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Bro. DB Jordan

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The Seat of Knowledge Trestleboard is an education based newsletter extracting articles and knowledge of interest from the past. Freemasonry is a rich and diversified field with world renown scholars who have contributed their knowledge to enhance ours, therein lies the reason for this particular Trestleboard. We are however happy to receive any articles or news including pictures from brothers of CDA 20 as well as recommendations and or suggestions. Please email submissions to: Bro. DB Jordan: CDA20.org@gmail.com

“Employ your time in improving yourself by other men’s writings so that you shall come easily by what others have labored hard for.” – Socrates



CDA 20 Stated Communication
2nd Mon. @ 1900 Hrs

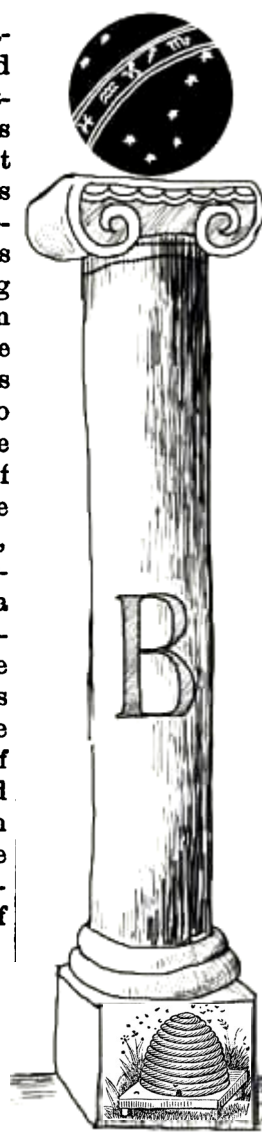
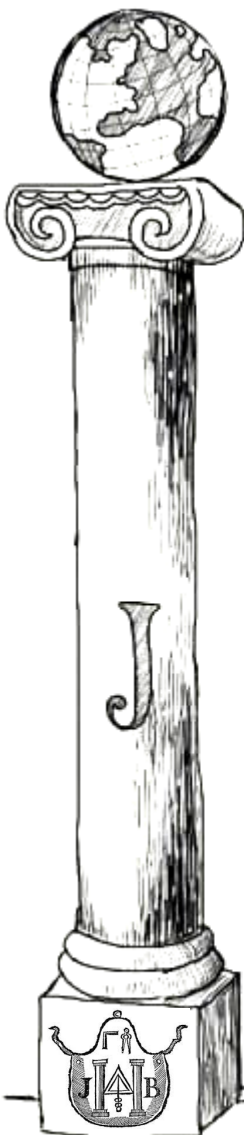
Table of Contents

Pg. 2 - NEWS

Pg. 3 - FREEMASONRY: ITS ORIGIN, RITUAL AND SYMBOLISM

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DARKNESS. The darkness of Masonry is invested with a pure and dignified reference, because it is attached to a system of truth. It places before the mind a series of the most awful and impressive images. It points to the darkness of death and the obscurity of the grave, as the forerunners of a more brilliant and never-fading light which follows at the resurrection of the just. Figure to yourselves the beauty and strict propriety of this reference, ye who have been raised to the third degree in Masonry. Were your minds enveloped in the shades of that darkness? So shall you again be involved in the darkness of the grave, when death has drawn his sable curtain round. Did you rise to a splendid scene of intellectual brightness? So, if you are obedient to the precepts of Masonry and the dictates of religion, shall you rejoice on the resurrection morn, when the clouds of error and imperfection are separated from your mind, and you behold with unvailed eye the glories which issue from the expanse of heaven, the everlasting splendors of the throne of God!





NEWS



In Memory of Brother Ben Benninghoff

2019 officers for CDA 20 are as follows:

WM — Taylor Marlow, SW — John Hull 32°

JW — B. Becker 33° — Treas. — Bill Needham

Sec. — DB Jordan 32°

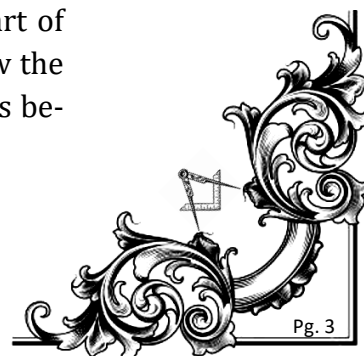
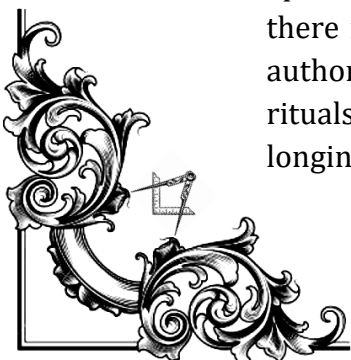
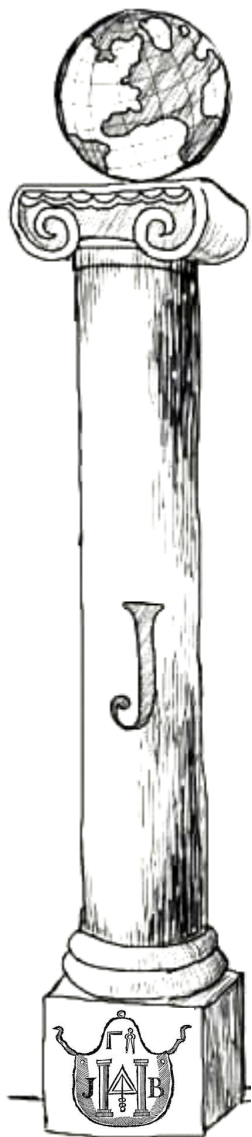




FREEMASONRY: ITS ORIGIN, RITUAL AND SYMBOLISM

By P. S. W .

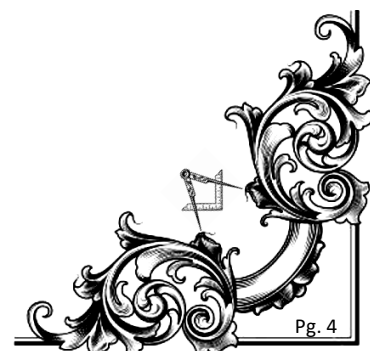
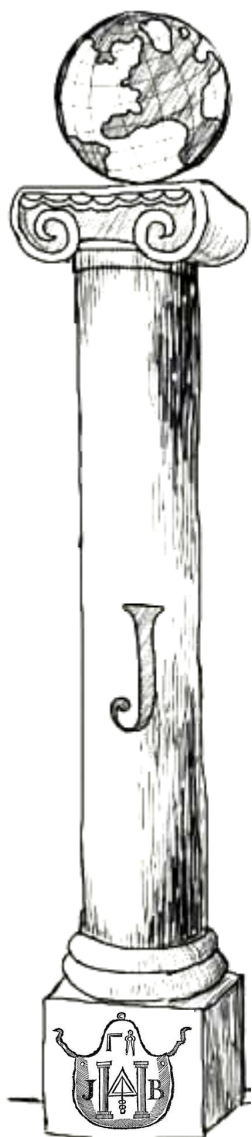
THE work by Mr. Arthur Edward Waite of which this is a brief notice, differs mainly in two notable respects from those of similar construction and purpose which have already appeared. In the first place a rigid standard of criticism is applied in weighing the available evidence for and against . any theory which has been advanced as to the origins and development of Freemasonry in its several grades; and the conclusions arrived at are strictly in consonance with that standard. Secondly, an interpretation of the rituals and symbolism of Masonry is offered which may help the serious student to an enlightened understanding of the end of initiation in the Instituted Mysteries of all times. It is highly probable that only a small proportion of those who have been initiated, passed and raised in Masonic Craft Lodges have any definite knowledge of the origin and development of the ancient and honorable Institution to which they belong. Should curiosity have prompted them to seek information on the subject, the researches and conclusions of a zealous and expert brother and distinguished writer are presented in these volumes. The rituals of the Craft degrees constantly affirm that those who qualify for admission as candidates for Freemasonry are not operative masons, but rather Free and Accepted or Speculative Masons. In this connection Mr. A. E. Waite shows that the claim sometimes advanced that Freemasons of today are descended directly from the operative Masons of the Early Building Guilds cannot be substantiated, inasmuch as the old charges and other documents of Operative Freemasonry contain no speculative or philosophical elements. These charges and constitutions of the Building Guilds axe considered at length. Similarly the case for Jacobite influence on Freemasonry is not corroborated by evidence, and the alleged derivation of Speculative Freemasonry from Hermetic schools is also set aside, although there is a considerable sentiment inclining in this direction on the part of authoritative writers such as Gould. The question then arises as to how the rituals of Freemasonry at present in use originated, and what materials belonging to the past were utilized by those who composed them.





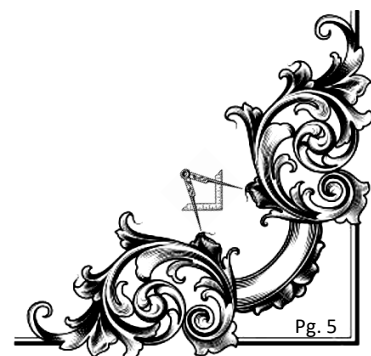
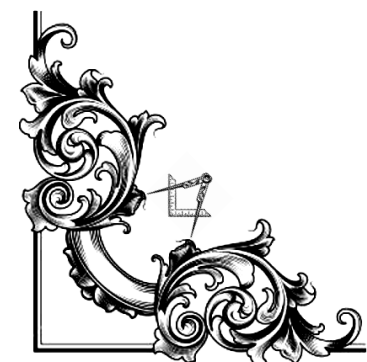
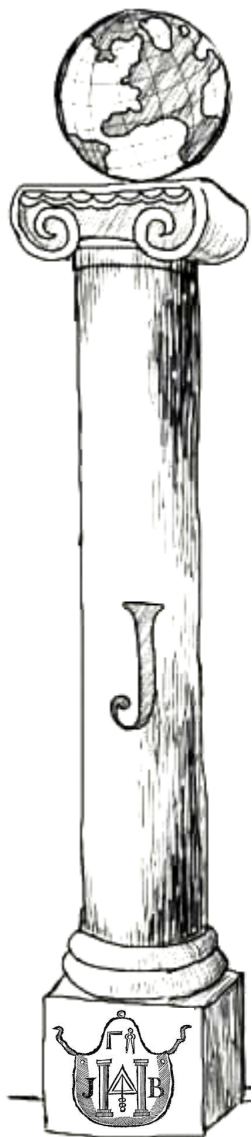
Mr. Waite leans to the opinion that when the Craft rituals were composed (about the year 1724-1725), there were only vestiges of old rituals available; possibly there was something incorporated from York, and from Scotland, but there is no trace of a regular system of speculative or philosophical Masonry in existence before the founding of the Grand Lodge of London in 1717.

Shortly after this date the Operative Documents, such as the so-called Gothic Constitutions and old charges, were put into the hands of Dr. James Anderson "to digest . . . in a new and better method." The rituals themselves were composed either by Theosophilus Desaguliers, or by a group of Masons of which he was certainly one. It is evident that whoever formulated the Master grade knew something of Kabalistic traditions concerning the pillars Jachin and Boaz, and had his eye on the Ancient Mysteries of past ages respecting rebirth, and the death and resurrection of the God. One important point as to the subject-matter of present rituals is emphasized by Mr. Waite, to the effect that the Christian grades as worked here and on the Continent before the French Revolution were afterwards "philosophized," and a colorless Theism replaced Trinitarian dogma. This expunging of Christian elements in Masonic Craft ritual is a matter of vital interest to any serious student of Masonry. It is not surprising to those who are familiar with Mr. Waite's mystical studies that he recurs to this point, and that his enthusiasm as a Mason is aroused chiefly by the great grades of Rose Croix and the like, which exist to complete the craft in the light of Christian doctrine mystically interpreted. We may question if the zeal of the candidate is stirred by the dramatic representation of the Hiramic myth, and whether after his introduction to an Institution stated to be more ancient than the Golden Fleece, more honorable than the Garter, he does not ask himself on attaining the master's apron if he has gained the light he was ostensibly seeking.





Should such questioning have arisen, we can confidently recommend the inquirer to continue his quest under the guidance of Mr. Arthur Edward Waite, to whom the message of Masonry is that of the Master Builder, and the building is that of "a city which is to come, the dwelling of the elect that is to be rebuilt in the heart, and over which a new firmament shall shine." The review of Freemasonry in France is of special interest, and in particular the author's account of the Campagnonnage as throwing a light on the development of emblematic Freemasonry. The pages devoted to Palladian Freemasonry contain matter which has never before been made public. In the sections of the work, treating of the Hermetic schools, alchemy, and the spiritual philosophy of St. Martin, Mr. Waite is especially in his element. . There have been many volumes written by industrious, erudite, or imaginative Masons, but in spite of this, we venture to think that this New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry may lay claim to a special place of honor on the shelves of all those who at one time or another have set forth in search of the genuine secrets of a Master Mason. It must not be inferred from the foregoing notes and observations that in one sense at least Masonry may not rightly be described as having "subsisted from time immemorial." "That which St. Martin said once, referring to all true men, we may repeat," writes Mr. Waite, "of the true mysteries: they speak the same language, for they come from the same country." The earthly locality of that country varies with the ages; to Iamblichus it was Egypt, to the descendants of Solomon it was Palestine; to the disciples of Zoroaster it was Persia; to the Greeks, Eleusis; and by analogy in all ages and countries there has existed a central and venerated shrine of the mysteries. The purpose of Initiation was always and everywhere one and the same, that of Regeneration effected by a figurative death to the entanglements of the senses, a rising from the tomb of transgression, and a glorious reunion with the divine Source of Being.





MASONIC TRIVIA

Brother and General Thomas H. Benton, Grand Master in Iowa, 1860-1862, posted federal troops around Brother Albert Pike's Masonic Library at Little Rock, Arkansas to protect its valuable contents when that city was invaded during the Civil War.

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