



# SCOTTISH RITE CALENDAR • SUMMER 2015 through FALL 2015

The meeting time for these events is 7:30 PM, unless stated otherwise, in the 2nd Floor Lodge Room. The meetings are limited to Scottish Rite Masons unless stated otherwise. All meetings are preceded by dinner at 6:00 PM in the Temple Refectory.

## MAY 2015

- 5 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
- 8 **SPRING REUNION**  
4:00-5:15 PM – Registration  
9:15 PM – Recess to Saturday
- 9 **SPRING REUNION**  
8:00 AM – Class Reports; light break-fast  
7:30 PM – Reunion concluded with Dinner and Festivities
- 12 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
- 16 **Celebrating the Craft**  
(House of the Temple)
- 19 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 25 **MEMORIAL DAY – HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED**
- 26 Albert Pike Consistory

## JUNE 2015

- 2 **PEN/Faulkner Program** -  
7:00 PM
- 9 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
- 10 **DCSR Golf Outing**  
(Whiskey Creek Golf Course)
- 14 **DCSR Tough Mudder**  
(Meadow Event Park, VA)
- 16 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 23 Albert Pike Consistory

## JULY–AUGUST 2015

### (Summer Recess)

No Schedule Meetings of the Washington Valley in July and August 2015

August 22-25 Biennial Session – Centennial Jubilee

## SEPTEMBER 2015

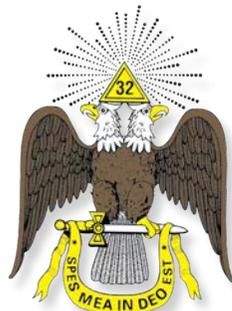
- 1 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
- 7 **LABOR DAY – HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED**
- 8 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
- 15 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 22 Albert Pike Consistory

## OCTOBER 2015

- 6 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
- 10 **Americanism Program - JROTC Awards Program**
- 12 **COLUMBUS DAY – HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED**
- 13 **Feast of Tishri**  
(Scottish Rite Brethren Only)
- 20 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 27 Albert Pike Consistory

## NOVEMBER 2015

- 3 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
- 6 **FALL REUNION**  
4:00-5:15 PM Registration  
9:15 PM Recess to Saturday
- 7 **FALL REUNION**  
8:00 AM – Class Reports; light breakfast  
7:30 PM – Reunion Concluded with Dinner and Festivities
- 10 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
- 11 **VETERAN'S BIRTHDAY – HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED**
- 17 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 24 **Scholarship – Education & Community Service Awards Program**
- 26 **THANKSGIVING DAY – HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED**





SCOTTISH RITE TEMPLE



2800

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS .....	INSIDE FRONT COVER
MESSAGE OF THE SOVEREIGN GRAND INSPECTOR GENERAL .....	4
<b>COVER STORY</b>	
<b>THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT</b> .....	5-23
By ILL. CHARLES S. IVERSEN, 33°	
<b>Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Renaissance Man</b> .....	24-25
<b>WASHINGTON VALLEY FALL 2014 CLASS</b> .....	28-31
<b>2015 GRAND MASTER OF MASONS - 33°</b> .....	32
<b>2015 POTENTATE OF ALMAS SHRINERS</b> .....	34
<b>INSPECTORS GENERAL HONORARY, 33°</b> .....	36
<b>KNIGHTS COMMANDER OF THE COURT OF HONOUR (KCCH)</b> .....	37
<b>50+ YEAR MEMBERS OF THE WASHINGTON VALLEY</b> .....	38
<b>MASTER CRAFTSMAN RECOGNITION</b> .....	39
<b>BENEFACTORS CLUB MEMBERSHIP</b> .....	40
<b>SCOTTISH RITE BODIES TRUSTEES</b> .....	41
<b>SCOTTISH RITE FOUNDATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, INC.</b> .....	42
<b>THE SCOTTISH RITE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>	
SECRETARY AND TREASURER .....	44
ALMONER AND STRATEGIC PLANNING .....	45
OFFICERS	
MITHRAS LODGE OF PERFECTION .....	46
EVANGELIST CHAPTER OF ROSE CROIX .....	47
ROBERT DE BRUCE COUNCIL OF KADOSH .....	48
ALBERT PIKE CONSISTORY .....	49
GENERAL OFFICERS .....	50
EMERITI MEMBERS AND COLLEGE OF PHILOSOPHY MENTORING PROGRAM .....	51
COMMITTEES .....	52-59
<b>2015 SPRING CLASS ACTIVITIES</b>	
INTRODUCTION .....	61
DIRECTORS OF WORK / DIRECTORS OF DEGREES .....	62-63
FOURTH DEGREE CAST .....	64
FOURTEENTH DEGREE RING .....	65
FOURTEENTH DEGREE CAST .....	66
EIGHTEENTH DEGREE CAST .....	67
TWENTY-SEVENTH DEGREE CAST .....	68
THIRTIETH DEGREE CAST .....	69
THIRTY-SECOND DEGREE CAST .....	70
<b>SCOTTISH RITE PRAYER</b> .....	71
<b>SCOTTISH RITE CENTER FOR CHILDHOOD LANGUAGE DISORDERS-STAFF</b> .....	73
<b>GENERAL GUIDELINES</b> .....	74
<b>2015 SPRING CLASS SCHEDULE</b> .....	INSIDE BACK COVER

**BY ILLUSTRIOUS LEONARD PRODEN, 33°**

SOVEREIGN GRAND INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE  
SUPREME COUNCIL IN WASHINGTON, DC



*Ill. Leonard Proden, 33°*

Greetings to all of our candidates! You will soon become a member of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry here at the Valley of Washington in the Orient of the District of Columbia. A part of that impressive Reunion process of the Rite, will have you view six Degrees (4°, 14°, 18°, 27°, 30°, and 32°), which will be presented as allegorical plays staged with Scottish Rite actors in costume along with scenery, music and a few special effects. The remaining Degrees will be communicated in our upstairs Lodge Room via narration and various visual methods. The Degrees cover topics that involve Blue Lodge masonry, ancient and comparative religions, the building of the Temple, history, chivalry and philosophy. Much information is presented and it can be awesome but overwhelming. My suggestion is to make a special effort to focus on the orations at the end of each Degree, which are summaries that highlight the important lessons that we should remember. I hope you find the entire process profound. At the conclusion of our Spring Reunion you will depart as a Master of the Royal Secret or better known as a 32° Scottish Rite Mason.

This Bulletin is our biannual publication distributed to all of our Orient members prior to each Reunion. It is your official invitation to join our candidates and me at this special time. Make time in your busy schedule to attend all or part of your Valley's Spring Reunion and re-hear those orations and the lessons we learned at our Reunion that set us on our personal journey in attaining equilibrium in our life.

Our chronicler-in-chief, Ill. Charles S. Iversen, 33° S.G.I.G. Emeritus, decided to reprint an article from the Spring 2002 Bulletin featuring the Age of Enlightenment and its influence on the development of freemasonry. With the editing assistance of our General Secretary, Ill. Carroll J. Collins, 33°, and contributions by Mark Dreisonstok, 32° it is hoped their combined updated efforts will provide an interesting read.

I reviewed the 2002 publication and found the then Deputy's Message by Ill. George R. Adams, 33° G.C. for that printing to be relevant 13 years later and spot-on. Below is an excerpt:

*My brethren, as Freemasons you belong to the largest and most universal brotherhood in the world. Its philosophy of life, transformed by enlightened members of our speculative Craft during the Age of Enlightenment, has its roots in the perennial philosophy of the Ages and helped inspire our Founding Fathers in America to lay the cornerstone of a new civilization that has become a model of a free democratic society that is emulated throughout the world. Like the ancient Vedas, whose authors are lost in antiquity, no one has yet proven with certainty the exact origins of Freemasonry. Some trace its Masonic roots as far back as Zarathustra and the Mithraic mysteries of ancient Persia; others to the College of Roman builders, others to the Greek mystery schools; others to the builders of the Pyramids of Egypt; others to the Cathedral builders of the Middle Ages; and still others to the Knights Templar. The truth is that Freemasonry draws on all of these traditions of antiquity to allow men of all cultures, religions and nationalities to identify with the Craft as part of their own tradition and philosophy.*

*With this perspective, I am pleased to say that the Valley of Washington, Orient of the District of Columbia, has entered the 21st Century in the universal spirit of our Masonic Ancestors and is working diligently to assist its members to become better individuals and better citizens of the world, while enjoying the journey along the way.*

Thank you for your support of our Scottish Rite.



Scan this QR Code with your Android or iPhone to access the SR mobile website.

# THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT: THE FLOWERING OF FREEMASONRY

BY ILL. CHARLES S. IVERSEN, 33°,  
SOVEREIGN GRAND INSPECTOR GENERAL EMERITUS



*“To everything there is a season, and a time to every  
purpose under the heaven”.*

ECCLESIASTES 3:1

All pictures shown within this article, including the cover are used with permission of the United Grand Lodge of England, and are taken from *Freemasonry: A Celebration of the Craft*, a book published in 1992 in commemoration of the 275th Anniversary of the premier Grand Lodge of England (1717).

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

The time and season for the flowering of Freemasonry was the 18th Century in Europe. The years between 1700 and 1789 were known as the Age of Reason now more generally called the Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment was fostered by intellectuals who studied philosophy, science and politics and who insisted on the application of reason and proof of their studies and discoveries. In order to assist them in their endeavors and spread their findings they formed many associations; the foremost of which were the symbolic lodges of Freemasonry.

The thinkers of that era were called “philosophes”, a French word meaning philosophical, political and social thinkers and writers of the 18th Century who were professionals within the various academic disciplines, and as a movement they formed associations wherein the philosophes of all disciplines could intermingle their thoughts and accomplishments.

The philosophes called for tolerance and the removal of prejudice that oppressed people’s lives, advocated freedom from religious dogmas, and promoted the need for basic civic and political rights for all. The result was the establishment of the intellectual foundation of our modern western world with its notions of democracy, civil liberty, and individual rights. In their rational studies they urged the people to be more virtuous, tolerant and reasonable.

The Enlightenment did not suddenly burst forth like a display of fireworks but was the culmination of centuries of progress towards a more civilized society and a long and costly advance towards freedom of thought and expression in science, politics and religion. For that reason, three eras which preceded the Enlightenment will be discussed briefly since without them the Enlightenment of the 18th Century might not have taken place.

---

## PRELUDE TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT

---

Weaving through the five centuries preceding the 18th Century was a movement which prepared human thought for the freedom that could accept Freemasonry, like a flow of water which at first was a trickle, then a brook, a stream, and finally a river. It started at the beginnings of Medieval Europe and covered 500 years of history. To explain that

This article appeared in the Spring 2002 Bulletin to show the exponential growth of symbolic Masonry during the 18th Century. Europe and its affiliated countries around the world were experiencing the Age of Reason (the Enlightenment) during which century most of the intelligentsia were breaking away from government control and religious dogma. The leaders in science and the arts found it to be convenient to form Masonic lodges as the centers for their meetings where they could exchange their ideas and broaden their powers of reason with interference. This started in England and spread across the European continent and into many nations beyond, including the United States before and after its independence as a nation. It is hoped that the new members of the Craft and those who missed the original printing will find this reprint of interest.

Ill. Charles S. Iversen, 33°  
*S.G.I.G. Emeritus*

important period of time would take literally volumes of the printed word, but it must be condensed into very limited space in this article, causing much of it to be omitted.

## THE CRUSADES

In the decade preceding 1100 A.D., it is reported that Christian pilgrims visiting the Holy Land were being denied entry and were set upon by highway men who robbed and killed. So, in an effort to maintain the religious freedom of association which been enjoyed theretofore, the Pope and monarchs of Europe formed the first crusade. It consisted of nobles and knights, clergymen and soldiers who advanced across Europe and into the Near East where in 1099 they attacked Jerusalem and wrested it from the Fatimid Caliphate. Subsequently, other crusades followed, and the Knights Templar helped to maintain control of the Holy Land for nearly a century. However, in 1191, they were driven out by Saladin's army, and in due time were allowed peaceful access again.

As the Knights Templar returned to their homelands in Europe during the 12th and 13th Centuries they retained their identity, maintained their organization and line of officers headed by a Grand Master, and amassed great wealth. That wealth, and its consequent power and influence, prompted debt-ridden King Philip the Fair of France, aided by Pope Clement V, to arrest all Knights Templar in France and confiscated their property. In 1314, the last Grand Master Jacques de Molay, was burned at the stake for heresy, and confiscation of Templar assets spread into other continental European countries, and England.



*In this 12th century drawing of the building of the Tower of Babel, Medieval masons can be seen working with many of the traditional working tools – square, chisel, heavy maul and plumb-rule. They are all retained in the symbolic workings of today's speculative Craft.*

Although the crusades started as a religious movement, they had a profound effect upon the political and economic life of their day. Some historians are of the opinion that Masonry had its beginning with the Templars, but there is insufficient space in this article to delve into that subject.

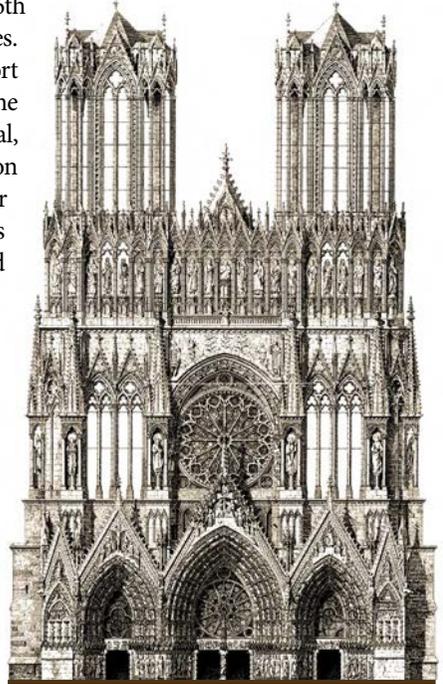
---

## GOTHIC ERA

---

Commencing in the 13th Century and fading out in the 16th was the era of the grand cathedrals and other similar edifices. Again, the movement was motivated by religion, an effort to express faith in the huge arched and pinnacled stone architecture. To accomplish the construction of a cathedral, the owner of the land would contract with a Master Mason who was by training and experience an architect, engineer and builder. The knowledge needed by him was vast, was unwritten and kept secret. To build a cathedral would require about 100 years. The Master Mason would gather together at the construction site stonemasons, excavators, carpenters, and others as needed, and they would live on the site as a “lodge”. Smaller buildings required less time and fewer workers. The stonemasons were fellows of the craft and apprentices, many of whom spent their entire lives on a single project. Guilds were formed to train and protect, as well as provide, the workers. The Master Mason with the power of an autocrat, drew up rules, plans and orders to govern his project and his workers.

The 400 years of the Gothic Era, although motivated by religion, had a very profound effect on politics and economics of that day. It is said that in England alone at the start of the Lutheran Reformation of the early 16th Century, there were around 20 cathedrals, 9000 parish churches, 645 monasteries, 90 colleges, 2,374 chantries and 110 hospitals, a total of over 12, 000 Gothic structures. There are many Masonic historians who believe that modern Freemasonry dated from this period, but as in the case of the Knights Templar there is insufficient room in this publication to discuss this interesting theory in detail.



*“Of exquisite design and workmanship.” The west front of Reims Cathedral, France, the coronation church of the French Kings, built in the 13th century by Bernard de Soissons.*

---

---

## THE REFORMATION

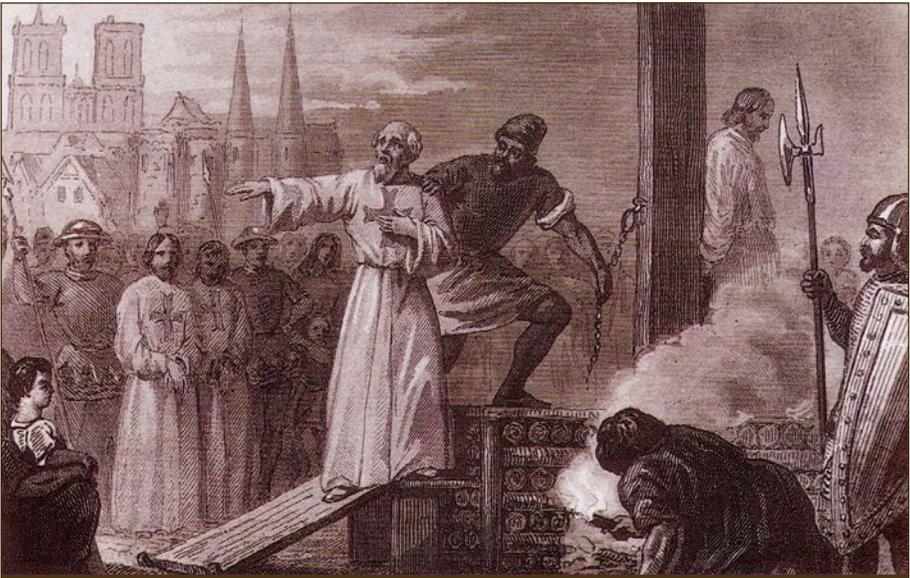
---

The 15th into the 17th Centuries saw the tremendous religious upheavals which accompanied the Reformation, a movement which spread Protestantism throughout Europe, with varying results. Like the Crusades and the Gothic Era, the Reformation was motivated by religion but had an even greater impact on politics, economics and society than did the two former movements.

During the years of the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church had a monopoly on religion in Europe. In fact, the continent of Europe was known then as Christendom, the word “Europe” having been adopted some time later. The church led by the Pope, influenced the monarchs and princes who governed the European kingdoms and principalities. This influence was both temporal and spiritual.

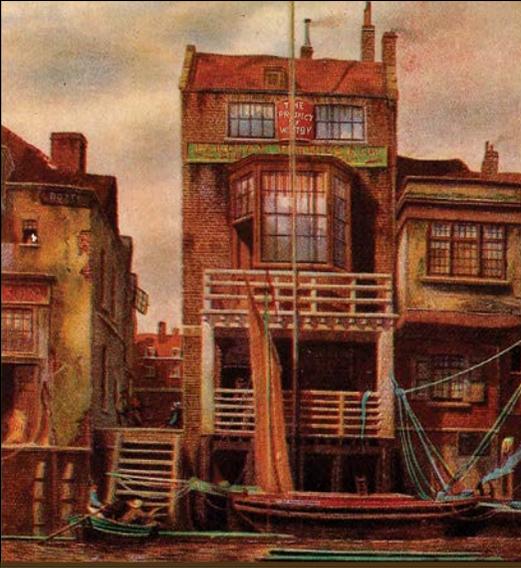
The centuries preceding the Enlightenment witnessed a gradual reduction in the church’s monopoly, particularly in its temporal power. One of the first evidences was the Great Schism (1378-1417) when there were two Popes, one sitting in Rome and one in Avignon. During that period of 39 years, various tactics were employed by each Pope to gain ascendancy over the other, including the Papal power of excommunication. It is said that each Pope exercised his power by excommunicating his opponent as well as all of the followers of his opponent leaving most Catholics as well and the Popes excommunicated. Miraculously, the church recovered from this debacle and regained most of its tremendous powers.

Then along came Martin Luther (1483-1548), a German priest and former monk, who became so disillusioned with the church that, in October 1517, he posted a list of his grievances on the door of All Saints Church in Wittenberg. Called before the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, he was charged with heresy, convicted and excommunicated. But he was saved from the stake by Frederick III, Elector of Saxony, a powerful duke, who invited Luther to live at his palace where, among many other undertakings, Luther translated the Latin Bible into German.



*Jacques de Molay, Grand Master of the Order of Knights Templar. ~ As he bravely met his death in March 1314, de Molay is said to have cried out to his persecutors, “I summon you, Philip the Fair and Pope Clement the Fifth, within a year before the tribunal of God.” Within twelve months, both men were dead.*

Luther's grievances struck a chord with the German people and their princes. Germany then being a combination of principalities, not a unified country as today. From this early effort at freedom of speech grew the Reformation which spread across Europe, becoming strongest in the northern countries. Luther formed his own religion in Germany and it was adopted by many princes as the state religion. (Separation of church and state was unknown to the Middle Ages.) From Germany it took hold in Scandinavia and was influential in Poland and the Low Countries. The Holy Roman Emperor eventually relented and permitted the practice of Lutheranism.



*The earliest English lodges met in taverns and coffee houses. This tavern on the River Thames, at Pelican Stairs, Old Wapping, London, England was the home of Old Dundee Lodge No. 18 1739-1820.*

Other clergymen broke away from the Roman church and started additional branches of Protestantism. John Calvin of Geneva created a church in 1530 which relied on very strict morals and self-discipline. His beliefs were approved by John Knox in Scotland who used them to form the state-supported Presbyterian Church. Calvin's beliefs became popular in France where they were adopted by the Huguenots and spread into Belgium and the Netherlands. Erasmus of Holland advocated the humanistic approach of ancient Greece and Rome bolstered by the study of the Bible. He claimed that the Roman church had strayed from the original meaning of Jesus's mission and had developed a hierarchy not contemplated in the Bible. Huldrych Zwingli of Switzerland broke from the Roman church and started a separate congregation. Then there were Wycliffe of England and Jan

Hus of Bohemia. As the years passed more reformers organized additional denominations of Christianity. They all had a large number of followers particularly among the nobility and intellectuals. For example, it is said that in Normandy, Brittany and Southern France, two-thirds of the nobility became Huguenots.

In 16th Century England, Henry VIII, a devout Catholic, ran afoul of the Roman church when he attempted to obtain an annulment of his marriage to Queen Catherine who had born a daughter but not a male heir, and had grown too old to do so. The Pope refused to grant it, apparently at the urging of the King of Spain to whom Catherine was related, so Henry confiscated all of the church's properties in England and expelled the clergy, including his archbishop. This resulted in Henry's excommunication, a complete split from the Roman church, and the establishment of the Church of England headed by the King himself.

Over the years, as matters grew worse for the Roman church, the Popes engaged in a Reformation of their own, and also a Counter-Reformation intended to block the hemorrhaging of membership into the Protestant denominations. In 1441, Thomas a Kempis, a Catholic clergyman, had written a book entitled *The Imitation of Christ* which delved beneath the rituals of the church to show the inner meaning of the Bible. This theme was undertaken by the church as a type of Reformation. Also, the church created a series of brotherhoods consisting of monks and laymen, primarily in the Catholic strongholds of Spain and Italy, which emphasized daily masses and monthly confessions. These changes in the spiritual practices had some success, but the church's temporal power continued to erode. Thus started the Counter-Reformation.

Pope Paul III called the Council of Trent (1545-1563), and the primary result of that 19-year conference was to strengthen the temporal powers of the Pope, and to reinvigorate the Inquisition which had been started in 1213 by Pope Gregory IX, and expanded in 1487 by Pope Innocent VIII. The inquisition was operated by the Pope through his agents in order to avoid sympathy for the accused by some local leaders. If a written complaint was made against a person, the complaint was served on the accused by the parish priest and it directed the accused to appear before the tribunal on a date certain. Unless the accused confessed, he was likely tortured (a practice common in those days) in order to obtain a confession and the names of other suspects. If found guilty of heresy, the sentence was frequently death by burning. As can be imagined, this procedure was not popular with the people and only accelerated the growth of Protestantism.



*Sir Walter Scott was the most successful British novelist of his day. In two of his novels (Ivanhoe and The Talisman) the Templars are featured, and in 1823 he was offered the Grand Mastership of the Masonic Knights Templar in Scotland, but ill-health led him to decline.*

In the 15th and 16th Centuries wars broke out between Roman Catholics and Protestants, nine in France alone where the Huguenots were strong. These wars around Europe were collectively known as the Hundred Years War. Then came the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) which started as a local dispute between the Holy Roman Emperor and his Protestant subjects in the Kingdom of Bohemia and expanded into a continental war, eventually becoming more political than religious.

---

## COMMENTS

---

Having touched briefly on the happenings over the five hundred medieval years from the 12th to the end of the 17th Century, the Age of Reason, or Enlightenment, arrived. It is seen that during those earlier years, the dignity of the individual had improved. He had acquired a greater control over his destiny; had earned a right to independent thought; and had enjoyed a higher degree of freedom from mental and physical oppression. He

had come out from under the feudal system of that time (not covered in this article) and had broken some of the constraints imposed on him by autocratic rulers and ecclesiastical dogma. This atmosphere of thought had benefitted him, particularly his intellectual advancement, and enabled him to read and understand the truths of science, politics, economics, and religion.

With the foregoing cursory review of history we are now going to proceed to the 18th Century and try to convey a little of the importance of the Masonic Fraternity.

---

### THE AGE OF REASON

---

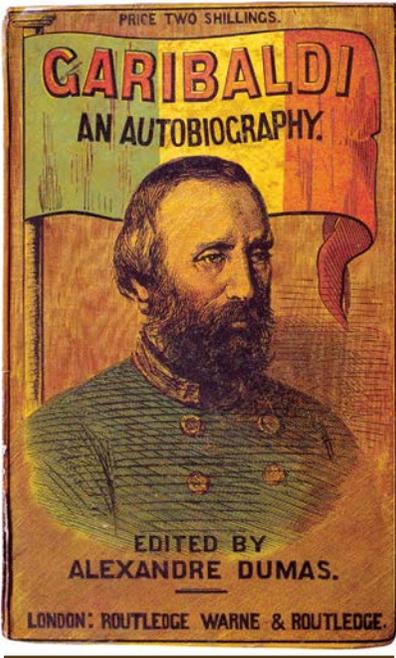
The years from the 1650s to the 1780s ushered in an era of enlightenment led by the intellectual thinkers and writers of Europe. As stated in the introduction, these men advocated and practiced free thought and freedom of reason.

“In the 18th Century, *philosophes* in Britain and Europe began to look at the way society was organized and how people were restricted in what they could say or do, either by moral convention or by the state. These thinkers differed in their specific concerns and conclusions, but they were united in their emphasis on the importance of reason. Everything they believed should be analyzed and improved through the application of reason. This movement became known as the Enlightenment, and the period in which it flourished is today called the Age of Reason.”<sup>1</sup>

The field of astronomy serves as an example of the progress of thought over the centuries. In the earlier days truth in science was determined by church dogma, but as time passed the dogma was replaced by scientific discovery and reason. Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1722), an English philosopher and scientist, was the most noted scientist of his day. He developed the principles of calculus and gravity; he held the belief that God created the world, then rested, watching the world develop but not intervening (basis of Deism). From mid-18th Century onward Deism lost its appeal in favor of the general Christian teachings that God is omnipresent and available in daily experience. One of the scientific fields of his day was the drastic change in astronomy.

Some of Newton's studies were the outgrowth of early astronomers: Nickolas Copernicus (1473-1543), a Polish cleric, who wrote a book entitled *On the Revolutions of the Celestial Orbs*, in which he declared that the earth revolves around the sun (reversing Ptolemy's theory of a flat earth around which revolved the sun and which had become church dogma), and whose discovery assisted Christopher Columbus and other adventurers who might otherwise have fallen off the edge of the earth; also Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), an Italian, who had access to a telescope through which he, as stated in his book *Dialogue for the Two Great Systems of the World*, confirmed the observations of Copernicus. Both Copernicus and Galileo were tried for heresy, the former excommunicated and the latter saved by recantation. These two great astronomers' discoveries were confirmed by Tycho Brahe (1546-1601), a Danish astronomer, who was given an advanced telescope by the king. With it he observed the firmament and concluded that Galileo was correct.

Many famous intellectuals of the 18th Century, some of whom were Freemasons, engaged in studies and discoveries in their various disciplines. A few of them are mentioned briefly in the ensuing space to show some of their accomplishments. It will be noted that through all of their works freedom of thought and expression are evident.



*Garibaldi's Autobiography* (1860) was edited by Alexandre Dumas, who was subsequently made a Mason at Naples in 1862. George Routledge, who published the English translation of Garibaldi's book, was also a member of the Craft.

Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), a French philosopher, believed that every dogma of traditional Christianity might be refuted if not in accord with reason. This philosophy pervaded Europe, letting in the light upon what had been darkness. Then Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), a German philosopher, questioned authority, believing nothing human to be absolute, and urged emergence from immaturity, from self-imposed inability to think for oneself. He encouraged people to “know”, to use their power of reason. Two books by Kant were popular: *What is Enlightenment?* (1784) and *Grounding for Metaphysics* (1785).

An Oxford professor, John Locke (1632-1704), espoused the idea that moral values (knowledge of right and wrong) developed from human experiences of pain and pleasure, and that science can unlock the mysteries of nature and improve the world through laws of physics and chemistry. This reflected to an extent the philosophy of René Descartes (1596-1650), a Frenchman who believed that the mind had innate ideas beyond the physical senses and that systematic doubt was the beginning of knowledge.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), an Englishman, although a pessimist, had similar ideas and believed that man could overcome his selfishness and greed by joining with others

and bringing peace to society by paying allegiance to an autocratic ruler. The concept for an autocratic ruler, however, disappeared following the “Glorious Revolution” in England when Charles I was dethroned and replaced by a decade under Oliver Cromwell and the restoration in 1660 of a limited monarchy under Charles II.

During the Age of Reason, Britain was considered by Europe to be the most enlightened nation. It was not until 1789 that the line of autocratic rulers (the Louis kings) were terminated in France by the country's revolution.

David Hume (1711-1776), a Scotsman, adopted the science of humanity, believing that people are capable of making their own rules for living because they have a sixth sense which guides them naturally to do good, and that actions which benefit society are the height of morality.

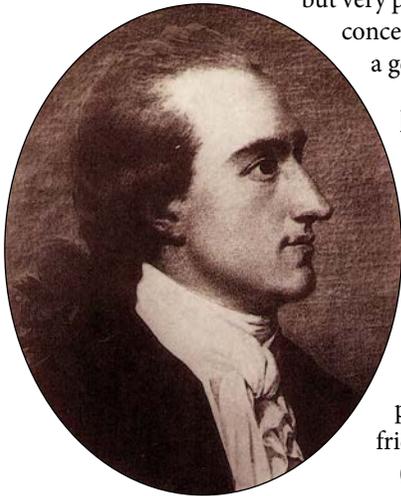
## The Age of Enlightenment

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), a farmer's daughter in England, defied many conventions. In her book *Vindication of the Rights of the Woman* (1792), she held that society corrupts woman by putting her on a pedestal and then making her dependent upon man. She sets forth many other grievances, probably the first intellectual dissertation on women's rights.

An English economist, Adam Smith (1723-1790), opposed the widespread use of tariffs and other restraints on trade, especially by the state. His book *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) proposed the policy of laissez-faire in economics. The market, he submitted is the best stimulus for economic progress, because the market is best controlled by supply and demand. Also, he wrote that each worker does his best when a business uses specialization since it increases productivity and thus benefits most people.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), a Swiss philosopher from Geneva, raised for most of his minority years in a monastery, turned to music and art for a living. His modern concepts of politics led him to write essays on equality in society. His principal work "*Of The Social Contract, Or Principles of Political Right*" (1762) helped inspire political reforms or revolutions in Europe, especially in France.

Denis Diderot (1713-1784) was a Parisian philosopher, art critic and writer, who wrote about philosophy and literature. His magnum opus was a 28-volume *Encyclopedia* (17 volumes of text and 11 volumes of illustrations) which covered all that presumably was known in science and art. It took twenty-one years to complete (1751-1772), and contained many essays on various subjects within the world of knowledge. The books were expensive but very popular, and they exemplified freedom of expression, a concept during the Enlightenment, and brought to the public a general education in all fields of science and art.



---

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Germany's greatest literary figure, whose work exemplified both the enquiring spirit of the Enlightenment and the imagination of the Romantic Movement.

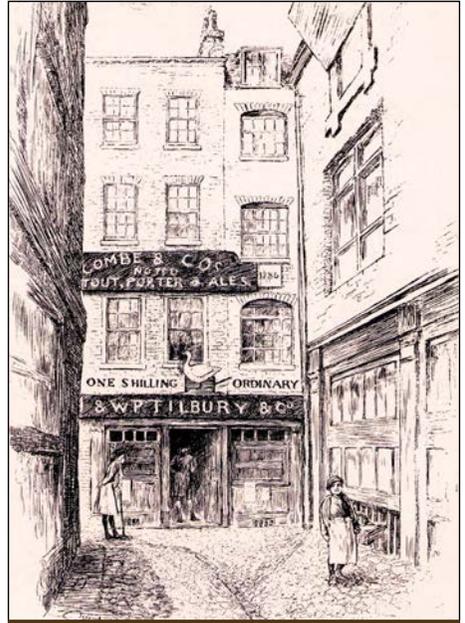
---

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) was an internationally famous German dramatist and author of the Sturm und Drang period, a romanticist in literature. After studying law at Strasbourg, he lived in Frankfurt am Main and became director of theater and the arts in one of the German states. His most famous books were *Faust* and *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. Like Thomas Jefferson, Goethe was a Renaissance man, very intelligent and cultured, a Protestant who promoted freedom and individuality, and was a good friend of the German poet Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803), and of Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805), a famous German historian who wrote histories and literature covering many volumes.

François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694-1778), was a French writer, historian, and philosopher who defended victims of religious intolerance, and a master of satire.

Because of his freedom of expression he was twice consigned to the Bastille and then exiled to England. While in England he learned the language and acquired an admiration for that country's government and way of life. His primary work was *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*. For two years he visited Frederick the Great in Prussia. Often accused of being an atheist, he was in fact a Deist and built a church on his own property. Two months before his death he was made an Entered Apprentice Mason in The Nine Sisters Lodge in Paris, having been introduced by Benjamin Franklin, then our very popular minister to France.

Frederick II (1712-1786), King of Prussia and known as Frederick the Great, was interested in agriculture and industry prior to ascending to the throne, also he instituted social reforms after becoming king in 1740. Frederick wrote profusely, his works covering 30 volumes. He had been made a Mason at Brunswick in 1738, and upon his ascension to the throne in 1740, promoted and protected Freemasonry. When compared to other monarchs of his day, he was quite enlightened. Most of the famous individuals who were prominent and influential during the years of the Enlightenment have been omitted due to the lack of space, but it is hoped that from the scanty biographies of those individuals who are mentioned above, a thread can be detected weaving through them all which shows their devotion to freedom of expression, promotion of individuality and the application of the power of reason. Europe had become the place where Masonry could prosper and so it did.



*The first meeting of the premier Grand Lodge was held June 1717 at the Goose and Gridiron Alehouse in St. Paul's Churchyard, the home of the first of four Old Lodges that established the Grand Lodge.*

## FREEMASONRY DURING THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Commencing in Britain, the 18th Century witnessed the flowering of Freemasonry in Europe. Religion, politics, and science came together during that century and formed an ideal climate for the advancement of Freemasonry.

“Private clubs, literary societies, and Masonic lodges also spread like wildfire. Like the salons, such clubs served as laboratories of free thought and democracy. Behind closed doors their members could debate as equals, free from either royal censors or the weight of traditional prejudices. In their settings, individuals were distinguished primarily by their merits, not their birth or rank<sup>2</sup>.

In 1717, four of five lodges in London formed a Grand Lodge to supervise Masonry in London and Westminster. The lodges were: (1) Goose and Gridiron; (2) Crown Ale

<sup>2</sup>History of the Modern World Volume IV

House; (3) Apple-Tree Tavern; and (4) Rummer and Grapes Tavern. From that year until 1723, a period known as the “Revival”, when Dr. James Anderson, a Scottish writer, minister, and Freemason published the *Constitutions of 1723*. The book consisted of (1) a fanciful “history” of the origin of masonry; (2) six charges of Free-Masons; (3) general regulations governing Masons, lodges and the Grand Lodge; (4) a group of songs; and (5) approbation of Grand Officers and the officers of about 20 lodges.

It was during this time that the course of Masonry was fully changed from the practical (operational) to the theoretical (symbolic). The laws and customs of the stonemasons’ trade (gentrified in the Gothic Era of the 12th to 16th Centuries) were applied to social, moral and fraternal purposes. Mackey said of the new order; “The ship was still there but the object of the voyage was changed.”

Masonry sprang into prominence and increased both in the number of lodges and the number of members. It became the object of imitation by other organizations.

Masonry expanded vertically by adding degrees, and horizontally by migrating over the civilized globe. From England, Masonry spread into other countries and jurisdictions, often first by authorizing provincial Grand Lodges, then later by independent Grand Lodges, as follows:

1. Grand Lodge of Ireland in 1730, which started prospering in 1747. By 1885 it had 387 lodges and in 1939 about 700 lodges, plus 122 military and traveling lodges
2. Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1736, there being about 100 lodges at that time.

Others were: Belgium in 1721; Paris in 1725; Madrid in 1728; Bengal India in 1735; Savannah, Georgia in 1734; Holland in 1734; Rome in 1735; Sweden in 1735; Portugal in 1736; Charleston, SC in 1736; Portsmouth, NH in 1736; Switzerland in 1736; West Indies in 1737; Dresden, Germany in 1738; Nova Scotia in 1738; New York in 1739; Russia in 1740; Berlin in 1740; Bayreuth, Germany in 1741; Virginia in 1741; Austria in 1742; Frankfurt in 1743; Denmark in 1743; Newfoundland in 1746; Newport, RI in 1749; Maryland in 1749; New Haven, Connecticut in 1750.

The growth continued at a more rapid pace in the latter half of the century. Over a period of 33 years, Masonry extended into nearly all countries in the Western Hemisphere. Some monarchs opposed Masonry, and Masonry encountered the enmity of the Roman Catholic Church, beginning with the Papal Bull of Pope Clement XII in 1738. Very little Masonic literature appeared until the late 18th Century.

---

### GROWTH OF FREEMASONRY

---

“We will never know precisely what it was like to live a life attentive to enlightened ideals. Some European men and a few women sought to express those ideals sociably, within the perimeters set by private fraternizing. Within those limits the Masonic lodges were by far the most cosmopolitan and internationally connected enclaves of the century.”<sup>3</sup> The lodges of that era promoted a belief in God, morality, fraternal bonding

and cosmopolitanism, not dissimilar from today. As the century matured, the lodges undertook Masonic charity to assist needy brethren. But they catered to the nobility and upper middle classes, some exclusively so, while others admitted men from all walks of life. In any event Masonry grew rapidly during the 18th Century in Europe. It should be remembered that the population of Europe was far less than it is today. The following statistics will show to some extent the degree of growth enjoyed by the Fraternity.

---

### ENGLAND

---

By 1723, when Anderson published his *Constitutions*, there were between 25 and 30 lodges; in 1740 there were about 180; and in 1743, about 271. Then a schism arose, resulting in the formation of the Grand Lodge of the Ancient Masons. For a while the number of lodges dwindled, but by 1813 when the United Grand Lodge of England was formed the Moderns Grand Lodge had 50 lodges in London and 277 in the rest of England, as well as 207 overseas. The Ancients Grand Lodge had 59 lodges in London and 127 in the rest of England.

---

### IRELAND

---

In 1688 the first lodge was opened at Trinity College, Dublin. In 1725, the Irish Grand Lodge had 6 lodges, and the number grew to 32 lodges in 1740. In 1804, the Grand Lodge of Ireland had 951 chartered lodges, 744 of which were active, plus 122 military lodges. By 1850 there was estimated to be at least one lodge in each village.

---

### SCOTLAND

---

Probably the oldest lodge in existence in the world is Edinburgh Lodge No. 1, also known as St. Mary's Chapel and was in existence about 118 years prior to the formation of the Grand Lodge in England, namely 1599. Kilwinning Lodge dates back to 1642. By 1736 there were 33 lodges operating in Scotland. In 1735, four lodges, Mary's Chapel, Canongate Kilwinning, Kilwinning Scots Arms, and Leith Kilwinning, started preparations for the establishment of a Scottish Grand Lodge, which was accomplished in 1736. The Grand Lodge expanded its operations, but the Jacobite revolt in 1745 slowed its progress. Also a dispute arose between Mary's Chapel and Kilwinning Lodge as to their respective ages, but in 1807 the schism came to an end with Kilwinning becoming Kilwinning Lodge No. 0. Starting in 1747 and for the remainder of the 18th Century, the Grand Lodge of Scotland focused greatly on establishing military lodges spreading Masonry in the British colonies, including Asia, Africa, Australia, and the West Indies. The Grand Lodge of Scotland allowed soldiers to join military lodges, while in England soldiers were not allowed to join military lodges until World War I.

---

### FRANCE

---

Masonry was introduced in France from England in 1726 when the first lodge was formed in Paris: by 1750 France had about 62 lodges. In the 1750's 70 additional lodges were chartered, and in the 1760s another 182. By 1780, there were about 35,000 Masons in the country.



*The Duke of Wellington (1769-1852), whose military success at Waterloo in 1815 brought peace to war-torn Europe.*

It is interesting to note that initiation fees, dues and assessments were high compared to today. In one lodge where the records still exist, the initiation fee was 36 livres in 1778 and in 1781 they had increased to 60 livres, a rise required by inflation. In addition to that, the lodge engaged the services of a cook and a laundress. Each brother was required to purchase his own regalia.

The following statistics will show the increase of Masonry in France during the 18th Century:

- 1743 – 22 lodges in Paris and 28 in the provinces.
- 1771 - 41 lodges in Paris and 169 in the provinces, also 11 lodges in French colonies and 31 military lodges.
- 1778 - 129 lodges in Paris and 247 in the provinces and colonies including military lodges.
- 1789 - Grand Lodge of France had about 100 lodges, and the Grand Orient had about 500 lodges. This was the year when the French Revolution commenced.

---

### THE NETHERLANDS

---

Between 1735 and 1744, all Masonic lodges were banned in the Netherlands, but from 1759-1794, 80 lodges were created. In La Loge de Juste, located in The Hague, women were admitted as members.

---

### GERMANIC STATES

---

The first lodge formed in the Germanic States was in Hamburg December 6, 1727. Eleven years later the Crown Prince of Prussia was raised and two years later became King Frederick II (Frederick the Great). Lodges spread throughout the states during the 1740's in Berlin, Bayreuth, Leipzig, Dresden, Meiningen, Breslau, Frankfurt an der Oder, Frankfurt am Main, Brunswick, Marburg, etc.

Masonry spread into Italy, Spain and Portugal, Poland, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Scandinavia, Belgium, Russia and elsewhere in Europe during the 18th Century and each had its own interesting history, but space will not permit further discussion in this article.

---

### THE SCOTTISH RITE AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT

---

Unlike basic Freemasonry which had its origin in England prior to the Enlightenment, the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry had its origin in France during the Enlightenment. As most of us are aware, many Masons in France in the early and mid-1700s became interested in literature and degrees which they had discovered among ancient records. They were joined

by a large number of Masons from Scotland, mostly Jacobean, who were exiled in France.

These brethren formed an organization in 1758 in Paris called the Council of Emperors of the East and West which, in turn, established a Lodge of Perfection. They also adopted three degrees in addition to the basic three which were conferred on candidates in the Blue (Symbolic) lodges, namely the Ecossaise, Novice, and Knight Templar degrees (unrelated to the American York Rite degrees). From these, twenty-five degrees were developed, the highest being the Prince of the Royal Secret: later, they were extended to thirty-three.

The Scottish Rite degrees were the product of Masonic intellectuals in France who were active during the Enlightenment. Although the degrees were rewritten after 1859 by Albert Pike, and in some instances, modified over the ensuing years, the basic tenor and meaning of the messages conveyed have remained the same. Three of the five obligatory degrees which are required to be conferred on all candidates will illustrate their similarity with the ideas espoused during the Enlightenment.



*The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite as we know it today was effectively born on 31 May, 1801 at Charleston, South Carolina, when the First Supreme Council was formed there by Col. John Mitchell, The Revd. Dr. Frederick Dalcho and their colleagues. (In this painting by Allyn Cox the house in which they met is shown as it appeared at the time.)*

---

### KNIGHT OF THE ROSE CROIX

---

This degree opens in an atmosphere of depression and sadness into which the candidate is introduced, and he is shown scenes of evil and misery, an environment of inhumane behavior and decadence. The candidate is asked how this can exist in a world where God is good and omnipotent. His power of reason is called into play by means of lectures which discuss the existence of good and evil. Religion is presented as the source of light by means of which he may dispel the darkness. Among the symbols of the order presented to him are the pelican and the eagle, the former emblematic of the mercy of God and the devotion of a true Mason, the latter emblematic of liberty and free thought. The crowned compasses represent equality and the cross and rose represent fraternity.

---

### KNIGHT KADOSH

---

This degree shifts thought from history and religion to philosophy and chivalry. The candidate is brought before a tribunal of judges who question his principles and loyalty, but ultimately are satisfied with his qualifications. The candidate then receives a lecture on the seven liberal arts and sciences, followed by a lesson on humility. Finally, the Commander delivers a lecture admonishing him to beware of the arrogance of autocratic rule by ancient heads of church and state. He is shown a crown and told, "It represents that worn by... (those who) have usurped or abused power, reined for themselves and not for the people, (who) slaughtered and persecuted their subjects, and robbed a free people of their liberty, or quenched the thirst of freedom with the blood of patriots". The Commander then displays a tiara and states: "Not as the symbol of any particular faith or religion, or of any particular church; but as that of unholy and haughty ambition and imposture, in any age, that makes men its dupes, enslaves them through their fears and unmans and brutalizes them by superstition, patron of Ignorance and ally of Despotism."

---

### MASTER OF THE ROYAL SECRET

---

This is the final degree of a Scottish Rite Mason, unless and until he is elected to receive the 33°. It is ceremonial and official and during its conferral, the candidate takes five vows:

The first vow is that of a Soldier of the Light, and as such he is admonished to endeavor to make men wiser and better.

The second vow is that of a Soldier of Freedom wherein the candidate swears to "resist and discomfit arbitrary power and rule among men... curb and repress those who subjugate free men." And then he adds in his vow, "and that I may do so I will myself be free, and remain absolute master of my own voice, vote and opinion, permitting none to dictate to me in matters where I am responsible for my own actions, and will be no one's Vassal."

The third is that of a Soldier of the True Religion wherein he is told: "When the Priesthood claimed communion with the Gods, and demanded authority and reverence as their

interpreters, men by degrees became the slaves of these new masters.”

The fourth is that of a Soldier of the People wherein the candidate agrees to “endeavor to thwart the designs and make ineffectual the efforts of all who seek to gain power by unworthy means; the crafty, the unfit, and the incompetent.” Then he concludes, “that I will constantly endeavor to incite men to be manly, self-reliant, and independent.”

The fifth vow requires the candidate to be a loyal and peaceable Soldier of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry.

In all of the degrees, the candidate agrees to retain control of his own conscience and being, to apply reason in all facets of his life, and to promote liberty. The applicant for membership is reminded that Scottish Rite Masons are patriotic, favor complete separation of church and state, and advocate the promotion of education through the public schools. These principles are in harmony with those of the Enlightenment.

---

### **CONTINUING INFLUENCE OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT**

---

European intellectuals of the 18th Century and their writings were well known in America, and they were influential in the course of events here. The colonists’ desire for political representation and for more freedom from British control was compatible with the Enlightenment in Europe. As an example, the Declaration of Independence of 1776 contained language and ideas, some of which could have been found in the expressions and writings of the enlightened Europeans. In particular, the Constitution of the United States espoused principles of government directly in line with the spirit of the Enlightenment, although more practically developed in the formation of our new government. In 1789, the French followed the course taken by Americans and fought their own revolution (based upon other reasons and for different ends than that of our Revolution) and thus made practical the teachings of the Enlightenment. They established a new government of liberty, equality and fraternity which, in principle, still survives today.

The practical application of the principles of Enlightenment continued into the 19th Century. The thirst for liberty spread beyond Europe and North America into South America where Simon Bolivar, a Mason led the liberation of countries on that continent from Spanish domination, and in Cuba where Jose Julian Marti, a Mason, died while fighting for freedom from Spanish control. In Italy, Giuseppe Garibaldi, a Mason helped free principalities on the peninsula from the control of foreigners and autocrats, and fused the diverse subdivisions into a united Italy. Indeed the thirst for liberty, equality and fraternity expanded all over the world into the 20th Century. And Freemasonry grew in those same countries.

---

### **CONCLUSION**

---

“In the final analysis freemasonry, for all of its exclusivity, secrecy and gender bias, transmitted and textured the Enlightenment, translated all the cultural vocabularies of its members into a shared and common experience that is civil and hence political.”

---

## APPRECIATION

---

Gratitude is extended to Ill. Akram R. Elias, 33°, Ill. Paul M. Bessel, 33°, and Joan Sansbury, Librarian of the Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, and the late Ill. Hugh Bernard, Jr. 33°, for their kind and effective assistance in compiling the material used in this article.

---

## SOURCES:

---

The History of the Modern World

*Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth Century Europe*, by Margaret C. Jacob

*A Comprehensive View of Freemasonry* by Henry Wilson Coil, 33°

*Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, Volume 109. Article by Michael Spurr, 1995

---

## ADDENDUM

---

### SOME OF THE FAMOUS EUROPEAN MASONS OF THE 18TH CENTURY

Robert Adams	John T. Desaguliers	Immanuel Kant
James Anderson	David Diderot	Thaddeus Kosciuszko
Thomas Arne	Thomas Dunkerley	Marquis de Lafayette
Joseph Banks	Antoine Francois Count de Fourcoy	Joseph Jerome de Lalande
Pierre Bayle	Frederick II of Prussia (Frederick the Great)	Pierre Simon, Marquis de Laplace
Francesco Bartolozzi	David Garrick	Gotthold E. Lessing
Ludwig van Beethoven	Edward Gibbon	James Lind
James Boswell	Comte de Grasse	John Locke
James Bruce	Antoine de Gobelins	John Loudon Macadam
Edmund Burke	Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	Franz Angon Mesmer
Robert Burns	Joseph Ignace Guillotin	Charles de Montesquieu (Secondat)
Charles XIII (Sweden)	Samuel Hahnemann	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Charles XIV (Sweden)	Joseph Haydn	Sir Isaac Newton
Christian VII (Denmark and Norway)	Claude-Adrian Helvetius	James Edward Oglethorpe
Pierre Ambrose, Chardelos de Lacios	Johann Gottfried von Herder	Reverend James Oliver
Luigi Cherubini	William Hogarth	Peter the Great (Russia)
Antoine Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet	David Hume	William Preston
Frederick F. Dalcho	Edward Jenner	Alexander Pope

Casimir Pulaski

Count de Rochambeau

Anthony Sayer

Sir Walter Scott

Friedrich von Schiller

Henri Bayle Stendhal

Friedrich Wilhelm von  
Steuben

Adam Smith

Jonathan Swift

François Marie Arouet de  
Voltaire

Arthur, Duke of Wellington

Sir Christopher Wren

## JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

At once a poet, a dramatist, an artist, a politician, a civil servant, as well as an inventor and scientist, the breadth of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's activity and work product also earned him the title of philosopher. Unfortunately, many Americans miss the opportunity to study, in even a cursory manner, this giant of modern Western intellectual thought and civilization. Some describe him as a post-Enlightenment thinker, while others as a pre-Romantic. The man's contributions as a great thinker have certainly earned him a place in history that probably straddles the materialist elements of the eighteenth century Age of Enlightenment and the nineteenth century reaction that heralded counter-Enlightenment Romanticism. In the process, Goethe came to personify the often contradictory ideas and ideals of his time and likely played a role in creating what became a Goethe cult of personality that continues to this day in many circles.



How, for instance, was he able to reconcile religious beliefs considered heretical by many with a political conservatism that held tight with the old order and eschewed the advancing republican movements of his day? Regardless of Goethe's own convictions on an issue, it is apparent that his vast appeal to a variety of audiences emerges from his ability to capture the general feeling of times in which he lived. Our own understanding of the upheaval, both the advances and the failures, of this eventful period is enriched by Goethe having borne witness for us.

The Age of Enlightenment was a time of great progress in human understanding, but it also stood as a transitional phase where revolutionary ideals threatened to collide (and, indeed, did collide) with traditional austerity. Some saw it as a movement away from Divine interpretations, or standing in opposition to religious orthodoxy. Goethe's role as both a participant, observer, and historian of the era is hard to overestimate, and is why we feel that Illustrious Charles Iversen's article on the Age of Enlightenment and Brother Mark Dreisonstok's article on Goethe make excellent companion pieces in this issue of the Scottish Rite Bulletin.



## JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE: RENAISSANCE MASON

BY MARK DREISONSTOK, 32°

*A well-dressed Mason, Trowel in one hand and Hammer in the other, came forward and began to speak with eloquence:*

*“Three things,” he began, “must be considered in a building: that it stand on the right spot, that it be on a secure foundation, and that it be well-executed in construction. The first is the business of the house’s master — his and his*

*alone. As to the third, the execution of the construction, art and skill both contribute. But the second, the foundation, is the true province of the Mason.*

*“Soon we shall lower this smoothly hewn stone into its place, after which these earth-walls, now ornamented with fair and worthy persons, will no longer be accessible but remain forever sealed.*

*“This corner-stone, which with its angles embodies the true angles of the building -- the sharpness of its molding, the regularity of its features, the truth of its horizontal and perpendicular lines, the uprightness and equal height of all the walls — we now lay down for it to rest in its place through its own weight, maintaining itself through its own internal strength, though its strength is magnified through well-spread lime and mortar...”*

J.W. von Goethe, *Elective Affinities*, Chapter IX



Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (28 August 1749 – 22 March 1832), the national poet and towering literary figure of Germany, received the first three Degrees of Freemasonry at Lodge Amalia in the city of Weimar during the Age of the Enlightenment.



Although his tragic play, *Faust*, is one of the great works of world literature, Goethe is less widely known as a Mason than other artists of genius such as his contemporary, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, or Robert Burns, or Rudyard Kipling.

There are several plausible reasons for this: Goethe was perhaps the world’s last great “Renaissance Man,” and his extensive activity in many intellectual may have prevented regular involvement in Freemasonry; but he did stay connected, and was present to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his initiation!

Another reason may be that the Masonic elements in Goethe’s Masonic works are enormously complex, which often makes them especially difficult to translate for the English-speaking reader. This is very apparent in two poems that are both translations of the same original, written in 1827, but so different that they even have different titles!

The first, translated by Thomas Carlyle during Goethe’s lifetime, is entitled *The Mason Lodge*, and the second, translated twenty years after Goethe’s death, *A Symbol* by Edgar Bowring. The first stanza of each follows:

### THE MASON LODGE

The Mason’s ways are  
A type of Existence  
And his persistence  
Is as the days are  
Of men in this world.

### A SYMBOL

The mason’s trade  
Resembles life,  
With all its strife, —  
Is like the stir made  
By man on earth’s face.



What is noteworthy is that Goethe uses the “Mason’s trade” or occupation as a symbol of how to live one’s life. The Mason’s commission and desire to build a perfect structure is here again paralleled to the notion of “unceasing endeavor” or striving.

A third possible reason that Goethe is not well-remembered as a Mason, at least in Germany, may be the campaign against Freemasonry during the years of Nazi power, when the National Socialists tried to downplay Goethe’s interest in Freemasonry as a brief, aberrant stage in his intellectual life – a kind of youthful indiscretion.

Yet Masonic ideas permeate Goethe’s literary works throughout his lifetime, up to the end of his life as he completed his *opus magnum* Faust. In Goethe’s reworking of the medieval tale of the scholar who wishes to sell his soul to the devil, the audience is shown that Faust’s fulfillment – this moment so sublime – through striving continually towards perfection in the contemplative as well as the active life.

We, as Masons, recognize the same insight as we speak of striving ever to smooth out our rough ashlar into the perfect ashlar, that is, the notion that striving for human betterment is a good in and of itself and the purpose of a Mason’s life.



Generations of Americans are certainly familiar with another of Goethe’s works, *Der Zauberlehrling*, or *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*, through Walt Disney’s 1940 animated film *Fantasia*, in which Mickey Mouse demonstrates that the apprentice has attained knowledge too quickly to make wise and judicious use of it and would wisely wait before initiation into the next stage – or degree – of knowledge.

In Freemasonry in general and in the Scottish Rite in particular, we pride ourselves on transcending ancient prejudices and religious divides. Goethe wrote truly in this spirit, for in his *Divan of West and East* he honors the Persian poet Hāfez, seeks reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, and speaks of the need in life to go back and forth between West and East.

I would like to end this article on Goethe and Freemasonry with a reference to *The Magic Flute*, Mozart’s opera employing Masonic symbolism in plot, theme, and even the very notes themselves. This is a very important Masonic reference point, not because the opera has the depth of the Masonic Degrees or because it even presents all things in Freemasonry accurately. It is important because for people everywhere this might be the only exposure they ever have directly to Freemasonry and Masonic ideals. In the story of original *The Magic Flute*, the candidate Tamino emerges from Darkness to Light and progresses through trials of purification in the Temple of the Master Sarastro. Goethe was so impressed with *The Magic Flute* that he wrote a sequel, though it was left as an unfinished fragment



I have endeavored to present an article on Goethe’s relevance for Freemasonry which provides new or different information from that in the widely distributed Masonic Short Talk Bulletin of 1932, but I can find no ending more suitable than to close with the final line of that fine article, as it provides final proof that Germany’s greatest poet, and a literary figure for us of all us from which to learn, died with his very last words being filled with Masonic significance:

With his last breath, Goethe cried the immortal phrase “More Light!”

WB Mark Dreisonstok, 32° is a twenty-five year member of the Valley of Washington, and currently serves as Worshipful Master of Arminius Lodge No. 25.

**THE SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY**

2800 16TH STREET, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20009  
TEL 202-232-8155  
WEB DCSR.ORG

