



LODGE EDUCATION GUIDES

VOL. 1

Presented By:

*The Education Committee
Grand Lodge of Mississippi, F. & A.M.*

Lodge Education Guide Topics

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Purpose of Lodge Education Guides

The Lodge Education Guides are designed and present by the Grand Lodge Education Committee to assist and encourage subordinate Lodges in developing and promoting proper Masonic study within their membership. Educational discussion provides opportunities for active learning and increases the retention of information and ideas. Appropriate discussion can engage the membership on a more personal level and opens opportunities for membership satisfaction and feedback. Each education guide presented is designed to be related, in some way, to a fraternal topic of interest.

How to use the Lodge Discussion Guides

It is highly recommended that the Lodge Education Committee should be composed of three to five Past Masters, appointed by the Worshipful Master, who are well informed about the history of Freemasonry, what masonry is, how you become a mason, and what masonry does. The size of the committee should depend on the membership of the Lodge. Members who are knowledgeable and well informed that are not Past Masters may also be appointed to the committee. The Lodge Education Committee should work with the Worshipful Master and other Lodge officers to seek to present a program on some Masonic subject of interest at every stated communication or special events of the Lodge.

Each Lodge Education Guide contains suggested questions in order that the Lodge Education Officer leading the discussion may encourage membership involvement. Furthermore, the Lodge Education Guides provide some historical evidence or symbolical facts to accompany each topic. Remember that not all masons are as well informed on certain topics and it may be necessary to prompt the membership towards a correct or appropriate answer. Some Lodge Educational Guides have been intentionally left unanswered for the membership/Lodge to interpret an answer according to their own beliefs.

In leading lodge discussion remember to keep the information brief and simple. Every response is welcome and valid. Treat others the way you wish to be treated. Keep the topic centered on hand, and leave other concerns and topics to be addressed at another appropriate time. Do not show favoritism or disapproval of a member's participation as this will deter them and other from participating in the future. Speak loudly and clearly so that everyone may hear and participate.

ANCIENT & HONORABLE

What emblem(s) does our Masonic study tell us that the lambskin or white leather apron is more ancient than? What emblem(s) does our Masonic study tell us that the lambskin or white leather apron is more honorable than? Why are these emblems chosen to portray Masonic antiquity? What is the Golden Fleece? What is the Roman Eagle? What is the Star or Garter?

The Golden Fleece. The Roman Eagle. The Star or Garter.

The Golden Fleece. In Greek mythology, the Golden Fleece is the wool of a golden winged ram Chrysomallas, sired by Poseidon, Greek god of the sea and other waters. The fleece symbolizes authority or kingship. It is a chief figure in the tale of the hero Jason and The Argonauts, who set out to recover the fleece by order of King Pelias in order for Jason to reclaim his rightful throne. The fleece was hung on an oak tree in a grove that was sacred to Ares, Greek god of war, and guarded by bulls with hoofs of brass and breath of fire. It was also guarded by sharp dragon teeth, which when planted in the ground turned to soldiers.

In 1429, The Order of the Golden Fleece was established by Philip III, Duke of Burgundy, to serve as an order of knighthood throughout Austria and Spain. Knights of this order served to protect the interest of the Roman Catholic Church. The fleece was selected to represent the order as it was the staple commodity of the region at the time.

The Roman Eagle. The Roman Eagle or Aquila was used in ancient Rome, usually on the standards of the Roman Legion. The eagle symbolized power, courage, strength and immortality but was also considered to be the messenger of the mythological gods and king of the skies. The loss of a standard bearing the Aquila was considered an extreme offense and the Roman Legion would go to great lengths to protect or recover it. Even after the adoption of Christianity, the eagle played an important role in Roman culture. It was later modified into a double-headed eagle to represent the Empire's dominance over both the East and the West.

Star or Garter. The Most Noble Order of The Garter is the oldest and most senior chivalric order in Great Britain. It was established circa 1348, by King Edward III of England. The organization is dedicated to the patron saint of England, St. George. Membership in the order is limited to the Sovereign, Prince of Wales, no more than 24 companion members and various supernumerary members, all of which can only be appointed by the Monarch. One popular legend of the origin of the order says that as the Countess of Salisbury was dancing, her garter slipped from her leg. As the court laughed, the king returned it to her and said, "Shame on him who thinks this evil." This phrase has since been adopted as the motto of the order. Another legend says that King Edward III was inspired by a vision on the battlefield of St. George, or even through the legends of King Arthur. The star was first introduced in the 17th century and insignia of the order depicts the shield of St. George encircled by the garter. Every year in June, an annual Garter Day procession is held in which the Queen and her knights march in their velvet robes, insignia and plumed hats to St. George's Chapel where a service is held and any new companions are installed.

COLORS

Why are the first three symbolic degrees of Ancient Craft Masonry often called "The Blue Lodge"? What does the color "Blue" as a symbol in Masonry? Does Freemasonry use any other colors to represent similar meanings? What are some of the most symbolic colors associated with Freemasonry?

Assigning a color to a symbol is probably as old as the symbol itself. Historians have found that in the study of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics: red represented man, yellow represented women, blue represented the king of the Egyptian gods, Amon, and black represented Anubis, the Egyptian god of death.

Blue. Famous Masonic author and scholar Albert Mackey noted that in Old Testament scriptures, blue is the translation of the Hebrew word "tekelet" which derives from the root word meaning "perfection." Throughout the cultures of the world the color blue represents, deity, the canopy of heaven, eternity, immortality, truth, purity, loyalty, fidelity, hope and faith. All of these define the characteristics of masonry. The color blue is the symbolic color of the spiritual or divine.

Red. Red is the symbol of the earth. It is often used to represent war, blood, sacrifice, heroism or struggle. It can also be used to represent charity or devotion. Even the color red is present in the root word of Adam, the first man created of the earth and the breath of God. It is translated as "Adamah" meaning "red clay" or "of the ground." It is often used as a symbol of faith, passion, fervency or zeal. In Freemasonry, it is most associated with Royal Arch Masons. Lodges conferring the first three symbolic degrees in formal Scottish Rite ceremonies are commonly called "Red Lodges."

White. White is one of only two color introduced throughout the first three symbolic degrees of masonry with a specific representation. The white apron reminds us of our hopes for a glorious immortality, purity and innocence. The classical Greek philosopher Plato notes that white is the color of the gods. In the Bible, Daniel sees God dressed as a very old man in robes as white as snow. It can also be used to represent beginnings or virtue. The word candidate derives from the Latin word "candidatus" meaning "clothed in white." In ancient Rome a candidate aspiring for public office wore a white toga to represent their untarnished character.

Green. The color green is associated with the color of life, renewal, nature, safety, growth, harmony and unchanging immortality of all that is divine and true. Ancient Egyptians used the color green in the depiction of the Egyptian gods Ptah, the divine preserver, and Thoth, the instructor of men in the sacred doctrines of truth. As Free and Accepted Masons we hold a particular awareness with the color green and the immortality of the soul. Green has been adopted as the official color of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

Purple. Purple is the combination of both of the colors blue and red. It is used to represent authority, kingship, wealth, richness, royalty or one of a higher statue, like the apron of the Most Worshipful Grand Master. It lends itself well to the union of the divine and that of the earth. In the Book of Mark, the roman soldiers mocked Christ by wrapping his body with a scarlet or purple robe. As the color purple required a blending of the color dyes, it was very expensive to make at the time and only reserved for the wealthiest or most important figures of the time

Black. Traditionally the color black is associated with darkness and death. It did not develop into a color of mourning until later into the 14th to 16th century. In some aspects of history, black has also been used to represent gravity and sobriety. During the age of European Reformation colorful clothes were frowned upon. Formal wear for day and evening occasions continues to be black.

Yellow. Yellow is rarely seen in Lodge and is associated with the idea of light. The color yellow may also be represented in the presentation of gold. In the use of the color gold, it represents authority, kingship and power. It is commonly found adorning the aprons of Grand Lodge Officers.

Riding the Goat

Have you ever made a humorous remark regarding a goat before the lodge begins its operations? Was the remark made at your initiation, passing or raising? How long do you think these types of remarks have been going around? Where did the idea of "riding the goat" start? What type of effect do you think these remarks have on our candidates? What type of expectation does this create in the mind of the candidate about our fraternity?

The Grand Lodge of Mississippi, F. & A. M. and its subordinate Lodges do not promote, encourage or tolerate any acts of hazing or harassment, as these acts are inconsistent with the teaching and principles of Freemasonry. Each mason is only responsible for his character while both inside and outside of the Lodge, but as a brotherhood our responsibility is to hold members accountable for their actions and provide council to help them in their errors. Vulgar and inappropriate conduct inside or outside of the Lodge hall does not promote the tenets of our institution and should not be encouraged.

The ancient Greeks and Romans were known to have a very creative polytheistic belief. They portrayed the god of the forest and unkempt nature as a shaggy, horned and cloven hoof character named Pan, or sometimes called "the goat footed." It is important to remember that as early Christianity evolved, some ancient and pagan symbols were adopted and modified to suit the visual needs of the Christian belief. The belief in the Greek god Pan, who also represented some aspects of fertility, gave way to a depiction of Satan, naturally inheriting his appearance and attributes. The devil became represented as He-Goat, with horns, beard and cloven hooves.

During the Middle Ages, lasting from the 5th to 15th century, the Christian church condemned the beliefs and practices of witches, blasphemous rites, and satanic ceremonies. Inquisitions, witch trials, and trials of heresy were common and those found guilty were punished in cruel and unthinkable ways. As there was no police force, the law enforcement was left in the hands of the members of the community. This gave rise to the belief that the devil would appear riding on a goat. Even the noble Knights Templar's were accused of worshipping The Goat of Mendes or Baphomet, which was a symbol of ancient alchemist to represent the balance in positive and negative force.

Due to the "secret" nature of early Masonic rituals, a common belief began that their rituals were "trying to raise the devil." Although the overall belief has died among the non-initiated, the saying generally remains the same. There has never been evidence in any major Masonic work to support that the practice of "riding the goat" has ever been a part of a Masonic ritual; however, the same cannot be said for all societies who claim to have originated from a time of antiquity.

Lewis

What is a Lewis? Who is a Lewis? What is the Lewis Jewel? What is the job of a Lewis Mason?

A Lewis, or Lewisson, is a lifting tool that has been used by stonemasons for centuries. It provides anchorage in a stone and enables the stone to be raised or lowered to the desired height so that a proper base can be set. A Lewis consist of 3 parts: 2 wedge shaped pieces and one straight center piece. A dovetail cut is made in the center of the top of the stone and the pieces are inserted tightly. The three parts are then bolted or linked together and attached to a hook, rope or pulley. By this process, the stonemason is allowed to work in safety and precision while the Lewis keeps the stone securely tightened.

In England, the word Lewis means strength. In speculative masonry it symbolizes the son of a mason who has been initiated and can take up his father's duty to bear the heat and burden of the day. Historians agree that the term first came into use during the 18th century but was also greatly expounded upon in the 1780s through the early William-Preston Lectures. The Lewis Jewel has been adopted by many jurisdictions, and is still used in England to honor the father of a new mason. The jewel usually consists of two bars connected by chains. The upper bar is inscribed with the father's name and initiation date, while the lower bar is inscribed with the son's name and initiation date. It may be worn by both the father and the son as long as the father is living and in good standing during his son's time of initiation.

As this jewel is not associated with any position of authority or responsibility within the Grand Lodge of Mississippi or its subordinate Lodges, it is highly recommended that members wishing to purchase the Lewis Jewel should receive express permission from the Most Worshipful Grand Master before adopting it as part of their Masonic regalia.

Josephus

According to our Blue Lodge Textbook: Josephus informs us of several particulars in the building of the Holy Temple during the reign of King Solomon, but who was Josephus? How much do we know about him? Is his information reliable? Where did he come from? Why is he so important that he would render mentioning in our text?

Titus Flavius Josephus was a Jewish priest, scholar, and historian whose works provide us with close-to-eye-witness and valuable details that do not survive in any other records. Josephus was born, Yosef ben Matthias, circa 37-38 A.D., roughly four years after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. His father was descendant of an ancient sect of Jewish priest and his mother was descendant of the royal and formerly ruling family of Judea. Both families were wealthy, which provided Josephus with many opportunities for exploration and education.

At the age of 16, Josephus spent three years in the dessert with Bannus, the Jewish hermit. By the age of 19, he had studied the three principal Jewish religious sects- Pharisees, Essenes, and Sadducees. It is known that during his early 20's, Josephus also served as an ambassador to negotiate the release of 12 Jewish priests in captivity from Emperor Nero, whose favored he gained through Nero's wife.

On his return, Josephus was appointed as the military governor of Galilee during the First Jewish-Roman War, a series of major rebellions by the Jews of Judea against the Roman Empire. He successfully fought the Roman Army until another hero from the resistance seized control and ordered him to be killed. Josephus fled for his life into the hills and caves with other loyal soldiers. After a time, he suggested that they draw lots to commit suicide to keep from being captured by the Roman Army. Josephus is said to have fixed the lots so that he would remain alive, which was later came to be known in mathematics as "The Josephus Problem." When the Roman Army finally drew near, Josephus declared that he had had a vision that Vespasian Augustus would be the next emperor of Rome. Two years later, Caesar Vespasian Augustus was declared the 9th Emperor of Rome, founder of the Flavian Dynasty.

In 69 A.D., Josephus was released from captivity and in 70 A.D. he acted as a negotiator for the defenders during the Siege of Jerusalem. Although the Jewish rebellion refused to surrender the city and was ultimately defeated, Josephus was allowed to bring some of his fellow priest and friends, as well as some sacred and historical writings, back to Rome. It is at this time that he adopted the title of "Flavius," as a Roman embellishment. For his duty, serving as an aid to the Roman Empire, he was granted Roman citizenship, a pension, and an estate in Judea.

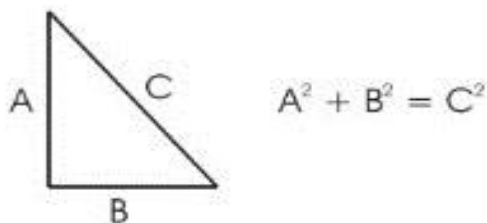
Josephus dedicated himself to the preservation and writings of Jewish culture. His most famous works include: *Jewish Wars*, which details the disastrous revolt against Rome, *Antiquities of The Jews*, a 21 volume collection which expounds upon the history, laws and customs of Jewish history, and *Against Apion*, a 2 volume collection defending the classical religion, philosophy and antiquity of Jewish culture against the Greek commentator, Apion. Josephus died as a citizen of Rome in 100 A.D. He has been noted as one of the most influential and historical writers of his time.

The 47th Problem of Euclid

Who was Euclid? Of the 465 mathematical and scientific problems proposed by Euclid, why is the 47th problem so important? What should the 47th problem of Euclid remind us of in our Masonic journey?

Euclid was a Greek mathematician and generally recognized as the “Father of Geometry.” Very little information can be found regarding Euclid’s background but according to some Arabic authors, he is said to have been born in Tyre circa 330 B.C. It is also claimed that he came from a very wealthy family. Euclid contributed greatly to the field of mathematics. He is known to have taught in the Great Schools of Ancient Egypt during the reign of Ptolemy I, successor of Alexander IV, son of Alexander the Great. Euclid’s book *Elements*, is a collection of 13 books on the subjects of mathematics and geometrics. It offers definitions, theorems, and proofs and includes the first known source of geometric algebra and finding the square root of a number. His works were heavily influenced by Pythagoras, Aristotle, Eudoxus, and Thales.

In order to understand the meaning behind the problem you must first understand the problem:



It simply states that the square of the sides of right angled triangles (legs) is equal to the square of the side containing the right angle (hypotenuse). This is also referred to as The Pythagorean Theorem, due to its discovery by our ancient friend and brother, Pythagoras.

The 47th problem of Euclid serves as a basis of common measurements for architects. Since a time of antiquity, builders have used this theorem, sometimes called the Rule of 3:4:5, in squaring a room. Engineers use the theorem to tunnel through mountainsides so that both tunnel shafts would meet in the center. By the study of this theorem, astronomers are provided with a mathematical equation whereby study the distances of the sun, moon and celestial bodies, thereby fixing the durations of times, seasons and cycles. Even the sailors used this theorem to study the longitude and latitude as well as true time.

In the study of Masonic emblems, we learn that 47th problem of Euclid helps us to define and measure the universe around us, all framed by the Supreme Architect of the Universe. The square, as an emblem for masonry, is the base needed for any solution. As a mason serves his position in lodge (3:4), he becomes more complete (3:4:5). Further research into the 47th problem of Euclid will reveal to a well-studied mason many of the ancient mysteries of the fraternity.

Lodge Etiquette

Masonry has always served in a position that unites men of every country, sect and opinion through the principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. In order to keep our organization pure and ensure that harmony prevails among the Craft, certain codes of polite conduct and appropriate behavior must be adhered to. What are some written or unwritten rules of lodge etiquette that we observe in our lodge?

Masonic Etiquette defines the proper procedures and behaviors deemed acceptable in our society. It enables us to behave with decorum and dignity, and allows us to match our behavior to certain circumstances. Lodge Etiquette leads to proper, pleasant, respectful and appropriate interactions. Masonic etiquette is generally unpublished and often learned "as you go." Some aspects of etiquette can be of minor importance, while others are integral to the peace and harmony which should always prevail in a lodge. Remember that each of us, at one point and time, have been guilty of lapses or ignorance of Masonic etiquette. This topic is designed for each of us to improve the operation and status of our Lodge.

Please take time to address the following Masonic etiquettes:

The Authority of the Worshipful Master

Dress and Appearance

Entering or Retiring from a Tiled Lodge

Receiving Official Visitors (such as a Grand Master)

Etiquette while at labor

Closing

Etiquette while at refreshment

This list does not include a complete listing of Lodge etiquette rules and procedures. Please take time to address any other Lodge etiquette rules that may be brought to the attention of the Lodge during this discussion.

MASONIC CALENDAR

In keeping with our customs and traditions, Masonry uses a dating system that does not match current calendar era dating. Masonic dates are followed by "A.L." Why? What does "A.L." mean and in what operation of masonry is it most commonly used? What abbreviations are used in the different appendant bodies of Freemasonry to represent calendar eras?

Blue Lodge masonry and the appendant bodies use calendar era dating to correspond with certain historical and significant events, usually specific to that body.

"A.L." (*Anno Lucis* = "in the Year of Light") is a calendar era dating based on the creation of light. It should be noted that "A.L." is not claimed to be synchronous with creation, but has symbolic reference to the Light of Masonry. It is equivalent to 4000 years of the Gregorian calendar. Thus, 2017 A.D. + 4000 = 6017. It is most commonly used in the ceremonial dedication and inscription of Masonic cornerstones and official certificates.

The Hebrew calendar is based on the first five books of Moses called the *Torah*. The *Torah* gives specific calendar related commandments, like God's commandment to affix *Aviv*, the first month of the sacred year, to the Exodus from Egypt. Therefore, it is important to realize that our current Gregorian calendar is different from the Hebrew calendar. In more modern times, the Jewish faith has adopted the Gregorian calendar to denote days of work and other days of the week, but still abides by to the Hebrew calendar for sacred festivals and religious dates.

In 46 B.C. (*Before Christ/Christian Era/Common Era*) Roman Emperor Julius Caesar introduced a solar calendar which was later adapted by Augustus. It affixed a calendar based on 12 months and 365 days to a year, and dates for each calendar month. We currently use a structure of this calendar. The Gregorian calendar is the solar calendar currently used today, established in 1582 A.D. (*Anno Domini* = *in the Year of our Lord*). The need for the Gregorian calendar came about when a study revealed that a year actually consisted of 365 and a quarter days long. It was introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 to correct the error of Julius Caesar in omitting 10 days from the calendar year. The Gregorian calendar was adopted in 1752 by Great Britain and the American colonies.

"A.M." (*Anno Mundi* = "in the Year of the World") is the calendar era associated with Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. Add 3760 to Common Era. Thus, 2017 A.D. + 3760 = 5777

"A.Inv." (*Anno Inventionis* = "in the Year of Discovery") is the calendar era associated with Royal Arch Masons from the date in which the second temple was commenced by Zerubbabel. Add 530 years to the Common Era. Thus, 2017 + 530 = 2547.

"A.Dep." (*Anno Depositionist* = "in the Year of the Deposits") is the calendar era associated with Royal and Select Masters from the year in which the Temple of Solomon was completed. Add 1000 years to the Common Era. Thus, 2017 + 1000 = 3017.

"A.O." (*Anno Ordonis* = "in the Year of the Order") is the calendar era associated with organization of Knights Templar. Subtract 1118 years from the Christian Era. Thus, 2017 - 1118 = 899.

**Add another year after the month of September.*

TUN TAVERN

Where was the Tun Tavern located? What role did Tun Tavern play in ensuring the freedom of the colonies during the American Revolution? What affiliation does the Tun Tavern have with Freemasonry during the colonial era?

Tun Tavern was located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the intersection of King Street (later renamed Walter) and Tun Alley. Tun is an old English word that means “barrel or keg of beer.” Being built in 1689, and serving as a center of social fellowship for men of the Philadelphia community, Tun Tavern was no stranger to the formation of important and influential organizations being founded within its walls.

The St. George Society, 1720, was a charitable organization founded to assist needy Englishmen in their arrival within the new colony.

St. John’s Lodge, 1732, was founded as the first lodge in the Pennsylvania colony. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania recognizes Tun Tavern as the birthplace of masonry in the United States and the beginnings of Masonic teaching and education in the United States. Founding father and Illustrious freemason, Bro. Benjamin Franklin, was a member of St. John’s Lodge.

The St. Andrew’s Society, 1747, which like the St. George Society, was a charitable organization founded to assist newly arrived Scottish.

In 1756, Benjamin Franklin used the Tun Tavern as a place of recruitment to form the Pennsylvania Militia in preparation against the Native American uprisings.

The most famous organization, however, was founded on November 10, 1775, when innkeeper, Bro. Samuel Nicholas, was charged with raising two battalions of fighting men. The tavern’s manager, Bro. Robert Mullan, served as the chief recruiter. These fighting men were charged with serving to protect the interest of the Continental Navy and were commissioned as sharpshooters aboard Continental navy vessels. The first company consisted of 100 Rhode Islanders commanded by Captain Nicholas.

Tun Tavern burned down in 1781, and all that now that stands in its place is a memorial marker near its original location, but each year on November 10, we remember Tun Tavern, those dedicated fighting men and their mark on history with traditional ceremonies across the world, complete with regal celebrations and an elaborate cake cutting ceremony, as the birth of The United States Marines.

Semper Fidelis!

The Anchor & The Ark

What is the emblematical Masonic representation of the Anchor and the Ark?

From *The Blue Lodge Textbook* we learn that the Anchor and the Ark are emblems of a well-grounded hope and a well-spent life.

From historical study we learn that the anchor, as symbol of hope, does not appear as in ancient or classic symbolism. The ancients believed that the mythological goddess Spes, or Hope, was represented in the form of a beautiful woman holding the skirts of her garments and in her right hand a flower-shaped cup.

As an emblem of hope, we learn that the anchor is particularly a Christian symbol. The first representation of the anchor was found inscribed in tombs of Rome, and probably derived from the scriptures of the Apostle Paul found in Hebrews. *Hebrews 6:9* "*which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast.*" Early Christians looked upon life as a stormy voyage and glad when their voyage was finished, as they have arrived in a safe port. The inscription of the anchor on the tombs is an expression that the deceased had reached a haven of eternal rest.

The ship has been adopted to symbolize of the voyage of life, but unlike the anchor was not confined to the Christian belief. The ship, masonically substituted by the Ark, is derivative of the Ark of Noah, floating safe among that which was overwhelmed by the power of God.

These symbolical sentiments have been adopted into masonry with an extended application directed to faith and character. The historical aspects added here are only probable origins as found and suggested in Albert Mackey's *Encyclopedia of Masonry*.

James Anderson

Who was James Anderson? What part did James Anderson play in the origins of Freemasonry?

James Anderson was Scottish writer and minister during the early 18th century. He is most famously renowned for writing the Book of Constitutions, which serves as a compilation of the earliest principles of Freemasonry.

Anderson was born in Scotland, circa 1680, where he was educated and probably took the degrees M.A. and D.D. Anderson was a minister for the Church of Scotland in 1707, and at some time prior to 1709, migrated to London, where we learn from state records that he was Presbyterian minister in Swallow Street until 1734. During his service to the church he published many sermons and is reported to have lost a great sum of money in the South Sea Company disaster of 1720.

When and where his participation began with Freemasonry has not yet been discovered, but must have been a prominent member of the Craft. In September 1721, he was assigned by the Premier Grand Lodge of England, having just been established in 1717, to digest the Old Charges in a new and better manner and standardize the ritual and practices of the fraternity. After an investigation of the Anderson's work by a committee of 14 well studied brethren, the Grand Lodge approved and ordered the Constitution be printed for the benefit of lodges in 1723. The writing is commonly known as the Book of Constitutions or Anderson's Constitutions but originally titled as:

The Constitutions of Free-Masons; containing the History, Charges, Regulations, &c. of that Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity. For The Use of Lodges. London. In the year of Masonry 5723, Anno Domini 1723.

The Book of Constitutions was rewritten by Anderson in 1738, after the formation of the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster. It was the first Masonic book printed in America under the direction of Bro. Benjamin Franklin in Pennsylvania in 1734, and was again edited in 1754, by Bro. John Entick who introduced various modifications to the ancient charges.

Anderson's Constitution of 1723, addresses the following Masonic principles: 1) concerning God and Religion 2) Of the Civil Magistrates Supreme and Subordinate 3) Of Lodges 4) Of Masters, Wardens Fellows and Apprentices 5) Of the Management of the Craft in Working 6) Of Behavior

The Williams Digest of Laws, adopted laws of the Grand Lodge of Mississippi, states that, "Anderson's Constitution, contain all or nearly all the Ancient Landmarks and Usages of Masonry proper to be written. No Grand Lodge has the right to alter, change or amend any portion of said Ancient Constitution, as contained in the first edition of Anderson's Constitutions is, or should be, regarded as the highest Masonic authority on which to found a Code of Laws for the good of the Craft."

MOON LODGE

What does it mean if a lodge is called a "Moon Lodge."? Where did this term originate? Which lodges in the State of Mississippi still congregate and operate as a Moon Lodge?

During early 18th century Masonic expansion throughout the colonies, especially in rural communities without an abundant access to electricity, Lodges would fix their meetings around the full moon. The moon provided the membership with the natural illumination necessary to travel the several miles of rough terrain to attend their Lodge.

While many Grand Lodges across the United States have legislated Moon Lodges out of existence, other have allowed them to prosper, deeming it in accord with the ancient customs and traditions of Freemasonry. Moon Lodges often fix their stated communications on or just before a full moon, thus, it might be possible for a Moon Lodge to hold 13 stated communications during the course of a year.

The first mention of a Moon Lodges can be found in the 1410 Cooke Manuscript, one of the oldest Masonic documents in existence. During the Colonial era it is noted that Moon Lodges were operating in Philadelphia, Boston, and Tennessee. By the turn of the century over 3,000 Lodges were operating by the illumination of the full moon. Due to the difference between lunar and regular calendar dates, most Lodges now practice a much more regular schedule for their stated communications.

Beth Eden Lodge No. 205, Louisville, Mississippi, congregates and operates as a Moon Lodge. Dispensation was issued in 1855, and chartered on January 21, 1856. The Lodge moved its operations in 1895, and officially changed their name in 1904. According to the Blue Lodge Directory, they hold their stated meetings on the Saturday of or before the full moon.

The Mississippi Lodge of Research DXL (DXL being the Roman numerals for 640) was chartered in 2010, and also congregates and operates as a Moon Lodge. At the 2010 Annual Communication the Grand Lodge body ratified an amendment to its Statutes to permit the Mississippi Lodge of Research to not only move it stated communication frequency to a quarterly basis, but also allow the Lodge to assemble anywhere within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Mississippi. The Mississippi Lodge of Research is dedicated to the investigation, archival and preservation of our Masonic organization.

EXAMINATION OF A VISITOR

What privilege is awarded to you, as a Master Mason in good standing, in relation to neighboring lodges? In which situation would it be necessary to examine a visitor to your lodge? In which situation would it not be appropriate to examine a visitor to your lodge? How should a visitor be examined as to his membership status?

It is highly encouraged that, as a Master Mason, you spend time visiting with the brethren of neighboring Lodges, and continue to improve upon your Masonic relationships and education. As a Master Mason in good standing with your affiliated Lodge(s), you are given the privilege to visit Lodges of this, or some other friendly jurisdiction, as recognized by the Grand Lodge of Mississippi. Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft masons are also given this privilege, with restrictions of attendance applying to their highest level of Lodge grade achievement.

As a visitor, you are not permitted to interfere with Lodge business, enter into discussion, unless requested to do so by the Worshipful Master, or vote on Lodge business, but merely serve as a spectator and friendly brother. Your privilege of visitation can be removed or forfeit due to bad conduct or any other reason that an affiliated member may see fit. No one can be permitted into a Lodge where he is unknown without first being examined as to his membership status.

A known mason may vouch for an unknown brother, if he has sat in Lodge with him. If no avouchment can be made, the unknown brother must be subjected to an examination. To this end, the Grand Lodge of Mississippi, in accordance with the ancient customs and traditions of Masonry, has adopted a means in which to examine the membership status of an unknown visitor.

Please take this time to instruct all the members present in the proper method of examining an unknown visitor. Any Lodge that is unsure of the proper methods and procedures should contact their District Deputy Grand Lecturer, who will be happy to see that you receive the proper instruction.

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