

CORONATIO QUADRANS

Mar 2026

Issue 9



CORONATIO QUADRANS

VERNAL EQUINOX 2026

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A Few Words from the Editors

Earlier this year The Editorial Cooperative received a paper to consider for publication, from Bro Dr Ross Kelly, an Associate of Coronation Lodge. It was entitled *At the Centre: Mathematics, Euler's Identity, and the Geometry of Being*. As soon as Robert read it he rang David, bubbling with excitement. "I've just read a paper from an associate with a PhD in Mathematics, reflecting on the mystery of transcendental numbers in geometry, and he has arrived at a view of the nature of Supreme Being which aligns closely with my own view."

"Well as you're both scientists, why should that surprise you?" David asked.

"What surprised me," Robert said, "was that Ross started from a completely different set of scientific premises but arrived at a similar conclusion."

"So why don't we publish it alongside that paper you gave a few years ago at Warrington on your personal take about Supreme Being?" David said. "And I'll also write an essay on my personal interpretation as well."

"That's a great idea," Robert replied. "And I'll see if I can get a few more brethren to contribute essays so we can publish a special edition sharing as many different viewpoints on the nature of Supreme Being as possible."

We managed to get four of our regular contributors to write an essay on the topic and the whole series is to be found in this issue. However, if after reading these various personal perspectives you feel you would like to contribute your thoughts then we would be happy to publish them in future issues.

Apart from getting excited about the implications of transcendental numbers the members of the editorial collective have been busy with other projects.

David has rejoined his mother lodge Domville Lodge No. 4647, a traditional Lodge that meets above a pub in the Cheshire village of Lymm. It's traditional in the sense that the brethren have to remove the Lodge furniture out of a cupboard, set the Lodge up and after the meeting, put it all away and set out the tables for the festive board.

The lodge has its own ritual and operates as a village lodge. It meets on the second Friday of each month, September to May.

David had become an acting officer in Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, which meets in London, and has a short paper on Wilmshurst in the latest edition of the AQC Transactions.

Robert has resumed the role of Associates Member's Secretary for the Lodge of Living Stones and hopes to encourage greater cooperation between these two important esoteric lodges. He has also produced a condensed presentation of *The Book of the Perfect*, for Coronation Lodge to work at this eternal equinox meeting. Its aim is to honour Wilmshurst's vision whilst creating a version that is more practical to work, relevant to educate the brethren, and illuminating for our visitors. The original takes almost two hours to deliver in full, while this version maintains the landmarks and can be delivered in forty five minutes. We hope you enjoy listening to it. There is a fuller article about this project later in the journal.

We have received two interesting submissions to the anonymous writing challenge and Bro Secretary will announce the names at the festive board.

This quarter's question from the chair and the subject for the next anonymous writing challenge is: **"Choosing one or more points I would like you to consider the history, and significance of the use of Tracing Boards in Freemasonry; the symbolism contained within regarding their associated degrees, how they convey the meaning of the respective ritual; the evolution of the symbolism, the style of imagery presented across the centuries and evolving culture, and what, if anything you would include or omit to make them more useful vehicles for conveying their intended meaning."**

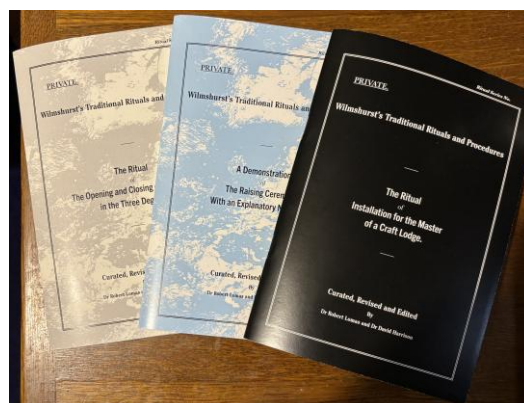
In Robert's mentor's answer, as well as providing an historical perspective he had focussed on how to use a tracing board as a useful vehicle for conveying the intended meaning of the First Degree. This leaves plenty of scope for other writers to explore how the boards might help aid Masonic progress in understanding the Second or Third Degree, or even how Wilmshurst's Tracing Board of the Centre may aid a better understanding of the role of an Installed Master. As writing down your thoughts and insights is a wonderful way to clarify your ideas we encourage all the brethren and Associates to consider adding their answer to the WM's question.

The Editorial Cooperative, alongside our continuing development of CQ magazine as a way to bring Walter Wilmshurst's ideas and writings to a new audience of modern Freemasons, have continued with our ongoing project to create modern editions of Wilmshurst's Rituals and Procedures for use by any interested lodges.

We have made *The Wilmshurst Installation Book* available, via Brother Secretary, and are now busy curating and editing the Wilmshurst narrated First Degree.

So far we have completed *Ritual Series No. 1 The Ceremony of Opening and Closing the Lodge in All Three Degrees*, and *Ritual Series No. 4 A Demonstration of The Raising Ceremony With an Explanatory Narration* and *Ritual Series No. 5 Wilmshurst's Extended Ritual for the Installation of a Master of A Craft Lodge*.

If any visitors, associates or Masonic friends of lodge members would like to obtain copies of these privately printed Ritual Books, copies can be bought from Bro Sec. John Karran at karranjohn@hotmail.com, with proceeds going to lodge funds. (Hint: they make a novel and thoughtful present for your Masonic friends.)



All that remains is for us to wish all our readers a Happy Vernal Equinox

The CQ Editorial Cooperative

Notes from the Secretary of Coronation Lodge

Spring Equinox & Fraternal Greetings Brethren

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

For those who attended the Installation Meeting, I hope you were especially impressed with, what I thought, was an excellent Wilmshurst's Installation ritual which I had never seen before and was conducted by our now IPM, W.Bro Dan Wilson, immaculately. We do now have the Installation Booklets for Officers and for sale. Dan has set the bar high for our present WM, W.Bro Wayne Warnick but I am sure he will be up for the challenge.

At our Vernal Equinox meeting we will be working a specially adapted version of the Wilmshurst's Book of the Perfect Lodge. The goal is to have a lodge that conducts its rituals with a more esoteric format whilst also bringing in discussion and lectures of an esoteric nature to the meeting. The goal of a focal point for esoterically inclined Freemasons conducting their Craft in a more profound environment is now available for those who seek this path. The Coronation Lodge Ritual, based on the Wilmshurst version from the Lodge of the Living Stones, is moving on. Full members please see me for your ritual book if you have not already received. They are also available for purchase for Associate Members, and also for any other interested brethren. The Third Degree is also completed. These Ritual books again will be available and please contact me for a copy if required. 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 Wilmshurst degrees Collection ready, thanks again to Robert Lomas and David Harrison.

The plan for the Third Degree ceremony is to have the candidate go through his third degree at the Lodge of the Living Stones and then we can demonstrate it at Coronation Lodge afterward. The Wilmshurst Third Degree workings are a bit longer than Emulation workings so we will split this into two. The Lodge of the Living Stones has only a small lodge room and places are limited but we have reserved five places.

The Associate Membership of the Lodge is progressing well with well over 45 members from all over the Globe. The Journal of the lodge is called; 'Coronatio Quadrans' and 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.

The Coronation Lodge Writing Challenge paper, we encourage members both full and associate to put in a paper as set out on Masonic and Esoteric matters. These should be submitted to the Secretary before each lodge meeting and will be gratefully accepted, long or short.

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'. Our next meeting on the 16th June, and is the Summer Solstice meeting. 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.

God Bless John

A Message from The Worshipful Master of Coronation Lodge

WBro Wayne Warnick

Whither Directing Our Course?

Dear Brethren,

What is the intended purpose of Coronation Lodge No. 2927?

We are an eclectic group of (mostly) Master Mason's who ascribe to differing philosophies, and beliefs, who have come together to form an esoteric lodge using the writings of Walter Leslie Wilmshurst as our foundation. In order to progress, we first need to know what led us here, what we want to achieve, and the necessary steps to reach that end goal.

1. We all likely have some dissatisfaction with elements within Freemasonry, and find it lacks the esoteric underpinnings that many of us originally joined for.
2. What does it mean to be an esoteric lodge, and what steps do we need to take to achieve it?
 - a. Development of clearly defined aims for the lodge as a whole, and a structure for members to make meaningful contributions, and develop personally
 - b. A return to Freemasonry as it was during the enlightenment.
 - c. Study of the hidden mysteries of nature, and science
 - d. Knowledge lectures based on personal expertise
 - e. Practical work that goes beyond the rituals

Laying the Corner Stone

In order for us to move in a unified direction to achieve our aims, we need to build on the foundation of a shared language.

1. How do we develop a shared language?
2. Reduction of ritual and theory to first principles
3. Dedicated reading list of foundational through to advanced knowledge
4. Structured knowledge papers, and lectures
5. Engaging in Socratic dialogue

Before the next meeting I intend to send out a survey to all members and associates of Coronation Lodge to gain a full understanding of what brought members into the lodge, what keeps us here, and in what direction we want the lodge to progress.

Your engagement will drive this lodge forward, so I hope all members will participate in the survey. All answers will remain anonymous, and will be treated with the strictest confidence unless indicated otherwise. The results will be compiled, and published in the next edition of Coronatio Quadrans.

Sincerely and fraternally

W.Bro Wayne Warnick

Coronation Lodge to Work a Modern Adaptation of Wilmshurst's Book of the Perfect Lodge

Bro Dr Robert Lomas

When Walter Leslie Wilmshurst first delivered *The Book of the Perfect Lodge* to the Lodge of Living Stones in the late 1920s, he was speaking to Brethren steeped in the contemplative and psychological approach to Freemasonry that he championed. His original exposition of the officers and their symbolism was intended to be a full evening of instruction. It takes well over an hour and a half to deliver in its entirety. For today's Masons, coping with the practical demands of modern lodge nights and a need to balance depth with accessibility, I have prepared a shorter version more focused version. It can be delivered in around forty-five minutes, but I have preserved the essential ladder of offices that leads you from the periphery of the Lodge to the Chair. In this focus I do not imply that the remaining officers are less important, they are vital to the smooth running of the lodge, but my approach reflects the reality that it is important for the future of Freemasonry that we educate and inform new Brethren. This is traditionally done by understanding their progress through a particular sequence of offices, where each step is intended to teach them something vital about Freemasonry and themselves. The purpose of this condensed presentation is to honour Wilmshurst's vision while focussing on creating a version that practical to work, relevant to educate the brethren, and illuminating for our visitors.

A Modern Adaptation of *The Book of the Perfect Lodge*

Understanding the ritual as a map of the inner life

Freemasonry is often described as a system of morality taught illustrated by symbols and veiled in allegory, but for many modern Brethren the deeper purpose of those symbols can become distant or obscured by routine. *The Book of the Perfect Lodge* was written to help bridge that gap. It invites you to look beyond the outward form of the Lodge and to recognise it as a mirror of your own inner life.

The central idea is simple but profound: a Lodge is not just a room or an assembly of people; it is a symbolic model of the human soul.

When the Lodge is opened, its officers, stations, and working tools represent the different faculties, tendencies, and energies within each of us. The ritual becomes a kind of spiritual anatomy lesson. The Tyler reflects the outer personality; the Inner Guard the rational mind; the Wardens the balancing powers of the soul; the Master the indwelling spark of Spirit. Each officer's role is not only functional but psychological, pointing to a part of us that must be disciplined, harmonised, and brought into unity.

This perspective explains why Masonic ritual is structured as it is. The ceremonies are not meant to be theatrical performances but dramas of self-knowledge, enacted outwardly so that their meaning is realised inwardly. The Craft Degrees trace the classic stages of spiritual development, facing up to fears to seek for Light, learning how to recognise and apply the study of Truth, and finally facing up to the reality of mortality. The Lodge officers personify the forces that assist or hinder that journey.

For the modern Mason, working the Book of the Perfect Lodge offers a way to reconnect with the vitality of the ritual. Instead of seeing the Lodge as a place we visit, we begin to see it as a pattern we

carry within us. Instead of viewing the officers as roles to be filled, we recognise them as aspects of our own nature that must be understood and mastered. The work of the Lodge becomes the work of building ourselves. We learn how to shape the rough ashlar of our character into something truer, squarer, and more aligned with the Light we seek.

The Book of the Perfect Lodge serves as a guide to the inner meaning of the Craft. It encourages us to approach the ritual not as spectators but as participants in a process of transformation. Its purpose is not to replace the degree ceremonies but to deepen our engagement with them, helping each Brother to “open the Lodge of his own being” and to labour consciously in the great work of self-perfection.

In an age where many seek meaning beyond the surface of things, Wilmshurst’s insights remain strikingly relevant. They remind us that Freemasonry is not merely a social institution or a set of inherited customs, but a living system designed to awaken, refine, and elevate the human spirit.

As Wilmshurst himself reminded the Brethren of the Lodge of Living Stones, the deeper work of Freemasonry unfolds in harmony with the rhythms of nature, and he chose the Vernal Equinox, the season of renewal, balance, and returning light, to deliver his full exposition of the form a Perfect Lodge should take.

Coronation Lodge will be following this tradition at our own Vernal Equinox meeting, when we work this more focused version of his teaching so that it remains both practical and meaningful for the modern Mason. By concentrating on the principal ladder of offices that lead a Brother from the periphery of the Lodge to the Chair, we will honour the path that every Mason must tread if they are to learn not only the workings of the Craft, but the workings of their own inner life. This emphasis does not diminish the importance of the other officers; rather, it recognises that progression through the offices is the Craft’s intended school of self-knowledge, discipline, and transformation. In presenting this concentrated version, we aim to preserve Wilmshurst’s vision while ensuring that its light continues to guide Brethren as they advance step by step from the West to the East.

For Brethren who are interested in the ceremony, copies of this shorter working, along with an appendix including, in an appendix, the complete original full evening of instruction will be available to order from the lodge secretary by the Summer Solstice.

Questions from the Chair of Coronation Lodge

Question for March 2026

Question: "Choosing one or more points I would like you to consider the history, and significance of the use of Tracing Boards in Freemasonry; the symbolism contained within regarding their associated degrees, how they convey the meaning of the respective ritual; the evolution of the symbolism, the style of imagery presented across the centuries and evolving culture, and what, if anything you would include or omit to make them more useful vehicles for conveying their intended meaning."

My Answer

Bro Dr Robert Lomas, :Lodge Mentor

The History and Significance Tracing Boards in Freemasonry

The Tracing Boards of the Craft are among the most distinctive and enduring instruments of Masonic instruction. Their history, symbolism, and pedagogical purpose reveal much about the evolution of the Craft itself, from operative practice to speculative philosophy. Far from being mere items of lodge furniture, they are visual distillations of the teachings of each degree and remain, when properly understood, among the most potent vehicles for conveying the inner meaning of Masonic initiation.

Historical Development

The earliest Tracing Boards were not boards at all, but ephemeral floor drawings executed in chalk and charcoal at each meeting. The Master drew the diagram from memory; the candidate advanced across it; and at the close of the ceremony the candidate erased it. This practice served several purposes: it ensured secrecy, cultivated humility, and, most importantly, required both Master and candidate to internalise the symbolism.

As the Craft developed, floor drawings gave way to painted cloths and eventually to the wooden boards familiar today. While these later forms offer convenience and durability, they lack the personal engagement inherent in the earlier practice. The shift from hand-drawn diagram to manufactured board mirrors a broader transition: from a discipline requiring active symbolic literacy to one in which the symbols risk becoming passive ornaments.

Symbolism and Ritual Meaning

Each Tracing Board encapsulates the essential theme of its degree:

First Degree — the foundations of moral and spiritual life, the dualities of existence, and the first steps toward Light. Learning to face your fears.

Second Degree — the ascent toward knowledge, the cultivation of the faculties, and the liberal arts as instruments of self-development and the study of the hidden mysteries of Nature and Science to learn to recognise Truth.

Third Degree — mortality, fidelity, and the transformative possibilities of spiritual rebirth.

In each case, the Board functions as a visual ritual, a symbolic commentary on the ceremony itself. It allows the candidate to revisit, in contemplation, what was experienced dramatically, and to deepen understanding through repeated engagement.

The Evolution of Style and Symbolic Density

The style of Tracing Boards has evolved with artistic and cultural trends. The earliest known example, the Kirkwall Scroll, (radio-carbon dated to the fifteenth century), is a complex and densely symbolic artefact containing many of the emblems now used in modern Freemasonry. Other early examples are simple and geometric. By the nineteenth century, boards became ornate and crowded with emblems; modern boards (such as the Martin Jackson set used by Coronation Lodge) have returned to cleaner, more minimal designs.

This evolution has enriched the tradition but also introduced challenges. When ornamentation proliferates, the central narrative of the degree may be obscured. When symbolism is disciplined and coherent, the Board becomes a powerful instrument of instruction.

The Purpose of a Tracing Board

Before we can understand the symbols on the Tracing Boards, we must first understand why they exist at all. Today, the Boards often sit quietly in the Lodge, brought out as required, sometimes treated as little more than official furniture. When an explanation is given, it is usually the brief, familiar lecture compiled more than a century ago — a lecture that openly admits it is only a simple introduction, meant to encourage deeper study. Yet few Brethren ever go beyond it. Many assume that memorising those lines is the whole of Masonic knowledge, and that proficiency lies in recitation rather than understanding.

But this was not always so.

In earlier days, when Freemasonry was not a social pastime but a disciplined study of spiritual science, the Tracing Board was the most revered symbol in the Lodge. It was not bought from a supplier; it was drawn by hand. At every meeting, the Master would take chalk and charcoal and sketch the diagram of the degree directly onto the floor. He did this from memory, quickly and accurately, because he had practised it many times. The candidate would walk across this diagram as part of the ceremony, and at the end he would erase it himself. This was a lesson in humility, secrecy, and the fleeting nature of outer forms.

This act of drawing the Board was not a quaint custom. It was a declaration that the symbols mattered. They were meant to be learned, contemplated, and internalised. Chalk, charcoal, and clay were themselves symbols: chalk for the purity and accessibility of Masonic wisdom; charcoal for the fervent heat with which that wisdom must be impressed upon the heart; clay for the human material into which the teaching is written.

Why, then, do we use Tracing Boards at all? The answer lies in three simple facts:

As the operative mason must understand the plan of the building he works upon, so the speculative Mason must understand the plan of the spiritual temple he is constructing within himself.

If we believe that the Great Architect has a purpose for us, then the Board serves as a reminder of that purpose. It is a diagram of the Divine Plan as it relates to the human soul.

When the candidate takes his steps across the Board, he symbolically identifies himself with the path it represents. He pledges himself to walk from darkness of the North toward the light of the eternal East.

Over time, the hand-drawn diagrams gave way to painted cloths and later to wooden boards. This made them more convenient, but something was lost. A machine-made Board cannot carry the same

personal value as one drawn by one's own hand. And as the labour of drawing disappeared, so too did the habit of studying the symbols with care.

Yet their origins reach back far beyond the eighteenth century. The ideas they contain were once taught in the great Mystery Schools of Egypt and Greece, not through diagrams but through dramatic ritual. They were used in vast symbolic plays illustrating the journey of the soul through many stages of growth. When the public Mystery Schools faded, the teachings didn't vanish. They were preserved in secret, passed on through symbols, diagrams, and allegories. The Tracing Boards are heirs to that tradition.

Their designer is unknown, but their composition reveals a master mind. They contain layers of meaning for those who learn to read them, and remain sealed to those who cannot. They preserve truths that are ancient, universal, and unchanging. These eternal truths lie behind the outer forms of all religions.

This is why they are called "immovable jewels" and "landmarks." They are not ornaments; they are maps of a Mason's inner life.

Every Mason should be able to look at the First Degree Board and say: "Here is an explanation of myself, my nature, my purpose, and the path I must follow." They should look at the Second Degree Board and recognise themselves again, now at a further stage of development. And when they stand before the Third Degree Board and see it stark, solemn, and forbidding, they should understand that it too speaks of their own experience: the necessary death of the lower self, the surrender of the unreal, and the birth of the true and immortal self within.

The Boards are not there to be memorised. They are there to be lived.

Let me give you an example of how to use the First Degree Tracing Board for Personal Development

When a candidate first stands before the Tracing Board of the First Degree, they see a collection of symbols that may appear decorative or mysterious. Yet the Board is not a picture to be admired; it is a map. Earlier in the degree, it has shown them what they are made of, the physical, emotional, and spiritual layers of their being. But now the Board turns from description to instruction. It begins to show you what you must do if you wish to grow into the Light you seek.

The journey becomes practical.

The point within a circle, held between two parallel lines, appears simple at first glance. But as you reflect, you begin to see yourself in it. The point is your own small, personal self; the circle is the Infinite; the parallel lines remind you that all things in the universe are held in balance. Your task is to walk the narrow path between extremes, keeping your inner eye fixed on the unity that lies beyond opposites.

The altar, a double cube, represents you: the lower cube the raw material of your nature, the upper cube what you may become. It teaches that spiritual growth is not accidental; it is crafted.

From the altar rises a ladder stretching upward into the heavens. Its countless rungs remind you that the ascent of the soul is gradual and lifelong. Every thought, every choice, every effort is a rung.

Then you see the three pillars, Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty, rising from earth to heaven. These are not abstract virtues but living qualities that appear together when a you align yourself with the Light.

As you contemplate these symbols, a deeper realisation dawns. Initiation is not only a ceremony performed upon you; it is a spiritual event that changes you. You have stepped into a lineage of seekers who have walked this path before you.

The Tracing Board, then, is not a picture to be memorised but a mirror. It shows a candidate what they are, what they may become, and what they must do to bridge the distance between the two.

The path is not easy. The altar of self-sacrifice is not kindled without pain. The ladder is steep. The work is demanding. But for every effort you make, there are compensating blessings. As you climb, the vistas widen. Wisdom becomes a steady light within you. Strength flows from a deeper source. Beauty begins to shine from your character like a quiet star.

And one day, through the gate of Beauty, you may look into “the land of far distances”, the spiritual horizon toward which the whole Craft gently guides you.

A Series of Papers reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being.

Paper 1 - Reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being.

At the Centre: Mathematics, Euler's Identity, and the Geometry of Being.

By Bro Dr Ross Kelly

Preface: On the Search for an Incorporeal Ruler

One of the quiet requirements of Freemasonry is belief in a Supreme Being. It is stated plainly yet interpreted broadly. For many, this presents no difficulty. For others — particularly those shaped by scientific or mathematical training — it can provoke a period of reflection. I count myself among the latter.

As an applied mathematician, I have spent much of my life immersed in abstraction: in structures that are not made of matter yet, govern it; in truths that do not age, yet shape everything that unfolds in time. Mathematics is incorporeal, eternal, and universal. It is not invented, but discovered. It does not belong to any culture, yet applies to all. It exists whether or not we are here to perceive it — and yet, through our perception, it becomes known. In retrospect, I have come to realise that I never lacked belief in a Supreme Being. I lacked only the language to name it.

Rather than approaching this question through theology or doctrine, I found myself approaching it through structure: through the relationship between observer and observed, through the laws of nature, and ultimately through mathematics itself. If there is a ruler of the universe — one that is incorporeal, omnipresent, and sovereign — then mathematics fits that description remarkably well. Not as a god of will or personality, but as an ordering principle: the architecture of possibility from which physical law, form, and even mind emerge.

What follows is not an argument, nor an attempt at proof. It is an exploration — an invitation to look at a single mathematical expression that, to my mind, captures something essential about harmony, balance, and what Freemasonry often gestures toward as the Centre. A note to the reader: you do not need any advanced mathematics knowledge to appreciate the following. I will guide you every step of the way.

Euler's Identity: A Mathematical Glimpse of the Centre

If mathematics is to be understood as an incorporeal ordering principle, then there are moments when it seems to reveal itself with particular clarity. One such moment is contained in a single line of mathematics, often described as "*the most beautiful equation ever written*":

$$e^{i\pi} + 1 = 0$$

This is known as **Euler's Identity**, named after one of, if not the most influential mathematician, Leonhard Euler (pronounced "oiler"). To describe Euler as a mathematician is reductive, Euler was a mathematician, physicist, astronomer, logician, geographer, music theorist and engineer.

Stanford University Mathematics Professor Keith Devlin said, "*Like a Shakespearean sonnet that captures the very essence of love, or a painting that brings out the beauty of the human form that is far more than just skin deep, Euler's equation reaches down into the very depths of our existence*"

At first glance, this expression can appear cryptic. Yet within it are five fundamental elements:

- π , the geometry of the circle
- e , the law of continuous change – growth and decay

- i , the imaginary or unseen dimension
- 1, unity
- 0, the origin, or Centre

To understand why this equation resonates so strongly with esoteric Freemasonry, it is helpful to meet these elements one by one.

π The Circle That Cannot Be Completed

π arises from the simplest act of geometry: drawing a circle. It is defined as the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter. No matter how large or small the circle, this ratio remains the same. Numerically it begins:

$$\pi = 3.1415926535 \dots$$

The ellipsis is essential. π **never ends, never repeats**, and cannot be written exactly as a fraction. It is irrational and transcendental. If you assigned a letter of the alphabet to each number, then within π contains every word conceived, every book ever published, (you get the idea). A perfect circle does not exist in the material world. Every drawn circle is an approximation. Yet π is exact — eternally so. It governs every circle while remaining forever beyond complete expression.

For the mason seeking the centre, this should feel immediately familiar. The circle appears throughout our symbolism, most notably in the Point within the Circle. π is the silent numerical law that underlies that symbol: infinite, incorporeal, and precise. As Wilmshurst reminds us, the circle is not merely a figure to be contemplated outwardly, but a condition of consciousness to be realised inwardly.

e The Law of Becoming

If π belongs to form, e belongs to process. The number e arises wherever change unfolds smoothly and continuously: compound interest, population growth, decay, diffusion. It governs systems that evolve according to their own internal law rather than external intervention. Numerically, e begins:

$$e = 2.718281 \dots$$

Like π , e is irrational and transcendental. It cannot be exhausted by calculation. Symbolically, it represents becoming — lawful change, growth, and transformation. Together, π and e express a fundamental polarity: structure and motion, being and becoming. One without the other is incomplete.

i , The Imaginary Numbers and the Hidden Dimension

Euler's identity also contains the imaginary unit i , defined as the square root of -1 :

$$\sqrt{-1}$$

Despite its name, there is nothing illusory about imaginary numbers. They arise from the need to make mathematics complete. Without imaginary numbers, mathematics exists only on a line: the real number line. With them, it expands into a plane — the complex plane — formed by a real axis and an imaginary axis at right angles to one another.

Symbolically, this is powerful. Reality is not exhausted by what is immediately visible or measurable. Completion requires an unseen, orthogonal dimension — without which the system remains incomplete.

The Unit Circle and the Inward Turn

At the heart of Euler's insight lies a geometric truth. To get to something truly beautiful you will have to follow me loosely here for a short while.

Consider the unit circle: a circle of radius one, centred at the origin (Figure 1). Any point on this circle can be described by an angle θ .

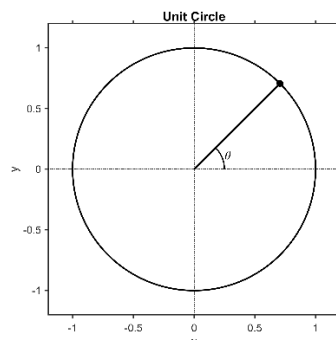


Figure 1: The unit circle

You may (or likely may not) recall from your school days that the horizontal coordinate of the point is $\cos\theta$; the vertical coordinate is $\sin\theta$. Combined, they give: $\cos\theta + i \sin\theta$

Euler discovered that this expression is exactly equal to:

$$e^{i\theta}$$

This is not metaphor, but identity. Exponentiation becomes rotation when combined with the imaginary dimension. What appears linear and progressive reveals itself as cyclical and returning.

Now let us choose a particular angle:

$$\theta = \pi$$

Geometrically, this is a rotation of 180 degrees — a half-turn. Starting from unity, we arrive at its opposite. Substituting this into Euler's formula gives:

$$e^{i\pi} = -1$$

Adding unity (adding 1 to both sides) yields the celebrated identity:

$$e^{i\pi} + 1 = 0$$

The Geometric Interpretation of Euler's Identity: Towards the Centre

The geometric interpretation of Euler's $e^{i\pi}$ suggests a 180-degree turn. This resonates for me. The motion of the sun from dusk to dawn, the turning of the tide, turning from loss towards a positive future, darkness to light, birth and death. **For me, we move from looking outward, to looking inward.** In Euler's identity, I see a mathematical reflection of that idea — a return to the origin after a complete and meaningful journey. From unity, through rotation, through opposition, everything resolves to zero — the origin, the Centre.

Euler's identity unites infinite form, lawful becoming, the unseen dimension, unity, and the Centre in perfect balance. For the esoteric Freemason, this is not merely clever mathematics. It is geometry performing inner work. Euler's identity does not explain the Centre — it embodies it.

Closing: Finding the Centre

Having taken this journey through Euler's identity — from unity, through rotation, through opposition, and back to the origin — it is natural to ask what any of this has to do with Freemasonry, or with belief.

For me, the answer is this: Freemasonry does not ask us what to believe, only that we acknowledge something greater than ourselves — something that grounds order, meaning, and moral orientation. It speaks in symbols rather than definitions, and in geometry rather than dogma. It encourages reflection, not conformity. Through mathematics, I found a way to square this requirement honestly (pun intended).

I found that the universe is not chaotic, but structured; not arbitrary, but lawful. I found that the laws governing it are mathematical in form, yet discovered through experience. I found that I, as an observer, am not separate from the universe I study — but a product of it. And I found that mathematics stands quietly behind all of this: incorporeal, timeless, and exact. Euler's identity did not convince me to believe in a Supreme Being. Rather, it revealed that I already did — though I had been calling it by another name.

Freemasonry speaks of the Centre as the place from which we should act rightly: the still point within movement, the reference by which all conduct is measured. In Euler's identity, I see a mathematical reflection of that idea — a return to the origin after a complete and meaningful journey. In that sense, mathematics did not lead me away from Freemasonry. It led me inward — toward the Centre. And from there, I have found that faith, reason, and reverence need not stand in opposition. They may, in fact, be different ways of tracing the same circle.

Paper 2 - Reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being.

A Physicist's Personal View on the Nature of Supreme Being

By Bro Dr Robert Lomas

I wasn't born a physicist, but I was born a Calvinist Methodist. This was a foregone conclusion as my mother, my grandmother, and my great-grandmother before her were all staunch Calvinists born and bred in the hotbed of Welsh Methodism that was the border town of Mold in Flintshire. My great-grandmother, Caroline, known to the family as Nain Blackwell, was famous in the town for having interrupted, with her childish crying, the prayer meetings in Poundal's Row hosted by my great-great-grandfather, which helped establish the reputation of Daniel Owen as a great preacher of "The Cause". My Nain knew Old Daniel and told me all about how he went on to write the first bestselling popular novel in the Welsh language, *Rhys Lewis*, which tells of the trials and tribulations of a Calvinist minister in nineteenth-century Mold. Incidentally, during Covid lockdown I translated the original subscription edition, first published in Mold, into English.

As soon as I could walk, the path to Chapel was laid before me, and I was encouraged to toddle along it to Sunday School. A lot of my childhood was spent in the Welsh diaspora of Salford, where I attended the local Calvinist Mission, or Independent Presbyterian Church as it was then known, every Sunday from the age of four until I was ten years old. I have the attendance cards and prizes to prove I never missed a Sunday over that six-year period, not even while on holiday in Mold, as my great-aunt would make sure I attended the local chapel with her and get a note from the minister to prove my standards had not slipped. You may not be aware, but Calvinist Methodism is quite a different beast from the cuddly and joyful Methodism that Charles Wesley popularised in England.

I was brought up on the apocalyptic insights of Howel Harris, the awesome responsibility of Roger Edwards, and the deterministic decisions of the Elect, as those Elders who had been granted a personal revelation of their God were known. I was taught the need to continually repent my sins and pay incessant attention to a jealous God who would punish any slips with hellfire and damnation.

I was also dyslexic. I couldn't read the Bible, which protected me from reading the worst excesses of my family's religious avocations. I didn't invent a technique of reading until I was eleven, by which time we had moved away from Salford, and I had finished attending Sunday School.

Because I was sent for piano lessons, I was lucky enough to realise that I could adapt the way of reading a music score into a way of reading the word shapes of text and quickly discovered science fiction. As I also had an inherent ability to manipulate numbers, I decided I would become a scientist. But failing the Eleven Plus was a bit of a setback. My newly acquired method of high-speed symbol reading, my ability to do mathematics by instinct, and my love of music made me quite an oddity at the secondary modern school I attended. I couldn't spell and never learned how to. I still can't, and please don't suggest I use a dictionary as I am also congenitally incapable of learning the alphabet. However, I was lucky enough to take ULCI and then GCE O level qualifications and, as a pioneer member of the first ever Sixth Form at my Prestwich school, I surprised everyone by scoring top grades. But I knew I was faking spelling and that sums were the real way forward. I went to Salford Technical College to study Pure Maths, Applied Maths and Physics to escape from having to learn English. I loved maths and went on to Salford University where I got First Class Honours in Electronics and eventually a PhD in Quantum

Solid State Physics. I had made it as a scientist and had learned about the naturalness, simplicity and elegance of the laws of nature. At last, I realised there was a deeper purpose to creation beyond an urge to force me to repent for sins I had not committed and fear hellfire and damnation for daring to ask what my purpose in life was. As I developed as a scientist, and with the support of word processing as a writer, I developed an awesome respect for the wonders of creation and how the reality of existence depends so much on the interaction between matter and intelligent awareness.

When I followed up an interest in Freemasonry, planted by my wife's mother inviting me to her Gentleman's Night, I asked to join Ryburn Lodge. My friend, the late Bro. Mike Astell, took me to one side as I prepared to give him my application form. "Before you can hand that in, I need to talk to you about an important question. You will have to come for an interview and answer it before we will decide if you will be allowed to join."

"What is that?"

"When you come for interview you will be asked if you believe in a supreme being."

"Do you mean do I belong to a church?"

"No, that is not necessary," he said. "But you must accept that there is such a thing as a supreme being."

"Can I think about my answer?"

By trade I am a scientist, and I found this question difficult to answer. It is ambiguous. With hindsight, I suspect deliberately so. I ended up doing considerable research before deciding how to answer, and I began by looking at the meanings of the words used.

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, "being" is
existence

the nature or essence of
a human being

anything that exists or is imagined

"Supreme" is defined as
highest in authority

greatest, most important
involving death

a rich cream sauce
a dish in this sauce

Often the term "supreme being" is taken as a synonym for God. But the dictionary possibilities are wider. You could legitimately join if you believe in a deity who, though limited in power, is made of a rich cream sauce. This hypothetical supreme being might be called "the custard god". When I first saw this definition I wondered if this might be why Freemasonry is sometimes called "the belly club". Certainly, Hogarth's well-known series of Masonic etchings showing the Freemason with his distended belly still haunts many a festive board. But a custard god is too weird for any scientist to accept, and anyway my wife keeps me on a diet. However, "supreme being" can also mean the greatest nature or essence of existence that can be imagined. To me this is the Laws of Physics.

This concept of supreme being was put forward in 1725 by Sir Isaac Newton in *Principia Mathematica*. He wrote:

The most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful being. And if the fixed stars are the centres of like systems, these, being formed by the like wise counsel, must be all subject to the dominion of one, especially since the light of the fixed stars is of the same nature with the light of the sun, and from every system light passes into all the other systems. And lest the systems of fixed stars should, by their gravity, fall on each other, he hath placed those systems at immense distances from one another.

This being governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all, and on account of his dominion he is wont to be called the Lord God or Universal Ruler, for God is a relative word and has a respect to servants. And Deity is the dominion of God not over his own body, as those imagine who fancy God to be the soul of the world, but over servants. The Supreme Being is eternal, infinite, absolutely perfect, omnipotent and omniscient. We know him only by his most wise and excellent contrivances of things and final causes.

I found this a powerful definition of supreme being. I showed it to Mike, who intended to propose me for membership of Ryburn Lodge, and asked him if it would be acceptable to Freemasonry. He read it through and looked me in the eye. His answer surprised me.

“What you believe is a matter for your conscience. It is not the concern of Freemasonry. We just want to know that you believe in something.”

He gave me some notes, which I later found to be a piece of ritual. They made clear how I might answer.

No man truly obeys the Masonic law who merely tolerates those whose religious opinions are opposed to his own. Every man's opinions are his own private property, and the rights of all men to maintain each his own are perfectly equal. Merely to tolerate, to bear with an opposing opinion, is to assume it to be heretical, and assert the right to persecute if we would, and claim our toleration as a merit.

The Mason's creed goes further than that. No man, it holds, has any right in any way to interfere with the religious belief of another. It holds that each man is absolutely sovereign as to his own belief, and that belief is a matter absolutely foreign to all who do not entertain the same belief. And that if there were any right of persecution at all, it would in all cases be a mutual right, because one party has the same right as the other to sit as judge in his own case, and God is the only magistrate that can rightfully decide between them.

I was impressed with this creed of tolerance. As I read it I realised that this statement of Masonic belief requires only that the individual asking to join is seeking to understand his or her own place in the greater system of the universe.

The purpose of all religions is to try to explain our place in the universe, and science has many features of a religion. In 1949 Albert Einstein wrote:

You will hardly find one among the profounder sort of scientific minds without a peculiar religious feeling of his own. But it is different from the religion of the naive man. For the latter, God is a being from whose care one hopes to benefit and whose punishment one fears, a sublimation of a feeling similar to that of a child for its father, a being to whom one stands to some extent in a personal relation, however deeply it may be tinged with awe. But the scientist is possessed by the sense of universal causation. The future, to him, is every whit as necessary and determined as the past. There is nothing divine about morality, it is a purely human affair. His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant

reflection. This feeling is the guiding principle of his life and work, in so far as he succeeds in keeping himself from the shackles of selfish desire. It is beyond question closely akin to that which has possessed the religious geniuses of all ages.

If you are a scientist who is attracted by the fellowship and tolerant spirituality of the Craft, but are worried that you will be rejected because you are not a churchgoer or a member of any particular religious faith, let me offer you a choice of definitions of “supreme being” from two high priests of cosmological science.

I find both deeply moving and inspiring, and fully identify with them. Either will allow you to answer honestly the symbolic question which guards the entrance to Freemasonry. “In all time of danger in whom do you put your trust?”

The question is symbolic and so is your answer. You will be expected to answer, “In God.”

If you think you might struggle with this answer then first read these two definitions of God put forward by Albert Einstein and Isaac Newton.

Einstein: “God is the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection.”

Newton: “God is the most wise and excellent contrivance of things and final causes.”

This symbolic question and answer, relating to belief in a supreme being, is testing if your knowledge of the universe has developed to a sufficient degree that you are able to understand that all things are one, all things are connected. There are many ways that you can come to this realisation without being a man of words. Our ancient Brethren were wise enough to avoid using the phrase “Have you unified your understanding of the underlying workings of the universe”.

Unless you have come to this realisation by a strongly intellectual route you would never understand what was implied. Instead, since the dawn of time many have used the term God to relate their understanding of the wholeness of existence to the gestalt of life. The need to believe in a supreme being in Freemasonry is not due to the necessity to be fearful of the punishments of a god or indeed to have a holy book to live your life by. It is needed because you must be aware of the interrelated aspect of existence. You must know that you are part of existence, and to change yourself is to change existence. This is the route to true Masonic morality, when you realise that every being is one being. Pain to another is pain to you. If you cause pain to the world or to another animal you cause pain to yourself.

The first question I had to answer if I wanted to become a Freemason was whether I believed that there was an order underlying the behaviour of the universe. Thinking my position through, I had no doubt. I could answer a truthful “yes” to the admission question. And I did not have to compromise my scientific beliefs.

This, then, is my definition of “supreme being”, my scientist’s creed if you like.

I believe in a number of immutable laws that apply throughout the whole of creation. These relate to the way matter behaves and are often called the Laws of Physics. They include such well-known relationships as the conservation of energy and mass and their interchangeability, the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, Fermi Dirac statistics and the laws of thermodynamics. I believe that matter is made up of twelve fundamental particles, six quarks and six leptons. There are four forces, strong, weak, electromagnetic and gravitational. I also believe that forces are mediated by the exchange of

particles. I accept the existence of twelve force carrying particles and think there might also be a thirteenth, the graviton, but I am not sure about that.

This world view is the Standard Model of physics. To accept it is to believe in a supreme order throughout the universe. Why there should be six varieties of quark and six varieties of lepton is not a matter of discussion. It is derived from experiments, and its acceptance leads to the type of universe which makes possible the evolution of an intelligent life form capable of asking "Is there a supreme being within the structure of the universe".

This supreme order gives me a comfortable world view. I expect DNA to be able to evolve, reproduce and give rise to living beings. I have no difficulty accepting that the twirly spirals of life mix and match like eels in a tub to create our minds.

Freemasonry teaches a deep truth about the way our minds work. But this can only happen in a universe where the interaction of fundamental particles follows known and reproducible paths. If the rules of interaction of atoms and molecules did not stay constant, our genes would not be able to reproduce the cells needed for our bodies to function.

Had I been asked to profess a belief that Jesus was a God, or that the Trinity made sense, I would have had to answer "no" and would never have joined Freemasonry. In that case I would have missed out on a wonderful source of spiritual teaching and scientific inspiration. I suspect this may have happened to many potential recruits who would have benefited from joining the Craft, but who never found either Newton's or Einstein's definitions of the concept of supreme being.

Stephen Hawking, a leading scientist of our generation, adopts the metaphor of God, or supreme being, to explain his belief in the rule of order underlying the evolution of life when he says:

If we discover a complete theory, it should in time be understandable in broad principle to everyone, not just a few scientists. Then we shall all, philosophers, scientists and just ordinary people, be able to take part in the discussion of the question of why it is that we and the universe exist. If we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason, for then we would know the mind of God.

The first lesson that Freemasonry offers to any human spirit is to face up to your own perception of the purpose of the universe. Freemasonry makes its initiates experience things that are difficult, if not impossible, to put into words. It is a system of self-knowledge based in myth, allegory and symbolism, and it may even suggest an answer to the key question of modern science, "Why does the universe go to the bother of existing".

Over the ages, the Craft has evolved and refined its ritual forms to help its followers find answers to such questions. It may be that the absolute truth about ourselves cannot be expressed in language and can only be revealed through symbols.

The actual book you hold when you take your Entered Apprentice's Oath does not really matter as it is only a symbol of what each individual believes and you are not asked to define that. It has been traditional in this country, since the time of Newton, to use the Bible. As long as you know what you believe then why should the symbol of that belief matter.

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Paper 3 - Reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being.

Wilmshurst, Cosmic Consciousness and the Divine within.

By Bro Dr David Harrison

In the Bible, we are presented with a separation between man and God; God is holy, righteous and pure, and man is presented as fallen and sinful. There are however men in the Bible who God chose to commune with; in the Old Testament there are men such as Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Solomon, to name but a few. In the New Testament we have Christ as the embodiment of the Divine on Earth, teaching the way to God.

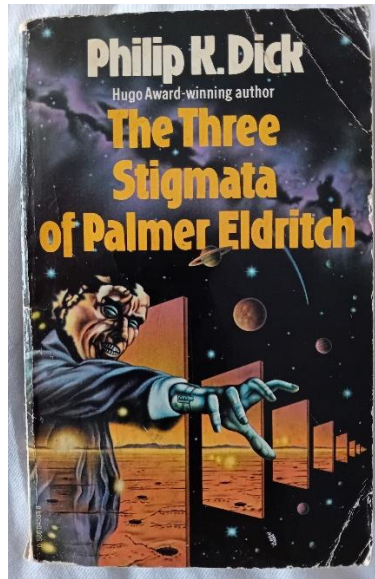
The Masonic ritual, like a story with sequels and prequels, teaches us to work at becoming perfect men and to put into practice this teaching in the world around us. As Masons, we are informed that the Word is lost, and we must search for it. Thus, we are searching for God. The various rituals that convey the Masonic story relates how certain Biblical figures communicated with God; the Wrestle ritual examined Jacob wrestling with the Divine, the Raising ceremony was set during the construction of Solomon's Temple, the dimensions of which were given by God to Solomon, and the Royal Arch ceremony presents us with the Word being found. Thus, the pathway of Freemasonry could, for some, be a pathway to find God; the journey to find God being a constant theme that is embedded in esoteric form in Craft Freemasonry and indeed, the side Orders or higher degrees, such as the Holy Royal Arch, the Knights Templar, the Rose Croix and the Red Cross of Constantine.

Certain historical figures have famously experienced the Divine, some of these experiences have been so profound and life altering that much has been written about them. These experiences are thus well documented, such as the experience of St. Paul on the road to Damascus and the experiences before great battles by Roman Emperor Constantine the Great and the seventh century Northumbrian king Oswald. These experiences occur throughout history, up to the modern period, from the experiences of saints to the experiences of members of the Victorian Occult Revival and into our modern era.

Esoteric Freemason W.L. Wilmshurst described this experience with the Divine using the term Cosmic Consciousness, and in his article on the subject, which appeared in the Occult Review in 1924, he described a number of experiences of various historical figures, including the poets William Wordsworth and Alfred Lord Tennyson. Wilmshurst in his teachings, urges us to find the centre; the Divine within us. Indeed, it was Paul who said '*Christ... lives in me*', (Galatians 2:20) and even Aleister Crowley in his *Book of the Law*, said that '*Every man and every woman is a star*', which perhaps gives an Occult flavour to the idea. Wilmshurst however, recognised the rituals of Freemasonry as a way to find the centre; to find the Divine within us, allowing all those that seek, to find God and experience the Divine in a personal way.

I myself have experienced the Divine in a personal way, and it changed my life. There have been a number of modern writers who have experienced a religious experience, such as science fiction writer Philip K. Dick (1928-1982), who wrote about his sudden and unexpected experience, which occurred in February 1974 after dental surgery, the science-fiction author describing a pink light and a vision that portrayed the struggle of early Christians in ancient Rome. This vision changed his life in a positive way and he wrote about his experience in *The Exegesis* of Philip K. Dick, which was published posthumously. Religious themes had been part of Dick's novels earlier, something that is displayed in

his novel *The Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, published in 1965, though after his experience, Dick became more directly involved in displaying themes of theology and metaphysical ideas in his work



A poet who experienced Divine love, was Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī (1207-1273) more commonly known as the Sufi mystic Rumi. After meeting with the dervish Shams Tabrizi (1185-1248), Rumi was transformed, going on to encourage the listening of music and sacred dancing. This was seen as a spiritual pathway to find Truth and reach perfection. The ideas of Rumi inspired the whirling dervishes, the mystical hypnotic state of the dancers, allowing them to experience divine love and become close to God. The dancing was in essence a form of active meditation, the music and dance providing a focus on God. Rumi told us the way, in his poem *I've Vanished in God*, where he says:

*'I've Vanished in God
and God is mine
search for God
nowhere else but in my soul...'*

In conclusion, faith and personal experience are important factors in assessing episodes of what has been termed Cosmic Consciousness or religious or mystical experiences. There are certainly similarities in the historical and modern examples; from the Mystic and poet Rumi to modern writers such as Philip K. Dick. They remain as deeply personal and profound experiences that convey faith and belief in the Divine, and can be life changing events, that, like the experiences of Constantine and St. Oswald, sometimes also change the world. I believe, like Wilmshurst, that the Divine can be found within, and that we just have to search for God inside us.

Paper 4 - Reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being.

The Supreme Being.

WBro Peter Maguire - Coronation Lodge 2927

The Supreme Being was the topic given for this paper, and it is overall a truly interesting topic. Why? Well as in all honesty there is no right or wrong answer for this subject because it's down to what your belief is and from your own personal perspective. Some may believe in one of the three Abrahamic religions, or any of the multiple beliefs out there from the indigenous Americans, Shinto Buddhism, or "Pagan" ones. To the laws of physics.

I was brought up in the Church of England and went to church with my father predominantly I remember the local Upton by Chester parish church where we would sit there, and we would go through common Prayer, but the Sunday school would try and drag the children to their lessons. Or some kind of Christian disco which I never enjoyed, and it was some aspects of the church life that put me off and didn't want to go to church anymore. My father however insisted that only by going through confirmation would I be able decide my attendance of church.

Some of you may now be screaming that at the age of 13 it was too early to make such an immense decision. Looking back now I would agree, (even had a conversation along the same lines in Dutton's Pub, Chester with a very religious School friend, but as ever I digress). But I am pleased I got confirmed as it did in the end become helpful to my beliefs.

What helped was that my Confirmation Teacher was great, Gorden Welsh was the lay preacher of the Parish church. Whose enthusiasm encouraged my studies of the New Testament. This caused my plan of getting out of Church, became a serious study and for a few years and regular attendance to Church until I got a part time job at the Post Office, which meant I was working most Sundays.

During the sixth form, A 'levels and life experiences, caused my opinion to change although I cannot point to a particular event or person to why this happened. I began to view the Church with a more sceptical eyes and that religion was the cause of most of the troubles in the world. This is not me saying that it was God's fault more the institutions of the Church and humans involved were the cause of the violence.

In September 1995 I left Chester to attend Hull University to Study Computer Science, but for hobbies and Sports I investigated the following, Hockey, Fencing, and Aikido. After one Hockey training session, and one night in the bar with the club. Was another for me to realise I like alcohol but I not to the point of becoming a borderline alcoholic. I never did get to a Fencing session. I did however attend the Aikido club and there began 4 years of Martial Art fun and spiritual (for want of a better word) awakening as Sensei Benge and his Sempais introduced many interesting topics and the concept of Zen Buddhism.

During that time my previously mention School friend got married and during the dinner I got into a long conversation with his Baptist Vicar about how although I didn't believe in God as I had done previously, I was more of an agnostic person, and we had a long conversation and although I never told him he was wrong, but it was more the case I had found the Far East viewpoint more appealing to me than what I had understood from my previous bible studies.

After university I didn't give the Supreme Being much thought. The material world was calling and life needed to be lived. That was until 2002 when I broke my collar bone on a skiing holiday in Livigno.

Due to not being able to drive I ended up working out of a client's office and the led me to an epiphany. I missed practising Martial Arts and went off to find a Dojo.

This was not an easy quest, but I did discover Chester Fencing Club and ended up talking to one of the instructors there. A Gentleman called Ian Thomas, it turned out he had a Dojo and over time he shared information about his Dojo, and the Martial Arts he practised and taught. After reading the material Ian provided, I asked if I could attend but I also said to him, "how come you don't advertised widely what you offer as I have spent a while looking for a new dojo?", Ian replied, "Well I am a firm believer in the concept when the student is ready then the Teacher will appear!"

This was a concept in the back of my mind I had heard before; it would be something that would be a regular occurrence in my life. As I seem to have the uncanny knack of a teacher or Sensei appearing at the right time in my life to point to the next signpost in my journey to better know the Supreme Being better.

One cold evening in 2004 a discussion broke out at the end of training session at the dojo about spirals and esoteric theories and what Sensei Ian a non-Freemason's belief was about the Craft and its deeper views. I resolved that evening to find out if what was said about our brotherhood was correct or just conspiracy hokum. As all I really knew about Freemasonry was the basics my father and Grandfather had told me. I asked my father about it and if I could join, and he agreed and brought me into the fraternity.

I joined and got involved with the lodge activities, but over the years I still felt I was missing something. So, I began reading books on the subject, and when I was invited to visit the Lodge of Living Stones 4957 (West Yorkshire) for the presentation of the Lecture of the Perfect Lodge. I realised that I had found what I was looking for and it exists in our order.

The Martial Arts I practise have the concept of Shumon and Bumon, Shumon being the spiritual gate and Bumon being the Warrior's gate. Now in September 2005 in the space of 7days I walked through both gates. Looking back, it may appear coincidental but since then the path I have been on truly seems to stem from those events. I earned my Blackbelt in Ninpo and was raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. But only by continuing this path have begun to understand more and feel a closer connection with God.

Paper 5 - Reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being.

The Ever-Shifting Face of the Divine.

By WBro Wayne Owens

Or why Humanity keeps rebooting the Supreme Being in Its own image.

Humanity has never been content with a static vision of the divine. Across millennia, our understanding of a supreme being has shifted, stretched, and reshaped itself in response to the tools and intellectual frameworks of the age. We have always reached for the most powerful metaphors available and projected them upward, hoping they might illuminate the mystery that stares back at us.

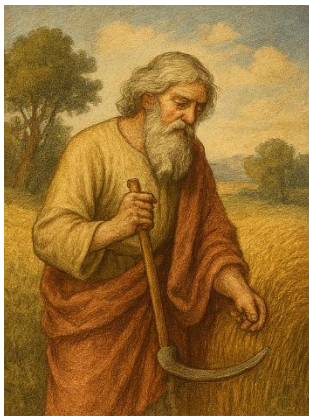
This is not a flaw in human thinking; it is one of our most enduring creative instincts. When we imagine God, we inevitably imagine ourselves, not in the sense of vanity, but in the sense of using the only language we have. The divine becomes the ultimate version of whatever we consider the pinnacle of mastery.

And so, as our technologies evolve, so too do our gods.

Ancient Technologies, Ancient Gods

Long before silicon chips and algorithms, humanity's metaphors were forged in fire, stone, and sweat.

The Agricultural God



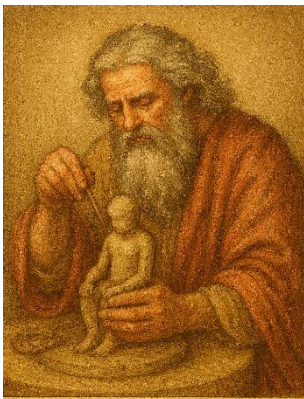
THE AGRICULTURAL GOD

When the plough revolutionised early societies, the divine was reframed through the lens of this new agrarian technology as a cosmic farmer. This shift meant that fertility cults flourished, as the survival of the community now depended on a theology that mirrored the cycles of the field. The gods were reimagined as those who tilled the heavens, sowed the seasons, and harvested the souls of the dead, acting as the ultimate planners of a productive universe.

The Imperial God

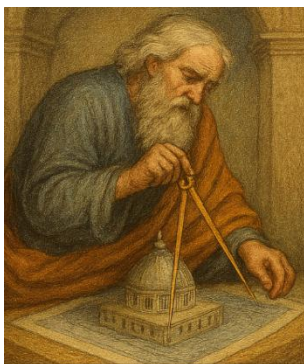
THE IMPERIAL GOD

As empires rose, the divine was recast through the lens of political power as a monarch. The heavens were reimagined as a celestial court, complete with the complex hierarchy, bureaucracy, and diplomacy found in the era's most sophisticated states. In this framework, the supreme being was no longer just an artisan but a Systems Administrator of power, often seen delegating administrative duties through leadership structures, such as the one Jethro provided to Moses to manage the Israelite population.

The Artisan God

THE ARTISAN GOD

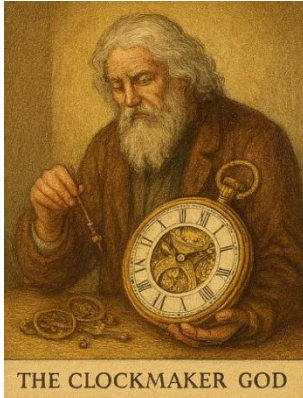
In the classical world, where craftsmanship was revered as the highest paradigm of human achievement, the divine was envisioned through the lens of artisanal technology. Plato's Demiurge, as described in the *Timaeus*, served as the supreme Architect and Potter, an entity that took the unformed, chaotic material of existence and geometrically ordered it into a stable, purposeful artifact. This perspective framed humanity as a literal manufactured vessel, moulded from the earth and given form by a master hand, a motif found across ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Biblical traditions.

The Great Architect God

THE ARCHITECT GOD

With the rise of geometry, cathedral construction, and scholastic philosophy, the divine became inextricably associated with architectural precision. God was envisioned as the Great Architect of the Universe, a figure who designed the cosmos according to a blueprint of mathematical and structural harmony. This metaphor reflected the medieval conviction that geometry was the essential language of both nature and the divine, a belief supported by the doctrine of *imago dei*, which suggested that the human intellect was designed to mirror the structural logic of the cosmic system.

The Clockwork God



The Newtonian revolution introduced a transformative mechanistic worldview, where the universe was reconceived as a vast, predictable machine. This paradigm portrayed the cosmos as a divinely designed clock governed by deterministic, universal laws that regulated everything from an apple falling from a tree to the moon's orbit with quantitative precision. In this model, physical phenomena were explained through matter in motion, functioning like interlocking clock gears that rendered the future as predictable as a mechanical movement.

Each of these metaphors tells us less about the nature of God and more about the people who imagined Him. They reveal what each age considered the highest form of intelligence, power, and creativity.

The Rise of Computational Divine.

Now we find ourselves deep in the Information Age, a world humming with devices that process more data in a single second than entire ancient civilisations managed in a lifetime of counting stars and tallying grain. Our metaphors, ever adaptive, have shifted once again. The divine, once imagined as a potter, architect, or clockmaker, now wears the robes of the digital.

Increasingly, the supreme being is envisioned as:

- **The Ultimate Programmer**, writing the cosmic source code in a language older than light.
- **The Systems Architect**, designing the scaffolding of reality with recursive elegance.
- **The Administrator**, monitoring processes, granting permissions, and occasionally issuing a patch when existence throws a fatal error.

These metaphors may seem playful, the sort of speculative theology tossed around in late-night conversations between technologists, philosophers, and the occasional mystic with a fondness for science fiction and syntax. But beneath the humour lies a profound shift in how we conceptualise causality and agency.

In a world where algorithms shape our desires, where data flows invisibly through every ritual and routine, and where complexity itself feels almost supernatural, it is hardly surprising that our theological imagination has begun to speak in the language of code. Divine will becomes executable logic. Miracles resemble system overrides. And prayer, perhaps, is a kind of encrypted support request, submitted to the cosmic server in hopes of a favourable response.

We no longer ask, "*Who made the world?*" but "*Who compiled it?*" And somewhere between the boot sequence of the Big Bang and the runtime of consciousness, we find ourselves wondering whether the divine is not watching from above but rather debugging from within.

Metaphors are never merely decorative; they are diagnostic instruments. They reveal what we cherish, what we fear, and how we attempt to map meaning onto the vast, indifferent machinery of

the cosmos. They are the stethoscopes we press against the chest of reality, listening for the heartbeat beneath the noise.

And in our age, we increasingly imagine that reality is something that can be debugged.

- Problems become glitches in the system.
- Miracles resemble unexpected patches.
- Destiny reads like a script running quietly in the background.
- Free will becomes a variable, sometimes fixed, sometimes delightfully unstable.

We speak of “*the algorithm*” with a reverence once reserved for fate. It knows us. It predicts us. It nudges us with eerie precision. It shapes our desires before we have fully formed them. In older ages, such a force would have been called an oracle. Today, it is a recommendation engine.

Small wonder, then, that some now imagine the divine as the ultimate algorithmic intelligence, the Architect of all code, the Compiler of existence, the silent Logic behind the world’s unfolding.

The notion that the universe might be a simulation, once the domain of mystics, metaphysicians, and the occasional eccentric philosopher, now appears in mainstream physics and cosmology. Whether the idea is true matters less than the fact that it feels plausible to modern minds. It fits the tools we use, the systems we build, and the language we speak.

In the end, our metaphors do not simply describe the world; they describe us. And in this age of data and circuitry, we have begun to imagine the divine in the only way that feels natural, as the hidden code running beneath the surface of everything.

Historical Echoes, We have Been Here Before

This is not the first time humanity has reimagined the divine through the lens of its most advanced technologies. Each age, in its moment of wonder, has cast its gods in the image of its tools, sacred metaphors forged from the machinery of meaning.

The Golem of Prague

In Jewish folklore, the Golem. A being sculpted from clay and animated by sacred letters, stands as an early metaphor for artificial intelligence. It is a tale of creation through language, of life summoned by symbols, of knowledge wielded with caution and awe. The Golem was not born but compiled, a proto-program, executed by divine syntax.

Hermetic and Alchemical Traditions

Medieval alchemists saw the universe as a system of hidden correspondences, a grand code waiting to be deciphered. Their metaphors were proto-computational long before silicon ever sparked. They spoke of transmutation, encryption, and symbolic logic, not in bytes, but in gold and spirit.

The Kabbalistic Tree of Life

The sefirot, in Kabbalistic thought, form a metaphysical architecture, a divine operating system through which creation flows. Each node is a function, each path a process. The Tree is not merely symbolic; it is procedural, recursive, and elegantly structured. It is theology rendered as flowchart.

The Islamic Golden Age

Philosophers such as Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina described God as the First Intellect, a source of cascading emanations, radiating order through nested hierarchies. Their cosmology was not static but dynamic, a conceptual ancestor of modern information theory. Divine knowledge was not stored, it was streamed.

The Victorian Telegraph God

When telegraphy emerged, some theologians imagined prayer as a spiritual wire, a direct line to the divine. The metaphor was new, but the instinct was ancient: to see communication as communion, signal as sacrament. The soul became a sender, the heavens a receiver.

Each era believed its metaphor was the most accurate. Each era was both right and wrong.

- **Right:** because metaphor is the only language we have for the ineffable.
- **Wrong:** because every metaphor is a mask, not the face.

And so, we continue the tradition: reimagining the divine not to diminish it, but to draw it closer, to speak of God in the dialect of our devices, to find the sacred in the syntax, and to remember that even in the age of algorithms, we are still mythmakers at heart.

The Promise and Peril of the Programmer God.

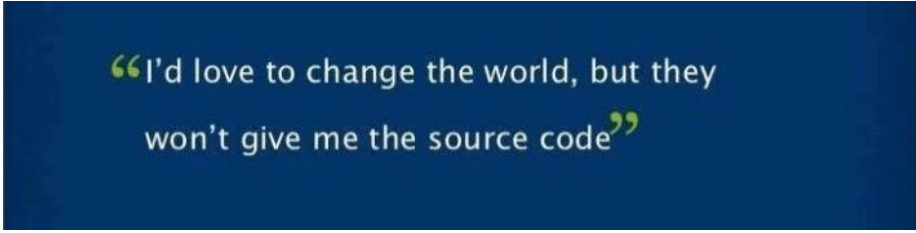
The computational metaphor opens new imaginative terrain, giving ancient questions a fresh digital sheen. In this worldview:

- **Creation** becomes an act of coding, a primordial command executed before time had even booted.
- **Miracles** become system overrides, moments when the Administrator reaches into the running program and alters the logic.
- **Prophecy** becomes access to the changelog, a glimpse of updates not yet deployed.
- **Mysticism** becomes a fleeting vision of the underlying architecture, the sacred structure beneath the surface.
- **Evil** becomes a bug, or perhaps a feature, depending on one's theological debugging philosophy.
- **Free will** becomes a sandbox mode, where the user is granted limited autonomy within a larger system.

But every metaphor carries its shadows, and this one is no exception. It raises unsettling, almost vertiginous questions:

- If reality is code, who maintains it?
- If God is a programmer, can the program be rewritten?
- If consciousness is emergent, could it be replicated?
- And if the universe is a simulation, what happens when the server goes offline?

These are not idle speculations. They shape how we understand ourselves, our responsibilities, and our place in the cosmos. They influence how we imagine agency, destiny, and the boundaries of the possible. Perhaps the most revealing aspect of this shift is not what it claims about God, but what it quietly confesses about us.



“I'd love to change the world, but they
won't give me the source code”

Every metaphor we choose subtly rewrites our theology:

- The **Farmer-God** taught us to honour cycles, seasons, and the sacred patience of growth.
- The **King-God** taught us hierarchy, obedience, and the solemn weight of authority.
- The **Watchmaker-God** taught us rationality, precision, and the elegance of natural law.
- The **Programmer-God** teaches us complexity, interconnection, and the radical possibility of change.

Our metaphors do not merely describe the divine; they shape our expectations of it.

They reveal the architecture of our hopes, the logic of our fears, and the tools with which we attempt to make sense of the infinite.

And in the end, the metaphor we choose becomes the mirror in which we see ourselves.

Conclusion: The Divine Mirror.

In the end, every vision of God is just a mirror, not of vanity, but of imagination. Each metaphor reflects the tools we wield, the worlds we build, and the questions we dare to ask of the cosmos. We look upward, but what we see is shaped by what we hold in our hands.

The computational metaphor is simply the newest chapter in an incredibly old story. It will not be the last. When our technologies evolve, *as they always do*, our gods will evolve with them, adopting new symbols, new languages, new ways of being understood.

But for now, in this age of data and code, we find ourselves imagining a divine Architect whose workshop is the universe itself, and whose tools are logic, language, and light. A creator who compiles reality, debugs existence, and sustains the great program of being with quiet, recursive grace.

And perhaps, just perhaps, this metaphor, like all the others before it, will help us inch a little closer to the mystery that has always hovered just beyond our grasp. Not to capture it, not to define it, but to honour it: the eternal presence that invites us to imagine, to question, and to wonder.

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Paper 6 - Reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being

Gnosis -In the name of the GAOTU

W.Bro Phillip Harris

With thanks to my Pastors, men and women of Enlightenment, brethren of Living Stones, the writings of Carl Jung, Rolf Pussel my friend and Zen Master in Kyoto, the work of the Creator throughout my life, Dr Robert who found me a masonic home, those I have met by reason of divine appointment, and the many who have sat in my home learning and also opening my eyes to the greater world of truth, existence, service, life, and what Wilmshurst called Cosmic Consciousness.

I will avoid the using the word G-d and use Creator; Cosmic Consciousness otherwise known as Enlightenment, will be called Gnosis (Knowledge) not to be confused with Gnosticism. Further to this I will barely mention the pathways but concentrate on what I see as Gnosis itself.

As a process consultant and systems reengineer, I found few executives had any idea where their processes began. It always was a lot earlier than they were mindful of. The path to Gnosis is no different. It starts long before initiation, the first chat, or any reading of the subject. You are here and that may be your first step or maybe just finding the staircase. Whatever, you and I are here by divine appointment.

Our founder Walter Leslie Wilmshurst saw The Craft as a pathway to Gnosis. The Book of the Perfect Lodge is his opening of this concept. You may well have come here already so gifted, but need a fellowship to progress, you might just be called to be guides, or even leaders of men. If you are here for the first time and seeking, look around you, here you are not alone. Give or receive of the Lodge as you are so moved to do so. Your voice is a powerful thing, teach us and share with us. We want to hear you. A word from you can change lives, and bring great joy or understanding to us.

In every generation of Freemasonry, certain Lodges burn brightly, attracting seekers who yearn for spiritual growth, while others fade into a dim echo of their own potential. This is particularly true of Lodges that identify themselves as esoteric. The term suggests depth, hidden wisdom, and a path of transformation, yet in practice not every esoteric Lodge lives up to that promise. Some function as true laboratories of the soul; others, regrettably, serve as little more than theatres for arcane pageantry.

A true esoteric Lodge is a living organism, a space in which the symbols and rituals of the Craft become living forces in the transformation of the initiate. Walter Leslie Wilmshurst repeatedly emphasised that the Lodge should be a place of regeneration, "where men may be remade", a place where the individual is gradually transformed through contact with the eternal truths embodied in the ritual drama. When such a Lodge is at work, there is a palpable atmosphere of stillness and intensity. The candidate is received not merely into a fraternity, but into a field of rebirth shaped by the aspiration of the brethren.

It begins in the heart of the individual. If it is not there then the pathway is false, and the experience claimed is null. The instigation for regeneration is within yourself. It can be from before you were born, but more recognised as an awareness that comes to us in life according to the individual.

(Eph 1:4 "he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love")

We become aware, or some might call it Gnosis, something not known a moment before. To sense all things above and below in an instant or what may feel like an age. We find Gnosis within us not in others experience, freemasonry, any physical action, nor by demand, or superstition but within yourself.

If you know how to pray you will understand that our words are powerful and must agree with the greater consciousness, not demanded, by futile repetition, or pleading. Our Spiritual life is a one-to-one with the Creator in all things. The Creator must increase as we decrease. As a Lodge we work towards our personal Eden individually. A return to the Sanctum Santorum of our beginning and ultimate goal.

(John 3:30 "He must increase, but I must decrease.")

From your initiation you will have learnt relationship management, how to correct yourself (the working tools), learnt of the liberal arts and sciences, and confessed to a knowledge of the GAOTU. You will have been recommended how to live in community and be a better person, father, brother, and son. We learn to be civilised. Great each other as a brother and live exemplary lives according to law, and our relationship with what we find within us. I mean empathy.

The Second degree introduced you to the square, the fourth part of the circle. Within which that point of balance and peace to live with the Creator, your brethren and the world within your personal universe. You will circle this point many times each time doing or receiving Freemasonry but learning and exercising your intellect to understand and gain insight into the meaning of Freemasonry. Here you will be encouraged to learn the more of hidden mysteries of science and nature. Nothing is forbidden you. Your imagination is set free to postulate your own ideas, draw conclusions, overcome personal bias, and be prepared to challenge your own views. Learn and relearn, share and move ever in the circle of your own Temple.

Those of you who have passed from this to a Master Mason in a few months will not have the basic knowledge to progress and will remain an initiate. Go back and learn each of the degrees and climb back to being a Master Mason. Otherwise, you will not achieve your full potential. Gnosis will remain elusive as you have not done the work on self. Building stones will be missing. To be a Master Mason is not time, but work in the quarry, apprenticeship and hard work earning your new life.

The Third degree left you dead in the Temple but risen again to the fullness of life guided by what was called that "vital and immortal principle" within you. The bright and morning star of hope pass from the grave from which you have been raised. Being dead you have a new life to study yourself and learn to be the person you really are by crushing that ego that has been a tyrant in your life so far.

A dead person has no ego. You will be prepared to follow your guide and seek your potential. You have to ask the right questions, learn your answers, and seek that transformation we call Gnosis. It is not a crown, a glorification, a promotion or certificate of merit, or a prerequisite for being anything **but a servant**. Make no mistake Gnosis is never free, it will cost you your life.

A New Man of Gnosis.

So much for the strait path of the Master Mason. You may have come to Freemasonry with Gnosis and are not seeking but needful of the spiritual intercourse with others. Your Gnosis may have been gifted to you without understanding what it is. If so, you came to Freemasonry to hone and learn more of what you have discovered. What is your purpose, why me, what does this mean, how did

this happen to me? You will learn of the most interesting studies of all human studies that of yourself.

Here is something to think on: You dream you have died. As you approach the GAOTU you ask, "Can I come to you"? You are asked to identify yourself. You reply, "It is I". "Go away I do not know you" came the response. What should your answer to the question be?----- I will tell you later.

In my experience there have only been two Masonic testimonies to having been in Gnosis. One was via a lonely journey in the Pennines, a near lightning strike, and the sense of presence. The other was in a hospital bed with little hope for survival. 30 years later that assurance of healing is here in evidence. There are others here this evening who you might like to talk to. Don't worry, they will already have noticed you. Please do not rush before you move away from the Temple. Abide a while and let the introductions come. Those in Gnosis recognise each other, recognise who is called, and will act as signposts. If one day you become greater in Gnosis, they will only glad for you and encourage others to follow you. The student may surpass the teacher. No one is ever a winner, only a contributor to the way of direction.

Gnosis.

Carl Jung when asked if he believed in a G-d replied after a short pause, "a very interesting question". "I don't believe in G-d, I know there is a G-d". This was an expression of more than faith; It was from a man who had faith turned into a living fact in his life. You are welcome to research this and even read his Red book. I do not expect you to have the same concept of Carl Jung, me or anyone else. How you see the Creator or the Ordering Principle of the Universe is up to you. Your belief is yours; I have my vision you are welcome to yours.

To be in Gnosis, open up that heart of yours as you did before you knocked on our door of the Entered apprentice degree. Open a little more and let that still small voice, that "vital and immortal principle" speak to you. We won't give it to you, you ask the questions as the answers are not from those in Gnosis but within yourself

A Question some ask, can an atheist be in Gnosis?

Experience tells me yes. In so much as I have found such a one or two to hold high moral ethics, just, upright and good men, of sound judgement and strict morals. What they have found is that there is more to life and living than anyone can conceive individually. Rejecting common descriptions of a Creator they have found something within themselves, tolerant of others of faith they just don't know as you might know. That vital and immortal principle is very varied and more than a single experience of Gnosis. It is big and all embracing. It shows me that belief and a superior being is more than a concept it is as if the truth is engraved on our hearts. Love is all abounding and a prerequisite for Gnosis. We form our own relationship with whatever we are given to understand. Use your own description, idea, experience and recognise what Gnosis is as truth and love.

What of my Creator, or the Ordering Principle of the Universe?

To me the Creator is not a being, but just IS. I AM, THAT I AM (Ex 3:14 "And God said unto Moses, **I Am That I Am**"), is the only description given to us. Inside of, part of, and totally all things. In you, me, your dinner to come, and sat next to you on the bus. It should bring you down to that place where you are nothing and the Creator is everything.

Things change now following your Master Mason degree. You will realise you need a guide even now as a Master Mason. Sadly, there are few. Visiting Lodges I hear Master Masons asking questions and

no one to answer them. Turning to Books and the web can be helpful, but what is needed are guides who have found their place in the West searching for those that are lost.

What do we look for in a guide? How do we recognise them? Here are the qualities you need to look for in your guide and within yourself as you accept the mantle of Gnosis when you find it.

(Gal 5:22- 23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law)

Here is a person of Gnosis: - Look for Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. All wholesome and of value more than many material gains, for against such things there is no law. Note the first of these qualities is Love. Here the heart comes in again.

(1John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.)

“He who does not love, does not know the Creator, for the Creator is love”. If you do not have or know love, you should not believe that, as it is a lie. You are loved and the evidence is that you are breathing, you have life, you can comprehend the heavens and the earth, there is a vital and immortal principle within you, and to live is the love of the Creator. Look without yourself and measure yourself against the Universe. Don't try to argue with circumstances, you will not win, go along with what you have, accept what cannot be changed, and bring an open heart to receive.

To move into Gnosis, I cannot give you a time or place, there is no act, or method that will make it happen for you. Be challenged about your self-examination as promoted by the third degree. Ask yourself, have you rejected all evil, transgression, rebellion, forgiven the unforgivable, and found that you are still capable of all these things. For you will never be perfect in life. Many like St Paul asked the question: -

Romans 7:24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? A burden and recognition that his old self clings to him while his new man strives to be better if not perfect.

We have holy books called the Volume of Sacred Law (VSL) in our Temples. In this 21st Century we have little tolerance of the teachings within. I challenge you to read these books not with the common literal interpretation, the Sunday school choice verses, but with the gift of the Spirit. Read what is being explained between the lines. Read as you would allegory and symbolism of the Craft and Royal Arch What is being said to you. I recommend John's Gospel to start with. Other holy books I know contain the same sentiments. You find your favourite quote's. Often men are given doctrine and dogma. It kills discussion dead, closes minds, and ushers compliance to a singular purpose. That is personal gain, only to lose the pathway at the end of life. You are not meant to be so, but free thinkers, open to learn and act as signposts to those you are sent to find in the West.

Who do you know who is in Gnosis? Here are some examples I know of: -

Some notable people of Gnosis are George Fox who when walking up Pendel Hill, not far from where I live, received Gnosis, that echo's even today across the globe in the form of the Quakers. Robert Lomas, the most successful masonic author, who when driving over the Pennines in his car was near struck by lightning. His masonic books are the most read in the world. Or WM on his deathbed found healing and an uncontroversial assurance he was getting better. Has found Gnosis and a change in himself he brings to us as Master of LoLS. Carl Jung had several experiences. St Paul, likewise, not only on the Damascus Road but repeatedly through his life.

Here are some names to look up, Smith Wigglesworth an international evangelist and worker of miracles, born in Menston Yorkshire. Kathryn Kuhlman another miracle worker based in the USA.

Gladys Aylwood the missionary for China, Watchman Nee, a great writer and Martyr who wrote three of the most wonderful spiritual books, "the Spiritual Man", "The Normal Christian Life", and "the Latent Power of the Soul". I must mention Martin Luther, who by reason of one scripture "the just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17) transformed Christianity forever.

Now what makes these people different to you and I? Very little but they opened up theirwait for it.....hearts to receive. They were transformed as you will be transformed, tested and even subjected to challenges. Like a rough ashlar you will be chipped, honed and brought into square and regular form. The Sufi call this the resurrection, the Christians call it the Baptism of the Spirit.

Carl Jung spoke of synchronicity and coincidence. I called it divine appointments. A chance meeting on a train, an introduction, a new colleague, sudden need for assistance, an odd invitation. Perhaps you meet an Angel, although you would not know it. A helping hand in difficulty, a gracious word from another. You might find yourself speaking out the gracious word or being a messenger. It is the fact that you are in the West from the East seeking that which was lost.

You might be able to understand more than you ever did. Have greater insight into situations. Have knowledge of the right thing to say. You might even bring healing into another's life. You will learn how to hear, understand visions, interpret situations, and recognise the work of the Creator in situations and individuals.

Gnosis is not yours; you actually are dead. The third degree showed you that fact. Gnosis is for others who need a guide. "Travel from the East to the West in search of that which was lost". In the West you might find your guide although you have been a Master Mason for many years. Gnosis is remembering that you are diminishing, but a conduit for the Creator.

Now getting back to the Sufi dream about dying. When asked by the Creator "who are you"? You reply now, "It is you". Go in in peace love and unity.

So, say I.

Paper 7 - Reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being

Chapin's Corner –

Roger has been asked to give the annual lecture to Mark Grand Stewards Lodge in July, which is entitled: *A curiously wrought sound: the language of music from Mozart to Madness*. Contact Mark Grand Stewards Lodge or Roger via the portal message system for further infrastructure

What do you understand by the meaning of a Supreme Being?

WBro Revd Roger Quick, Provincial Grand Chaplain, Yorkshire West Riding.

I knew one theologian who sat down whenever there was a line in a hymn she couldn't believe. She spent a lot of her time sitting down. You might ask therefore, why she bothered with Church at all. I could ask that same question of myself. My answer would have to relate to the nature of belief, which is never singular, any more than the self is formed in a vacuum. We are formed by the society in which we are born and nurtured. The resultant self may question, accept, reject or adapt whatever belief system has been part of our formation, but it is always in the context of that foundation, however much we might wish it to be otherwise. So Jack Lewis's tutor, an atheist of Presbyterian nurture, continued always to wear his best suit on a Sunday.

In my years as an atheist, which coincided nicely with my undergraduate years, I searched for universal meaning, and mostly accepted the doctrine that I was a set of genes shaped in a particular environment. The problem which vexed me then was the question of who I might be. I had a clear sense that *I* was; that the being I identified as *me* had an individual reality. What, then could constitute that *me*? I came to accept the notion of a soul. But what was the origin of that soul? Reluctantly, I considered the possibility of a creator. But not by any means the Christian God of my intensely Evangelical childhood.

Nonetheless, I took a job as a church organist, purely because I was short of money. It was a very different tradition than that I had grown up in. It accepted the body in worship, which which Protestant Christianity all but completely denies.

Around that time, my close friend and mentor, to whom I had turned for guidance and support, took his own life. It seemed impossible to me that someone so full of life and wisdom could wholly cease to exist.

I was studying music at the time; primarily analysis rather than performance. Wherever I turned: in the physical structure of music; in the exquisitely crafted compositions of Beethoven; everywhere; I found order and pattern and beauty. This was annoying. Those meditations and the *Tao Te Ching* led me to a suspicion of faith.

It would be presumptuous of me to find in that what Ross Kelly (in his recent most illuminating paper which prompted this series) found in Euler's Identity: *a return to the origin after a*

complete and meaningful journey. (Which itself reminded me of Ursula Le Guin: *true journey is return*). It is in any case very close to recapitulation in Sonata Form: matter returning reshaped by its experience.

At the point where I accepted Christianity, I felt called to ordained ministry, for if this was all true, then it demanded all of me. Other aspects played their part in this; I met priests whom I admired, and wanted to be like.

Something of the same could be said of my wanting to become a freemason. I liked the masons I knew. Some of my Very Christian Friends tried to dissuade me; there are still those who believe us to be the spawn of Satan. Standing outside the Lodge, preparing to be Initiated, I sent up a prayer: *Don't let me be getting into anything evil.*

What is the question asked of every Initiate?

In all cases of danger and difficulty, in whom do you put your trust?

I needed that question. And I needed the answer I was given.

From that moment, I felt I had come home. Perhaps a different home, as I was gradually to discover. I much appreciated being able to share in fellowship - and prayer - with brethren of other faiths. I had in my teens sometimes played the organ at a synagogue. It seemed absolutely natural to me to accept that we are all climbing different sides of the same mountain.

I would thoroughly recommend Karen Armstrong's *A History of God*. Whatever our subjective belief, it helps us to consider what the objective history has been of supreme beings. To consider the notion of a divinity is, I would say, incumbent upon us as freemasons; not least in that we join together as brethren in prayer, transcending the divisions of our particular faiths. Rather, I find my own belief enhanced.

The idea of a god requires of us both uncertainty and humility. If we believe that we understand God, then we have made ourselves greater than whatever divinity we profess belief in. Certainty is the very enemy of faith.

God as described or assumed in masonic ritual is a supreme being characterised primarily as a creator. This is a very male model, in contrast to the more female notion of a constantly present and nurturing god. There is little mention of the love of God in our ceremonies; but then, our texts took their form during the rise of Deism, the true belief of the Enlightenment. Deism is a very broad school, as the varied creeds of America's founding fathers shows. Robespierre developed one form of Deism as the state religion of Revolutionary France.

To return to the beginning, the nature of our belief depends upon what we have learnt, what we have been taught. Coming from the tradition of Deism, it is instructive for us to examine Voltaire, who says, "I believe atheism is as pernicious as superstition." But that is Voltaire writing a reply to his own "Three Imposters" attacking Moses, Jesus and Mohammed; a reply he himself described as somewhat playful (*un peu badine*). The closeness to masonic notions of the deity are immediately apparent:

The astronomer who watches the motions of stars, established according to the laws of the most profound mathematics, must adore the Eternal Geometer. The physicist who investigates a grain of wheat or an animal body must recognize the Eternal Craftsman. The moral man who seeks a support point in virtue must admit the existence of a Being as fair as He is supreme. So God is necessary to the world in every way, and we can say together with the author of

the Epistle to the scribbler of a vulgar book on the Three Impostors, "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent Him".

I trust I have not invented God. Though I am aware that having a God who agrees with everything I say is a sure and certain sign that I have created God in my own image. Humility is not a nice addendum; it is vital.

The reflections above tend towards the objective. Infinitely more significant for me as a believer is that the reality of God is experienced; a sense of the closeness of boundless love, of an abiding presence who wishes me nothing but well, who directs my steps and measures my days, who sustains every particle of the universes in being, whose purposes will at the last become evident. More than we can ask or think.

My belief depends upon this sense of God. That sense I have never found overwhelming; God seems to talk to me in nudges and whispers. No shouting.

What then, and how, do I believe? How do I manage what Ross Kelly describes so finely: *to believe in... something that grounds order, meaning, and moral orientation.*

Like my friend the theologian, there is more in corporate worship with which I can agree than otherwise. For me, saying the Creeds would demand a lot of footnotes before it could achieve complete integrity - a notion which is in any case surely a Platonic Absolute. This applies as much to masonic ritual as it does to the liturgy of The Church.

I do not sit down more than I stand.

Paper 8 - Reflecting on the Nature of Supreme Being

A Summary of What Many Scientists Say About The Idea of The Great Architect.

Bro Dr Robert Lomas

To add a conclusion to this series of papers presenting personal views on the Nature of Supreme Being I have brought together the views of many well-known scientists on this topic.

Must a Scientist be an Atheist?

If you read only the works of Richard Dawkins you might answer yes to this question. For as we all know There is no God and Dawkins is His Prophet. But you must remember that Dawkins is a biologist, which is a form of science rather similar to bird watching or stamp collecting. For physicists, science begins with mathematics and ends with experiments. My generation of physicists was taught that there is no rhyme or reason in the behaviour of populations of small wave like objects, but we were shown how to become skilled manipulators of these tiny bits of matter to create a whole new range of technologies from our predictive equations. The price we paid was not only the loss of our sense of awe and wonder but also a complete interdict on spiritual metaphor, which Dawkins has raised to a fine art. We were treated as heretics if we even considered that there might be interactions between reality and the intelligence of a conscious observer at the quantum level. To suggest that we might be able to understand such interactions was far beyond the pale. That view is changing now that the role of consciousness in quantum events has been experimentally demonstrated.

One of my heroes of science, Enrico Fermi, was a Mason before he became a great scientist, so he must have been able to express a belief in a form of Supreme Being. From Newton down to Hawking, a majority of the physicists whose work I admire have expressed views about the existence of some sort of God, even if our use of the term God is a metaphor for the fundamental laws which all physicists believe lie at the heart of creation.

Albert Einstein accepted the existence of a superior intelligence that he felt revealed itself in the harmony and beauty of nature. But he did not extend this to include a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation and whose purposes are modelled after our own. When asked to define God he wrote:

I am not an atheist, and I do not call myself a pantheist. I am in the position of a little child entering a huge library filled with books in many languages. The child knows someone must have written those books. It does not know how. It does not understand the language in which they are written. The child dimly suspects a mysterious order in the arrangement of the books, but it does not know what it is. That, it seems to me, is the attitude of even the most intelligent human being toward God. We see the universe marvellously arranged and obeying certain laws but only dimly understand these laws.

Werner Heisenberg, the man who discovered the Uncertainty Principle, made this forthright statement:

It may be argued that certain trends in Christian philosophy led to a very abstract concept of God, that they put God so far above the world that one began to consider the world without at the same time also seeing God in the world. Then a new authority appeared which was completely independent of Christian religion or philosophy or of the Church, the authority of experience, of empirical fact. It spoke of two kinds of revelation of God. One was written in the Bible and the other was to be found in the book of nature. The holy scriptures had been written by man and were therefore subject to error, while nature was the immediate expression of God's intentions.

When I became a Fellow Craft Freemason I was told it was my duty to study the hidden mysteries of nature and science so that I might better understand the Great Architect. This view has never been more clearly expressed than in the words of Heisenberg quoted above.

Erwin Schrödinger, the man who discovered the quantum wave function and invented the famous experiment with the cat in the box, was explicit about the nature of God. He rejected the idea of a personal, interfering and vengeful god, and the idea that scientists had to be atheists:

Let me briefly mention the notorious atheism of science. Science has to suffer this reproach again and again, but unjustly so. No personal god can form part of a world model that has only become accessible at the cost of removing everything personal from it. We know, when God is experienced, this is an event as real as an immediate sense perception or as one's own personality. Like them He must be missing in the space time picture. I do not find God anywhere in space and time, for God is spirit.

The super consciousness which I suspect might link a human mind to some cosmic intelligence is a deliberately cultivated state of being which Freemasonry calls awareness of the Centre. The rituals of the Craft, and the support of a Lodge, are intended to help individual Masons achieve this state of insight. When they do, they know what Schrödinger called experiencing God as an immediate sense perception.

Paul Dirac, a Bristol man who shared a Nobel Prize with Schrödinger and was a student of Bro Sir James Jeans, said:

God is a mathematician of a very high order, and He used very advanced mathematics in constructing the universe.

Richard Feynman, the discoverer of quantum electrodynamics, explained how a sense of spiritual inspiration lay at the heart of his physics:

The same thrill, the same awe and mystery, comes again and again when we look at any question deeply enough. With more knowledge comes a deeper, more wonderful mystery, luring one on to penetrate deeper still. Never concerned that the answer may prove disappointing, with pleasure and confidence we turn over each new stone to find unimagined strangeness leading to more wonderful questions and mysteries. Certainly, a grand adventure. Few unscientific people have this particular type of religious experience. This is not yet a scientific age.

Fred Hoyle, the scientist who discovered the origins of the carbon atom, also came to the view that a cosmic intelligence plays a part in the workings of the universe:

We learn in physics that non-living processes tend to destroy order, whereas intelligent control is particularly effective at producing order out of chaos. You might even say that intelligence shows itself most effectively in arranging things exactly as the origin of life requires. This point is so important that it is worth pausing to consider the very great difference that intelligence can make, not by thunder and lightning methods like Thor and his hammer, but by the subtlest of touches. Where is this intelligence

situated. Exactly what does it do. What is its physical form. A generation or more of scientific consolidation is needed before risking a shot at such ambitious questions. Is intelligence outside the Earth inaccessiblely remote or is it close enough to be contacted if only we knew how.

I believe that Freemasonry may have found a way of teaching its followers how to interact with this cosmic intelligence. But here is the crucial difference between Freemasonry and religion. The Craft imposes no supernatural theology upon how this interaction is to be understood.

Stephen Hawking, not noted for spiritual sensitivity, when challenged in the letters page of American Scientist about being afraid to admit the existence of a Supreme Being, defended his physicist's freedom to interpret it, saying:

I thought I had left the question of the existence of a Supreme Being completely open. It would be perfectly consistent with all we know to say that there was a Being who was responsible for the laws of physics. However, I think it could be misleading to call such a Being God because this term is normally understood to have personal connotations which are not present in the laws of physics.

Fred Hoyle's acceptance of a cosmic intelligence is derived from his study of physics, as he said:

God is a forbidden word in science, but if we define an intelligence superior to ourselves as a deity, then we have arrived at two kinds. The intelligence of other evolved intelligent observers elsewhere in the cosmos, and the God of the infinite future. In contemporary Western religions it is said that God created the Universe and that God can interfere with the Universe to suit himself. However, the Universe cannot interfere with God, so that, unlike the situation in science, action and reaction are not equal and opposite. This lopsidedness leads inevitably into a logical morass. One is impelled by such concepts to ask a question which turns out to be unanswerable, the question why the Universe should exist at all. As a distinguished modern theologian said, What we cannot understand is that God who has no need of the world should have reason to create it. But this morass is avoided when it is seen that God exists only by virtue of the support received from the Universe.

Quantum physics inevitably leads to the idea that self-consciousness interacts with matter to create the reality we experience. There is nothing supernatural in this, but it does lead to the conclusion that the Great Architect of the Universe could well be emergent intelligence within the universe.

My problem with promiscuous use of the word God is that it carries far too much superstitious baggage from an unscientific past. I see why Richard Dawkins dislikes it as a metaphor, but I accept its sparing use as an imperative to study the hidden mysteries of nature and science. To seek to understand the true meaning of life is, for me, the most important part of Masonic philosophy.

There is deep insight to be found in the knowledge of centre which W L Wilmshurst, the founder of my own Lodge of Living Stones, defined as the God experience or Cosmic Consciousness. I have worked out how to achieve this meditational experience by either stilling my mind of all thought or by actively overloading my neurones with a strong electromagnetic field. For someone of a religious turn of mind the experience this produces might convince them of the existence of a personal god. I am inclined to attribute it to the effect of entanglement of all matter. I am a Freemason but also a scientist with an interest in self-consciousness and how it interacts with matter to form reality. I agree that deep within us is a spark which interacts with creation to bring about purpose. Ritual calls this Divine Spark the centre from which no Freemason can err. I interpret this as a consequence of the basic particles which fabricate our minds being entangled with all other matter that was spread out by the initial inflation which occurred soon after the Big Bang.

I am happy to call that entanglement The Great Architect of the Universe, while accepting that others might seek a personal God.

I am happy to explain my position but do not try to force my ideas on religious believers who might prefer myths and doctrines to the hard logic of equations.

A spiritual approach to the hidden mysteries of nature and science is Freemasonry's most important contribution to society over the ages and has inspired many scientists. Freemasonry has developed a neutral language to discuss the most fundamental questions of all. Why are we here? Do we have a purpose?

I feel Freemasonry should be supported to share its inspirational message with future generations, so they can enjoy the company of likeminded individuals who realise the Craft offers a fundamental insight into the nature of reality and the symbolic tools to investigate it.

Brethren I hope you enjoyed this series of paper reflecting on the nature of Supreme Being, Bro Ross's paper inspired me to collect, from a range of different viewpoints. If any of you feel moved to write an account of your personal view, we will be happy to publish them in CQ.

A Paper on Brotherly Love.

W.Bro David Beckwith Master of the Lodge of Living Stones

Delivered at the Lodge of Living Stones on 23 January 2026

Brotherly Love

For many of us, when we entered Freemasonry, the term Brotherly Love was probably heard for the first time. It certainly was for me. The fact that all the members we encountered are male, then the word Brotherly seemed an appropriate word in this context. I interpreted this as an adjective for the Bonding between us all, e.g. a means of looking after each other in times of need. I was not wrong in reality. The word Love was then a completion of that expression suggesting a deeper bond.

Visiting our own Lodges and others over the years, we are bound to hear the term Brotherly Love discussed every now and then. We accept it as a Masonic 'standard' and to be expected. There is nothing wrong with that of course. Indeed, as we know, it is the first of the three core values we learn in Freemasonry – **Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth**. We occasionally hear explanations of these values given in Lodges and indeed we listen to and read Papers covering the same topics.

I joined LOLS 20 years ago and it was only then did I hear the term Brotherly Love used much more frequently than any other Lodge. There was a strong sense of Brotherly Love then. It certainly made me think far more deeply about the meaning of the subject and especially in context with this Lodge and what we have today. Ours is a very special Lodge and so we tend to give the term Brotherly Love and its related associations, far more priority in understanding and application than most Craft Lodges.

But what does **Brotherly Love** actually mean ?

We have all experienced many aspects of **Love** in our lives and each of us have our own interpretations of what Love actually means I am sure.

We have often taken for granted the word Love as it can mean different things to different people. My interpretation of Love in earlier times was related more towards a romantic nature.

As we progress in age, we appreciate a deeper understanding of **Family Love** concerning bonds with our Parents, our Siblings, our Children, and of course our Relatives. As we move further on in life, we then learn of the importance of having Love for ourselves and not just others.

However, there are other associations incorporated in Brotherly Love that we take for granted.

Here we can assimilate the inclusion of the word **Brotherly** in context to the word **Love** by incorporating the following into our understanding. These are especially prevalent in freemasonry.

Unconditional care: where we illustrate to others that we are there for them and share with them throughout all life's difficult challenges.

Mutual respect: here we acknowledge and participate in valuing each other's individuality, skills, opinions, and personal boundaries.

Loyalty: We illustrate this by demonstrating to others that we help protect their well-being, even when it is difficult at times. Now we are getting near to Brotherly Love.

In Freemasonry, at times, we all meet others we cannot get on with for one reason or another. Because we enjoy the same pastime doesn't mean we have to simply accept certain factors in individuals. I am sure we have all experienced this. In Freemasonry though we have to go a step further and at least try and absorb other's faults without being dramatic. We are expected to show tolerance in all situations.

We might be influenced by an individual's educational skills, or other talents – but similarly, others may not be so enthralled. Irrespective, we must learn to accept that we are all different and also accept that we have much to offer by our own individuality just as much they offer their individuality to us. It is important therefore that we exhibit tolerance at all times.

Unconditional Care, Respect and Loyalty are important features in Brotherly Love but all too often there are two extremely important features that are never mentioned openly and which are so important. These are **Forgiveness** and **Empathy**. Both come hand in hand.

Forgiveness involves letting go of conflicts or the mistakes of others to maintain a strong connection. To Forgive of course can be a difficult thing but it is truly satisfying when applied successfully.

I have witnessed many instances of criticism being voiced in observation of a wrong doing, but followed by very few occasions of offering Forgiveness for that same act. To Forgive is a virtue.

We are each entitled to our own opinions, but it is often the case of not what is said, but the way it is said that causes the criticism. We must allow for this and learn to forgive.

Empathy is the understanding and our sharing in the feelings of those we care about. It is not to be confused with compassion. Empathy allows you see people for who they are. You know that the words they speak are what they want you to hear or are meant to influence a situation. This is where Forgiveness comes in as we can confront lies that have been spoken or forgive words that have been said.

Some may be outspoken for a practical reason, but some may just do so because of the type of person they are. We are not all the same. We must show ourselves to be Empathic and Forgiving at the same time.

Forgiveness & Empathy provides us with strength to deal with any situation life throws at us – and together, they provide us with understanding instead of conflict.

In Conclusion

We must practice tolerance, respect, and kindness - both toward fellow members and to stand in support of each other during hardship, defend each other against injustice, and forgive past conflicts.

This naturally extends beyond our own family ties and has to include our bonds in other friendships but especially in Freemasonry. We must treat one another with warmth and solidarity always.

Stay Safe Online-Prevailing Threats—June 2025

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

+41 Scam Calls

Getting calls from **0041** (the country code for **Switzerland**) can be a red flag if you aren't expecting a chocolate delivery or a Swiss banking update. Lately, these have become a common tool for international spoofing, utilising the familiar +41 1223 456789, does look deceiving similar to +44 1223 456789.

Here is the breakdown of why you're getting them and how to handle it.

Why Switzerland?

Scammers often use Swiss numbers because the country is associated with **trust, wealth, and privacy**. They hope that by seeing a "legitimate" European country code, you'll be more likely to pick up than if it were a known high-risk area.

Common Tactics Used:

The "Wangiri" (One-Ring) Scam: They call and hang up immediately. They want you to call back, which connects you to a premium-rate international line that charges you several ££ per minute.

Investment/Crypto Fraud: Callers claiming to be from "Swiss Financial Hubs" offering "guaranteed" returns on Bitcoin or Forex.

Impersonation: Pretending to be from an international tech support company (like Microsoft) or a global shipping service.

What to Do (And Not Do)

Don't Call Back: This is the most important rule. If you missed the call, let it go. If it's important, they will leave a voicemail or find another way to reach you.

Silence Unknown Callers: Both iOS and Android have settings to automatically send calls from numbers not in your contacts straight to voicemail.

Check the "Plus": Sometimes scammers format the number as +41. It's the same thing. If you don't know anyone in Zurich or Geneva, it's safe to ignore.

Use a Blocking App: Apps like **Hiya**, **Truecaller**, or **Mr. Number** have massive databases of reported Swiss-based scam numbers.



Is it always a scam?

Not strictly, but **context is key**. If you have an account with a multinational company (like a Swiss-based insurance or tech firm), it could be legitimate. However, legitimate companies will almost always:

Identify themselves immediately.

Never ask for passwords or sensitive data over the phone.

- **Tip:** Use a unique, complex password. Avoid reusing the same password across other sites like your email or bank.

- **Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA):** If CarGurus or your associated email provider offers 2FA, turn it on now. This acts as a “second lock” even if hackers have your password.
- **Check “Have I Been Pwned”:** Visit haveibeenpwned.com to see if your email address has appeared in any recent leaks, including the February 2026 batches from ShinyHunters.
-  **Be on High Alert for “Vishing” and Phishing**
- ShinyHunters is currently using Voice Phishing (Vishing) as their primary weapon.
- **Ignore Unexpected Calls:** If someone calls claiming to be from “CarGurus Support” or “IT Security” asking for a code sent to your phone, hang up. CarGurus will never ask for your password or MFA code over the phone.
- **Inspect Every Email:** Look for subtle signs of a fake. Just like we noted that Drake’s has its apostrophe, check that “CarGurus” isn’t spelled “CarGuras” or sent from a suspicious domain like @cargurus-support.net.
- **Don’t Click Links:** If you get an email about a “security concern” on your account, go directly to cargurus.com by typing it into your browser rather than clicking a link in the email.
-  **Monitor Your Digital Footprint**
- **Watch for Fake Listings:** If you are a dealer or seller on the platform, check your active listings. Hackers often take over accounts to post “too good to be true” deals to scam buyers.
- **Review Financial Statements:** If you have payment methods linked to your account, monitor your bank or credit card statements for any “test” charges (usually small amounts like \$0.01 or \$1.00).
 - **Revoke Third-Party Access:** If you have linked your CarGurus account to other apps (like Facebook or Google), consider revoking those permissions in your social media settings until the situation is fully clarified.

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 question set for this quarter's writing challenge was **“What would you deem the impactful symbolism or allegory with Freemasonry that would be considered Quintessential in Esoteric Freemasonry?”**

The Lodge Mentor choose not to respond to this question to avoid influencing the views of the brethren. Instead he answer a far more technically precise question which our new WM

This question was placed in your hands brethren. Here are the answers we received.

Contribution 1

What would you deem the impactful symbolism or allegory with Freemasonry that would be considered Quintessential in Esoteric Freemasonry?"

In the name of the Great Architect of the Universe.

Of all the Masonic Symbols there is one that is not so obvious or recognized as such. We learnt of over 60 Symbols on our path to the Chair of Solomon. Seldom do we discuss what they mean to us. We fail to get opportunity to explain to our brethren what we see in them. They become interesting and beyond our cognition, assigned to a singular view without consideration that a symbol means different things to each of us. There is no right or wrong interpretation. Only wonder and leave them alone for they may speak but we do not hear them.

Of note we have the Square and compass, the point within the circle and the parallel lines, and the movable jewels of the Lodge officers. All have their place in the Craft but are never considered other than the obvious. Visiting a Lodge in Paris, the Worshipful master explained 72 symbols without prompt in one lecture. Not that the explanation was an absolute but an introduction to use our own thoughts and ideas of the meaning.

The one masonic Symbol I want to amplify is the least obvious to all of us. It is everywhere, seldom recognise but instrumental in recruitment, retention, and the path of knowledge. Knowledge is to me the mainstay, and reason to be a Freemason. The life blood of the Craft and all covering immeasurable wealth. Without which we would have no Freemasonry.

The Symbol is the depository of the Knowledge, its library, and teacher. I am talking about a Master Mason. This is the ideal Master Mason who has, been prepared in his heart, knocked on the Temple of truth door, laboured in the quarry, carried his heavy load, served apprenticeship under an overseer and Master, been admitted to Fellow of Craft, and eventually after many years been raised to the Sublime degree of Master Mason. He is learned in the art and is a skilled and worthy artist.

Let me digress for a moment. I have a cousin who is a Ships Master. He has been on passenger lines, cargo, and containerships as big as skyscrapers. He was made a Master Mason in 1975. He never was installed as a Worshipful Master but remained a Master Mason all his life by choice. Progress to the Chair is never compulsory, not should it be.

Speaking with him, he told me that following his initiation he began to recognise passengers, crew, port agents, and onshore personnel that were 'outstanding'. Not a great deal of men but some who were different. He soon realised he was in the company of his brothers. He recognised something in them that showed him they were Masons.

As time progressed and there were fewer such. He began to realise that Master Masons were a diminishing number. He was finding more of the "uninitiated initiated". Men who claimed brotherhood but did not reach the standard he once recognised. This was apparent only as time progressed. The Master Mason was becoming a rarity.

This I found interesting. What had happened? My own attraction to Freemasonry was a desire for knowledge, a curiosity that this might be in the craft, and an example set by a neighbour. A man who lived a life of harmony, peace, righteousness, and truth.

What are the attributes of a Master Mason that are exemplary of a symbol of Freemasonry? The detail is in the ritual, in the allegory and the symbols, the working of the tools, and attention to level, square, and upright actions within and without the Temple.

I am told often that Freemasonry makes good men, and maybe bad men, better. I ask how does this happen? Here there are mumbled answers and obscure reasons given. The truth is they do not know. These are not exemplary Master Masons as they have never questioned what has been spoon fed to them. They have never been touched by the knowledge available to them.

To appreciate what a Master Mason should be we need to look at the Masonic Temple that is a metaphor for ourselves.

We progress from the entry in the West towards the East seeking knowledge and a Master to guide us. We pass the darkness of the North. We wake up the Wardens demanding to be heard and present as a fit and proper person. We pass from the darkness of ignorance to the light of truth.

We circumambulate the Altar in the Centre of the Lodge. Here we find balance, between the physical existence we know so well, and the spiritual existence all of us are called to. We find we are between the darkness of the North and the noon day light of the South. We are there to obtain balance and harmony.

The tools are there to chasten us, the advice and recommendations to lead us, the Master to direct our path, and the obligation so we learn to only reveal to the world such as necessary.

The Master Mason has crushed his ego, fears not death, has a relationship with his understanding of the GAOTU, is a servant of all, and gives more of himself than he once thought possible. He is recognised as a wise man, he gives the gracious word, understands who is in need, and makes a difference.

He is the light that attracts others, he walks in light and makes a difference to the world. He lives respected and dies regretted.

He has symbolised truth.

Is not it a wonderful thing to be recognized as a brother, a Mason, and a man who can lead another to knowledge, talk in masonic light, and be numbered amongst the symbols as a better man but humble enough to wish better for others who follow.

So, say I,

Contribution 2

What would you deem the impactful symbolism or allegory with Freemasonry that would be considered Quintessential in Esoteric Freemasonry?"

If one were compelled to select a single emblem that holds the centre of gravity for Esoteric Freemasonry, I would name the Temple both the historical edifice of Solomon and its interior corollary, the temple of the soul. Around this living axis gather our working tools the Square, the Compasses, the Level and Plumb and our great mythos, the quest for the Lost Word. Together they compose a drama of becoming, wherein the initiate proceeds from rough stone to perfect ashlar, reconstructing, stone by stone, an inner sanctum capacious enough to receive the divine resonance of the Name. In this comprehensive allegory, morality, metaphysics, and mystical praxis converge.

To speak of "impactful symbolism" is to ask what symbolism effects change. The Temple allegory does not merely inform; it transforms. Its grammar is geometric, its rhetoric ritual, its aim nothing less than the reintegration of man with the Light the light concealed, the light sought, the light finally revealed.

The Temple as Metaphysical Blueprint

The Temple of Solomon stands for more than national devotion or architectural prowess; it denotes cosmic order impressed upon matter and order recovered within the human microcosm. In this reading favoured by esoteric interpreters the Temple is the psyche under construction. Its Outer Court is moral discipline; its Middle Chamber, intellectual measure and balance; its Sanctum Sanctorum, the silent chamber of direct knowing. The pillars at the porch hold not only the architectonics of a building but the polarities through which a Mason must pass: strength tempered by establishment, dynamism yoked to stability.

This approach is broadly consonant with the line taken by W. L. Wilmshurst, who insisted that the Craft is a spiritual art of regeneration, not a mere ethical club with antique pageantry. For Wilmshurst, every configuration of the Lodge, every station and light, is an instruction in interior architecture, leading the candidate from "the illusions of time and sense" to a clarified interior life.

Yet it is Charles Webster Leadbeater who most emphatically elaborates the Lodge as a working engine of subtle forces, a temple whose ritual geometry and colour, when properly executed, energises the brethren and aligns them with a supernal "Great White Lodge." In *The Hidden Life in Freemasonry*, Leadbeater asserts that ritual forms and fittings are neither arbitrary nor merely commemorative; they are technologies of the sacred designed to attune the Lodge to trans-physical currents.

Leadbeater's vision can be startling to sober historicists, but its intent is clear: to recover the Temple not as a metaphor only, but as an operative esoteric instrument, a "machine" for the shaping of consciousness through symbol, sound, light, and ethical practice.

The Working Tools: Geometry of the Soul

The Square and Compasses are the insignia of the Craft recognisable even to the profane but in the esoteric school they are dialectical: the Square urging rectitude in the horizontal field of action; the Compasses inscribing the circle of rightful measure in which passions and appetites are kept within bounds. Classical lectures and modern expositions alike reiterate these meanings, noting that the Square governs conduct, while the Compasses chastens desire by circumference.

Extended further, the Compasses, descending from above, image the outreach of Principle into manifestation, while the Square drawn from earth images embodied order. Between them the letter G sometimes appears, variously glossed as God, Geometry, or as a silent signifier of the Great Architect each interpretation reinforcing the unity of cosmic law and ethical life.

Esoteric readings frequently pair these with the Plumb and Level uprightness and equality without which a Lodge, or a life, cannot stand true. Contemporary summaries echo the traditional teaching: meet upon the Level, act upon the Plumb, part upon the Square.

For Wilmshurst, such tools are not moral platitudes but initiatory instruments whose application changes the operator: the Square squaring the will, the Compasses defining the sacred circle of self-mastery, the Plumb exacting vertical alignment of motive and deed. His whole oeuvre urges us to *use* these tools until their forms dissolve into the habitus of a transfigured character.

Leadbeater radicalises the same point by suggesting that the tools, correctly understood and ritually applied, condition the subtle atmosphere of the Lodge and the auras of its members, shaping the flow of “force” through ordered lines of symbol. Whether one accepts his clairvoyant physics or not, the practical implication aligns with the Craft’s core: ritual order shapes moral order, and moral order opens the interior sanctuary.

The Drama of the Lost Word

If the Temple is the place, the Lost Word is the treasure; if the tools are the method, the Hiram legend is the ordeal by which the aspirant ceases merely to *use* symbols and begins to become them. In the Third Degree, we are ushered into a mystery of death and restoration, a myth that fuses history with ageless psychological truth: the Name shorthand for ultimate meaning falls out of conscious reach, and the soul must undergo its descent to recover the virtue of the Word in a higher key. Modern summaries of the Hiram legend make the point plain: whatever the historicity of Hiram Abiff, the legend has become the cornerstone of Masonic interior work.

Leadbeater locates this myth in a continuum of ancient Mysteries, reading the loss of the Divine Name as a shift from an exoteric cultus to an esoteric quest in which the spiritualisation of the Temple becomes imperative. In *Glimpses of Masonic History*, he assembles a panorama from Egypt and Eleusis to the Mithraic caves arguing for a transmitted technique of initiation culminating in the modern Craft. Scholars will argue about emphases and evidence, but the book is valuable as a map of meanings: it shows how the Lost Word allegory resonates with ancient patterns of death-and-rebirth gnosis.

Wilmshurst, for his part, writes unambiguously that the Craft’s ultimate aim is regeneration: the recapture of a Word that is not a password but a state of consciousness “Truth” realised inwardly and lived outwardly. When the Master-Mason substitutes letters and syllables for the Word, it is a spur to continue the search, to find within what enacted drama can never exhaust.

Leadbeater’s Esoteric Masonic Vision

Because you asked specifically for Leadbeater, allow me to weigh his contributions with sympathetic rigour.

1) Strengths and contributions - *The Hidden Life in Freemasonry* is a bold theosophical commentary on Craft ritual. Leadbeater presents the Lodge as a sacramental organism, in which officers, lights, jewels, colours, and even the arrangement of furniture form a conductor’s score for energies that elevate the assembly. He provides granular exegesis of the degrees, arguing that the ritual works upon the astral-mental vehicles of the participants and links them to a hierarchy of spiritual

Intelligences. For readers seeking the “how” of esoteric Masonry how symbols might exert real-time effects Leadbeater is invaluable, even when one does not share his clairvoyant premises.

His companion volume, *Glimpses of Masonic History*, situates the Craft within a grand initiatory stream: Egyptian, Jewish, Greek, Mithraic, Operative, and Speculative stages are laid out to sketch a continuous tradition of mystery teaching. The book’s utility is not primarily documentary in the modern academic sense; rather, it offers a mythopoeic history that allows the Mason to *think symbolically across time* to see Craft work as a living branch of the wisdom of the ages.

2) Limitations and controversies. - Leadbeater’s method clairvoyant observation will not satisfy a critical historian. His wider oeuvre (*Occult Chemistry, The Chakras*) advances claims about subtle anatomy and subatomic structure perceived by supersensory means; these claims have attracted both enthusiastic defence within the Theosophical world and robust scepticism from mainstream science.

In Masonic terms, the risk is reification: treating the poetry of ritual as physics of ether. The best safeguard is to read him symbolically and pragmatically: does the practice he recommends lead to deeper reverence, moral exactitude, interior stillness, and fraternal charity? If so, his pages are fruitful. If not, one may take his panoramas as imaginative meditations upon the Temple rather than blueprints of invisible machinery. A fair-minded recent appraisal frames his project precisely in that light: a fascinating window into the ambitions and contradictions of the occult revival.

3) Consonance with mainstream esoteric Craft.

When Leadbeater interprets the Square and Compasses morally and mystically, he stands in continuity with centuries of Craft instruction and modern expositions that see these tools as summoning us to integrity and measured desire. Where he goes beyond is in claiming objective subtle effects. You need not subscribe to his clairvoyant optics to benefit from his insistence that a Lodge should be carefully ordered, the officers devoutly attentive, and the ritual exactly rendered all of which belong to the Craft’s own best traditions.

The Quintessence: A Threefold Answer

Your question seeks the *quintessential* symbolism in Esoteric Freemasonry. I answer in three notes that harmonise into one chord:

1. The Temple as outer rite and inner architecture is the master-symbol. To build the Temple is to build the self in conformity with the Great Design; to open and close it is to raise and still forces in one’s microcosm. Leadbeater magnifies this into an energetic science of templecraft; Wilmshurst defines it as interior regeneration. Take both together and you have a comprehensive practice.
2. The Working Tools Square, Compasses, Level, Plumb are methods. They are the grammar of operative spirituality: action squared, desire circumscribed, relations levelled in charity, intention plumbed to the vertical of the Real. Every time you lay them upon the trestleboard of life, the plan clarifies.
3. The Lost Word is the goal, the logos rediscovered not as a syllable but as a state a recovered axis of being in which knowledge, love, and will are reconciled. The Hiram legend dramatizes the price of such attainment: the Word is not handed over; it is raised within.

Practising the Allegory: From Page to Pillar

How then might a Mason *work* this allegory?

- Order the Lodge, order the life. Attend to form—clean lines, precise movements, clear words. Whether or not you accept Leadbeater’s energetic account, beautiful form disposes the soul to beautiful act.
- Live the tools daily. Keep a literal Square on your desk; above it, a Compasses. Before a difficult conversation, square your motive; during it, circumscribe your impulse to excess. After it, check your Plumb: did your actions hang true?
- Approach the Temple as silence. The Sanctum is entered not with speech but with stillness. Wilmshurst’s counsel to seek the inner meaning through meditative attention remains the most reliable door.
- Rehearse the myth consciously. At moments of loss, betrayal, or confusion, read your circumstance as a Hiramite act an invitation to find a truer Word beyond the one that failed.

On Reflection

To the casual observer, Freemasonry is a cabinet of curiosities aprons, gavels, odd phrases, and antique dramas. To the esoteric Mason, it is a living cathedral whose stones are virtues and whose light is the Light of the Centre. The Temple teaches us where we are going, the Tools teach us how to go, and the Lost Word reminds us why we set out at all. If you would taste the quintessence, build where you stand within until the inner Holy of Holies is illumined, and the echo of the Word is no longer lost but living.

Contribution 3

What would you deem the impactful symbolism or allegory with Freemasonry that would be considered Quintessential in Esoteric Freemasonry?"

Last CQ magazine the paper competition was set as "what is the most impactful symbolism or allegory with Freemasonry?"

Now others might say it is the Square and Compass, the lodge and these symbols do have merits for taking that crown. You could say it is one of the five ashlar or seal of Solomon.

Not for me, for me, it is that little odd, shaped thing on the first-degree tracing board. The Circle bounded by the two grand parallel lines.

The reason for this, is that the circle contains the point from which a Freemason cannot err. It is the points that one uses to draw the circumference of your own circle. That circle is you; the point or centre is where that divine spark is situated within you.

According to the emulation ritual, one pillar is Moses and the other is King Solomon.

Moses represents the Laws of God (Divine Spark) whilst King Solomons represents wisdom. Our ritual says in the explanation of the Tracing board that on a journey around our circle we touch both pillars keeping us in due bounds.

This covers the mortality part of our layered masonic teachings. There is a hidden meaning, if we replace Moses with John the Baptist and Solomon with John the Evangelist. The pillars morph into something more. They represent our Masonic journey, the purification of one's body from its material addictions to inner illumination of one's spiritual awakening.

Walter Leslie Wilmshurst, Arthur Edward Waite, Aleister Crowley and the friend of 'the third Inkling'

By W.Bro Dr David Harrison

*'The secret of the inmost sanctuary is not in danger of profanation, since none but those who penetrate into that sanctuary can understand it...'*¹

D.H.S. Nicholson & A.H.E. Lee, 1917

The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse was first published in 1917, and stands as an excellent anthology of esoterically themed poetry from the period, which included poetry with overt hints of the supernatural, Arthurian legend, Christian Mysticism, the Occult, and hints of Freemasonry, which mainly delved into the initiatic experience, hidden knowledge and the search for the Divine. Walter Leslie Wilmshurst (1867-1939) and Arthur Edward Waite (1857-1942) were the standout contemporary esoteric Freemasons in the long list of authors that had contributed to the collection, though Aleister Crowley (1875-1947), who had also contributed three poems to the anthology, also had Masonic connections, albeit connections that existed on the outer fringes of regular Freemasonry. Other authors who appeared in the collection, who had been prominent Freemasons included Alexander Pope (1688-1744)² and Oscar Wilde (1854-1900),³ though these were posthumous contributions. Poetry by William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) also appeared, Yeats being a prominent member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, who had known both Waite and Crowley.

The publication of poetry in the Oxford Book of Verse series by these key members of the later Occult Revival certainly suggests poetical work of a high standard. Indeed, Daniel Howard Sinclair Nicholson (1883-1936), one of the two editors of the anthology, who had chosen the poems, was somewhat interested in mysticism and moved within Occult circles. Nicholson had published various works that had resonated certain esoteric and Occult themes, his works venturing into Christian Mysticism, sex magic and divulging into ideas of alchemy and spiritualism. Nicholson was a close friend of 'the third Inkling' Charles Williams, who, along with the Rev A.H.E Lee, formed an Occult discussion group that met regularly at Lee's vicarage in London from around 1919 'to explore spiritual matters'.⁴ Nicholson's died in 1936, and after Williams left London for Oxford in 1939, the meetings came to an end.⁵

These meetings were very much reminiscent of John Yarker's Society of Eight, which existed around thirty years before, being a smaller but equally important meeting of like-minded intelligent men who held a desire to discuss and explore ideas of the Occult. Nicholson had published his own collection of esoterically themed poetry in 1913, some having a mystical religious overtone such as the poem *The Vigil of St. Joseph, Assisi*, while others, such as *To the Dancing Faun*, held more mythical and traditional

¹ D.H. S. Nicholson and A.H.E. Lee, (ed.), *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917), p.vi.

² Alexander Pope was a member of a Lodge held at the Goat, a Tavern quoted as being at the foot of The Haymarket in London.

³ Oscar Wilde had been initiated into Apollo University Lodge No.357, Oxford, in 1875. Wilde also joined Churchill Lodge No.478 and was a member of the Rose Croix at Oxford University Chapter No.401.

⁴ Grevel Lindop, *Charles Williams: The Third Inkling*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p.63.

⁵ According to an edition of the *Hampstead News*, published on Thursday 13 February 1919, Rev A.H.E. Lee was advertised as giving Holy Communion at St. Stephen's Church, 20-22 Avenue Road, at Hampstead. Nicholson was certainly familiar with the area as his birth was registered at Hampstead in December 1883.

themes. Nicholson went on to continue the mystical religious theme with a work entitled *The Mysticism of St. Francis of Assisi* in 1923. Perhaps his most successful work however was his novel *The Marriage-Craft*, the work putting forward ideas of sex, with some ideas drifting into more spiritual areas, especially with the notion of transmutation. Three of the characters in the novel were based on Nicholson himself, and his friends Charles Williams and the Rev. Lee, and as the premise of the novel is based entirely on discussion amongst a group of people, one can glimpse (albeit briefly) at what the discussions in Lee's Vicarage were like. The novel, when reviewed in *The Spectator* in September 1924, was somewhat praised for its boldness,⁶ and it still stands up today for its modern approach to writing.

The Rev. A.H.E. Lee was the second editor of the anthology, and it has been suggested that Lee presented Williams and Nicholson with certain esoteric rituals, and it has been put forward that Lee was a member of the Stella Matutina - a Golden Dawn splinter group. Lee also contributed to some Christian works, the works sometimes being ever-so-slightly controversial in their approach, such as his introduction to Geraldine Cummins' *The Childhood of Jesus*.⁷

Charles Williams was an editor at the Oxford University Press, and had keen esoteric leanings; he had been involved in Waite's Fellowship of the Rosy Cross, being a member of the Salvator Mundi Temple, and it was this background as editor and as an esotericist, combined with his deep friendship with Nicholson and Lee, that probably assisted in the publication of the anthology with the Oxford University Press. Williams was also a popular novelist, his work reflecting his interest in the supernatural and the spiritual. Like his fellow Inklings J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, Williams wrote fantasy novels, though his stories were firmly set in the contemporary world.

Much has been written on the Inklings; they were an Oxford based literary discussion group, led by J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis. Other significant 'members' of the group included Charles Williams, who had corresponded with Lewis from an early stage, both of the writers having congratulated each other on early works. The group championed the fantasy genre and the use of narrative, and the readings appeared to have garnered constructive criticism and support for each other's work. They met at various locations, such as University College in the University of Oxford, and later at Magdalen College and in some of Oxford's pubs, most famously the Eagle and Child. Some of the novels first read at the meetings included Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, Lewis's *Out of the Silent Planet*, and Williams's *All Hallows' Eve*. All of these works have of course become classics.

The Poetry of Wilmshurst, Waite and Crowley in the Anthology

W.L. Wilmshurst, a solicitor, was initiated into Huddersfield Lodge No.290 in West Yorkshire, before founding the esoterically flavoured Lodge of Living Stones No.4957 in 1927, which still meets in Leeds today.⁸ Wilmshurst was a supporter of Waite's works, writing reviews for his books, and also wrote articles for *The Occult Review*, as well as writing his own books, with topics ranging from Christian Mysticism, Orientalism and esoteric meanings within Freemasonry. Wilmshurst's Masonic work put forward the emphasis of finding the Centre, which was to find that Divine spark within us. This idea was presented in his poem *The Mystery of Light*, a work of esoteric splendour that set the scene of hidden mysteries and acted as a poetical guide on how to find the Centre:

⁶ Anon., '[A review of] *The Marriage-Craft* by D.H.S. Nicholson', *The Spectator*, 27 September, 1924, p.22.

⁷ See *The Childhood of Jesus* by Geraldine Cummins; with a preface by Eric Parker and an introduction by The Rev. A.H.E. Lee, (1937). Royal Collection Trust, Ref: RCIN 1116932.

⁸ <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/lane/record.php?ID=1467> [Last accessed 31/12/24]

*'Watch the thronging angels pass
 To a high celestial Mass ;
 See a veiled, flaming Centre
 See a Great High Priest there enter,
 Whence a Host he lifteth up
 And a crimson-brimming Cup,
 Which He bids all eat and sup.'*⁹

A.E. Waite had immersed himself in Christian Mysticism, embracing the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn before founding the Fellowship of the Rosy Cross. He had dabbled with Martinism, was initiated into Runnymede Lodge No.2430 in 1901, entered into a number of high degrees, and wrote many books on esoteric, Masonic and Occult traditions, such as *The Book of Ceremonial Magic* in 1913, and his *New Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry*, published in 1921.¹⁰ In his poem *The Morality of the Lost Word*, which features in the anthology, Waite ventures directly into themes of Freemasonry and Christian Mysticism, and touches on a similar theme to which Wilmshurst conveyed in his own version of esoteric Freemasonry, especially with the search for the Centre, putting forward that:

*'The spirit within is the long lost Word'.*¹¹

Interestingly, a poem by an anonymous author in the anthology is entitled *A Ballade of the Centre*, and again, suggests that the Divine is within us:

*'Thou Inmost God to Whom aspire'*¹²

The same poem also expresses a common theme that runs through the poems of Wilmshurst, Waite and Crowley; that of the hidden secrets behind the veil, and the movement away from darkness to the light:

*'Into the darkness, unafraid,
 Wherein soft hands of silence lay
 Their veil of peace upon the blade
 Of too bright thought, we take our way.'*¹³

Aleister Crowley was the most controversial of the three in regards to his lifestyle, which mainly concerned a well-publicised indulgence in Fringe Freemasonry and sex magic, and was certainly well known in Occult circles. He was certainly as qualified as Wilmshurst and Waite in regards to poetry, having numerous poetry collections published, such as *White Stains* in 1898 and *The Winged Beetle* in 1910. Crowley had by this time entered into what was to become known as Fringe Freemasonry; he was initiated into an irregular 'Scottish Rite' lodge in Mexico, was a member of the unrecognised Anglo-Saxon Lodge No.343 in Paris, and had become involved in John Yarker's Antient and Primitive Rite, becoming Grand Hierophant for a time after Yarker's death.¹⁴ Crowley's poetic offerings were

⁹ Nicholson and Lee, *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*, pp.483-484.

¹⁰ For further discussion on Waite, see David Harrison, *The Lost Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry*, (Addlestone Lewis Masonic, 2017), pp.66-71.

¹¹ Nicholson and Lee, *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*, p.445.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp.549-550.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ See David Harrison, *The Life and Death of John Yarker*, (St. Neots: Lewis Masonic, 2024). See also Martin P. Starr, 'Aleister Crowley: Freemason!', *AQC*, 108, (1995), pp.150-161.

thus as equally enigmatic and esoteric, with the Masonically themed *The Rose and the Cross*, and his poem on initiation into the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, entitled *The Neophyte*, which, like the aforementioned Wilmshurst poem, discusses the secrets behind the veil in the inner Temple:

*'I feel the Spring, the all-devouring Dawn,
Rush with my Rising. There, beyond the goal,
The Veil is rent !
Yes : let the veil be drawn.'*¹⁵

In this sense, Freemasonry appears to have been a gateway in the search for a deeper esoteric understanding for Wilmshurst, Waite and Crowley, all of whom saw the Craft as a means to discover hidden knowledge and to transform oneself, and to ultimately search for the Divine. Wilmshurst for example, stated that *'The First Degree Ceremony used on the reception of a Candidate into the Craft is designed to introduce him to the first stage of a system of knowledge and self-discipline which, if faithfully followed up and lived out in his personal life, will clarify and transform his mind from its natural state of darkness to one of Light'*. This would set the new Mason on a quest for the Centre, the initiate being guided by Wilmshurst's teachings.¹⁶

Waite, in a similar form, saw Freemasonry as a gateway that revealed hidden knowledge:

'Craft Masonry signifies a quest for that which was lost like the Word in Kabalism ; for that which has been hidden like the holy Vessel of the Graal ; for that which is communicated by God like the Mystic Stone of Alchemy'.¹⁷

Crowley the magician also saw Freemasonry with interest, especially the third degree:

'A magical ceremony constructed on this formula is thus in close essential harmony with the natural mystic process. We find it the basis of many important initiations, notably the Third degree in Masonry, and the 5° = 6° ceremony of the G.D... The essence of it consists of robing yourself as a king, then stripping and slaying yourself, and rising from that death to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.'

Indeed, after forming a friendship with the aforementioned John Yarker, Crowley managed to obtain the rituals for the Antient and Primitive Rite, which he subsequently used in the reconstruction of his Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO).¹⁸

Conclusion

The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse was certainly the most esoteric of ventures in regards to the Oxford anthology series, and as a product of Nicholson and Lee, who held a deep interest in mysticism, it cannot be ruled out that their close friend Charles Williams, an editor at the Oxford University Press at the time, who also held an interest in esoteric matters, lent a helping hand in the work. The timing of the publication of the work in 1917, during World War I, is also worth noting, as

¹⁵ Nicholson and Lee, *The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*, pp.522-524.

¹⁶ W.L. Wilmshurst, *The Ceremony of Initiation. Analysis and Commentary*, (Privately Printed, 1932), p.3.

¹⁷ Arthur Edward Waite, *The Secret Tradition in Freemasonry*, Vol I, (London: Rebman Limited, 1911), p.xv. See also R.A. Gilbert, 'The Masonic Career of A.E. Waite', *AQC*, 99, (1986).

¹⁸ Aleister Crowley, *Magick*, (London: Guild Publishing, 1989), p.167. See also Harrison, *The Life and Death of John Yarker*, pp.120-122 & p.218.

the period saw the rise in popularity of spiritualism and interest in mysticism, due to the many deaths of sons and husbands caused in the war. This Wartime Occult Phenomena was fuelled by publications of Occult works such as *The Angels of Mons* by Arthur Machen in 1915, Machen being a writer of Occult fiction and a friend of none other than Arthur Edward Waite. The Angels of Mons were reputedly sighted by an officer as a large body of horsemen that suddenly vanished during the retreat of Mons. This interest in War time spiritualism was championed by another Freemason, the author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle,¹⁹ and a renewed interest in the esoteric and mystical beliefs went hand-in-hand with this. Thus, this particular anthology was published and found an audience, and it allowed the likes of Wilmshurst, Waite and Crowley to find a larger and more popular reception for their poetry. Freemasonry, the themes of which were embedded in their verse, was a gateway that offered endless esoteric explorations for these three men, and indeed, the poetry displayed in the anthology by Wilmshurst, Waite and Crowley certainly explored elements of initiation, hidden knowledge and the esoteric nature of the Craft.

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¹⁹ For further discussion on Conan Doyle, see Harrison, *Lost Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry*, pp.78-80.

Book Review

The Way to the East

By W, L. Wilmshurst

Published by Wakins in 1934

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Review of W. L. Wilmshurst's *The Way to the East*

A lyrical map of the Masonic journey from husk to heart

By Bro Dr Robert Lomas

W. L. Wilmshurst's *The Way to the East* is not merely a collection of poems; it is a poetic exposition of the inner life of Freemasonry, written by one of our Craft's most perceptive interpreters. For readers familiar with Wilmshurst's prose, particularly *The Meaning of Masonry*, this volume feels like the natural flowering of ideas he had long cultivated.

In the foreword, he describes the poems as an attempt to cast the Masonic theme into "lyrical expression," offering new veils of language that may prove "more diaphanous" than the traditional ones. That is precisely what the book achieves.

Wilmshurst begins by reminding us that Freemasonry, though woven into the social fabric and no longer a "secret society," still guards a graded system of initiation into the "more hidden secrets of Nature, especially of human nature." The poems take this assertion seriously. They are not decorative verses about ritual; they are meditations on the psycho-spiritual journey that the Craft dramatizes. The familiar ethical and social features of Masonry are acknowledged, but they are treated as secondary. What matters here is the "world-old Gnosis," the science of self-knowledge that the rituals veil in architectural allegory.

The central poem, *A Song of Degrees*, is the heart of the collection. Drawing inspiration from the Psalms, the "Temple-hymns of the Hebrew Initiates", Wilmshurst presents an aspirant in dialogue with the "Voice of Silence," an inner guide that motivates him from his own spiritual centre. The candidate's journey mirrors the three great stages of the Craft: the Purgative, the Illuminative, and the Unitive Life. Wilmshurst is clear that the real obstacles are internal: egoism, instability, fluctuating moods, and the illusions of the personal will. Only in the stage of Mastership, when the ego has undergone its mystical death, does the aspirant become a vessel for the "greater Voice of the Silence," the creative Word that can finally speak through him.

Other poems extend this inner reading of Masonic symbolism. The piece on the Holy Royal Arch explores the often-neglected ceremony of Passing the Veils, illuminating its deeper meaning. *In a Secret Temple* reflects on the Agape, the mystical repast that modern festive boards faintly echo. The concluding poem, *In Excelsis*, gestures toward the "Grand Lodge Above," the spiritual archetype of the Craft on earth, echoing the Kabalistic "Greater Holy Assembly" and the Christian "Communion of Saints."

What emerges is a symphonic sequence that charts the entire Masonic journey "from its inception to its conclusion." Wilmshurst insists that the Craft's rituals preserve a spiritual tradition of immense moment, one that most Masons have yet to perceive. The poems are offered as aids to that perception, helping the reader move from "natural and literal understanding" to the "wine of spiritual experience." The metaphor is apt: the waterpots of the Craft have long been filled, but the transformation into something richer has been reserved for those who seek the inner meaning.

Beyond the personal journey, Wilmshurst also gestures toward the cosmic purpose of Freemasonry. Each Mason, in building his own inner temple, contributes to the construction of a world-temple, an edifice of thought, spirit, and brotherhood. The Craft, he suggests, is an instrument for the spiritual

evolution of humanity, a “drag-net for the skies” capable of gathering seekers of every nation and creed into a shared pursuit of truth.

The Way to the East is therefore more than a book of poems. It is a visionary document, written by a man who had spent nearly half a century labouring in the Craft and who felt compelled to share both his dreams and his insights. For Masons seeking a deeper understanding of their tradition, the book offers a rare blend of mystical insight and literary grace. For non-Masons, it provides a window into the universal principles of the inner life that Masonry symbolises.

Wilmshurst hoped that his poems would help the Craft recover its spiritual centre and realise its latent potential. A century later, his voice remains one of the clearest and most compelling guides to the “Way to the East”, the path of inner illumination that the Craft has always pointed toward.

Here is a sample poem about my favourite degree The Fellowcraft or Journeyman.

THE JOURNEYMAN. (1). By W.L. Wilmshurst

“They stagger to and fro and are at their wit’s end.” (Ps. cvii, 27).

*‘O’er Nature’s chequered flooring
I strode towards the light
And I sailed to find safe mooring
Beyond the seas of night;
I thought to win to heaven,
By symbol, sign and key,
But Heaven hath me bereaven
And sent me misery.*

*My eyes prevent my seeing
The things I meant to see,
My feet are ever fleeing
From where they fain would be;
‘Mid falsity and fiction
I move from day to day,
My life a contradiction
Of all it longs to say.*

*My head perceives the better,
My hand performs the worse;
Each action welds fresh fetter,
Each thought begets new curse;
Wrecked in a whirlpooled river,
Where is the saving spell
That shall my soul deliver
And drag me forth from hell ?*

*My asking, seeking, knocking,
(But did’st thou ask aright ?)
Have brought me only mocking,
(Learn to see dark as bright !)
I gave my soul to testing,
(Shall not Light test by gloom ?)*

CORONATIO QUADRANS

*O God, now give me resting!
(Rest cometh in a tomb !)*

*Rest there till thou art able
To see thy self-will die;
Learn there that souls unstable
Are stablished from on high;
Offer the sacrificing
Of all you know and are;
Dying thou shalt see rising
Thine own soul as a star!*

Notes About Contributors

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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 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 of 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.

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

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 lodges' 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, *Coronatio Quadrans* or CQ for short.

www.robertlomas.com

www.WebofHiram.org

X: @Dr_Robert_Lomas

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.

WBro Wayne Owens PProvSGD. Associate Member of Coronation Lodge

Wayne is a polymath who was born at a very early age and, quite impressively, has not died yet—something he considers to be a notable achievement. He joined Llannerch Lodge in 2006 and has been deeply involved in Freemasonry ever since. Wayne is a member of Wrexhamian Lodge, the Maesgwyn Lodge of Installed Masters, and the Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge of North Wales.

In 2011, Wayne became the Master of Llannerch Lodge and has spent eleven of the ensuing thirteen years in one chair or another. He is the Secretary of the Maesgwyn Lodge of Installed Masters, and Bishop Wilkins College SRIA.

His commitment to Masonry in North Wales is extensive. He was a founding member of the Widows Sons North Wales chapter, served as the Provincial Webmaster for five years, and has been the Assistant Provincial Mentor since 2021. Additionally, Wayne is an active member of the North Wales Association of Masonic Study, gives talks across several provinces and has done since 2017.

Wayne is also a fervent supporter of the Blood Bikes Wales charity, dedicating his time and effort to this vital cause.

www.wayne-owens.uk

X: @Wayne_Pen_Owens

W.Bro The Revd Roger Quick – Honourary Associate of Coronation Lodge 2927

Roger Quick was born in London and raised in Yorkshire. He trained from the age of thirteen as a Junior Exhibitioner at the Royal College of Music, and took his first degree in Music at Leeds University, where he studied composition with Alexander Goehr and Philip Wilby.

After making his debut as an accompanist at the Wigmore Hall in 1975 he freelanced as a pianist, conductor and composer, working with the newly established *English National Opera North* as a repetiteur and conducting promotional concerts. He has accompanied and worked with a great variety of artists, including Donald Swann, Raphael Wallfisch, William Waterhouse, Eugene Rousseau and Omar Puente. He began his doctorate on Sibelius in 1982.

Roger has written a number of scores for theatre productions, including *Tutte Lemkow* at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh: the *Young Vic*: Leeds Playhouse, and for the first production of John Mackendrick's play *Ludd!*

He taught piano in the Music Department at Leeds University and at the Yorkshire College of Music, conducted Leeds Youth Opera and Leeds Guild of Singers, and was college accompanist at Leeds College of Music.

He was for six years Senior Lecturer and Director of Music at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance, working with many of the world's leading choreographers and dancers, broadcasting frequently. Whilst there he conducted his own composition as part of the inauguration of the Symphony Hall complex at Birmingham, in the presence of HM The Queen.

He has frequently improvised music for silent films in the Leeds Film Festival. He enjoys busking on the accordion, and played that extraordinary instrument on the very first edition of *The Big Breakfast Show*.

After studying for the Anglican priesthood at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield, and taking a further degree in Theology, he was ordained in 1996. His short Mass setting is included on the cd *Maranatha!* recorded at Mirfield.

As an actor and author, Roger worked with *Jabbok Theatre*. He wrote and presented an occasional series, *Talking Saints*, on BBC Radio 2 for Aled Jones' *Good Morning Sunday*. His presentation of a sermon in Rap for Advent Sunday 2003 was broadcast on BBC television to great, if mixed, critical acclaim. He has written for a variety of journals on law, music, and theology, and in 2008 a number of his poems were included in the anthology edited by Barry Tebb, *Strangers on the Shore*. He completed his first novel in 2016.

His leisure interests have included studying computer science at Kellogg College Oxford, riding, and glass engraving. He has been a member of the Society of Genealogists and the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, and in 2018 was elected a member of the Royal Entomological Society.

Roger was for seven years Chaplain & Head of Divinity at Strathallan School. He became Episcopalian Rector of Highland Perthshire in July 2011, where he was chaplain to the Celtic Bishops' Conference, and honorary padr  to the Cameronians Regimental Association.

From 2013-22 Roger was Chaplain to the homeless charity St George's Crypt in Leeds; his two books about that work were published by DLT. In 2021 he was part of the *Nursing Times* "Team of the year".

He retired in November 2022, and the following year was chaplain to the Lord Mayor of Bradford.

His son Ben is an artist blacksmith, and his daughter Olivia works with refugees in London.

Bro Roger was Initiated into Headingley Lodge in 1987, and is presently Provincial Chaplain for the Province of Yorkshire West Riding. He belongs to many companion orders, where he is often either Provincial Chaplain, or Organist.

W.Bro Phillip Harris. JP – Associate Member of Coronation Lodge 2927

Bro Phillip was initiated into Leodiensis Lodge 4029 in 1994. He was Passed and Raised in the same year. Suspecting that there was more to freemasonry than the parochial, he moved Lodge to Olicana 1522. He is currently the Secretary of The Lodge of Living Stones.

He found the Royal Arch a disappointment and following his exaltation he 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 Quartely Writing Challenge.