

**TO A NON-MASON:
YOU MUST SEEK
MASONIC
MEMBERSHIP!**



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TO A NON-MASON: YOU MUST SEEK MASONIC MEMBERSHIP!

Ask and you shall receive! Knock and the door will be opened unto you! Seek and you shall find. As a Past Grand Master of Masons in California, these comments of mine may be helpful.

Many men live a lifetime and never know they must ask for admission to the world's oldest, most purposeful and greatest Fraternity. They do not realize that they will not be invited. They must come in of their own free will and accord, without persuasion, for, that is in the manner in which many millions of Masons in America have been accepted.

True, some countries have interpreted the ritual in a more liberal fashion. The United Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of England, Premier Grand Lodge of the World, in its Quarterly Communication dated the 9th day of December, 1981, states:

'Solicitation of Candidates for Freemasonry

'The question of improper solicitation of candidates has been raised on many occasions and the Board feels that a statement on this matter would be helpful to the Craft.

'There is no objection to a neutrally worded approach being made to a man who is considered a suitable candidate for Freemasonry. There can be no objection to his being reminded, once, that the approach was made. The potential candidate should then be left to make his own decision, without further solicitation.'

This, I think, is an outgrowth of the situation which prevailed in the Middle Ages when altered conditions of trade resulted in old guilds introducing honorary members. The fundamental requirement, in any event, is that membership must be wholly voluntary, without persuasion, so that whether approached or voluntarily requested the application itself is of the candidate's own free will and accord.

You may ask, therefore, is visible proof available of the claimed great antiquity of your Order? Do Masons revere God? Why are Masons called builders? Are Masons dedicated to freedom and are they champions of liberty? Do they practice charity and benevolence and strive to promote human welfare? Do Masons number among them many who are outstanding and famous in the fields of business, the professions, finance, the arts, music and high public and military service?

Our Masonic antiquity is demonstrated by a so-called Regius Poem written around the year 1390, when King Richard II reigned in England, a century before Columbus. It was part of the King's Library that George II presented to the British Museum in 1757. Rediscovered by James O. Halliwell, a non-Mason, and rebound in its present form in 1838, it consists of 794 lines of rhymed English verse and claims there was an introduction of Masonry into England during the reign of Athelstan, who ascended the throne in A.D. 925. It sets forth regulations for the Society, fifteen articles and fifteen points and rules of behavior at church, teaching duties to God and Church and Country, and inculcating brotherhood. While the real roots of Masonry are lost in faraway mists, these items show that our recorded history goes back well over 600 years. Further proof is furnished through English statutes as, for example, one of 1350 (25 Edward III, Cap. III) which regulated wages of a "Master . . . Mason at 4 pence per day." The Fabric Role of the 12th century Exeter Cathedral referred to "Freemasons."

The historical advance of science also treats of our operative ancient brethren who were architects

and stonemasons of geometry. It is apparent from this portrayal that they have had a very real and personal identification with the Deity and that this fervent devotion provided energy to build cathedrals. They embraced the teachings of Plato and understood and applied Pythagorean relationships. Just as there is a beauty of harmony credited to mathematical relationships on which music is based, in precisely the same way these master geometricians treated architecture. The architects and stonemasons became the personification of geometry, performing extraordinary feats with squares and compasses. Geometrical proportion, not measurement, was the rule. Their marks as stonemasons were derived from geometric constructions. The mighty works they wrought, cathedrals with Gothic spires pointing towards the heavens, and especially their "association," were not without danger and opposition, bearing in mind the Inquisition established in 1229, the Saint Bartholomew's Eve Massacre of 1572, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. These historical points remind us of the need for our cautions against cowans and eavesdroppers.

Our operative Brethren of the Middle Ages thus were the builders of mighty cathedrals throughout the British Isles and continental Europe, many of which still stand. These skilled craftsmen wrote in enduring stone impressive stories of achievement, frequently chiseled with symbolic markings. With these architectural structures of these master builders there was a companion moral code. These grew up together. Out of this background modern Freemasonry was born.

Although "Lodges" had existed for centuries, four of the "old" Lodges met in London on St. John the Baptist's Day, June 24, 1717, and formed the first Grand Lodge of England, thereafter known as the Premier Grand Lodge of the world. No longer operative as of old, the Masons carried on the traditions and used the tools of the craft as emblems to symbolize principles of conduct in a continued effort to build a better world.

The American colonial Masonic organizations stemmed from this Grand Lodge of England and were formed soon after 1717. Its then Grand Master appointed Colonel Daniel Coxe as Provincial Grand Master of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania on June 5, 1730, and Henry Price of Boston as Provincial Grand Master of New England in April 1733.

George Washington joined Fredericksburg, Virginia, Lodge in 1752 and later was Master of Alexandria Lodge. As Grand Master Pro Tem of the Grand Lodge of Maryland and while President of the United States, he laid the cornerstone of our Nation's Capitol on September 18, 1793. Items from his Masonic life which we can see today include his Masonic apron, the square and compass he used as a surveyor, and the Masonic Bible on which he took his oath of office, administered by Chancellor and Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New York, Robert R. Livingston.

Masons are dedicated to freedom and are champions of liberty. This is as much a cardinal characteristic today as it was when colonial Masons were in the forefront of our fight for freedom and independence. Even then, however, Masonic Lodges remained sanctuaries where war passions were conciliated with brotherhood. The background thus displayed makes clear that no tyrant nor dictator can exist in a country where Freemasonry prevails and hence the first act of a tyrant or dictator is to obliterate Freemasonry. Masons, imbued with traditional concepts of freedom and liberty, wielded a vital influence and vigorously worked to put their ideals into practice. Our distinguished Revolutionary War Brethren included, among others, these leaders: Washington, Lafayette, Franklin, Hancock, Revere, John Paul Jones, Rufus King, James Otis, Baron von Steuben and Joseph Warren.

Masons practice charity and benevolence and strive to promote human welfare. All over the world Masons care for their indigent Brethren, widows and orphans; maintain homes; support their mother countries in great wars; aid medical research, gerontology, blood banks, youth programs, military rehabilitation; contribute scholarships and practice character building.

Masons number among them today many outstanding and famous Brethren in the fields of business, finance, the arts, the professions, music and high-public and military service. They have included fourteen Presidents and eighteen Vice Presidents of the United States; a majority of the Justices of the United States Supreme Court, of the Governors of States, of the members of the Senate, and a large percentage of the Congressmen. Five Chief Justices of the United States were Masons and two were Grand Masters. The five were Oliver Ellsworth, John Marshall (also Grand Master of Masons in Virginia), William Howard Taft, Frederick M. Vinson and Earl Warren (also Grand Master of Masons in California).

World-famous, active Masons have included Will Rogers, Simon Bolivar, James Boswell, Robert Burns, Edward the VII, Giuseppe Garibaldi, George the VI, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Rudyard Kipling, Franz Joseph Haydn, Lord Kitchner, Louis Kossuth, Giuseppe Mazzini, Wolfgang Mozart, Jose Rizal, Cecil J. Rhodes, Sir Walter Scott, Jean Sibelius, Voltaire, and many, many others. Astronauts have included Edwin E. Aldrin, II, Leroy Gordon Cooper, Donn F. Eisele, Virgil I. Grissom, Edgar D. Mitchell, Walter M. Schirra, Jr., Thomas P. Stafford, Paul J. Weitz and James B. Irwin.

Masons have had a great interest in maintaining free public schools. It was our Brother Governor DeWitt Clinton of New York, a constructive statesman of unusual ability, who was largely instrumental in establishing the foundation of our free public school system in America. Masons believe as the twig is bent so is the tree inclined and that an educated citizenry is vital for enlightened living. "Knowledge is power."

Most of the eminent Masons of modern times have been honor men of our Scottish Rite, a worldwide organization of the Masonic family. The Northern and Southern Scottish Rite Jurisdictions in America confer the Fourth through the Thirty-third Degrees and are engaged in many good works including extensive research into the causes and cure of childhood aphasia,

schizophrenia, contributions in the fields of medical research, endowments and scholarships, and patriotic, moral and spiritual programs. Allied organizations include the Knights Templar, the Royal Arch Masons, the Royal and Select Masters, the Masonic Service Association, the Masonic Relief Association of the United States and the Shrine.

All in all, an inquiry will reveal an image of Masonry as having a grand design for the betterment, happiness and enlightenment of mankind. And he who poses these questions and then petitions and is accepted for membership will be mighty proud and grateful for a dignified, inspiring and rewarding experience.

The moment a candidate signs his petition, has been accepted, and enters a Lodge, he is immediately imbued with an easy, comfortable feeling in surroundings that are impressive and fraternal. He will find that within a regular and recognized Lodge there will be no discussions of partisan politics or religious dogma, thereby assuring brotherly tranquility. He is given a warm welcome that conveys a feeling of being very much wanted as an active integral part of the group so that he looks forward to enjoyment of time-tested and intellectual progress. The successive steps bring new thrills and adventures in a place where he participates with pleasure in the ritual and procedures. His days as an Initiate pass quickly toward new friendships, greetings and welcoming smiles of his Brethren in the Lodge room and at the banquet table.

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