

T.F.S.

Three, five, and seven

3 5 7

Number 161 – December 20, 2009

“Heat and animosity, contest and conflict, may sharpen the wits, although they rarely do; they never strengthen the understanding, clear the perspicacity, guide the judgment, or improve the heart.” Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864)

This publication, while it is printed with the permission of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of A.F. & A. M. of Minnesota, contains the writings and opinions of Ed Halpaus and is not in any way the opinion of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota.

“But curb thou the high spirit in thy breast, for gentle ways are best, and keep aloof from sharp contentions.” Homer

To view this document on iwork or to download from iwork in PDF, Word, or Pages, click on this link:
https://www.iwork.com/r/?d=TFS_no_161_from_Ed_Halpaus%2C_Grand_LEO.pages&a=p1055054322&u=erhmasonic@gmail.com&p=25D49A1D27C04AEAA5F0

Constitutions and Charges

A few years after the 1717 formation of the Premier Grand Lodge in London the then Grand Master George Payne, who served the Grand Lodge two separate times as Grand Master; 1718 & 1720, ordered that the Masons should bring to the next Annual Communication all the old writings they had from the Lodges before the Grand Lodge was formed. Our early Brethren brought all the old records and documents that survived to the next annual communication, which were given to Rev. Brother James Anderson who was charged to digest all the information and draft a new set of rules and regulations for the consideration of the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge. I mention about the old records that survived, because there is documentation that many Masons destroyed many documents rather than have them appear in a printed book produced by anyone, even the newly formed Grand Lodge. Not all was harmonious within the Premiere Grand Lodge at the time.

Brother John Noorthouckⁱ in commenting on a book titled ‘The Use and Abuse of Freemasonry’ written by our former Brother George Smithⁱⁱ in 1783 mentions about Grand Master Payne’s order to bring the old documents to the Grand Lodge: *“Indeed, the temptations of authorship have effected a strange revolution of sentiments since the year 1720, when even ancient manuscripts were destroyed, to prevent their appearance in a printed book of Constitutions!”* Evidently many of our early Brethren were very adamant that nothing about Masonry should be collected and printed. Freemasonry, however, is indebted to the Masons who did bring in what they had of the written laws of Masonry in the form of those old documents, because through them Speculative Masonry has learned and continues to learn a great deal.

In any event the result of the gathering of the ‘old’ Masonic documents brought to the Grand Lodge by our early Brethren is what we now know as Anderson’s Constitutions of 1723, there were also editions that followed: We’re just eight years away from the 300th anniversary of the founding of the Premiere Grand Lodge, (2017)ⁱⁱⁱ and the writing of the Constitutions for the Grand Lodge of England; While Anderson’s Constitutions are not Landmarks, they do precede the list of Landmarks compiled by Brother Albert Mackey in 1858, and are important to Masonry and to Masons.^{iv}

I’m told that in the Grand Jurisdictions of Canada each Constituent Lodge has the Charges of Anderson’s Constitutions read at the making of every Mason in the Lodge, and, in addition, these Charges are read in each Lodge annually, so that all are familiar with them. I like the tradition of reading Anderson’s Constitutions on a regular basis, and it might be a good idea to also read Mackey’s list of 25 Landmarks.

These Charges can be read in the Little Masonic Library, (which is available in most Lodge libraries,) and Freemasons for Dummies, (which was a selection for the Minnesota Masonic Book Club in November 2005.) And Mackey’s list of Landmarks are available to read in many places, one of the easiest places to read many old documents is on the Internet is at sites such as Phoenix Masonry at; www.phoenixmasonry.org, and the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and the

Yukon at; <http://www.freemasonry.bcy.ca/sitemap.html> Another good thing to do is read them in Mackey's Jurisprudence of Freemasonry. Reading old documents such as the Old Manuscripts, Anderson's Constitutions, Mackey's Landmarks, and the Masonic Laws of your own Grand Lodge is a very interesting journey into Masonic learning.

In the Masonic Concordance of the Holy Bible it mentions something that, to me, is interesting about the word 'Neighbor.' About that word it refers the reader to Anderson's Constitutions where in section 6 "Of Behavior," and article 5 "Behavior at Home and in your Neighborhood," it says in part: "*You are to act as becomes a moral and wise man; particularly, not to let your family; friends and neighbors know the concerns of the Lodge.*" The good reason for this is because the Lodge resembles a family, and because of that there are things the Masonic family would like to keep private, because those things concern no one else.^v

Anderson's Constitutions is not the only place you will find the admonition of keeping private the goings on and business of a Masonic Lodge. Many if not all of the 'Old Constitutions' "*have the charge that "every Mason shall keep true counsel of Lodge and Chamber"* (see Sloane Manuscript, No. 3848). This is enlarged in the Andersonian Charges, of 1722 thus: "*You are not to let your family, friends and neighbors know the concerns of the Lodge*" (Constitutions, 1723, page 55). However loquacious a Freemason may be in the natural confidence of neighborhood intercourse, he must be reserved in all that relates to the esoteric concerns of Freemasonry."^{vi}

There are three copies of what Mackey calls the 'Old Manuscripts' that have the name of 'Sloane;' so named because they were once the property of Sir Hans Sloane, but which now can all be found in the British Museum. The first Sloane Manuscript (circa 1646) is number 3848, and is one of the most complete copies extant of the 'Old Constitutions.' The second Sloane Manuscript (circa 1659) is number 3323, and the third Sloane Manuscript, (date of this manuscript is unknown but thought from 1640 to 1700; some scholars think it should be dated around the beginning of the 18th century,) is number 3329. More can be read about these important Manuscripts in Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, and in Mackey's 7 volume set of the History of Freemasonry. Many Lodges will have one or more sets of this work in their Lodge library. Otherwise they can still be found through sellers of used Masonic Books; one of my favorite sources is Brother Harold Davidson, founder of the Billings Masonic Library and Librarian of The Philalethes Society; Brother Harold can be reached at brodave@wtp.net.

It is difficult to legislate and enforce certain behaviors among people, Freemasonry included. However, the 'old Charges, and The Charges approved by the Premiere Grand Lodge in 1722, and which make up an important part of Anderson's Constitutions, attempt to do just that. Section 6 and all its articles (1 – 6) deal specifically with a Speculative Mason's behavior both within and without the Lodge. This section of Anderson's Constitutions might make an interesting topic for a presentation by the Lodge Education Officer.

"Inwood, in his sermon on 'Union Amongst Masons' says: 'To defame our Brother, or suffer him to be defamed, without interesting ourselves for the preservation of his name and character, there is scarcely the shadow of an excuse to be formed. Defamation is always wicked. Slander and evil speaking are the pests of civil society, are the disgrace of every degree of religious profession, are the poisonous bane of all brotherly love.'" From Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry – Clegg edition.

Words to live by: Only by pride comes contention; but, with the well-advised is wisdom.

From volumes of Sacred Law:

"The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression."
Proverbs 19:11 Tanakh of Judaism, and the Old Testament of Christianity

"A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." Proverbs 18:19 Tanakh of Judaism, and the Old Testament of Christianity

"My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires."
James 1:19-20 New Testament of the Christian religion

“Governing sense, mind and intellect, intent on liberation, free from desire, fear and anger, the sage is forever free.” Bhagavad Gita; Sacred Scripture of the Hindu religion

“For those who expend in alms, in prosperity and adversity, for those who repress their rage, and those who pardon men; God loves the kind.” Qur’an:3:134 The Family of Imran: Holy Book of Islam

Please remember: if you would like to participate in the latest Masonic Monday Question, please go to <http://www.lodgebuilder.org> and click on the Lodge Education forum. When you have an answer send it to masonicmonday@gmail.com the Masonic Monday Question for the week of 12/21/09 is: **What Masonic Lodge did the designer of America’s most widely recognized and Masonically -inspired Symbol of Liberty belong to; when was the cornerstone for this Internationally recognized memorial laid and who was the GLMW who presided over this Masonic Cornerstone Ceremonial?**

“Indulge not thyself in the passion of anger; it is whetting a sword to wound thine own breast, or murder thy friend.” Akhenaton (1375 BCE,) Egyptian King, Monotheist

More Light – Mehr Licht ©, Masonic Matters © and T.F.S. ©, are sent out by Email at no charge to anyone who would like to receive them. If you enjoy these publications please share them with others. To subscribe to these publications just send an E-mail to erhmasonic@gmail.com with Subscribe in the subject line and you will be added to the list to receive the publications.

“Oh, let us not be found, when our Master calls us, ripping the lace off our waistcoats, but the spirit of contention from our souls and tongues.” Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)

“Whatever is begun in anger, ends in shame.” Brother Benjamin Franklin

Education videos from the Grand Lodge of Minnesota can be viewed by typing glmned in the You-Tube search window or by using this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUsEQa2RMCc&feature=autofb>
Some of Ed’s papers can be read at: <http://www.halpaus.net> and at: <http://www.mn-masons.org>

With “Brotherly Love”,
Ed Halpaus
Grand Lodge Education Officer

**Seek to mentor a Brother Mason:
It’s good for him, it’s good for you, and it’s good for Freemasonry!**

ⁱ John Noorthouck (1746-1816) Editor of the 5th Book of Constitutions, which is considered the best (1784.) Brother Noorthouck is the one who saw fit to report Brother Preston to the Master for having organized a procession to St. Dunstan’s Church without a dispensation. [a] Denslow’s 10,00 famous Freemasons.] This led to his suspension / expulsion and the formation of the Grand Lodge of England South of the River Trent. Noorthouck himself was also later expelled, but both were later reinstated, and while Noorthouck and Preston obviously were at odds Denslow suggests that possibly they may have reconciled as Noorthouck became a member of Preston’s Grand Chapter of Harodim. Reading about Noorthouck and Preston is an interesting study into how animosity of two Masons can get out of hand. You can begin reading about it at: <http://www.masonicdictionary/preston.html> Also in the latest issue of the Philaethes (Fall 2009) there is an excellent article on Preston that mentions Preston and Noorthouck by our good Brother and Masonic scholar Robert G. Davis of Guthrie, OK

ⁱⁱ I mention ‘former’ because in 1785 Captain George Smith was expelled from Masonry for ‘uttering an instrument purported to be a certificate of the Grand Lodge recommending two distressed Brothers.’ There will be more on George Smith in the 12-28-09 issue of More Light.

ⁱⁱⁱ 1967 was the 250th anniversary of the Grand Lodge of England; our then Grand Master of Minnesota, M.W. Brother Joseph Seltzer went to London for the recognition ceremonies. If tradition and good health prevails our current Junior Grand Steward, W.B. Robert Darling, will be the Grand Master in 2017; I hope he will be able to represent our Grand Lodge by visiting London for the 300th anniversary of the formation of the Grand Lodge of England.

^{iv} The Landmarks are called “The Unwritten Law” while the old Manuscripts and Charges are called “The Written Law.” A good reference to find the landmarks and information on the Written Law is in “Mackey’s Jurisprudence of Freemasonry.” Many Masonic Booksellers have it for sale.

^v In the April 10 issue of Masonic Matters I wrote an article titled “What Happens in Vegas stays in Vegas.” It has to do with keeping private the goings on in a Lodge Communication, and the symbolism of the Rose. If you would like to read it go to; <http://www.halpsus.net> then click on Masonic Matters and in the archives click on April 2005

^{vi} Mackey’s Encyclopedia of Freemasonry; Clegg edition, Vol. 2