Church, the Student Law Society, the Chess Club and the local Conservative Association, so he resolved to establish a practice of his own in the town. Uncle Ben helped him to rent three rooms in 20, Kirkgate Buildings, a large tenement building near the Market Place, and there he set up an office and furnished a small flat.

Now he was free to apply for membership of a lodge he would have choose one. He opted for Huddersfield Lodge No. 290. Bro Henry Hanson was its senior deacon at the time. Perhaps a desire to impress Emma's father might have some played a part in that decision, whatever, Bro Hanson became his proposer.

Walter was initiated on December 11th, 1889. A month later he passed to the degree of a Fellowcraft, and the following month was raised to the degree of Master Mason. Over eight weeks he was rushed through the three basic degrees of Freemasonry and although ranked a Master Mason had learned almost nothing about the Craft. He had, however, made many useful connections: not least Mr Elijah Sudworth, the treasurer of the Huddersfield Conservative and Unionist Association who was a Provincial Grand Officer no less. Three months later Walter became a Trustee of a newly formed Ltd Company to run the Conservative Club for Fartown Conservative Association. Now he was a

Freemason, his fortunes changed for the better. On Wednesday June 1st, 1892, three years after founding a practice of his own, he and Emma Hanson were married at St. John's Church.

During his early days in Freemasonry, while busy building up his practice as a lawyer, he still found time to carry out the onerous duties of Secretary of the Lodge for three years. During this time, he wrote its history for the celebration of the centenary. The lodge, however, seemed only interested in exploiting his legal services rather than developing his interest in the mystical. Soon after his father-in-law died, he resigned from Huddersfield Lodge and for five years stayed unattached. Then, around the turn of the millennium, he became a joining member of The Lodge of Harmony. Whilst taking a break from Freemasonry he had taken an increasing interest in religious mysticism and Masonic symbolism. A contemporary of his, WBro Frank Abbey, described him as "of a very studious and inquiring nature, always ready and anxious to discuss any aspect of the ritual and symbolism of the craft, with a ready wit and kindly, somewhat retiring, disposition."

He had become a regular contributor to the Occult review, and by 1905 had written articles about the conflict between religious and scientific thinking, the nature of Cosmic Consciousness and on the passive and active routes to achieving awareness of the Centre. He was rapidly promoted to Junior Warden, and thence directly to Master in 1908. He soon became a popular lecturer in the Prov of West Riding and was appointed Prov Grand Registrar in 1913.

He became a founding member of the London Masonic Study Society in 1921. And his ideas about the importance of awareness of the Centre were clarified in his book *The Meaning of Masonry* which he published in 1922. (There is a review in the current edition of CQ and a link to download a pdf of the book.)

In 1927 he became the founding master The Lodge of Living Stones and went on to set out its purpose: saying "The Craft has surely some larger end in view than merely inculcating the practice of social virtues common to all the world and by no means the monopoly of Freemasons." He linked the process of Divine Visitation to something he called Awareness of the Centre. And pointed out that we open a Master Masons lodge on this Centre, as this is the point from which no Master Mason can err.

But why did he become Interested in Cosmic Consciousness? I found out by accident when I was travelling between my University in Bradford and my home in Halifax.

I must admit when I first read this history it seemed to be a romantic vision of mysticism brought on by Walter's devout religious belief. But that all changed when I had a moment of Cosmic Consciousness inflicted on me. I survived a spontaneous electro-magnetic event, (SEME) on a Yorkshire Hilltop, which zapped my brain and revealed to me the infinite vastness of the Cosmos. And from that moment I knew that the phenomenon is not only real but is a reproducible process induced within a conscious entity that can be affected by external forces, and mediated by inner pre-occupations.

Just as the Antient Myths proclaimed, I met with a God who spontaneously arose on the wings of a thunderstorm on a Yorkshire hilltop. Luckily for me I wasn't confronted by the Jealous Calvinistic God of my childhood Sunday Schooling. Instead, I met Thor, one of the Norse Gods whom I had been studying in relation to their influence on early Scottish Freemasons. Had I met my childhood God of Abraham and Job I would have been instantly convinced all the talk of Hellfire and Damnation I had heard from the Big Seat of the Chapel, was True.

What I experienced was Awareness of the Centre, as a result a Spontaneous Electro-Magnetic Event (SEME). This took the form of a lightning strike which was within 1500 metres (5,000 ft) of me. Close,

but not near enough to kill me. I had no prior expectation that a Divine Entity would manifest. But Thor certainly managed to put the fear of God into me. However, my rigorous Calvinistic upbringing assured me he wasn't real, so I analysed the experience as a physicist. The whole story, and my analysis, can be found in my book *Turning the Hiram Key*.

At that stage in my Masonic research, I knew that speculative Freemasonry had begun in Aberdeen and had involved visions of the Norse goddess Freya. Now, understanding that experiencing Cosmic Consciousness was real, I had new clues as to how WLW came to his views.

If our Aberdeenshire ancient brethren were familiar with the legends of Freya and had been wondering about them when they had a SEME, then they could easily accept that she appeared to them. That would explain why she turns up on an early Masonic Floorcloth, from the 1480s.

Freya is the patron goddess of love, beauty, fertility, war, and magic. In the Kirkwall Scroll floorcloth she is depicted under the apple tree of Eternal youth, presiding over the beasts of the sea, field and air, with her magical human faced boar Hildisvíni, in attendance. As the goddess of Seidr, Freya was associated with a trance-like state, during which her supplicants could interact with Divine beings.

To protect this floorcloth, when it passed into the care of Kirkwall Kilwinning Lodge some two hundred years later, she was deliberately muddled with as Eve by the addition of extra side panels showing the journeys of Moses in the Wilderness. This was to prevent the cloth from being destroyed by the Calvinistic Presbyterian Church of Scotland as a heathen artifact. This little detail was revealed by the carbon dating of the constituent panels, showing the centre panel to be hundreds of years older than the outer ones.

This floorcloth was created by early Masons building the Christian St Nicholas Kirk, amid the pagan heartlands of the Norse gods in Aberdeen. Its high spire, built in the city of Aberdeen, still has such a high frequency of thunderstorms that the helicopters serving the local oil rigs are fitted with specialist protective lightning conductors to protect their occupants. St Nicholas's is now protected by Bro Ben Franklin's lightning conductor.

When the spire was built that lightning conductor was not invented, hence many Master Masons experienced SEMEs, a state which the locals believed was a gift from Freya. As the Norse religion faded away, these SEMEs became linked to the Presbyterian God of Calvin as they fed into the myth of The Elect, who are identified by the fact God chooses to visit them personally.

Before Bro Ben Franklin's invention, our Scottish brethren accumulated a large cohort of past masters who experienced a personal vision of the Centre, as part of their daily working routine. They naturally understood why it was the point from which they could not err.

Some of the founders of this group of early Freemasons, had worked at Roslin under the guidance of Sir Gilbert Hay, and learned how the public display of symbols can affect the way people think and behave. When they moved to Aberdeen they set out not just to study symbols, but they enhanced this study with their first-hand experience of Cosmic Consciousness. Over many generations our present complex system of degrees emerged from their simple rituals of Initiation and becoming a Lodge Master. This includes the practice of opening a Master Mason's lodge on the Centre.

When Freemasonry spread southwards, with Bro King James VI of Scotland, initiated at the Lodge of Scoon by RW Bro John Milne, becoming Bro King James I of England, the Craft still had a cohort of operative Past Masters who had personally experienced awareness of the centre as part of their day job. Most of them were employed building churches and were devout Christians, so they had prior

expectations of the God that appeared to them during SEMEs. They recognised him as the True and Living God Most High whose Temples they had traditionally built.

But this group, with their regular experience of SEMEs, dried up in the mid eighteenth century, after Bro Ben Franklin invented the lighting conductor. No masons afterwards regularly experienced close, non-lethal, lightning strikes.

This you will recall that during this period there were five Grand Lodges competing for members, each with their own ideas about Freemasonry. They were the Grand Lodges of Scotland and Ireland, (which originally had large cohorts of past masters who had worked in high places amid stormy landscapes). There was a Grand Lodge of York, which had grown from close links to Scotland. In London a new Grand Lodge of Moderns was created to distance London masons from the threat of accusations of sympathy for the Jacobite Rising supported by Stuart Freemasonry. And finally, there was the Grand Lodge of The Ancients, which was started by an experienced Irish Mason aiming to return to the old traditions which the Moderns had rejected.

As Freemasonry became more speculative and intellectual, the old operative traditions of neutral awareness of the Centre fell further into neglect and the influx for noble gentlemen encouraged the growth of social and charitable interests to attract more non-operative brethren and distract from the dangerous old Jacobite rituals.

So, how did WLW learn about Cosmic Consciousness and decide to create rituals which explored ways to reach it?

As I have explained, he began with a strong educational grounding in the Christian religion and was advised, by Uncle Ben, to join Freemasonry at the earliest opportunity. This he did. During his early years in Freemasonry, while he was building up his practice as a solicitor, he carried out the onerous duties of Secretary of the Huddersfield Lodge for three years. During this time, he studied Christian, Eastern and North American mysticism, and took a great interest in the spiritual dimensions of the surviving Old York Masonic rituals, particularly the working tools of an Old York Master.

The brethren of Huddersfield Lodge didn't encourage or share his interests, and when his father-in-law died he resigned from Freemasonry and remained unattached for the next five years. Then he read a book called *Cosmic Consciousness: A Study in the Evolution of the Human Mind* written by a Canadian psychiatrist called Richard Maurice Bucke and saw links between this state of mind and the old rituals of the Centre, which had been a part of the natural experience of many early past masters in Scotland, Ireland, and York.

He rejoined Freemasonry as Chaplin of the Lodge of Harmony 275. Within seven years he was WM. He became a prolific speaker and writer about the deeper spiritual meanings to be found in the old workings in general, and in particular the role Cosmic Consciousness played in Awareness of the Centre, in the more complete ritual workings of the Old York and Scottish Installation ceremonies.

The rest is history. He wrote a book on these ideas, called *The Meaning of Masonry*. He became an early member of the Masonic Study Society and almost a hundred years ago set up a lodge "to meet a demand, for a fuller understanding and realisation of the latent teachings of our Order than usually obtains and to meet the need of a minority of Brethren who are eager to learn more."

He wrote a whole series of procedures, rituals and study papers to share his knowledge and encourage further research, hoping to set up a network of similar lodges. Unfortunately, that did not happen in his lifetime.

His Lodge of Living Stones met formally at the four turning points of the year. The season began at the winter solstice with the death and rebirth of the lodge as expounded in his Extensio Rituals of Installation, the working of which he had to have specially approved of by UGLE, announcing that "that it is not essential for every Installed Master to receive all the Signs, Tokens and Words used in such form of working."

The old lodge dies during the Installation. All the officers hand back their collars and return to the floor. After Installation the new master installs his officers, then at the next Vernal Equinox Meeting all the new officers read out their own portion of Wilmshurst Book of the Perfect Lodge. This explains their symbolic role and spiritual duties, while holding that office. This progression was intended to prepare them for their eventual installation.

He wrote beautiful rites for Opening and Closing the Lodge which are significant in their own right. And he suggested that they should be studied and practiced independently from the larger ceremonies they complement and enhance.

He also wrote demonstration rituals for each of the three degrees, with the addition of a narrator to explain the deeper meaning of each step. These ceremonies would be worked over the June and September meetings, each ceremony taking two meetings to complete over three years. This had the intention of teaching the brethren the deeper meanings and its implications.

His lodge also held informal meetings of debate, where papers were presented, discussed and eventually admitted to the Canon of Lodge Papers.

Here at Coronation Lodge, we are in the process of replicating his original workings, which, apart from the Book of the Perfect Lodge, have been somewhat neglected by Living Stones.

So, to return to the Master's Question.

Wilmshurst said the goal of Freemasonry is to reach the Centre. What is unique or particular to Freemasonry's goal and approach to this ultimate objective?

Wilmshurst studied religious mysticism in many of the ways mentioned in the preamble to the question, and came to recognise in the Old York rituals this innate acceptance of the experience of Cosmic Consciousness in the form of awareness of the Centre. This, I have pointed out, was a natural outcome of the working conditions of early practitioners of our Craft. I don't think he knew the detailed history of how this came about, which I have shared with you in this talk, but he did recognise the deep insights which had been preserved from these beginnings. It is the natural exposure to Spontaneous Electro-Magnetic Events, created by the working conditions of our Ancient Brethren, which gave them a unique awareness of personal contact with the Divine Force Behind Reality which they acknowledged as The Great Architect of the Universe and the force driving all religious belief. No other trade had such dangerous daily working conditions to offer this mysterious insight that seeped into our evolving rituals. This heritage is unique to Freemasonry's ultimate objective of reaching the Centre, the point where no Master Mason can err.

Finally, do "Wilmshurst's rituals encode instructions to reach this goal, or does reaching the goal rest upon solemnly performing the ritual in itself, vis-a-vis, is the ritual theurgic?"

In my opinion Wilmshurst's rituals are not theurgic rites. Rather they are an educational path which encapsulates the guidance and wisdom of generations of the old craftsmen who lived through the terror of meeting the Force of Creation in the wild and stormy high places where they worked to build a place to worship that Force.

Simply parroting a ritual, theurgic algorithm will not transport you to the Centre. You must be properly prepared and brave enough to face the terror of dissolution of your ego, to truly embrace the Divine Spark of Self-Awareness at your Centre that links you to the Infinite. Only then can you become one with the Creative Force that fashioned and sustains the Universe.

So, brethren, let me sum up.

Freemasonry is unique in its spiritual goal because of its largely forgotten history.

We Freemasons are heirs to the unique heritage of an Order that encourages an interest in the fundamental tenets of the world's great religions whilst remaining a secular philosophical system to seek out agreement between any people of good will.

We try to seek out the shared elements of belief, rather than looking how to exploit and amplify minor differences in doctrine to argue about.

Our modern Freemasonry is special because it is built on the foundations of is an ancient craft that habitually exposed its workers to the hazards of working on high structures in bad weather. It is no accident that the first lodge of speculative Masons emerged in Aberdeen. It was formed by an outcast group of masons who had learned about symbols, and the importance of King Solomon's Temple, from a medieval spin doctor, Sir Gilbert Hey. During the fifteenth century they had been employed in Hey's mission to create an alternative focus of religious fervour to replace the Holy Rood of the Stuarts, for his master Sir William St Clair of Roslin seize the crown of Scotland. When that escapade failed they were thrown out of work. Fortunately, these unemployed craftsmen were taken on by the new Burgh Council of Aberdeen to build the Christian outpost of St Nicholas's Kirk, in the midst of the heathen heartlands of the old Norse Gods.

To undertake that work, they formed a lodge, which is well documented in the records of the council that commissioned the first high Christian spire to be built among the conquered Picts and Norsemen. The geology and meteorology of that region creates ideal conditions for a high and regular concentration of thunderstorms. The high structure of the Kirk and its Spire took years to build, and thunderstorms were frequent. If a mason was too close to a strike it would kill him, but it was less than 5,000 feet away, the intense fluctuation in the electromagnetic field would trigger coherent firing of most to the neurons in his brain. I know from personal experience that this creates a state of consciousness we call Cosmic Consciousness. In this state of abject fear, you will manifest whatever Divine Being that most recently occupied your thoughts.

Only Masons were diligent and daft enough to work high on unprotected structures in bad weather and would often be unable to take cover before lightning struck, so mystical events were frequent. As the Brethren developed their ideas of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, they were able to share the Truth of these personal encounters with the Infinite. Afraid to speak to freely about their experiences before the Elders of the Kirk, and conscious of the danger of being accused of blasphemy or conjuring Pagan gods and demons, they created metaphors and symbols to illuminate their experiences. These they illustrated with their early ritual floorcloths. Fortunately, one of these survived and was available for scientific study and accurate dating. It contains almost all the symbols we now use in the various degrees of the Craft, but they are randomly scattered over the seven panels which lead from Initiation to understanding of the mystery of the Centre.

These symbols and the awareness of the Centre came before the rituals and ceremonial explanations. Those were developed over many generations and changed under the influence of the various Grand Lodges. As David Harrison has pointed out, some manuscripts of early Scottish rituals were discovered

in Durham, by John Yarker and he believed them to be the original Old York rituals, which Wilmshurst later studied and used to underpin his rituals to guide latter day brethren to the Centre. Brethren you are heirs to a unique tradition. Use it well and cherish it.

So what is this Esoteric Freemasonry Thing, Anyway?

WBro Dan Wilson, Master of Coronation Lodge No 2927

So, you wanna know more about Freemasonry and you've heard about this cool new Esoteric Lodge down in Runcorn. You want in, but haven't the foggiest idea what it's all about? Fear not, Dear Reader, as all shall be explained in due time. Let me begin by introducing the man who invented this type of Lodge.

Walter Leslie Wilmshurst (1867-1939) is the principal writer associated with Esoteric Freemasonry and widely regarded as one of the foremost authors on Freemasonry. He founded the Lodge of Living Stones (LoLS) No. 4957 in 1927 and served as its WM for several years. It met and still meets today at Castle Grove Masonic Hall, Leeds. This Lodge has 4 regular meetings and 7 informal meetings a year. The informal meetings are composed of discussions around a short paper given by one of the Brethren. Wilmshurst's intention with this Lodge was to be a place of Masonic education alongside a Brother's Mother Lodge. Though his intention was to have an Esoteric Lodge in every province, this dream was far from realised, though our repurposing of Coronation Lodge No. 2927 brings Esoteric Freemasonry to the oldest province in England: the Province of Cheshire.



Wilmshurst contributed several of the 49 formal Lodge Papers of LoLS, almost all are private, though papers 4, 16, and 19 are public. These are the *Book of the Perfect Lodge*, *The Entered Apprentice Degree*, and *The Fellowcraft Degree*. He also wrote two books, *The Meaning of Masonry* (1922) and its sequel *The Masonic Initiation* (1932) which are excellent starting points for Brethren interested in Esoteric Freemasonry. He also developed his own version of the rituals based on Old York workings, which come with extensive commentaries and were intended as demonstrations rather than to be worked for candidates.

Wilmshurst was a solicitor by trade, and this comes across in his style of writing. I don't agree with everything he says or everything about his approach – what he writes is far from the “last word” on Esoteric Freemasonry - but I think we are in a good position in Coronation Lodge to bring a fresh perspective to his work and carry it forward into the twenty-first century by inviting a broader perspective to approach the topic. A good start would be to offer more accessible and concise Lodge Papers with plenty of diagrams instead of walls of text and padding. Yet, despite his shortcomings, he was a real pioneer – the work of Wilmshurst contains many excellent ideas which we can use as a foundation for the work of Coronation Lodge.

Principal among his ideas, Wilmshurst said the goal of Freemasonry is to “reach the Centre”. This is the same ultimate goal as every serious spiritual tradition, with each tradition calling it by a different name, and expressing the path to it through different symbology and language. In the Western Mystery Tradition, it is called *Knowledge and Conversation with the Holy Guardian Angel* (or *Higher Self*). Much more will be written about the Path to the Centre in future papers, but it is important to

state that Esoteric Freemasonry recognises a higher purpose for Freemasonry more than *just* lessons in morality.

Definition of Terms

A great deal of confusion can be eliminated by simply explaining what words mean, so let us begin our adventure by defining a few terms.

Mysticism – is the study of mystics, people who have *mystical experiences*. A mystical experience involves an altered state of consciousness with a sense of “oneness with the Divine”. There are different kinds of mystical experiences, such as out-of-body experiences (OBEs), near-death experiences (NDEs), astral travel, and cosmic consciousness. Similar effects can be induced by psychedelic drugs, although these are not usually considered part of mysticism. It is possible to have a mystical experience on top of a psychedelic experience, such as meeting entities whilst under the influence of the drug dimethyltryptamine (DMT). What is studied in mysticism is the writings of mystics and their methods of inducing mystical experiences.

Occultism – “occult” means “hidden”, and occultism is the study of the hidden forces of nature in Heaven and Earth. The term was popularised by Eliphas Levi and doesn’t necessarily refer to anything sinister – the word has become demonised by religious authorities and its depictions in Hollywood. The first principles studied are the 4 classical Elements (representing the Constitution of Man), the 7 Planets (representing Celestial forces and their effects on the Human Soul), and then the 12 Signs of the Zodiac (representing stages in a cycle or journey). It also includes the arrangement of the Elementary, Planetary, and Zodiacal Signs onto the Qabalistic Tree of Life, which is a Western form of Yoga with 10 Sephirot instead of 7 Chakras. Other topics of study within occultism include the angelic government of the universe. In the Western tradition, it typically combines several interrelated disciplines such as Alchemy, Astrology, Theurgy, and Qabalah together and works to achieve union with one’s Higher Self, among other things.

Esotericism – is the study of esoteric texts. A text is said to be “esoteric” when it is thought to be deliberately written with one or more hidden meanings which are hidden in plain sight in the form of riddles (such as the Ancient Greek tradition of writing in *aenigmata*) or in a symbolic code (such as alchemical manuscripts). The easily-accessible meaning is called the “*exoteric interpretation*” and the hidden meanings are called the “*esoteric interpretation*”. To access the hidden meanings, you need one or more “Esoteric Keys” to the text. This is why I propose we have two streams in Coronation Lodge: one that studies Freemasonry and another that looks at allied traditions to find these Keys. No true mystic ever disavows the exoteric – both esoteric and exoteric work alongside each other and contribute to each other. The exoteric moral story of Freemasonry is a vital prerequisite to exploring deeper meanings, as you must first succeed with moral development before you are ready for higher

work. It is an error to view the esoteric meaning as the “true meaning” and the exoteric as only intended for “lesser minds”.

The Chest of Secrets (left) symbolises Esotericism: the bottom drawer is the Exoteric interpretation and it is open to all. The drawer above it is closed but still accessible: it just needs effort to open. The drawers above it are locked and need Keys to open – these are the Esoteric interpretations and on the floor of the picture are the Esoteric Keys, which we hope to discover in our Lodge.



Spirituality – is a personal intuitive pursuit for finding meaning in yourself, your existence, and your place in the Cosmos, and developing a connection with the transcendent. A distinction is made between the Material and the Spiritual and you must liberate yourself from the Earthly and Material inclinations that encumber the Spirit and “weigh down” the Soul. This allows you to transcend your present state of consciousness and proceed to a higher and healthier state of consciousness.

Though I said at the beginning that Wilmshurst invented the Esoteric Lodge, strictly speaking, Wilmshurst was concerned more with the *spiritual dimensions of Masonry* rather than specifically *Esoteric approaches to Freemasonry* as defined above. Discussion of the spiritual dimensions of Freemasonry can be considered an enhanced form of Speculative Masonry and is a slightly different

thing to Esoteric Freemasonry, though there is inevitably some overlap. Esotericism is not a synonym for “advanced spiritual science”, though that often is its subject matter, and the terms are often conflated. Here I hope these definitions will afford us some clarity for our discussions.

How is an Esoteric Lodge different from an Ordinary Lodge?

Truth

Freemasonry is founded on the principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. As a fraternity, Brotherly Love is always the foremost principle upon which our noble Order rests and everything we do is built upon it, such as Relief, be it of our Brethren or of our fellow creatures. In an Ordinary Lodge, it often stops there, with little said about the pursuit of Masonic Truth. An Esoteric Lodge is dedicated to this final principle although, not to such a manner as to neglect or ignore the other principles.

In Coronation Lodge, we acknowledge and embody the defining principle of a Freemason’s Heart – I mean Charity. Charity is twice blessed and like its sister, Mercy, it blesses those who give as well as those who receive. The difference in Coronation Lodge is that we view the Temple as a Holy place and do not profane it with the exchange of metals, reserving the Festive Board as the primary venue for charitable donations – our multi-prize raffles are fun and popular, and is the biggest source of charitable monies raised by our Lodge.

Wilmshurst uses somewhat pretentious language to refer to Ordinary Lodges – he calls them “promiscuously-constituted lodges” as if Esoteric Lodges were only for the “chosen few”. This sort of elitism is a pernicious spiritual vice and is not befitting of an upstanding Mason. There is nothing wrong with Ordinary Lodges – the purpose of an Esoteric Lodge is to provide a additional experience to

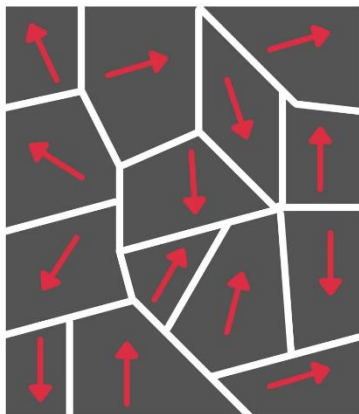
support Masonic education and to facilitate Brotherly Love between like-minded Masons who share an interest, maybe even a passion, for the deeper aspects of Freemasonry. Both Ordinary Lodges and Esoteric Lodges coexist together as part of a greater fraternity of Masons basking in the Light of His Vast Design.

Egregores

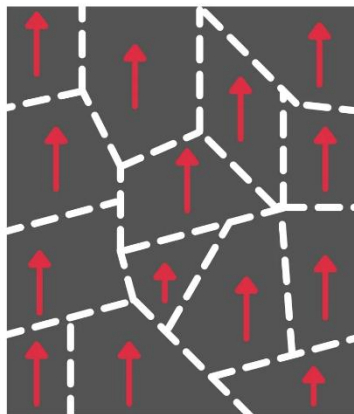
An interesting concept in Occultism is that of the Egregore which is a thoughtform or collective spirit generated by the collective thoughts, emotions, and intentions of a group of people. In Jungian terms, it is a localised pocket of the collective unconscious of that community. It generates most strongly when the *attention* and *intention* of members of the group are aligned. Christ alludes to an Egregore for the Church when He says,

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

—Matthew 18:20 (KJV)



Domains Randomly Assigned



Domains Aligned

Using the analogy of a magnet (see above), when pockets of magnetic material are all aligned in the same direction, it generates a strong magnetic field. Likewise, when we align our emotions, thoughts, and intentions, it generates a strong Egregore. Egregores can be powerful. I will give 3 kinds of examples: the Good, the Bad, and the Weird.

The Good: consider football matches and a church. The emotion of so many supporters focusing their attention on the game will affect how a team plays, hence why fixtures are alternate games played at home and away. As for churches and religious communities, I went to a community event that rented out the temple room in a church. This kind of church didn't practice Holy Communion, wasn't really furnished like a traditional church, and had virtually none of the usual symbolism, yet there was a distinctly Holy feel to the place. It was the result of many people enjoying the same emotional state over many years. Indeed, the Egregore might be colloquially referred to as, “the atmosphere of a place or the feel of a room”, but there's also more subtle things happening on higher levels.



Football matches



Churches

The Bad: consider Nazi Germany. The so-called “Hitler salute” was actually stolen from the Occult circles of the time. They took the Sign of Zelator, which constitutes zeal towards a particular object and militarised it by adding a heel click and raising the hand higher. The correct form is to hold the hand at eye level so vision and gesture are linked. Interestingly, it was only compulsory for the civilians until late in the war when the military were also required to do it. Drawing the sheer mass of civilians into an Egregore at a national level was instrumental to the early successes of the Nazi party. It is not possible to escape the Egregore of your nation – one reason why nationalism is such a strong force.



Salute for Reich Civilians



The Sign of the Zelator

The Weird: drug rehabilitation centres and nursing homes often have weird energies because their residents are in the same emotional state, either trying to fight their demons of personal addiction or being close to death. This causes these places to be hotbeds of paranormal activity.

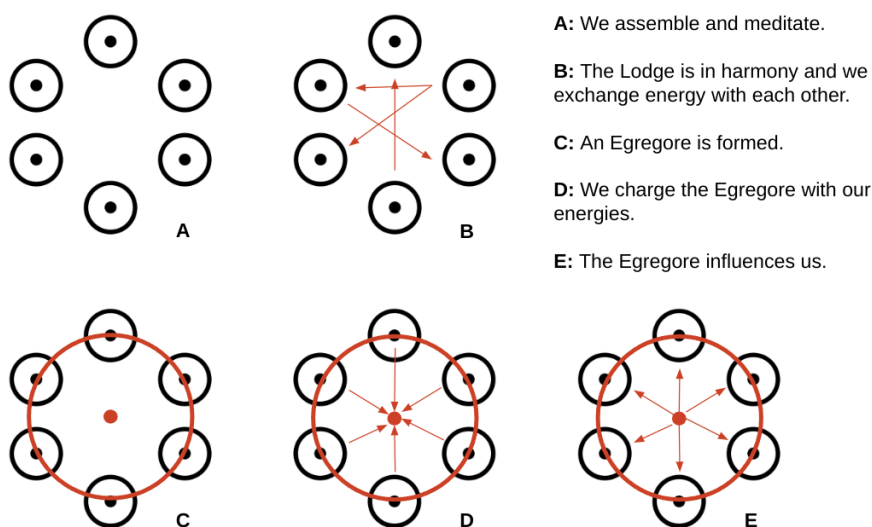


“Shadow people” are often seen in corridors of rehab centres and nursing homes

A Masonic Egregore changes the feeling of the Lodge. When ceremonies are conducted with synchronised intent and feeling, the effect is altogether different from a blank recital even from an adept ritualist. Thus the emotions expressed by the ritualists and those felt by the candidate are of crucial importance to the degree ceremonies. Verbal mistakes are far less of an error than the real cardinal sin: delivering the ritual without enthusiasm or feeling.

We have around 60 Masons attend each meeting of Coronation Lodge, which can provide a lot of energy for the Egregore, but only if our intentions and emotions are properly aligned. This is the purpose of the Dark Silence at the beginning and end of the proceedings, to allow us to forget the outside world, still our minds, and all approach a similar state of consciousness, ready for the proceedings of the Lodge.

When we develop the intellectual foundation of our Lodge and provide our members with a shared foundation, we create conditions for fruitful discussions. Here the effect of the Egregore will be seen: each of us is our own Centre and when we discuss together, exchanging energy with each other, the circumference of our Centres link together and create a new Centre in the midst of our Lodge. When we charge this with our own energies, it becomes an entity of itself and will interact with us. The discussion will take on the character of a group mind in discussion with itself. See the figure below.



How is this different from any other assembly of humans having a discussion? It is the unified intentions of the group (to uncover the mysteries) and the collective knowledge that this is going to happen. With that knowledge, the Egregore will be charged with our energies even though this process occurs unconsciously for most Masons.

And how, may you ask, can you positively contribute to this Egregore? With sincerity and a genuine intent to uncover the mysteries. For further knowledge, see the book, *Egregores*, by Mark Stavish, and two articles in *The Freemason*.

Real Initiation

Wilmshurst makes a distinction between “real initiation” and “initiation in name only” and it is the pursuit of “real initiation” that is a core quality of Esoteric Lodges. Common practice in English Lodges is to rush a candidate through the degrees with little or no discussion on any of the content and with little requirements for a candidate’s understanding of the material to be tested.

The execution of a ceremony performed by an Esoteric Lodge is of a significantly greater impact than an Ordinary Lodge – the Egregore of the Lodge and the emotions and intentions expressed by its members, as well as the standard and form of its ritual coordinate to impress more deeply the significance of the experience on its candidates. But an Esoteric Lodge passes and raises candidates only rarely, and may never initiate them. So what do we mean by “Real Initiation”?

Real initiation requires raising the state of consciousness of the Mason, regardless of degrees already conferred. We do this via engaging with the symbols, by developing a personal explanation of the symbols, and studying the interrelation between those symbols so that everything is imbued with meaning. Every interaction with our symbols should raise many connections in a Mason’s soul and mind.

Nothing in Freemasonry is arbitrary – it all fits together beautifully. Consider the Step that we take when giving the Sign. Is this just so? Or does it have deeper meaning? We will consider this later, after talking about Esoteric Keys.

Worked Example of an Esoteric Key

Now we come to the real meat of this paper and to some Esoteric work! I will describe an Esoteric Key and apply that to the ritual to gain a better understanding of what the Principal Officers represent. Properly understanding the three Principal Officers provides a powerful first step in making sense of the deeper meaning of ritual. Armed with this understanding, you can take the first steps in appreciating what Freemasonry is really about!

In a short paper entitled *The Book of the Perfect Lodge*, Wilmshurst says the WM represents the Spirit; SW, the Soul; and JW, the Mind. These terms are broad and open to interpretation, especially the notion of Soul, whose meaning differs between traditions and is given a more precise and technical meaning in Neoplatonism. Wilmshurst mentions a more direct interpretation as WM representing the Will; SW, the Feeling faculty; and JW, the Thinking faculty.

We have at least 8 sets of symbols that apply to these Principal Officers. Tables are a very useful tool to show connections between symbols and different symbol sets, so I strongly encourage their use. Here’s our first one.

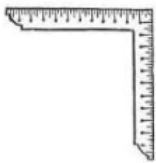
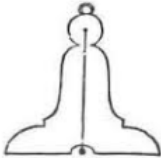
	WM	SW	JW
Badge	Square	Level	Plumb Rule
Directions	East	West	South
Solar Cycle	Rising Sun	Setting Sun	Meridian Sun
Lesser Lights	The Master	Moon	Sun
Masters	King Solomon	King Hiram	Hiram Abiff
Orders of Architecture	Ionian	Dorian	Corinthian
Virtues	Wisdom	Strength	Beauty
Working Tools	3rd Degree	2nd Degree	1st Degree

Let's take one of these symbol sets and apply a Key to it. Consider the Badges of Office: the Plumb Rule proves verticals; the Level proves horizontals; and the Square proves both axes at once.

The Alchemical Key

We outline the Key by introducing the symbols, their names, and discuss in some depth what they mean. The goal is to make the symbol have a greater depth of meaning in your mind.

From alchemical symbolism, we learn that a vertical line represents the Active part of the Soul; a horizontal line represents the Passive part of the Soul; and a cross represents the Active and Passive parts operating in perfect Union.

Officer	Badge	Alchemical Symbol	Jungian Interpretation
WM		 Union	Superconsciousness
SW		 Passive	Subconsciousness
JW		 Active	Ego-Consciousness

The symbolism in Alchemy is intimately connected with depth psychology (that's the stuff from Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud, and co.), so we can interpret these using more familiar Jungian terminology:

the JW represents the Ego-Consciousness; the SW represents the Subconsciousness; and the WM represents Superconsciousness, which can be the Higher Self and its connection to the Collective Unconscious.

It is worth stating that Ego-Consciousness here refers to your normal waking state in that everything is perceived in terms of your Ego as the observer which is separate from the things it observes, “I observe X, X is not I.”. It is a common beginner’s mistake to conflate Ego-Consciousness with being egotistical. The point of “Ego Death” is so you can listen to your Higher Self through your Subconscious. Your Higher Self is connected to the Collective Unconscious and the Divine and your Ego-Consciousness gets in the way of listening to it. This is the idea of the Divine Silence – that seeds grow in silence. The opening lines of the Tao Tse Ching read, “The Tao that can be spoken is not the Eternal Tao; the name that can be named is not the Eternal name.” Indeed, the true way is the unspoken way.

Recall when the Lodge opens, all members hold the 1st Degree duegard whilst the WM discharges it. What does this represent? Cutting the throat, i.e. not speaking, This represents the Higher Self speaking when the Mind is silent – something we should all aspire towards.

As a personal example, I often go to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament in my church. Entering this chapel invokes humility as it contains a physical presence of God in the Consecrated Hosts for the purposes of having a personal relationship with me. That humility is enough to reign-in the Ego-Consciousness for me to ask God questions and receive answers by my thoughts being directed onto the answers I need. Indeed, when one “speaks to God” in this manner, one is really talking to the Subconscious and receiving messages through it from the Higher Self. “God” here really acts as a symbol for the spark of Divinity within us (in Masonic language, the Vital and Immortal Principle).

Esoteric Hermeneutics using the Key

Hermeneutics is the theory and methodology of interpretation of texts, especially religious scripture, wisdom literature, and philosophical works. There are many methods applied in the field of Hermeneutics – an example from Biblical hermeneutics is *scriptura sui ipsius interpres* (scripture interprets itself), which entails interpreting passages of scripture through other passages, hence why you will often see a list of cross-references to other passages in study Bibles to give hints as to what a passage means. In Esoteric Hermeneutics, we cannot rely on such internal references alone: we use the Esoteric Key to decode the text first and then reappraise the text after applying this Key to unlock the secret interpretations.

Applying such Keys to our ritual opens up a new discussion on its meaning and thereafter how we can apply these teachings to our own journeys. We will now examine parts of the ritual and follow the new discussion that we opened. The following discussion is to show you the process – much more can be said once one has understood the Key and re-read the ritual.

The Pillars: When the Lodge is closed, the JW has his terrestrial pillar up (vertical) and his badge is the Plumb Rule (vertical). The SW has his celestial pillar down (horizontal) and his badge is the level (horizontal). When the Lodge opens, the JW’s terrestrial pillar goes down and the SW’s celestial pillar goes up. This represents two things:

- That we leave the outside world behind (lowering of the terrestrial pillar) to consider spiritual things (raising of the celestial pillar).
- That when we undergo the process of initiation, we quieten the Ego-Consciousness and look within – specifically to our Subconsciousness. When we quieten the mind and forget the

outside world, the Subconsciousness speaks back to us – it is Active, hence why the celestial pillar is raised.

This secret of the Lodge room is also encoded in a Tarot card – Major Arcana card VI: The Lovers. The masculine Adam on the right represents Ego-Consciousness as Masculine represents an Active principle. The feminine Eve on the left represents the Subconsciousness. Feminine represents a Passive principle, as the Subconsciousness sits in the background absorbing what we do. The Angelic being represents our connection to the Divine, which is the Higher Self. A secret of this card is hidden in the gazes of the people: Adam looks at Eve and Eve looks at the Divine. This is because the Ego-Consciousness is an Active state and so cannot directly communicate with the Divine: connection with the Divine has to go through the Subconsciousness. Hence why in the Masonic system, we are repeatedly exposed to a multitude of symbols which act upon the Subconsciousness. The mountain in the background symbolises Initiation (remember Mount Horeb and Mount Moriah from the Royal Arch Degree?), so this card is telling you that the basis of initiation is to look within you, through the Subconsciousness to access the Divine.



Advance to the East: In each of the three Degrees, the WM tells the SW to advance the Candidate to the East by the proper Steps. The SW then instructs the Deacons to do so. The WM does not address the Deacons directly: why do you think this is? It is because the Higher Self provides subtle prompts for your spiritual advancement through your Subconsciousness, to which you may either attend or disregard at your own behest according to the Principle of Free Will.

Distinguishing Badge: When the Distinguishing Badge is given in each Degree. The subconscious works in symbols so the SW gives the Badge.

Testing of the Wardens: We also learn why we letter the word at the JW and halve it at the SW – because the Ego-Consciousness works atomistically (in parts) whereas the Subconsciousness more holistically (in wholes).

A Proposed List of Esoteric Keys

To continue our studies, I propose the following list of example Keys. Much can be written about each Key and how it can be applied to the ritual, so I will leave you with teasers for future papers, which will appear in *Coronatio Quadrans*.

- **Alchemical Key** – Consider horizontals, verticals, and unions thereof, as well as the three principles (Sulphur, Mercury, and Salt), as well as the 4 elements (Fire, Air, Water, Earth).
- **Astrological Key** – Consider symbolism of the Sun and Moon and the rising, setting, and meridian of the Sun. Also consider the symbolism of the Directions. There is a variety of astrological symbolism encoded in the ritual.

- **Geometric Key** – Consider circles, squares, triangles, right angles, and tau crosses. We are especially instructed to study the liberal art of Geometry in the ritual, so this Key is particularly important.
- **Qabalistic Key** – Consider the pillars and positions of the Penal Signs of the Three Degrees. Also consider the columns, where they are and what they represent when you are sitting at the JW's chair. There is an interesting secret that can only be understood when you are sitting in the JW's chair. There is also plenty to discuss using the techniques of the Literal Qabalah, such as gematria.

How do we find more Esoteric Keys? There are likely only a small number, though I do not claim to have listed them all. I proposed the above by drawing from my studies of Alchemy, Astrology, Sacred Geometry, and Qabalah. It is also fruitful to be familiar with the use of symbolism in general, and a symbols dictionary is of great utility, such as the *Penguin Dictionary of Symbols*. What counts as a fruitful Esoteric Key is open to debate and may be discussed more fully in a future paper, though I would consider the original intent of the writers of Masonic ritual and what they likely knew. I would suggest they were exposed to the Hermetic, Neoplatonic, and Rosicrucian traditions, as well as Operative Freemasonry, so these would be the most fruitful sources for finding Keys. This is why I propose we have two streams in Coronation Lodge: Esoteric Freemasonry foremost as well as leaving some room for discussion of the Western Mystery Tradition in general and how that relates to Freemasonry.

As Esoteric traditions inter-relate, it is to be expected that each Key isn't standalone – some symbols will overlap between Keys (e.g. the Active and Passive symbols of Alchemy could be considered geometric symbols) and several Keys can work together to unlock deeper discussions.

The Work of the Lodge

Let us turn now to some practical suggestions to how an Esoteric Lodge can operate. What is missing from Ordinary Lodges is contemplation of the ritual and discussion upon it, so I propose we spend most regular meetings with a paper and then most importantly, a discussion based around the paper. Often, the discussion can be more interesting than the paper.

Participating in discussion is vital: it enhances participants' ability to make links that would otherwise be difficult on one's own and the Eggregore works as a collective mind and definitely assists this endeavour. The value of discussion is also supported by an educational theory, known as Vygotsky's *Zone of Proximal Development*, which states that being in conversation with a "more knowledgeable other" will enhance a student's ability to solve problems on their own. Thus the value of having more knowledgeable Masons together with those earlier on in their learning journey is vindicated by educational theory and practice.

The discussion need not be of an intellectual nature all of the time, sharing how Masonry relates to one's own experience is a valuable contribution, that is pivotal to being a Mason rather than just talking about Masonry. Any interpretation that makes connections in your mind is beneficial in opening it up. Interpretations can be refined later as one grows in Masonic knowledge.

We have many ways to engage with the work of the Lodge.

- Regular meetings (quarterly on equinox and solstice months)
- Lodges of Instruction (LoI):

- Special LoI: for allied topics, our first one will be a practical demonstration of Laboratory Alchemy
- General LoI: for demonstration of ritual and commentary, or papers
- Online lectures (through MS Teams)
- Online discussion (through the OpenLodge portal)
- The Lodge Journal, *Coronatio Quadrans*
 - Questions from the Chair (quarterly from the WM to the Lodge Mentor)
 - Writing challenges from the Lodge Mentor
 - All Brethren are invited to submit papers for publication in the journal
- All of this will culminate in formal Lodge Papers to record our work

LoLS has 49 Lodge Papers that have been ratified by votes of the Brethren as formal Lodge Papers. I suggest we do something similar, albeit with a more modern approach. Our early work can focus on developing a paper for each Esoteric Key. Rather than static documents, these can be living documents, discussed on the OpenLodge portal, and refined over time. There is no problem with these papers having multiple contributing authors listed – indeed, it embraces the collective spirit of Freemasonry, of living and growing together in harmony.

Conclusion

After our discussion on Keys, we can return to the meaning of the Step. Why, whenever we start walking around the Lodge do we start with the left foot? This is because the heart is on the left side of the body and symbolically represents the feeling function, which is why Ancient Egyptian statues have their left foot first.



Left foot first!

So let's go to the SW's pedestal, where feelings arise from the Subconsciousness. Step forward with the left foot, and then place the right foot into its hollow. The left foot is vertical because it's Active and the right foot is horizontal because it's Passive. It is instructing us to regard our feelings first and our thoughts second. Interestingly, the Step is in the shape of a tau cross and this tau shape is also the position of the three principal officers when starting from the SW's pedestal.



This orientation of the Tau cross is the same shape as the Step and the Lodge room when viewed from the SW's pedestal.

So when you next make the Step and give the Sign, may it evermore be imbued with meaning.

Brother, can you hear me?

Helping brethren to take an active part in masonic meetings.

Bro David Grainger. SW Francis Drake of York Lodge 7825. JD
Cornerstone Lodge 10051.

Introduction

I don't know if your lodge is like mine, I expect many are similar and from my visiting experience there are definitely a number of shared common themes. One of these is the age profile, some numbers from Yorkshire North and East Riding - out of a total of 3123 brethren in our province, 1645 of them are aged 65+ and 985 are aged 75+.

Clearly there are many considerations that need to be addressed for our older and somewhat wiser brethren. One of these that I have been able to assist with is hearing loss / deafness.

What follows is not a complete solution but something that lodges and/or masonic halls might like to consider to assist brethren to become more engaged with and therefore active within their lodges, chapters and other orders.

Digital technology.

Our modern lives seem to be governed by a myriad of apps and technology, it's hard to imagine how we used to cope without a smartphone that will do everything for us (even tell us the time and make phone calls!).



It seems inconceivable that there couldn't be some way to use this technology to our advantage to help our brethren in times of need.

A number of years ago, my son's grandfather, who has been instrumental in my love and passion for Freemasonry, started struggling with his hearing loss, to the point where it became impossible to have a conversation. He has severe hearing loss in both ears, leaving him with only 30% overall hearing. This has also made it impossible for him to attend lodge meetings and church services.

Another close friend of mine, Bro Martin Owen, Vale of Nene lodge 7006, whom I have worked with on numerous Roman re-enactment events and who helped with my initiation and progression into the Mithraic order (ritual devised by Bro Owen), unfortunately had to resign from his lodge as he couldn't engage with the ritual or festive board due to his hearing loss.

I'm pretty certain that lots of our brethren (not just those advanced in age) have a range of difficulties with hearing loss and this might be one of many reasons for them to choose not to attend or engage with their lodges.

As ever with 'solutions' of this sort, it needs patience and understanding from a variety of brethren and officers to help to make it work but from my experience helping Bro Owen it has shown a remarkable improvement in the ability to communicate and attend lodge meetings.

Since 2019, Google has offered an app (usually comes pre-installed on any device running Android 12 or better) called [Live transcribe and notification](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.audio.hearing.visualization.accessibility.scribe). This has been developed greatly and the newest version (technical details in the footnote below) is a vast improvement on previous versions. <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.audio.hearing.visualization.accessibility.scribe>¹⁸

Google explains the function of the app as follows:

Real-time transcriptions of your conversations and sound event notifications.

Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications make everyday conversations and surrounding sounds more accessible among people who are deaf and hard of hearing, using just your Android phone.

Bro Owen summarises his experience with the app as follows:

I found the software worked fine in the lodge room, as I could look down and read what was going on. Occasionally it will 'mishear' a word (a bit like live subtitle feed on a TV news programme), with some entertaining mistakes, but since we know what to expect in the ritual this isn't too much of a problem. At the festive board, it was less successful when everyone was talking and did get a bit jumbled but it worked fine during the toasts and speeches.

Comments from my sons' grandfather are here:

The App is by no means infallible and often types rubbish mainly because most of us speak badly and generally too quickly. Having said that one to one in a reasonable environment it is great and has allowed me to go solo to hospital and medical appointments whereas previously my wife had to go with me to make sure I understood what was being said. It has also made it possible for me to use the telephone by having the phone on speaker with the App beside it.

I now am able to 'hear' the sermon when in church - another plus. When in company the App can't cope very well with multiple voices but at least now I can understand what the subject of a conversation is and don't feel too isolated. One snag is that it can also pick up voices of those nearby but that said it is a very worthy App. that has made a big difference to my life.

Essentially what it does is to type the speech that it recognises onto your phone or tablet screen so that the user can read the text even if they can't hear the words. There are clearly limitations to its functionality, as indicated by both comments above. However, on a 1-1 basis it has proved to be 'life-

¹⁸ On most devices, you can open Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications with these steps:

1. Open your device's Settings app
2. Tap Accessibility
3. Depending on which feature you'd like to use, tap Live Transcribe or Sound Notifications

Requires Android 12 or newer on most phones.

changing' and would lend itself perfectly to masonic ritual and business in a lodge temple, where (generally) there is only one person speaking at a time.

Bro Owen has also field tested a directional microphone which can be used in conjunction with a set of bluetooth enabled hearing aids, supplied by Specsavers. Care needs to be taken with the placement of the microphone in order to get best results, but it can work extremely well.

The only 'downside' is that these are expensive to buy, but in cases of hardship welfare funds might be available. Bro Owen comments:

I'm delighted to be able to report that Wednesday's test of the gadget was a success. In the Lodge room I could hear most of what went on apart from a couple of people who speak quietly anyway, and at the Festive board I could hear the people around me, and most of the toasts etc.

<https://www.phonak.com/en-us/hearing-devices/microphones/roger-on>

Conclusion

To summarise, this speech to text app is remarkably good and is currently under test at Castlegate House in York.

Careful support and consideration of brethren and officers in the lodge needs to be thought about, and appropriate dispensation may be required from your Provincial Grand Master to use this in your own lodge, also be mindful of your lodge bylaws and the "Information for the guidance of members of the craft", 2024 edition, pages 30-32.

It is under constant development and at the time of writing (April 2025) I am in contact with the development team to offer suggestions, one of which is that it would be really helpful if the text could be colour coded for different people to make the typed text on screen easier to follow. If you know of any brother who finds it difficult to communicate or doesn't like to attend lodge because they can't hear what's going on, maybe try it out - take them out for a drink and assist (if necessary) to get it up and running first, before testing it in a lodge meeting.

I'm pleased to report that Bro Owen has now rejoined his lodge and I am able to go for lunch with my son's grandfather and have a meaningful conversation (usually about Freemasonry!).

With warm masonic salutations. Please do feel free to get in touch if you require any further information. davegrainger2010@gmail.com

How the Ancient Masonic Symbol of Jacob's Ladder Survives in Yorkshire.

By Robert Lomas

Jacob's Ladder is a powerful symbolic motif which has traditionally played an important role in the Craft's ritual introduction to its mysteries. If you have been privileged to visit the Lodge of Peace 149, at Wessedden Head Road, Meltham then you will have noticed that when they open their VoSL the IPM places a model of Jacob's ladder on it. It reaches up to the Master's pedestal.



Peace is an Athol Lodge, dating back to 1st April, 1777. It was consecrated in The Cock Inn, Barnsley, as No. 199 on the Roll of the Ancient (or Athol) Grand Lodge. It later moved to the Traveller's Rest in Dewsbury and then to the Wool Pack at Honley where it struggled to survive. In 1813 it became No 247 on the Roll of UGLE.

Some Meltham Masons bought its warrant on 13th Sept 1826 and re-established it at The Golden Fleece in Meltham. In 1832 its number changed to 172 and in 1863 became 149. It settled in its present Masonic Hall in 1882.

It is a long-established lodge that is proud of its traditions including its prominent use of Jacob's Ladder its ceremonies and on its First Degree Tracing Board. So, what is the significance of this symbol for our Craft?



The origin of this myth is found in Genesis 28. But here's a summary.

Jacob, younger son of Isaac and his wife Rebekah, had an elder brother, Esau. Jacob exploited his father's weak eyesight to fool Isaac into giving him the formal blessing meant for Esau. This constituted a legal ruling of who would inherit the covenant promises made by God to Abraham and Isaac. Stealing that blessing made Jacob the Chosen One through whom God's promises to Abraham would be fulfilled.

His mother helped in this escapade and witnessed it. She objected to Esau's wives, Judith, Basemath, Mahalath, Adah and Oholibamah, from various Hittite tribes related to Abraham's illegitimate son, Ismael, by slave woman Hagar and favoured Jacob as a more suitable heir.

Esau was upset and decided to kill Jacob. Rebekah warned Jacob to seek the protection of his uncle Laban, who lived in Haran, many days away. Jacob rested, at sunset on his first night. He lay down to sleep choosing a rough stone as a pillow. As his head touched the stone, Jacob saw a ladder stretching to the heavens, with angels ascending and descending. God stood at its top and introduced Himself to Jacob, to confirm that he was accepted as The Chosen One.

Jacob was so impressed by this endorsement that he set up the stone as an altar and called the place Bethel (meaning House of God) saying "This stone which I have set as a pedestal shall mark this place as God's house and the gateway to heaven."

This is a significance myth as it symbolises how a Divine Encounter can change the course of an individual's life, and help understand God's engagement with the world.

Jacob's Ladder is as a symbol of a Masons' spiritual journey, illustrating a need for the constant pursuit of moral and spiritual virtues, and developing empathic resonance between the mundane and the Divine. The Lodge of Peace demonstrates this insight by placing a ladder on their VoSL resting upon a double cube altar (representing Jacob's Pedestal of Bethel,) pointing upwards to the heavens.

The ladder displays a complex of Masonic ideas.

The two sides are the equivalent of the two Pillars B. and J. denoting the dual basic principles of positive and negative power which run through the planes of the Universe and give it structural stability.

The transverse staves harmonize these two opposing principles with each rung representing the degree of attainment of the individual climbing the ladder.

The gaps between the rungs represent phases of life which alternate during our periods of existence. Waking and sleeping, birth and death oscillate between states of being, each being essential to progress. The gaps are as important as the rungs.

The ladder rests upon the foundation of the Divine Law with its feet placed on the VoSL.

The symbol of the empty ladder on the Trancing Board offers an available means of descent and re-ascent to achieve co-consciousness with our Creative Source. Symbolically suggesting that only that which has come down from heaven can re-ascend; everything else is superfluous. This echoes the symbolism where every Masonic candidate is divested of clothing and belongings to join a Lodge.

Masonic Aprons and their Symbolism.

WBro Peter Maguire - Coronation Lodge 2927

Introduction

When I was initiated into Freemasonry I enjoyed the ritual for the Entered Apprentices Apron but found as I progressed through the other two degrees the ritual for the Aprons seemed not to match as nicely as it had for the 1st degree. I, therefore, resolved to investigate this and understand more of what our aprons signify.

Aprons - Well what are they?

An apron is a clothing garment that protects the wearer and stops their normal clothes from getting ruined. For example, a person who is cooking, doing carpentry, working as a blacksmith or doing stonework would all wear aprons. However, these aprons are a full length in size by this I mean they cover from the chest down to about the mid-thigh area of the legs. Whereas a masonic apron is worn from the waist down.

The wearing of an apron has been used in religious ceremonies, for example, the Egyptian and Hebrew priests wore an Abnet which was considered an apron and it was meant to represent Authority.

In the case of the apron in Masonry, it is an item that is used as a mark of favour from the Worshipful Master. The candidate is invested and is told that this is the badge of honour of the degree the mason has just taken part in.

For example, after being initiated the new apprentice is invested with a white lambskin apron. Where he is told that it is an ancient emblem of purity and innocence. More honourable than the garter and older than the Roman Eagle. He should always look after it as it will look after him!

As the candidate is passed to the second degree, the lambskin apron is replaced with one that has two sky-blue rosettes on it, the Emulation ritual in use under the guidance of UGLE states that it shows the candidates progress in the science of Freemasonry. In the Emulation ritual book, there is no extended or traditional explanation of the sudden addition of the two blue rosettes or even the colour apart from these additions "mark the progress you have made in the science."

To mark the candidate's raising to the sublime degree of a Master Mason the apron has changed from a white lambskin apron with 2 rosettes. To one with a sky-blue ribbon around the apron with an additional rosette on the triangular flap, there are two vertical ribbons on the apron with seven metal tassels attached to each of the vertical ribbons. The apron is no longer secured to the wearer by a white string and tied. But with a sky-blue ribbon that is clasped together by a metal serpent.

The standard text in the blue book passes over the whole change by saying "to mark the further progress you have made in the Science" At my mother lodge, they use the long explanation from the ritual book;

Bro Jones by the WM's command, I invest you with the distinguishing badge of a MM to mark the further progress you have made in the science. Your white lambskin apron has been replaced by one with a light blue border, having three rosettes arranged in a triangular fashion with the point uppermost. The colour of the silk, the triangle and the three rosettes, have special meanings.

The two vertical ribbons typify And The import of which has already been explained to you. To each of these ribbons seven tassels are attached to remind us that no Lodge is perfect unless seven Brethren are present, that in olden days the seven ages of man were thought to be influenced by seven then known planets, and no MM was considered efficient unless he had some knowledge of the seven liberal arts and sciences.

I have always felt that this part "**The colour of the silk, the triangle and the three rosettes, have special meanings**" sounds like, "**and we are not going to tell you so there!**"

Hence, I have been confused about our aprons, as you see they change again when you are Master of the lodge and if you receive Provincial Grand Rank or London Grand Rank and even Grand Rank.

But we have all seen that at some point Masonic aprons changed, just look at this example:



This is a Master Mason's Apron from 1782 which was George Washington's. As you can see it different from our own, so what happened, how did we go from the 1782 version to the one we have now, another example, this time is a hand-painted apron from the late 18th / Early 19th Century.



The answer to that, like most of the changes that have happened in Masonry, was due to the unification of the two Premier Grand Lodges in England in 1813. Not all changes occurred that year but that was the catalyst of them.

From time immemorial we are told that initiates into our order were clothed in lambskin aprons as a sign of purity and innocence. It would have been remarkably similar to our apprentice aprons. But the flap of the apron would be turned up. Being informed that this was how the apron was worn by entered Apprentices at the building of King Solomon's temple. When you pass to the second degree and the Senior Deacon takes you to the Senior Warden to be instructed how a craftsman wears his apron.

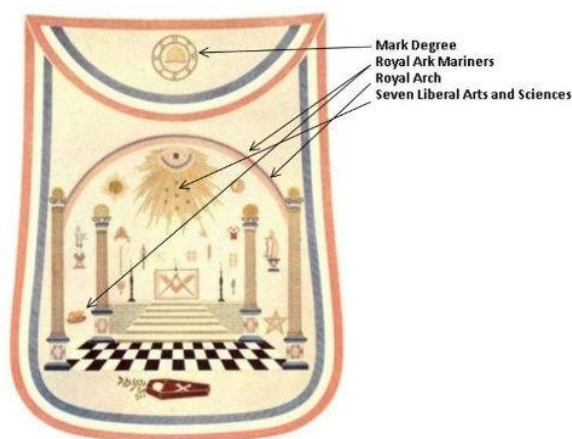
"The Deacon now conducts the candidate to the Senior Warden's station. This officer leaves his Seat, and, approaching candidate, turns the flap of His apron down, at the same time saying-- Brother, At the building of King Solomon's Temple, the Fellow Crafts wore their aprons with the flap turned Down and the corner turned up, and thus you will Wear yours, until further advanced. (Tucks a Corner under the string.)"

Finally raised as a Master Mason, again as we have in our ritual the candidate is conducted to the Senior Warden.

Master Masons wear their aprons with the flap and corners down, To designate them as Master Masons, Or as overseers of the work, And so you will wear yours.

I must point out that these ritual extracts come from Duncan's Ritual of Freemasonry book the extract is from the third edition 1866. The Master Mason's apron was like our own in design. But I am using this to show how the apron was worn, but pre 1813 the apron you first received was worn with corners and flaps down. As time went on you were allowed to decorate the apron with Masonic symbols. As the Mason entered side degrees then the symbology of those degrees he had join would appear. For example, you may have worn a lapel pin for a Craft symbol or have seen a triple TAU pin, an Arrow, Knights Templar one in your lodges.

In past days they were embroidered on to the apron like the examples below:



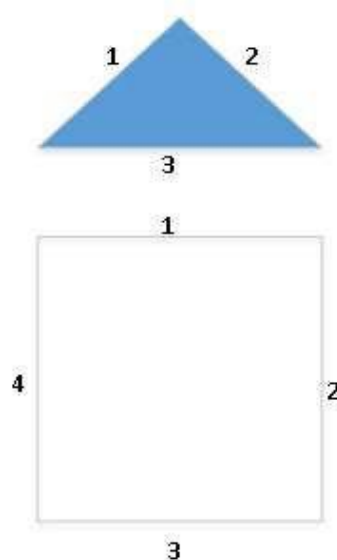
Taking the belief that in the latter days of the 1700s more landed gentry and higher classes were joining Stone Mason lodges as they become more speculative than operative. The aprons became more decadent and with the creation of the United Grand Lodge of England uniformity and the fact

that it only controlled the 3 craft degrees and Royal Arch. Meant that Keystones, Arrows and Rainbows although legitimate Masonic symbols had no place on a Master Mason's Apron.

Therefore, the rosettes were added to the Craftsman apron, and the additional rosette, vertical ribbons, silver metallic tassels, a serpent clasp and the sky-blue trim around the apron and belt. As the long explanation of the Master Mason's Apron tells us they all have special meanings.

What are these meanings and what is the symbolism? EA Apron

As we have said earlier it is made from the skin of a lamb, which is the symbol of innocence and purity. It also consists of three parts, a square of lambskin, and a triangle of skin to form a flap on the apron and finally a cord in which to tie it around the wearer. As discussed earlier the flap/triangle was worn with its point up so we have a 3 sided shape attached to the 4 sided square the sum of the sides is seven, which as we are told in the extended explanation for the Master Mason's apron was that 7 Brethren present makes the perfect lodge.



The number 7 is a reoccurring theme within the Craft; three principle officers and two Deacons, Inner Guard and a Tyler. These seven represent the "seven-fold" constitution of Man's nature. This is something we are all aware of but not really, we all know we have a body, a soul and a spirit.

This is the basic idea that St. Paul brings to Christianity, these ideas can be found in the teachings from the mystery schools of old and in some sects of Christianity. For although once considered part of mainstream Christian teachings it has been overshadowed by damnation and salvation of one's soul.

The seven are:

1. The Body, or Rupa.
2. Vitality, or Prana-Jiva.
3. Astral Body, or Linga-Sarira.
4. Animal Soul, or Kama-Rupa
5. Human Soul, or Manas.
6. Spiritual Soul, or Buddhi.
7. Spirit, or Atma,

The body, Spiritual Soul and Spirit being part of the teachings of St. Paul for example:

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

The Atma is Spirit, Buddhi is the highest power of intellection, that which discerns and judges, and Manas is Mind. They form the trinity that was allegorised in the Christianity as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Making them a divine triangle or Real Man.

The other four are known as the quaternary or lower man and are the materialistic side of Man.

- Passions and desires (Kama-Rupa)
- Life principle (Prana-Jiva),
- Astral body (Linga-Sarira)
- Physical body (Rupa).

Making a square of matter/body the imperfections of man that a Mason must overcome on his journey to enlightenment.

The triangle as we have suggested above has been used in Ancient Mystery systems throughout the world to signify or denote the Spirit or that which is not obvious to the eye. A triangle has been known to represent fire, looking at the religion of Hinduism they have Brahma (Creator), Vishnu (preserver) and Shiva (Destroyer). Shiva is represented by a triangle and signifies the flame which rises upwards from a funeral pyre. This flame in essences points to Heaven.

Egypt is famous for its pyramids, which are? Yes, triangular. These places are known to be tombs for the dead but also it is said that rituals took place there for spiritual devotion. Even if they are as academia suggests tombs then the burial chamber was said to have a sealed door or Spirit door that allowed the dead Pharaoh to transcend to the next life. Again, confirming the idea that the triangle represents the Spirit. In Christianity, a spire is used on the tops of Churches and Cathedrals to show this flame of the spirit in its aspirations in reaching for God or to the Heavens.

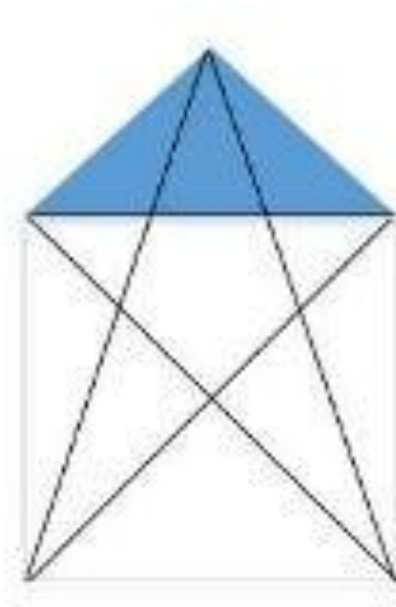
Spires do not start from the ground but rest on top of rectangular towers, which matches to the quadrangle shape section of the apron. This part of the apron is meant to represent Matter, the world or Materialism. Something that can be measured and weighed by the senses of man.

Therefore, it is something with form in which case it is an allegory for the body of man like the triangle is an allegory for the spirit of man.

The apron if displayed with the flap extended with the upper most point pointing up then what we have is a representation of the spirit of the candidate outside of his body and not within his body or his conscious. Yes, the Candidate has gone through a cleansing ceremony of initiation but at this point, the spirit does not know whether the body will continue with the ideals it has purported to do. The spirit is therefore tethered to the body via two cords keeping the spirit and body together and these cords take the place of the Cable Tow that you entered in on.

Reminding you to be cautious and not to rush forward, as you work to bring union between your spirit and body. Why does the spirit need to be tethered to the body, for although the body and has said it will give up the want of monies and the lures of the world in the ritual he has passed through, the spirit is not fully convinced that the body will stay the course it has just started!

The apron is made from the skin of a lamb as the lamb itself is considered a symbol of innocence as is the colour white, hence its use as the primary colour of wedding dress, baptism robes etc. As a bond of friendship to our brothers as we all share the same frailty of life, but with the flap up on the apron makes a pentagram shape that has 5 points which later on in our progression is another reminder of the five points of fellowship.



Within the initiation ritual, you are asked if you have about your person any metallic or valuable substance. This again comes back to the idea that no metal substance was on the high priest when he went to the sanctum sanctorum once a year to offer devotion to the Most Divine.

Fellow Craft's Apron.

This apron is made from a white lambskin with two sky-blue rosettes on the square, the triangular flap is now pointing down to the centre of the square. This is to signify that the candidate has made further progress in the science of freemasonry and his spirit (here symbolised by the triangle) has descended into his body (the square).

Looking again at Hinduism the downward triangle represents Vishnu the Preserver. It symbolises rain which preserves the fruitful earth. Therefore, the down-pointing triangle in the square means the descent of the divine spirit into matter.

It thus represents the candidate has subdued his passion and material needs and is becoming in tune with his spirit. Although this bond is not fully complete as the apron is still secured to the wearer by the symbolic cable-tow represented by the cords around the waist.

In this degree we learned that *plenty* is depicted as an ear of corn near a fall of water, this appears on the apron as the two rosettes. As they are the seeds planted in the first degree and are now sprouting as the Candidate understands his spiritual progress. As the sun and rain fertilise the seeds of the corn so through wisdom and guidance the Candidate can now begin to perceive his spirit within his body. The colour of the rosettes represents the colour of the heavens; these flower on his "body" as emblems of the spirits celestial origins.

The entered apprentice degree is the foundation degree, preparing the candidate to begin his journey to enlightenment, ergo planting the ideas and principles within him. The Fellowcrafts degree shows the mid-point of him passing from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence on the path to enlightenment. The rosettes symbolise this as soul and body established in strength.

Note the idea of the two pillars one the priestly pillar J and the kingly pillar B. Establishing this mine house to stand firm forever! Or a Mason's internalised Temple.

Master Mason's Apron.

The apron has now been altered again signifying the candidate's strengthening spiritual centre not only has a third rosette flourished in the centre of the triangle but the three rosettes together make a triangle showing that the spirit of this man firmly within the body in a balanced union.

The apron now contains metallic substances, even though in previous degrees we had denounced them ensuring none was about our person. But it should be pointed out that silver in ancient times symbolised the soul, as gold refers to the spirit. The cord has been replaced by a sky-blue ribbon held together by a silver serpent which in itself is a symbol that represents Divine Wisdom in the ancient world. The silver tassels are the light that comes from above illuminating his intelligence it is not surprising that there are 7 tassels as white light is made up of seven waveforms of the electromagnetic spectrum. These are attached to sky-blue sashes that are vertical, Heaven's blue and heavenly light shining in the middle of the apron.

The new-made Master Mason has gone through a figurative death and come out of it resurrected as a new being, *"the perfected Initiate has mastered his lower nature and has become the Perfect Man."* He is no longer ruled by materialistic views or wants but now focuses on the more spiritual plain.

Alternative hypothesis.

The Premier Grand lodge had ruled in the 18th century that its Grand lodge officers would wear Royal Blue which was coincidentally the ruling Monarch's family colour. Scotland chose green which was the Stuarts' Royal house colour and as this was the period of the Jacobite rebellion it would have been unpatriotic to have green on the regalia in England at that time. It had been decided that the Grand Stewards Lodge would wear crimson, as Acting Stewards still wear crimson today.

One tradition holds that when a mason was passed to the fellow crafts degree the left-hand corner was buttoned up to signify his rank. Then when he was raised, the right-hand corner of his aprons was also button up thus creating a pocket in the apron for the tools he uses. According to Rev. Neville B. Cryer, *"In North America this latter practice is widely maintained."*

However, in England, these buttonholes are replaced with two rosettes and what it suggests is that it shows the wearer has reached the second degree. Hence the addition of the third rosette means this is the Third Degree. The two vertical sashes are a reminder of how the old aprons were tied, the cord would go around the body and tied in a bow under the flap, the two ends would be visible. On the Master Mason's apron as we have mentioned earlier is no longer a cord but a belt and catch. The vertical straps and tassels have no significance apart from reminding us of older operative masons' aprons. There is also no symbology of 7 pendants that hang from the strips as there have been times when nine sometimes twelve were placed there.

The apron is light blue to distinguish it from the Royal blue that is worn by the Grand Ranks. At one point it had been suggested that the Master of the lodge should wear Orange but guess what that

is the Colour of the Dutch Royal House, therefore, the idea was rejected. In North America, some of the Masters wear Purple to differentiate between them and the Master Masons in the lodge.

Installed and Past Masters

Installed Masters and Past Master aprons have a slightly different design as the rosettes are replaced by upside-down T shapes. Now some theories say they are 3 TAUs but this more of Royal Arch symbol. But to be fair they may not be the TAU symbol, J.S.M Ward said,

"The T cross, the symbol of the Male or creative side of the Deity; and, lest there should be any Mistake, the T is placed on the apron of the Master of the Lodge, Though placed _|_, so as to give also the symbol of the square, And also to emphasise its phallic meaning."

Yes, but the book of constitutions clearly defines them as, *"Perpendicular lines upon horizontal lines, thereby forming three several sets of two right angles"*. Which WBro. Wilmshurst suggests that it is the plumb line and the motion of the Trowel which creates a Tau symbol, which the newly invested Master now has on his apron, implying that he knows the use of these two tools. Others have suggested that these are the working tools that adorn the Senior and Junior Wardens regalia and on the Master's progression to the chair of King Solomon and he now has knowledge of their use. By combining the Plumb rule and the Level it forms the Master Jewel of the Square.

Wilmshurst goes onto say:

"The master is a Cross, a living Cross, and therefore wears the sign of the Cross upon his clothing." Even though we are not calling the _|_ a Tau, the Tau Cross manifests itself and brings us back to the idea of the ancient mystery schools if Plato et al. That the principle of the Cross is to work to resolve the two opposing principles of the spiritual and the Material through unity and harmony.

Provincial and Grand Rank.

If you are promoted in the craft to the higher echelons then your regalia changes to Royal blue and gold replaces the silver previously used. The gold represents the spirit, the idea being that these individuals have further evolved their soul and the spiritual awareness with their God that they have transformed it from silver into gold. As can be seen on a Grand Lodge officer's apron it has sprouted more elaborate embroidery reiterating their spiritual development.

Conclusion

I think I have found some of the answers to why our aprons are the way they are and why they are not as decadent as the ones worn in the 18th Century. It has certainly answered the special meaning of where the triangle, colour and rosettes come from. For me, I will lean to the speculative side that they are part of our journey on a path to enlightenment.

The idea that the rosettes are buttonholes, well I can't get it myself, why is this well if the apron is a symbol of purity and innocence yet the blue rosettes are symbols of buttonholes. It seems rather an odd thing to do when we say that Freemasonry is a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, to not just have buttonholes!

Nothing in Freemasonry is haphazard, at least of all when it most seems so.

The Predominant Wish by Major R. Watkins-Pitchford.

The Long Night's Dream

W. Bro Phillip Harris. Coronation Lodge

David Aaron Peterson a young man, woke up on a carpet one day following a night out on the lash, as they once used to describe a boozy night out with the lads. Not realising where he was, in total darkness he got up to find a light switch. Moving with caution in the blackness of a cave he tripped over a chair some fool must have left in the middle of the floor.

Recovering his balance he promptly fell again over a box and landed on a foot stool. The language from him described his feelings exactly. To put it politely, "where am I, some silly person leaving stuff all over the show". Following which he repeated his cautious journey and fell over several chairs in a group. Recovering again, he agreed extreme caution was needed as there might well be a hole to fall into next.

On his hands and knees, he grovelled past several more chairs to the wall and felt around to open curtains, find a light switch, or door to provide light to see with. In his efforts he found more wooden boxes, steps, and posts but no possible light source. In his desperation all objects were moved with some violence as his anxiety grew. David was lost. Not just lost, confused, without direction and seemingly abandoned here as in some oubliette.

By this time his head was banging, knees bruised and anxiety rising he called out for help. All remained silent. Then a voice asked, "who are you". This was repeated several times following and outburst from him demanding "who are you", "where are you", "did you put me here", and eventually, "can you let me out of here"?

Reaching the end of his endurance he proclaimed, "I am.....". Before he could complete the sentence, the voice returned with, "then you have no right to be here, get out and learn some truth about yourself". Whereupon he woke in his own bed. He was still dressed in his previous night's clothes, smelling of cannabis, bad breath, and aches and pains all over his body. His head was fit to burst and reminded himself, "never again". A resolution of many young men following an evening's excess. A false and unworthy act that shows no repentance but just sorrow for oneself.

He did not share the dream with anyone, friends, family or even his girlfriend but it had left a mark in his mind. The questions kept coming, "where was I, it was so real, why was I, it must have been important, will I ever find out, who was speaking to me". Answers came, and went, as quickly as he could dismiss them, as ludicrous. He would never know or admit how much it pricked him constantly.

He continued with his life, Mum and Dad provided well, for his education, and sufficient funds for the excess of a modern young mans life. His parents married late in life and consequently had him in late middle age. All was well and a comfortable life was to be enjoyed, work for his Mum, live cheaply at home, and have the occasional good time out with the girls.

Tragedy hit him when all was going so well. Mum took ill and died quickly from what the medics said was natural causes. Even worse Dad died the next day from what could only be a broken heart. Both had lived and loved no other and prided themselves on careful living and good company. Our dreamer considered his future, a house, a job still in Mum's business, a chance to spend an inheritance. All would be well.

It was sad for David as more tragedy followed. Dad had remortgaged the house to fund Mum's business in meeting modernisation standards. The house was not his to live in. The business had to

fold as it was now incapable to keep up with changing markets. The dreamer was out of work and homeless. Friends fell away and no place to call home. Eventually he broke into his former home, now empty and slept on the carpet for several weeks in the hope of finding some work that would help him pay his way.

He cried and was so depressed that one night he resorted to prayer. He was so low he pleaded and begged for some way forward as he was now at an end of his endurance. His world was empty, no money it had all gone, he was living like a tramp.

Things looked bleak.

One day a man in a suit called at the house asking for him by name. "Could I have a word with you privately" he asked David. Unable to open the locked door of the house and only climb out of the window he joined this man. Together they walked from the former family home and discussed Dad and Mum. It came out that the man was a close friend of Dad's and always respected him and regretted his loss. David could just then recall this man was amongst the large group of suited men at the funeral of his parents. At the time he thought were business contacts. He had been asked how he was but had not in a fit mind to engage in conversation on that day. The man introduced himself as Michael DeAngelo. "I have an offer for you if you are interested in work and a place to live". David with regret recalled the rude manner in which he had spoken to Mr DeAngelo at the funeral and apologised.

Michael said that he and David's Father were Freemasons. And went on to say that out of love for the dear man and his dependants, we the brethren of the Lodge want to help you back on your feet. "Thank you, Mr DeAngelo, I am happy for your help", David said with some relief and heartfelt gratitude.

"You will be starting tomorrow in town at 08:00 sharp and work with an estate company, cleaning, maintaining, performing utility and safety checks and so on. Is that suiting you"? David thought, this is hard work but what else is there. "Your Father's friend, Mr Francis Sharegold will be there to meet you". There is potential for you to progress in the company and perhaps find yourself a better position". "Let's see how it goes".

The job provided a place to live on site which was comfortable and warm. He realised that this was an opportunity to make an impression on good people like his Father. He regretted not being so able when Dad was alive. Two years of hard and thorough work paid off when Mr DeAngelo and Mr Sharegold came to see him with two other gentlemen unknown to him came along. The two men were younger, smartly but not formally dressed. They were introduced as brethren of the Lodge that met down the lane towards the town.

"You have just had a birthday", Mr Sharegold said. "You are older now and have performed well with this job". "What do you think of Freemasons and have you ever considered following your Father into our fraternity"? David replied, "I have been treated well, paid on time and only as is right, I get time off when I ask, and I am always asked how I am when you and your friends come". "Although, I am only the cleaner I am well treated". "Yes, I appreciate you gentlemen". Mr DeAngelo then asked, "are you interested in joining us". "We have a lot of things to teach you; your progress will be over many years. Along the way there will be education in our purpose and work in the community". "What we have witnessed your good upbringing, and the manner in which you have established yourself here has been excellent". "You have proved yourself to us and we would be pleased to admit you to our Order". David relied with some uncertainty but with a hope it was all true, "But I am nothing, I am only a cleaner and not worthy of my father or the company of men like you". Mr DeAngelo went on to

explain. "Your Father used to fret about you but supported your excess as the way of young men". "He hoped and had faith you would come to right, be prepared in your heart and accept our invitation in time". The lad replied, "thank you, I would like to know more, what can I do for you, where would I fit in, am I really prepared in my heart, what does it mean".

It was explained to David that being prepared in the heart was not always the same. A wish to improve oneself, a desire to understand life and living, a pull on the emotions to understand others, a gracious gesture, looking deeper into the working of life, not seeking reward for kindness, and even dreams.

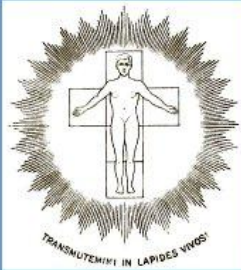
They invited the lad to come with them. A short walk took them to the Masonic Hall. Where they would speak further with him. Climbing the stairs they paused outside the double doors marked with a knocker in the form of a hammer. "You have probably been prepared long ago for this step; we had a vandal break in here yesterday we will have to move some furniture". The light switch outside the door was turned on and the doors were opened.

Standing in the empty Temple with his new friends he saw several chairs knocked over, the Altar on its side with the kneeling stool, the Masters pedestal on the floor, and the tall candle sticks fallen over. The Candles were broken, and the room needed cleaning up. "Let me build and sort this with you", said David. "He started to work clearing up his mess of a Temple and said, "may I become such as We".

A month later David was made a Mason, 12 years later he was installed a Worshipful Master, and remains, called, faithful and true.

To Know Thyself

Bro Dean Magee-Tingle - Worshipful Master of The Lodge of Living Stones 4957



Lodge of Living Stones No 4957 in the Province of Yorkshire, West Riding

[Bro Dean is an honorary associate of Coronation Lodge and has visited the lodge during his time at the helm of Wilmshurst's Lodge of Living Stones. At the last informal meeting of the Lodge of Living Stones in May, he gave this paper, which he has kindly agreed can be shared with the brethren and associates of Coronation Lodge. For those of you who are interested, The Lodge of Living Stones will undertake a full working of WLW's Book of the Perfect Lodge at their meeting on fourth Friday in March at Castle Grove in Leeds. Contact them at <http://www.lodge-of-living-stones.org.uk/>]

Know Thyself, Nosce Te Ipsum or Gnothi Seauton' are aphorisms. It is commonly known that 'Gnothi Seauton' was written on the forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. Legend tells that the seven sages of ancient Greece who laid the foundation for western culture, gathered in Delphi to inscribe "know thyself" at the entrance to its sacred oracle. The adage subsequently became a touch-stone for western philosophers and extended its reach as the influence of Greek philosophy expanded. It is thought that the Ancient Greeks received the idea from early Mesopotamian philosophy, but how far back do we go with the search? The Mesopotamians, and especially the Sumerians certainly used pictographs as a form of laid down communication and then 'Cuneiform' which was wedge shaped writing. Whilst written versions of the phrase haven't been found in languages earlier than Egyptian, this most certainly does not mean the philosophy didn't exist prior. Before both the Greeks and Egyptians, the Hindus were and still are deep thinkers. Hinduism is not about believing what somebody else tells you, e.g the nature of your soul, or accepting what others claim about God, it is about exploring the very depths of your own soul. In Hinduism, Atman (the individual soul) is seen as being the true Self or is the real Essence of a person. To achieve this liberation, they must reach the level of self-knowledge that allows their Atman to become the same as the Brahman (the ultimate reality) which underlies the whole universe, which is the life-force, the subtle essence of everything.

The ancients from Kemet, now commonly known as Egypt, lived by a code "Know the world in yourself. Never look for yourself in the world, for this would be to project your illusion." At the Luxor temple it is scribed above the external entrance and reads "The body is the house of God" with another on the inner temple entrance reading "Man, Know thyself and you will know the Gods". Knowledge of the self was the root of a complete and thorough education in the ancient Kemetic education or 'Initiation System' (aka the Mystery System by western historians). Our ancestors of Kemet carefully handled educating new students called initiates and before our Kemetic ancestors would permit the new initiates to even enter the sacred education process, the new students were first required to purge themselves of physical, spiritual and mental toxins. In preparation for an ancient education the initiate had to undergo a cleansing, fasting, meditating and use of supplication, to humble the inner spirit and harness the human passions.

The word education comes for the Latin term, *Educo / Educare* meaning to lead forth, to bring out, and to rear up out of. Thus, the true source of knowledge and education begins deep inside each person. Education is literally supposed to bring out the best in everyone. A good Education must recognise the students' talents and interest. A good Education empowers them to excel at their strengths, while identifying and improving any weaknesses. The foundation of a proper education is Knowledge of Self. We need to exercise honest personal analysis and correct our weaknesses that may interfere with our purposes or goals. Self-knowledge is all-encompassing. What is learned on one scale of experience can be applied to all scales. It is the highest form of knowledge, surpassing all other knowledge. Self-knowledge is also timeless, which means that what is gained in one era, should benefit all subsequent generations, that is if it is shared. Is it our place to share what we have learned? Do we think it is selfish to keep the knowledge that we have gained and searched for? Whatever you may have an opinion on, that is yours and is right for you.

Whilst on the journey to finding or knowing oneself, we embark on a path that has no right and wrong turnings, there are no special doors to go through. Yes we can be guided, indeed there are many that have reached a certain amount of opulence, through advising via popular mediums such as dvd's, books etc. Shall we become hermits so as not to be immersed in the trials of the world and become soaked in questionable ways? Or do we immerse ourselves in the world and its associated pleasures to learn and experience every conceivable manner to make an informed decision? The following passage, I have taken from a paper 'flying roll XXI – know thyself' composed in 1893 by Mina Bergson who later becomes Moina Mathers. (HOGD 1888-1902)

'One of the reasons why we are told not to isolate ourselves is that isolation tends to make a man egotistical-it will become a habit to him to study and to pay too much attention to his own Microcosm, whereby he will neglect other Microcosms which together with his, form part of the Macrocosm; and this Egotism of the Spirit, will yet be a far greater snare to him, as being more subtle and therefore less easy to be perceived and checked.

For the chief danger of spiritual egotism lies in the self-righteous spirit so easily developed, which while gradually absorbing, the true Occult Aspiration flatters its victim with the idea that he is rapidly attaining his proposed Goal.

It will be best, then, for us to live amongst our fellows, and in our contact with them are we advised to avoid preaching and proselytising; which often leads also to a condition of self-righteousness in the Preacher and is generally useless to the listener.

Rather would we influence them by our example, and by keeping our thoughts as well as our actions pure'.

Such words are a wise council indeed and are in my opinion a good guide for our individual journey.

In Lodge Paper No. 6 Bro. Wilmshurst says "The first lesson imparted to Candidates for Initiation in all ages was KNOW THYSELF, since truly to know oneself involves a knowledge of all else even of The Great Architect, in whom everything lives, moves, and has its being."

Remember, the Charge in the Third Degree – it guides: '... your reflections to that most interesting of all human studies, the knowledge of yourself.

A famous German philosopher and Freemason, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, said: *"Look at yourself, shift your gaze from everything around you and direct it to your interior. This is the first request that philosophy makes to his apprentice. You are not going to talk about anything outside of you, but only of yourself"*. In 1793 Fichte became a member of the masonic lodge 'Modestia cum Libertate', which

is Switzerland's second oldest and largest lodge. He was also in the Lodge 'Pythagoras of the Blazing Star' where he was elected minor warden.

Lao Tzu said *"Knowing others is wisdom, knowing yourself is enlightenment"*. Are these wise words earth shattering? Or are they simply what we already know?

To 'know thyself' is your spirit, wisdom, mind, soul and body working in harmony, it comes from within, not from external authority or possessions. Many say that 'outside influences' change their perspective, so as constant change gives birth to a new you, or inner perspective of you, possibly then, you can never attain full knowledge of you! Both the Egyptians and Jesus Christ are quoted to say 'The kingdom of God is within you; and whosoever shall know himself shall find it'. It matters not who said what first, the message is fundamental.

Stay Safe Online-Prevailing Threats—June 2025

Bro Chris Eyre - St Oswald Lodge, Associate of Coronation Lodge

Marks & Spencer Cyber Attack:

The recent cyber attack on Marks & Spencer (M&S) has had several significant effects on its customers, even though M&S has reassured them that payment details and passwords were not compromised.

Here's a summary of the impact:

- **Compromised Personal Data:** The most direct effect is the theft of sensitive personal information. This can include:
 - Names
 - Home addresses
 - Telephone numbers
 - Email addresses
 - Dates of birth
 - Online order history
 - Customer reference numbers for M&S credit card or Sparks Pay holders.
- **Increased Risk of Scams:** Even without payment details, this stolen data makes customers more vulnerable to phishing emails, fake delivery texts, and scam calls that appear more convincing because hackers can include personal details. M&S has warned customers to be cautious of unsolicited communications claiming to be from them.
- **Disruption to Services:** The cyber attack initially disrupted M&S's online services, including:
 - Contactless payments
 - Click-and-collect services
 - Suspension of all online orders (which was ongoing for a period, with expectations for services to gradually return to normal in June/July).
 - Some stores also experienced missing food items due to systems being taken offline.
- **Inconvenience and Frustration:** Customers have faced delays in receiving direct notifications about the breach, and the inability to place online orders has been frustrating for many. Some customers may have opted to shop with rival retailers.
- **Erosion of Trust:** Despite M&S's reassurances, any data breach can profoundly impact customer confidence and trust. Customers expect their personal information to be protected, and such incidents can damage the brand's perception. The way M&S communicated the breach has also been a point of potential criticism.
- **Call for Password Resets:** While passwords weren't stolen, M&S is prompting customers to reset their passwords when they next log in for "extra peace of mind." Cybersecurity experts also recommend changing passwords across all online accounts as a general good practice.

- **Potential Lawsuit:** A class-action lawsuit is being launched against M&S by a solicitors' firm on behalf of customers whose data was exposed, highlighting the severity of the perceived impact on individuals.

In essence, while M&S has emphasised that financial data and passwords are safe, the breach has exposed customers to an increased risk of targeted scams and caused significant inconvenience and a blow to customer trust.

Free M&S Hamper/Aviva/Guinness Email Threat:

Not The Generation Game, but three very similar email threats; Ironically an M&S Hamper, a Free Emergency Kit from Aviva, and a Free Guinness Micro-Draught, pertaining to offer something free for submitting information on a survey.



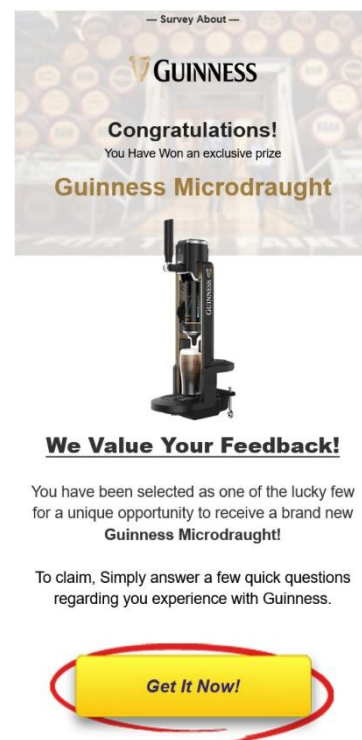
Here's a breakdown of why these emails are likely a scam and what to do:

Why it's a threat/scam:

- **"Free Hamper" offers:** M&S (Marks & Spencer) is a frequent target for these scams. Fraudsters often send emails offering free hampers, gift cards, or other tempting prizes to get you to click on malicious links or provide personal details.

M&S has issued warnings about such scams.

- **Impersonation of Aviva and Guinness:** Similarly, scammers frequently use the names of trusted financial institutions like Aviva or other well-known brands (like Guinness) to make their emails seem legitimate. They might claim there's an issue with your account, an offer, or a security threat to create urgency and fear.



- **Urgency and fear tactics:** Scam emails often use phrases like "limited availability," "special offer," or threats of account closure/fines to pressure you into acting quickly without thinking.



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You have been selected as one of the lucky few for a unique opportunity to receive a new Fire Safety Kit!

To claim, simply answer a few quick questions regarding your experience with Aviva.



If you no longer wish to receive these emails, you may unsubscribe by clicking here or by writing to 14000 Avery Ranch Blvd Ste 1200, Austin, TX 78717

- **Request for personal/financial details:** Legitimate companies like M&S, Aviva, or Guinness will *never* ask you for sensitive information like your full card number, CVC, or online banking login details via email.

- **Suspicious links:** The emails will contain links that, if clicked, could lead to fake websites designed to steal your information or install malware on your device.

What to do if you receive such an email:

DO NOT click on any links or open any attachments.

- **DO NOT reply to the email.**

- **Forward the email to the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC):** In the UK, you can forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk. The NCSC will investigate and may take down scam websites and email addresses.

- **Mark the email as "Junk" or "Phishing" and then delete it.**

- **If you are an M&S Bank customer:** You can forward suspicious emails to phishing@mandsbank.com.

- **If you are an Aviva customer and have clicked on links, entered personal information, or made a payment:**

- Notify your bank immediately.
- Report the scam to Action Fraud (www.actionfraud.police.uk or 0300 123 2040 for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland) or Police Scotland (101 for Scotland).
- You can also report it to Aviva at keepingyousafe@aviva.com or via their Fraud Hub.
- **Be vigilant:** Always be cautious of unsolicited emails, especially those offering something "too good to be true" or threatening negative consequences. If you're unsure about an email, always go directly to the official website of the company (by typing their address into your browser, not by clicking a link in the email) to check for genuine offers or updates.
- **Check your bank accounts:** If you have clicked on any links or provided any details, monitor your bank accounts and credit card statements for any suspicious activity.

By following these steps, you can help protect yourself and others from falling victim to these scams.

Co-op Cyber Attack:

The Co-op Group experienced a significant cyber breach that began around **late April 2025**, with the company declaring the attack on **April 30th, 2025**.

Here's a summary of what happened:

- **Nature of the Attack:** Malicious third parties attempted to access Co-op's systems, aiming for a ransomware infection. While Co-op staff took systems offline to prevent widespread ransomware, a significant amount of customer and staff data was stolen.
- **Impact on Operations:** The attack severely affected operations at Co-op's supermarkets and funeral services, leading to widespread empty shelves, particularly in rural areas, as staff were unable to view inventory in real time and manage stock effectively.
- **Data Compromised:** The extracted data primarily includes Co-op Group members' personal data such as:
 - Names
 - Contact details (residential address, email address, and phone number)
 - Dates of birth
 - The Co-op has stated that member passwords, bank or credit card details, transactions, or information related to members' or customers' products or services were **not** compromised.
- **The Hackers:** The attacks are widely believed to be linked to a notorious criminal group known as **Scattered Spider**, who use a platform called **DragonForce** for their attacks. They often employ social engineering techniques, such as manipulating IT help desk staff, to gain access.
- **Co-op's Response:** Co-op took early and decisive action to protect its systems by taking them offline, which helped contain the issue and prevent a full ransomware infection. They have been investigating the incident in conjunction with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the National Crime Agency (NCA) and have implemented enhanced security measures.
- **Recovery Phase:** As of mid-May 2025, Co-op has been in a "recovery phase," gradually bringing its systems back online and working to restore normal supply chains.
- **Customer Advice:** The Co-op has advised members that they don't need to take any immediate action unless contacted directly. However, they urge caution regarding suspicious emails or phone calls and advise against sharing personal or banking information unless certain of the source.

The Co-op incident is part of a wave of recent cyberattacks on UK retailers, with Marks & Spencer and Harrods also being targeted around the same time.

Harrods Cyber Breach:

Harrods, the renowned luxury department store, also became a victim of a cyber attack in **late April 2025**, around the same time as the Co-op and Marks & Spencer incidents.

Here's a breakdown of what is known about the Harrods cyber attack:

- **Nature of the Attack:** Harrods experienced "attempts to gain unauthorised access to some of our systems." Unlike Marks & Spencer, which confirmed a ransomware attack with data theft, and Co-op which also confirmed data theft, Harrods acted quickly to contain the threat.
- **Harrods' Response:** Harrods' IT security team took proactive steps, including **restricting internet access at their sites** as a precautionary measure to keep their systems safe. This swift action appears to have been effective in preventing a more severe breach.
- **Impact on Operations:** Despite the attempted intrusion, Harrods confirmed that its physical stores (Knightsbridge, H Beauty branches, and airport outlets) remained open and fully operational. Their online shopping services also continued without interruption.
- **Data Compromised:** As of the latest information, **Harrods has not confirmed whether any customer data was compromised** or the severity of the breach. Their rapid response suggests they may have successfully thwarted significant data exfiltration.
- **Attribution:** While Harrods has not publicly attributed the attack, it's widely believed to be linked to the same wave of attacks impacting other UK retailers, with some reports speculating about the involvement of groups like **Scattered Spider** (also known as Octo Tempest) and the use of **DragonForce** ransomware-as-a-service. These groups often employ social engineering tactics to gain initial access.
- **Wider Context:** The Harrods incident, along with those at Co-op and Marks & Spencer, has prompted warnings from UK authorities, including the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), about increased risks to the retail sector. Experts suggest that retailers are prime targets due to the volume of identity and payment data they hold.

In essence, while Harrods was targeted, their quick and decisive action in isolating their systems likely helped them avoid the more extensive disruptions and data compromises seen in some other recent retail cyberattacks.

There are many risks involved when engaging with the internet, Brethren, and my purpose in this article has been to keep you informed of those risks and help you avoid being accidentally exploited. Stay Alert Brethren and remember you have been taught to be cautious"

Contributions to the Writing Challenge.

When establishing CQ the Editors announced a new **Quarterly Writing Challenge** for any member, or corresponding associate, of Coronation Lodge to develop their writing talents. Going on to say:

“As both Co-Editors are experienced university academics, they appreciate the benefits of anonymous marking and have long familiarity with applying it. And anonymity also has a glorious history in the practices that Bro Iolo Morganwg laid down for the prestigious Eisteddfod competitions of The Chair and The Crown. A topic is set in advance, and a deadline set. All submissions are put forward under a penname. Only after the work has been adjudicated, performed, and judged adequate for publication is the writer asked to stand up and reveal their identity. It won't be possible to facilitate quite such a dramatic reveal as at the eisteddfod, but the principle can still be followed.”

The topic for the Winter Solstice was set by the WM to the Mentor. Why is it Important to Memorise Rather than Read Ritual?” The task is to write an essay answering the question from your own viewpoint. Freemasonry does not lay down dogmatic beliefs which must be followed to the letter. Its teaching is told by peculiar rituals and illuminated by symbolic understanding. There is room for many different interpretations and the answer provided by the Mentor can only be his personal view. You may have a completely different idea, which the lodge would also like to hear. And if you submitted it by the last day of Feb it could feature in the fifth issue of CQ. **The Quarterly Writing Challenge** is open to all members and corresponding associates of Coronation Lodge, with the exception of Drs Harrison and Lomas. Here are the rules.

“Your essay will be anonymised by email it to Bro Secretary who will allocate it a unique number, whilst recording the name of the writer, before forwarding the now numbered essay is to the Editors for consideration. They will judge it on the quality of the writing, the clarity of expression of its argument and the degree of supporting evidence for the views expressed. The winning essays will be published, still anonymous, in the Vernal Equinox Issue of CQ and the writer will be contacted by Bro Sec and invited to submit an article on a topic of his own choice for the Summer Solstice Issue to be published under his real name. In this way the Editors hope to encourage the competitive development of the writing skills of the brethren and improve the body of literature on Masonic Topics of interest to the lodge. “

Brother Secretary has received two anonymous submissions for **The CQ Quarterly Writing Challenge**, and both have been found worthy of publication and are reproduced. The authors who, at the moment are only known to Bro Secretary, will be revealed by the WM, at the Festive Board and in the next issue they will be invited to submit an article on a topic of their choice for that publication.

A new CQ Quarterly Writing Challenge, with a deadline for the last day of Sept, is now open with the topic being the new question from the Chair of Coronation Lodge, which is “As all esoteric spiritual traditions seem to have a similar goal, be it Knowledge and Conversation with the Holy Guardian Angel; union with the Higher Self; reception of the beatific vision; finding the Holy Grail; union with the Augoeides; Henosis with the One of the Soul or the monad; Theosis with the Father; or Gnosis of the Pleroma, Wilmschurst said the goal of Freemasonry is to reach the Centre. What is unique in Freemasonry's goal and its approach to this ultimate objective?

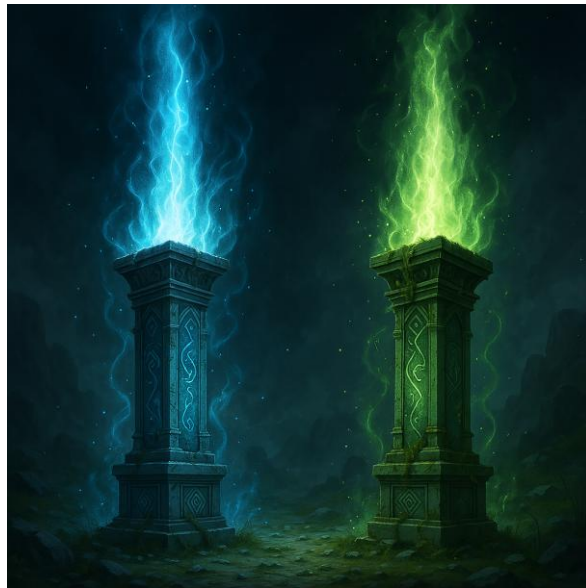
The Lodge Mentor's response to the question can be found in an earlier article. And if you prefer to listen to the paper instead of reading it there is link to an unlisted YouTube video. But we would also like to hear the views of other brethren.

To what extent are Masonic rituals Theurgic Rites?

Contributor No 1

In order to effectively answer this question, it is first necessary to examine a more fundamental question: “*What are Theurgic Rites?*”, or, more broadly, “*What is Theurgy?*”. Only by establishing a clear understanding of these concepts, can we hope to develop a more nuanced framework through which to explore the broader implications of the original question.

Theurgy is often considered to be one of the two fundamental pillars of magic, the other pillar being Thaumaturgy, with each pillar representing distinct approaches to mystical practice.

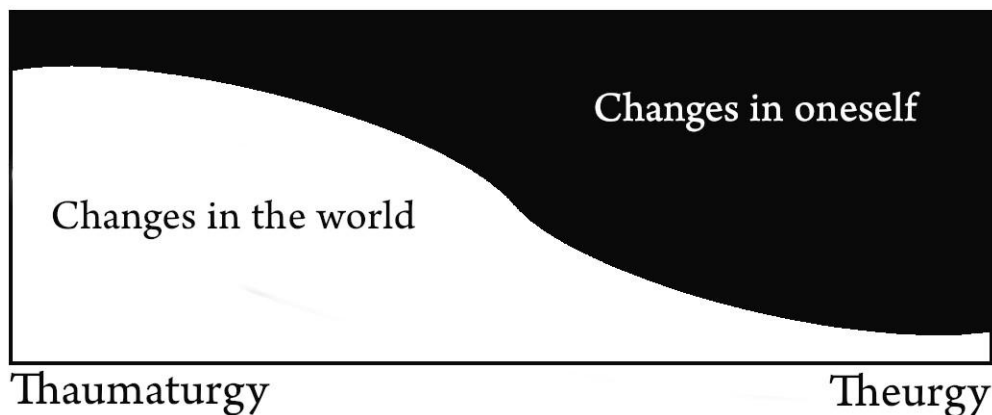


Theurgy and Thaumaturgy: Two Pillars of Magic

- **Theurgy** derived from the Greek words “*theos*” (god) and “*ergon*” (work), is the spiritual and divine aspect of magic, focused on invoking higher powers, deities, or celestial forces to achieve enlightenment or union with the divine. Rooted in Neoplatonic philosophy, Theurgy is not merely about performing rituals but about elevating the soul and attaining spiritual transformation. Practitioners engage in sacred rites, prayers, and symbolic invocations to align themselves with divine energies, seeking wisdom and transcendence rather than material outcomes.
- **Thaumaturgy** derived from the Greek words “*thauma*” (miracle) and “*ergon*” (work), is the practical and miraculous side of magic, concerned with producing tangible effects in the material world. Thaumaturgy is the art of wonder-working-manipulating reality through spells, incantations, and magical tools. Unlike Theurgy, which seeks divine communion, Thaumaturgy is focused on achieving supernatural results, such as healing, protection, or influencing physical events.

Putting it another way, Theurgy is religious or spiritual magic; thaumaturgy is practical magic, Theurgy is directed at changing the magician, Thaumaturgy is directed at changing the world. Together, these two traditions form the foundation of magical practice. Theurgy represents the mystical ascent toward higher realms, while Thaumaturgy embodies the ability to shape and alter the physical world through magical means.

Some practitioners blend both Theurgy and Thaumaturgy, using the former for spiritual evolution and the latter for practical workings, forging a harmonious approach to magic. In reality, the distinction between these two forms isn't rigid but rather a fluid spectrum. Every magical act reshapes the connection between the practitioner and the universe, influencing both the inner self and the outer world. The most potent magical workings tend to create profound shifts in both realms. Because of this, true magic should be approached with an openness to inner transformation and spiritual growth. Once the gateway between the internal and external worlds is unlocked, energy moves freely in both directions.



Some practitioners integrate both, using Theurgy for spiritual growth and Thaumaturgy for practical applications, creating a balanced approach to magic. In truth, the line between the two types of magic is not a line at all, but a continuum of gradations. Every act of magic changes the relationship between the magician and the world, so every act of magic has both internal and external effects. In fact, the strongest acts of magic seem to affect both self and world in very powerful ways. For these reasons, a magical practice should be undertaken only by those who welcome spiritual growth and inner change. Once the door between the inner and outer worlds is open, there will be a flow in both directions.

Now that we've established a foundational understanding of what Theurgy is, we can delve deeper into the next step in answering the topic *"To what extent are Masonic rituals Theurgic Rites?"* by examining *"What are Theurgic Rites?"*.

"Theurgic rites are ancient ritual practices aimed at uniting with the divine and achieving spiritual perfection. They involve specific rituals and techniques to invoke or evoke the presence of deities, often with the goal of achieving henosis (union with the divine). Theurgy is distinct from magic in that it is not primarily focused on manipulating supernatural forces for personal gain, but rather on establishing a connection with the divine." Walter Leslie Wilmshurst

Theurgic Rites are not mere ceremonies; they are carefully structured spiritual operations designed to elevate the soul, bring the practitioner into communion with higher realms, and align their inner being with divine forces. Unlike simple incantations or spellwork used in other forms of magic, Theurgic Rites are deeply spiritual in nature, often requiring devotion, purification, and an understanding of cosmological principles. They involve invocation, meditation, symbolic gestures, and the use of sacred names or divine hierarchies to attune the individual to higher states of consciousness.

The purpose of these rites varies from one tradition to another. Some seek enlightenment and union with the divine, while others aim to receive guidance from higher intelligences or to transform aspects

of one's inner self. The effectiveness of Theurgic Rites does not lie in mechanical repetition but in the sincere intention and spiritual readiness of the practitioner. Engaging in Theurgy is not simply about performing rituals but about deepening one's relationship with the sacred, leading to profound inner transformation.

Theurgic Rites, in their essence, are ritual practices designed to foster a connection with the divine - a concept that continues to resonate deeply in contemporary spiritual practices. Today, many seekers unite elements of ancient ritual with modern techniques to create transformative experiences that help them access higher states of consciousness, much like the ancient theurgists did.

In today's spiritual landscape, rituals are not merely symbolic acts; they serve as vehicles for personal transformation and inner growth. For example, many modern practices, ranging from mindful meditation sessions to New Age ceremonies embrace the same fundamental principles that underpinned Theurgic Rites. These include the use of sacred symbols, invocations, and carefully structured ceremonies that aim to align one's inner world with the greater cosmic order. This synthesis of symbolism and ritual creates a dynamic framework where the practitioner can both explore and transform their inner life, echoing the ancient view that every act of magic and ritual impacts both the self and the outer world.

Furthermore, contemporary spiritual practices are often eclectic, drawing upon a mix of traditions such as Eastern meditation, holistic healing, ceremonial magic, and even aspects of shamanism. This blending of methodologies reflects a shared understanding: the use of ritual, be it through chanting, visualization, or the deliberate arrangement of sacred space can catalyse profound personal and spiritual development. Such practices underscore the idea that while the specific techniques may evolve, the fundamental human yearning to bridge the gap between the finite and the infinite remains constant. In this light, Theurgic Rites serve as a historical blueprint that continues to inform and enrich modern spiritual pursuits.

In summary, the enduring influence of Theurgic Rites on contemporary spirituality lies in their ability to provide a structured yet dynamic means of connecting with higher realities. Modern practices retain the spirit of these ancient rites by using ritualistic elements to facilitate inner transformation, foster a sense of sacred connection, and create a dialogue between the self and the universe. This continuity between ancient wisdom and modern application highlights the timeless nature of the quest for spiritual enlightenment and the ongoing relevance of ritual in our search for meaning.

To enable us to fully understand and answer the question, we also need to quickly consider Theurgic Rites and Egregores.

When practitioners engage in theurgic rites, their collective focus and intention create a powerful energy field that can manifest as an egregore, a psychic entity or thoughtform that embodies the essence of the invoked deity. In these rituals, the deliberate use of sacred symbols, invocations, and structured ceremonies not only channels divine energies but also unites the participants in a shared, almost tangible, collective consciousness. This group energy is potent enough to shape the outcome of the rite, influencing both its immediate effects and the ongoing spiritual journey of those involved.

Within Western esoteric traditions, an egregore is understood as an emergent entity born from the accumulated thoughts, emotions, and ritual actions of the group. Often described as a "group mind," this psychic presence grows in strength as it is continually nurtured by the beliefs and repeated practices of its practitioners. Over time, the egregore may gain a measure of autonomy, subtly guiding the spiritual direction of the group, reinforcing its core values, and even impacting the lives of its

members. Its evolution underscores the transformative potential embedded within the ritual, where the boundary between individual intent and collective manifestation becomes fluid.

The interplay between theurgic rites and egregores illustrates how ritual practices serve not only as a means of divine invocation but also as a mechanism for building a shared spiritual identity. By merging individual energies into one focused effort, these rites foster a dynamic environment where both personal transformation and collective evolution occur simultaneously. The sustained focus on sacred symbolism and ritualized action creates an energy reservoir that continues to influence the group long after the ceremony has ended, acting as a guardian presence or spiritual beacon.

Now that we've established a foundational understanding both of what Theurgy is, and what Theurgic Rituals are, we can finally delve into answering the topic question of "To what extent are Masonic rituals Theurgic Rites?"

In summary, Theurgic Rites employ sacred symbols, deliberate invocations, and exquisitely structured ceremonies that work together to align one's inner world with the greater cosmic order.

- **Sacred Symbols:** For instance, in Freemasonry, an array of sacred symbols is used -notably the Three Great Lights and a central Sacred Symbol, which occupies a pivotal place within the meeting room.
- **Intentional Invocations:** The rituals incorporate numerous phrases and passages, each functioning as a focused invocation to invoke higher spiritual energies.
- **Ceremonies:** Freemasonry is renowned for its carefully orchestrated ceremonies, particularly during the conferment of the three degrees and the installation of a new master, demonstrating a precise and symbolic ritual structure.

Thus, Masonic rituals inherently encompass the essential elements of a Theurgic rite.

Many would claim that Freemasonry is wholly separate from the realm of magical practices and ritualistic rites. However, when we take a more nuanced view, especially by comparing Freemasonry with a tradition like Wicca, we begin to observe intriguing parallels.

At first glance, Freemasonry is often understood as a fraternity dedicated to ethical principles and moral enlightenment rather than literal spellcraft. Yet, beneath its surface lies a rich tapestry of symbols, initiatory ceremonies, and allegorical narratives that echo the ritualized structure of many magical traditions. In a similar way, Wicca embraces the sacred power of ritual, using symbols, invocations, and ceremonies to forge a connection with nature and the divine.

Both Freemasonry and Wicca offer structured frameworks that guide their practitioners through processes of transformation and self-discovery. While Wiccan rituals are often overtly linked to magical workings and the harnessing of natural energies, Masonic rites use allegory and symbolism to foster inner growth and spiritual alignment. In each tradition, these carefully crafted ceremonies serve not merely as performative acts but as pathways to deeper understanding and personal metamorphosis.

Both Freemasonry and Wicca follow a three-degree progression in which the initiate is first disoriented, typically hooded or blindfolded, and symbolically adorned with a cable-tow around the neck. In each tradition, the initiation begins by drawing the candidate into a consecrated space where they are tested with the point of a poignard, a tool that functions much like the athame in Wiccan practice. Following this test, the initiate is ceremonially led around the space, whether arranged in a

circle or a square, and formally introduced to the four cardinal directions: North, East, South, and West.



Some maintain that Wiccan rites have been influenced by Masonic ritualism, while others argue that the influence flows in the opposite direction. However, what is undeniable is the striking similarity in the ceremonial structures of the two systems, emphasizing transformation, orientation to sacred space, and a deep engagement with symbolic elements.

By comparing the two, we see that despite different outward appearances, both systems share an inherent belief in the transformative power of symbolic ritual. This suggests that while Freemasonry might not be labelled as "magic" in the common sense, it contains many of the ritualistic elements that are central to magical practices worldwide.

In conclusion, Freemasonry's ritual process is a transformative journey that begins with the careful preparation of both the self and the sacred space. Members first don ceremonial attire that signifies their readiness and intention before entering the temple, a space set apart for spiritual work. This initial step is followed by a solemn opening ceremony designed to consecrate and protect the space, ensuring that it is free from disruptive energies and fully prepared for the sacred work ahead.

Once the environment is sanctified, practitioners come together using sacred symbols and purposeful incantations to collectively direct their energies toward the centre. This unifying action is not only a means of focusing individual intent but also serves to create a powerful energy field. In some instances, this field can even manifest as an egregore, a collective psychic force that reflects the combined spirit of the group, while in other cases, it may simply act as a catalyst for profound inner transformation and spiritual elevation.

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To what extent are Masonic rituals Theurgic Rites?

Contributor No 2

It is essential to be clear about what we are looking into here. What is Theurgic?

There are two opposing principles or practices that need to be defined. Abolishing the word "Theurgic" and using Witchcraft, divination, necromancy, and black or white magic (if there are such things in reality) we must look at the difference and compare to the Theurgic Practices and rituals of the Craft.

Theurgic ritual was outlawed in England yet is still practiced today in one form or another. The belief that "thy will be changed", curses, and seeking the advice of the departed has well been dismissed as imagination, superstition and wishful thinking. Such has caused the death by hanging and burning of many innocent citizens over the years. As it is unclear what such practices are, many have been convicted by denunciation which is manifestly unjust.

Anyone believing in the effectiveness of such practice is foolish and misguided. Perhaps also guilty of the death of many decent people in the past. What evidence is there of any good other than massaging an ego, or celebration of the act of making one different or in rebellion to truth and intelligent research.

Theurgic ritual is completely opposed to the rational as well as the correct purpose of a relationship with the Creator or superior being. Such members would prefer a Grimoire in place of the VSL. Whenever has such a book belonged to just, upright and good men of good report". Never and will never be. It is ego in the extreme. Which is not the objective of our Craft.

It is of note that such arcane practices never cured a broken leg or turned lead into gold. A reasonably minded person would rationalise and discern the fantasy and the superstitious from reality and common sense.

Once when I was acting in a TV production of a Dennis Wheatley drama of witchcraft. We spent four hours out in the fields of Harewood House in Yorkshire naked in the rain while the main actors performed some hocus-pocus in and about a fire with utterances and waving sticks with stuffed heads on spikes. It was not magic but freezing and hoping it would be over soon. It was outrageous, of no value (except the premium paid to us), nonsense, and more to frighten the weak minded. I have to say we mercifully had long white shirts to wear during the proceedings. I have never done that in the Craft and don't expect to. As it resulted the only thing we caught that night was a chill.

Then why do people do such things? The reason is simple, the search for power beyond the normal gifts one is given, ergo to be better than others, advancement in a marsh's quagmire of lies and quicksand of loss. For loss it is. A loss of reason, and above all a relationship with the superior being they have professed to believing in at Masonic initiation.

In Craft as well as all the degrees to Royal Arch, the theme of a superior being is submission, asking, blessing, praising and acknowledging the Supreme Governor of the Universe. It is a relationship of agreement, sharing knowledge, and looking out from that Centre we are given as a place of harmony and purpose.

Here is the difference between what we do, and the pagans have done previously. We ask and live according to our morality defined and written on our hearts, we curse no one and bless those who are in need. The opening and closing addresses of the Royal Arch ceremony confirms this view: -

The Opening or Initial Address

This is given after the Chapter is Opened. It is complementary to the Valedictory (or Closing) Address and should be given by another Companion. Companions, again we assemble together with those feelings of affection and goodwill which animate the meeting of friends who have been sometime separated. After this interval, you have, I trust, acquired an increased relish for the interesting exercises of this retreat and you undoubtedly return with new alacrity to your labours.

And now, Companions, we meet within closed doors, the busy world shut out, with all its perplexities, cares and sorrows, none of which are suffered to intrude upon our happy privacy; for here nothing should enter but innocent pleasures, quiet joys and fraternal gaieties. Here you are invited to excel in the true, the good and the just, and to enjoy the bright auspices and emanations of the glorious light which sheds around you the clearest and most cheering rays. Here your understanding will be delighted with wisdom and your hearts warmed with benevolence.

Companions, you are not in darkness, walk therefore, as children of the Light. Observe the strictest decorum, carefully attend to every instruction offered, and readily comply with every requisition enjoined. Be diligent in the duties of your respective stations and all the joys of unity and peace will prevail. The Order we profess is of the highest dignity and honour, it being the summit and perfection of Craft Freemasonry. It impresses on the mind a belief in the existence of a deity, who is without beginning of days or ending of years, and it reminds us of the reverence due to his most Holy name.

The Valedictory or Closing Address

Companions, you are now about to quit this sacred retreat of peace and friendship and mingle with the world. Amidst all its cares and employments, forget not those sacred duties that have been so strongly recommended and so frequently inculcated in this supreme convocation.

Remember that around this altar you have voluntarily and solemnly vowed to befriend and relieve, with the most unhesitating cordiality, so far as may be within your power, every Companion who shall need your assistance; that you will in the most gentle manner remind him of his failings, aid in his reformation, defend and vindicate his character whenever wrongfully traduced, and will suggest the most candid, the most palliating and the most favourable circumstances in extenuation of his conduct, even when it is justly liable to reprehension and blame.

Thus, shall the world see how dearly Masons love each other. But, my Companions, you are to extend these noble and glorious sentiments still further. Let me impress on your minds, and let it be instilled in your hearts, that every human being has an undoubted claim to your kind offices. Ceremony of Closing the Chapter Nov 2012 11 Let me, therefore, exhort you to do good to all, whilst we more particularly recommend to your care the household of the faithful, that by diligence and fidelity to the duties of your respective avocations, liberal benevolence, diffusive charity, constancy and sincerity in your friendship, uniformly just amiable and virtuous deportment; you may show to the world the happy and beneficent effects of our ancient and honourable institution.

Let it not be said that you have laboured in vain and spent your strength for nought, for your work is before the Lord and your recompense is with your God. Finally, Brethren and Companions, be ye all of one mind, live in peace, and may the God of love and mercy delight to dwell amongst you and bless you for evermore.

If everything wise, virtuous, and praiseworthy were united, the result would be Royal Arch Masonry. Its aim is the perfection of virtue, and its most solemn business is the communication of the Sacred and Mysterious Name of the True and Ever-Living God Most High, that Great Awesome Being, who alone can exalt us to joys, imperishable in their nature and eternal in their duration.

Our path is one in harmony with the Creator and led into our path without superstition, or imaginary forces.

Here is a thought. The popular falling out in Freemasonry is to walk out of the Lodge and declare there is a variance between brethren. It is Grandstanding and misses the correct behaviour of a true Freemason. There should be settlement otherwise both should leave until the difference is settled. The WM should not allow any return until this is sorted. With the above addresses in mind and the five points of fellowship, no variance is permissible to continue harmony is paramount.

But here is a consideration, what if one is at variance with the superior being, by practicing such rites Who should leave? The answer is simple the superior being won't come back until the Theurgic practitioner is gone, sent home by the WM and his Wardens. What is a Lodge or the Individual without the Centre? Therefore, no practitioner of the Theurgic rites should be allowed into any Lodge.

One does not find truth in the works of man. Truth is only found within oneself and that still small voice at our Centre.

Letters to the Editorial Collective.

Dear Bro Editors.

The Importance of Memorising Ritual.

I write to share my thoughts on the Importance of Memorizing Masonic Ritual Rather Than Reading It

Freemasonry is rooted in ritual and tradition, serving as the foundation of our teachings, symbolism, and philosophy. While some may view reading the ritual as an acceptable practice, true Masonic excellence comes from memorization.

A well-delivered, memorized ritual enhances the dignity of our ceremonies and strengthens our bonds as brethren. Following personal thoughts explore the importance of committing Masonic ritual to memory, emphasizing its role in tradition, personal development, and Masonic experience.

Freemasonry has always been an oral tradition just like the ancient mystery schools long before us. When we memorize and recite the ritual, we keep it alive rather than reducing it to words on a page. Memorization just strengthens the continuity of our Masonic heritage.

History has shown that Freemasonry does not always operate in times of peace and freedom (like it happened in my beloved Romania during the takeover by the communists). In countries where Masonic lodges were banned or persecuted, brethren relied solely on memorization to preserve the ritual. Without written texts to guide them, brethren carried the light of the Craft within their minds and hearts, passing it down from brother to brother and generation to generation. From wartime Europe to regimes that sought to suppress free thought and association, brethren who committed the ritual to memory ensured that when the Craft could once again flourish openly, its traditions and teachings remained intact. Their dedication served as a testament to the power and necessity of oral transmission in safeguarding our sacred work. As an example, as a young kid, I had to learn the teachings of my grandfather without any written book of the long-lost ritual. Which leads me to the most important phrase I've learned long before being initiated – Q: "Where were you prepared to become a Freemason?" A: "Within my soul."

Memorizing the ritual is a huge challenge that builds character. For me at least, it created:

- Discipline – the effort of committing words to memory enhances self-control
- Perseverance – repetition and refinement strengthen determination
- Focus – deeper understanding of the ritual leads to personal growth

These qualities not only improve our Masonic journey but also enrich our daily lives. When a brother memorizes the ritual, he internalizes its symbolism and lessons rather than just reciting words. The working tools, allegories, and sacred teachings become more profound when we truly learn and understand, rather than read the meaningless words.

A memorized ritual elevates the candidate's experience, making the initiation or passing ceremonies powerful and transformative. A Master Mason who speaks with conviction and reverence delivers a ritual that inspires and impacts the younger brethren. When a Mason puts effort into memorizing the ritual, he demonstrates commitment to the lodge. This shows mutual respect and unity, strengthening the bonds between brethren and ensuring the lodge remains vibrant and active. A Master who knows his ritual by heart inspires confidence and demands respect. Memorization also allows flexibility - if a

brother must step into a role unexpectedly, he can do so with ease. This keeps lodge meetings smooth and ensures continuity of leadership.

The rewards of memorization far outweigh the difficulties, making it a valuable endeavour for every brother. Memorizing Masonic ritual is not just a tradition - it is a duty. It preserves the Craft's integrity, deepens our understanding, and enhances the Masonic experience. A well-delivered ritual is powerful, and inspiring. By committing ourselves to memorization, we honour our ancient traditions, strengthen our brotherhood, and ensure that the light of Freemasonry continues to shine for generations to come.

Sincerely and Fraternally.

Bro Andri Ballan, Internet Lodge No. 9659

Dear Bro Editors.

You might want to do something with my thoughts.

What do people see in this image? Something of beauty, fragile and ephemeral; a marvel of creation?; the manifestation of the work of the Great Architect?; or just another flower, pretty but so what?



I can sit and look at it and be totally absorbed. I don't need nuclear physics and the mysteries of the cosmos, they're all here in a simple flower.

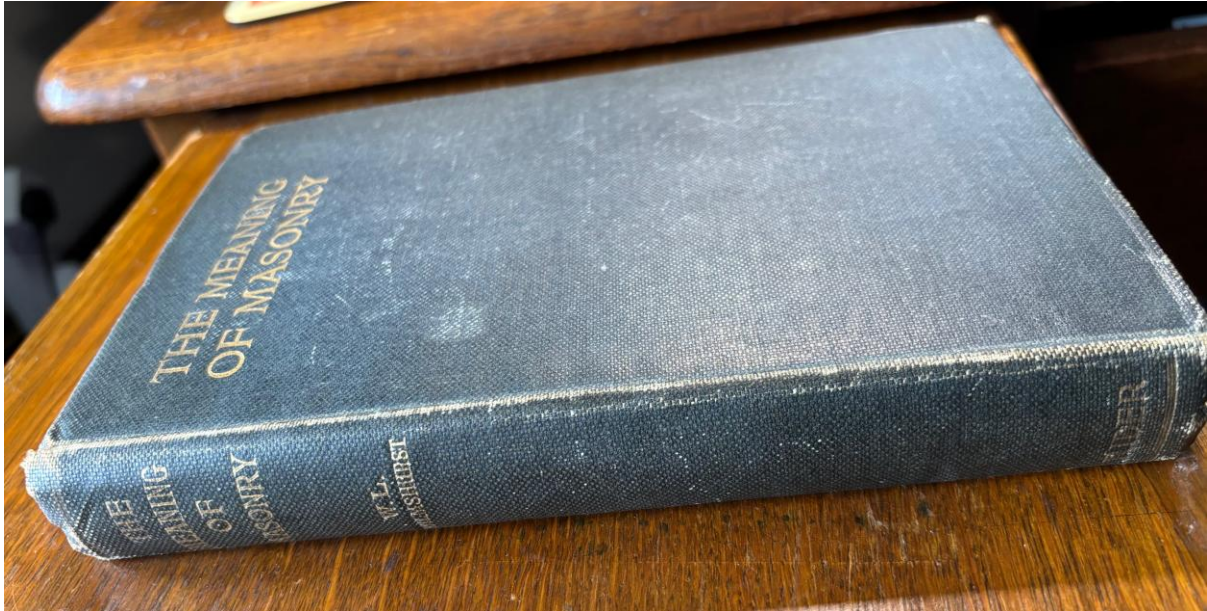
S&F greetings

WBro Keith Wilson. Southport Group Mentor. Associate of Coronation.

Book Review

The Meaning of Masonry by W. L. Wilmshurst

By Dr Robert Lomas



The Author.

Walter Leslie Wilmshurst (1867–1939) was an English author, lawyer, and Freemason, best known for his writings on the spiritual and esoteric aspects of Freemasonry. Born in Chichester, he later moved to Huddersfield, where he worked as a solicitor and became deeply involved in Masonic scholarship. He was initiated into Huddersfield Lodge No. 290 in 1889, but resigned 1896. In 1899 he became a joining member of the Lodge of Harmony 275, quickly rising through the ranks. He later founded the Lodge of Living Stones No. 4957 in Leeds in 1927, which is dedicated to studying the esoteric meanings behind Masonic rituals. His passion for Masonic philosophy led him to write extensively, contributing articles to *The Occult Review* and publishing several influential books, including:

The Meaning of Masonry (1922)

The Masonic Initiation (1924)

The Ceremony of Initiation (1932)

The Ceremony of Passing (1933)

Wilmshurst believed that many Masons misunderstood the deeper purpose of the Craft, focusing too much on social and charitable aspects rather than spiritual enlightenment. He emphasized that Masonic rituals were designed to guide initiates toward self-transformation and inner awakening. His writings remain highly regarded among those of us who are interested in Masonic mysticism.

Wilmshurst died on a London street in 1939 soon after attending the installation of George Edward Alexander Edmund, Duke of Kent (The grandfather of our current Grand Master) as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England and soon after leaving a meeting of the Masonic Study Society.

To this day his work continues to inspire Masons seeking a deeper understanding of the Craft, which is why I have included a Review of his most famous book, *The Meaning of Masonry*. (I have uploaded a pdf version of the book into the CQ portal library for those of you who might not have read it.)

Wilmshurst's writing is eloquent and thought-provoking, and in my view this book is a must-read for anyone interested in the philosophical and mystical aspects of Freemasonry. I do need to warn you that Wilmshurst was an Edwardian solicitor and wrote in the style of his times. Some sections may feel dense for casual readers, but if you are seeking a deeper understanding of Masonic teachings you will find studying it immensely rewarding.

The Meaning of Masonry by W. L. Wilmshurst was first published in May 1922 by The County Press, Bradford. It consists of an introduction and five chapters, each offering deep insights into spiritual and philosophical aspects of Freemasonry.

The introduction is inspirational, offering encouragement for Masons who feel disillusioned by lodges that primarily focus on social or charitable activities. And it offers welcome revelations if you are truly seeking the hidden wisdom of the Craft.

Overview of Chapters

1. **The Deeper Symbolism of Masonry** – Wilmshurst argues that Masonry conveys a philosophy of spiritual life through dramatic ceremonies, forming a framework for personal regeneration that aligns with all religious traditions. He explains the benefits that Masonic teachings offer to initiates, emphasizing their transformative power.
2. **Masonry as a Philosophy** – Here, Wilmshurst elaborates on Masonry as a comprehensive spiritual system, providing guidance for those seeking answers about life's purpose and destiny. He explores the symbolic significance of Masonic rituals, discussing the importance of self-discipline and mental refinement—concepts embodied in the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences.
3. **Further Notes on Craft Symbolism** – This chapter delves into the specific roles of the Three Degrees, illustrating how Masonic symbols serve as practical tools for self-improvement. Wilmshurst explains that initiates must undergo intellectual and moral development to fully grasp the divine order embedded in Masonic teachings.
4. **The Royal Arch Wisdom** – Drawing on his experience as a Craft Mason, Wilmshurst explores the Royal Arch's deeper meaning beyond simply attaining a sacred "Word." He stresses that true enlightenment comes only after enduring a rigorous process of purification and mental discipline, ultimately revealing one's profound connection to the Great Architect of the Universe.
5. **Masonry and the Ancient Mysteries** – In the final chapter, Wilmshurst suggests that Freemasonry is a modern continuation of ancient traditions that have guided seekers throughout history. While direct historical links between Masonry and Egyptian, Greek, and Judeo-Christian mystery schools are difficult to establish, he draws clear parallels between their spiritual and philosophical principles.

Final Thoughts

In *The Meaning of Masonry*, Wilmshurst argues that a lack of spiritual education hinders the effectiveness of Masonry as an initiatory system. He calls for a renewed focus on the spiritual teachings of the Craft to fulfil its original purpose. Making the following points:

- Many members engage in charitable activities but do not grasp the spiritual significance of their involvement.
- Masonry should address both physical and spiritual poverty.
- A deeper understanding of Masonic rites and philosophy is essential for the Craft to realize its full potential as a moral and spiritual force.

Wilmshurst thought that Freemasonry was misunderstood by its members, who often viewed it merely as a social club rather than a profound system of moral and spiritual teachings. In this book he stated that the true purpose of Masonry is to guide individuals toward self-discovery and spiritual enlightenment through allegorical teachings and rituals. He took a great interest in the rituals associated with Grand Lodge of York, which Dr Harrison wrote about in this issue. Their rituals could be traced back to the early workings which began in Scotland and encoded more mythical information than the later simplifications of Emulation. This working sometimes called Old York or extenso workings. Indeed, he incorporated so much of this ancient lore into his Installation Ceremony that he was forced to seek the permission of UGLE to work it. This was granted in a Declaration of 1926 which is read out before the Opening of the Board of Installed Masters which says *“In December 1926, at the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge, permission was granted to all Lodges under the jurisdiction of the United Grand Lodge of England to perform what is known as the 'Extenso Working' of the Installation Ceremony, provided a declaration was made before the Installed Board was opened to the effect that it is not essential for every Installed Master to receive all the Signs, Tokens and Words used in such form of working. Such Declaration is now made and will be recorded in the Minutes”*.

This book is essential reading if you wish to pursue a deeper understanding of Masonic teachings. It provides a structured process for finding true enlightenment, though Wilmshurst cautions that such a journey still demand careful study and dedication.

To fully appreciate its insights, I suggest you pace yourself, digesting small portions at a time. This approach will allow you to contemplate its profound messages and avoid being seduced by simplistic explanations of Masonic traditions. *The Meaning of Masonry* can lead you down fascinating paths of discovery, encouraging you to question and explore beyond conventional Masonic instruction.

If you haven't already read it, then please take the time to download it from the CQ portal and read it at your leisure.

Obituary -WBro Simon Lindley PG1948-2025

WBro Roger Quick

Following the death of our dear friend and brother, many brethren have said that they didn't realize quite how eminent he was. Simon's deep kindness, humility and friendliness, hid his achievements, which were of global significance. He was, as the ritual says, *easy of address*. One of the finest organists and choral conductors of his generation, he was a soloist at the Proms, performed internationally, broadcast regularly and recorded extensively.

He was President of the Royal College of Organists. As an editor of the English Hymnal, his knowledge was truly encyclopaedic. He held two honorary doctorates. As an examiner, performer and broadcaster he travelled the world. As a teacher he demanded the same high standards of his students as he did of himself; but did so in a way which was kindly, encouraging, and always with a sense of humour which was never far below the surface. It would however be fair to say that he knew his own opinion, and was not afraid to express it.

The son of an Anglican priest, and grandson of the Belgian poet and academic Émile Cammaerts, Simon was educated at Magdalen College School, Oxford, and the Royal College of Music, where he afterwards taught. After being Peter Hurford's deputy at St Alban's Cathedral, he made his home in Yorkshire, and was for over forty years Director of Music at what is now Leeds Minster. He was also Senior Lecturer at the then Polytechnic, and Leeds City Organist, in addition to being director of Sheffield Bach Choir, Doncaster Choral Society, St Peter's Singers and Overgate Hospice Choir, and chorus master of both Halifax Choral Society and Leeds Philharmonic Society. All this in addition to examining the notoriously difficult FRCO. He was a member of the Royal Society of Musicians, a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, and in 2005 received the Freedom of the City of London

Simon was Initiated into masonry in St Cecilia Lodge, London in 1970. In West Yorkshire, he was a member of Zetland Lodge and St Laurence Chapter. In 2010 he began his fifteen-year tenure as Provincial Grand Organist, and was Grand Organist from 2010-12.

He was active in Rose Croix, in the Mark Degree, and in Royal Ark Mariners; at the time of his death he was enjoying a second year as Commander of Bram Morley RAM Lodge, and was also WM of St John's Lodge in Dewsbury.

Reputedly the organist for 26 masonic units, Simon would most generously play anywhere when asked. He will be very deeply missed; for his playing, and for his kindness, laughter, and generosity of spirit. He is survived by his former wife Carel, and their four adult children.

Notes About Contributors

Bro Chris Eyre. Associate Member of Coronation Lodge

Chris was born 24th June – in the Feast of St John the Baptist and was ordained as Brother Christopher James Eyre on 11th July 2024, with themonastery.org

He studied at King's School Pontefract 1984-88, and Wakefield College, receiving a diploma in IT and also Electronic Engineering 1988-89. Shortly after he started work at ICL Wakefield, and has stayed in IT ever since, from support to sales, and also management, working in 'cyber security' before it even had a name. He's worked for big brand names like Insight, NCC, ECSC, and also for vendors such as like SmoothWall, and Computer Associates (CA).

Bro. Chris is Senior Deacon at St. Oswald Lodge No. 910 in Pontefract, for which he joined in June 2014, being raised on the 21st October 2015, and was further exalted on 11th December 2024. He is also a member of St. John 280 in Coldstream, and a Companion of Hirsell and Duns SGRAC Chapter No.466.

Chris is passionate about preserving British and Masonic history, and has started to preserve some of his Mother Lodge's history, using Large format scanners and 3D rendering, Here are some examples:

[Hughan Masonic Manuscript - By Bro. William Watson – Dedicated to T. W. Tew \(Our Founding Master\)](#)

[St. Oswald's Church, Heavenfield, Northumberland](#)

His pastimes are: Scuba Diving, Computers, 3D Scanning, 3D Printing, Astronomy, Esoteric Freemasonry, Freemasonry history.

Bro Dave Grainger, Francis Drake Lodge 7825, Cornerstone Lodge 10051 and Associate of Coronation Lodge

Dave was initiated into Francis Drake of York lodge 7825 in May 2018, passed and raised by 2019. He will be installed as master on 6/2/26, his 50th birthday!

He is also a member (JW) of Fitzwilliam Mark lodge 277, Stonebow Conclave 301 of the order of the secret monitor and a founder member of Cornerstone lodge.

Dave is a full time Teacher of Physics and Head of Department, having graduated from The University of Edinburgh in 1997, Strathclyde University (PGCE) in 1999 and he started teaching in 1999.

WBro Phillip Harris. JP Lodge of Living Stones 4957 & Coronation Lodge 2927

Bro Phillip was initiated into Leodiensis Lodge 4029 in 1994. He as Passed and Raised in the same year. Suspecting that there was more to freemasonry than the parochial, he moved Lodge to Olicana 1522.

He found the Royal Arch a disappointment and following his exaltation I felt lost. He was installed as a Knight Templar in 1998. But did not find the answers to his questions in the Encampment. He moved to Harewood Lodge 5667. By now he was beginning to suspect that he wasn't going to get answers to his questions. Then, when he joined Chapter Affability 308, he found a community of Companions who had more understanding.

In 2016, he joined Internet Lodge 9659 and never looked back. He was able to visit overseas, brethren who were strong in Masonic light, and began to understand more about The Craft. He visited the Lodge of Living Stones 4957 and found a guide, mentor, tutor, and friend there..

Bro Phillip has papers (*The Excellent Master, The Strait path of the Master Mason, The Sun in Freemasonry.*) published in Masonic Forum, SRA magazine, and has been translated into Romanian and German. He is a former winner of the Quarterly Writing Challenge.

WBro Dr David Harrison – Assistant Secretary of Coronation Lodge 2927

W. Bro. Dr David Harrison gained his initial degree in Welsh History and Archaeology at the University of Wales, Bangor, in 1997, and went on to gain an MA in 2000, and then a PhD in 2008, both at the University of Liverpool. Harrison also gained a Certificate of Education from the University of Manchester in 2000. He has worked as a history lecturer for the University of Liverpool, University of Hope, Liverpool and the University of Manchester, and as a project coordinator for various History groups around Liverpool and Merseyside.

Harrison has had 15 works published on the history of Freemasonry and Fraternalism and has had numerous academic papers and letters published on the subject in various journals. His works include *The Genesis of Freemasonry* (2009), which was Harrison's PhD thesis, *The Lost Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry* (2017), *The Rite of Seven Degrees* (2021) and his most recent work *The Life and Death of John Yarker*.

He became a Freemason in Cheshire in 1998 and is a Past Master of the Lodge of Lights no.148 in West Lancashire. He is also a member of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No2076

David is currently Assistant Secretary of Coronation Lodge and Co-Editor of the Quarterly Journal of Coronation Lodge, *Coronatio Quadrans* or CQ for short.

www.dr-david-harrison.com

WBro John Karran – Secretary of Coronation Lodge 2927

John was born in Liverpool, is an Oil and Gas Consultant and has been married to Sheila for over 40 years with three grown up children and three grandchildren.

He became a Freemason in 1985 and was initiated into Eureka Lodge No 3763 in Bootle. After some years living abroad, on his return he joined Starkie Lodge in the Southport Group in 2006 and became its Worshipful Master in 2013. He became acting Provincial Grand Steward in 2015, and Master of the Provincial Stewards Lodge, Quingenti Lodge No 8516, in 2017.

John was Acting Provincial Grand Senior Warden of the Province of West Lancashire in 2017 and was exalted into North Meols Chapter No 5828 in 2000, installed as First Principal in 2017 and became Acting Provincial Grand Steward in Royal Arch in 2021. He is also a member of Provincial Stewards Chapter.

He is Secretary of Mersey College in the SRIA and their Provincial Director of Studies. He is active in many other Masonic Orders, in the Ancient and Accepted Rite (Rose Croix) where he has attained the 30th degree and is a Acting Officer of Red Cross of Constatine. Has been in both KT & KTP Chairs and is a Mark PM and with acting rank in Red Cross of Constatine plus is in many others including Royal Order of Scotland. As is clear from his CV, John has a strong interest in the esoteric and mystical side to Freemasonry.

Bro Dr Robert Lomas – Mentor of Coronation Lodge 2927

Robert is a British author, physicist, and retired Fellow in Operations Management from the Bradford University School of Management. He holds a First-Class Honours degree in Electronic Engineering and a PhD for research into the quantum properties of solid-state physics and crystalline structures from

the University of Salford. He has worked as a consultant on command-and-control systems for various weapons systems, and the emergency services. Before he retired, he lectured on Information Systems, Statistics, and Computer Security at Bradford.

He remains among the longest standing members of The Lodge of Living Stones, where he is organist, and has also benefited from that lodge's resources to study the work and philosophy of founder Walter Leslie Wilmshurst which he strongly promotes.

Robert is currently Mentor of Coronation Lodge and Co-Editor of the Quarterly Journal of Coronation Lodge, *Coronatio Quadrans* or *CQ* for short.

www.robertlomas.com

www.WebofHiram.org

X: @Dr_Robert_Lomas

WBro Dean Magee-Tingle—WM of Lodge of Living Stones 4947 & an Honourary Associate of Coronation Lodge 2927

Dean joined freemasonry in 2011 in the Province of Yorkshire West Riding Prior to joining the craft, he had gravitated towards the study of 'the self - spiritual awareness'. His research was not actively encouraged, shared and discussed within the confines of ordinary craft lodges, then his friend 'Craig Maurier' introduced him the Lodge of Living Stones No 4957 in 2014, what a change in direction that took him on. He served first as Secretary and then became WM in 2023, and began a second year in 2024. WBro Dean is a member of the SRIA and says how he has hugely benefited from the enrichment offered by his fellow seekers. He is the current Master in the Chair of Living Stones and visits Coronation Lodge.

WBro Peter Maguire- Coronation Lodge 2927

Pete is a fourth-generation Freemason who attended Christmas parties as a child at the Masonic Hall on Hunter Street, Chester. He joined Westminster Lodge No. 7532 in February 2005 and was installed as Master in 2013. Due to work, he relocated to Rochdale and joined Lodge of Hope No. 54 in October 2016, where he was installed as Master in 2023. He also became a joining member of Coronation Lodge No. 2927. Pete enjoys Freemasonry, particularly the understanding of the Ritual and the esoteric aspects of masonry. He is a member of the Holy Royal Arch and Mark Masonry. Pete can often be found meditating at St Edmund's Church.

X: @MaguirePete

WBro A. Umit Iris- WM of Internet Lodge No. 9659 and Corresponding Associate of Coronation Lodge