



# THE HOUSTON VALLEY HERALD

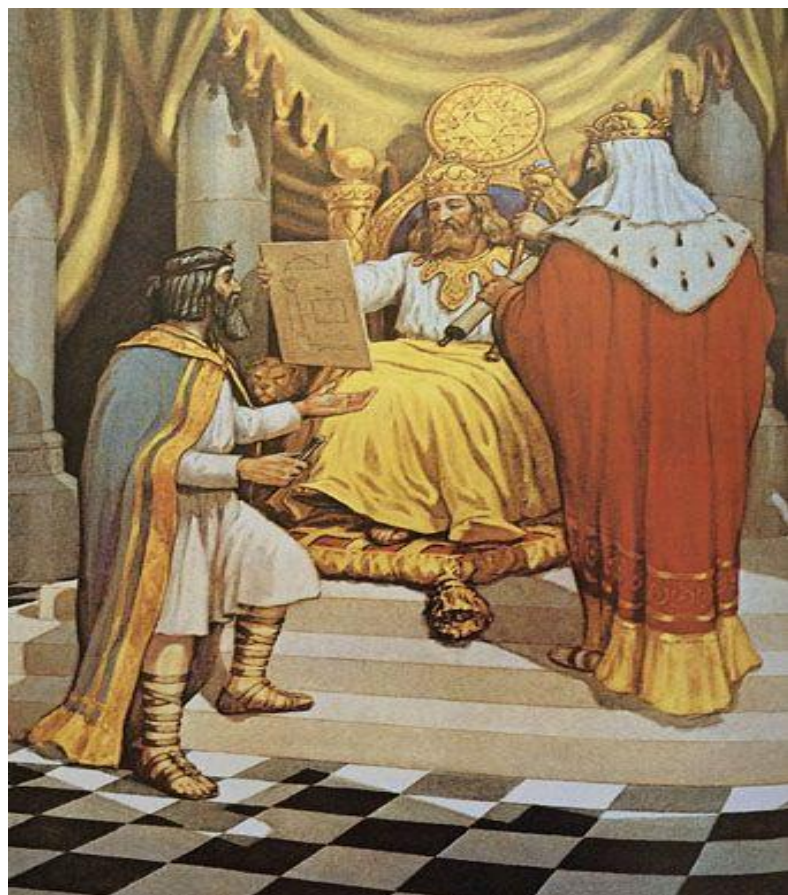
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## Everybody makes mistakes

By Jason D. Rees 32° KCCH



We are all capable of making mistakes in life, whether it be with our families, our jobs, our fraternity, or in our church. In the sixth degree, *Intimate Secretary*, we find ourselves in the audience chamber of King Solomon where we witness an angry confrontation between King Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre. Hiram, the King of Tyre, is presenting Solomon with a grievance based on a previous agreement the two of them had.

In 1 Kings 9:11-12 we find that King Solomon gave twenty towns in Galilee to Hiram of Tyre because Hiram had supplied King Solomon all of the cedar, juniper, and gold he wanted. But when Hiram went from Tyre to see the towns that Solomon had given him, he was not pleased with them, for the towns were all in ruins.

In this degree we learn how to handle mistakes and misunderstandings that come up unexpectedly, and how to work out our differences and make good on our own omissions. Solomon and Hiram of Tyre work peacefully through their disagreements, and execute a new treaty between both countries.

How do you react when you are wronged or if there is a difference of opinions or ideas? It is easy to allow pride or anger to enter into the conversation. We first must remember to be honest and just with our words and actions. Not everyone is trying to con or destroy us. Make sure you understand the other party's point of view and where they are coming from. Keep an open dialog with the other party and sit down in a conference where both sides can be heard. Once that has been achieved you can start to work on a plan of action by reaching common ground and attempt to make amends for any wrongs or misunderstandings.

I heard it once said that hurting someone unintentionally is worse than intentionally because if one party thinks it wasn't on purpose then they should not apologize. I think that is a bad way of thinking. If you have hurt someone, unintentionally or intentionally, and you either cherish that relationship or you might have to work with that person in the future, it is vital to step up and take the high road and repair what has been damaged.

## Freemason helps a hero in need

By Jason D. Rees 32° KCCH



As time flew by, the highly distinguished yet impoverished gentleman knew his time was short. Every time he drank a glass of water it was "like swallowing molten lead." The doctor's prognosis was throat cancer and he did not have much time left. He must finish his goal – not for prestige, accolades, not even for history's sake. It was to provide for his wife, Julia, who would soon become a widow. He wanted her have some form of income to support herself after he had passed away. He once held the Highest Office in the land, The President of the United States; prior to that he was named General of the Army of the United States, a rank and title that was once held by Brother George Washington. Thought of as a drunk by his critics and by his friends, he was known to have "four o'clock in the morning courage." He once sold firewood just to make ends meet.

Of course, the man we speak of is Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. He had saved the United States of America by defeating the Confederacy and brought an end to the Civil War. As President he all but destroyed the Ku Klux Klan, and did his best to preserve the Union during Reconstruction while dealing with the corruption of the Gilded Age. But it was not man nor country nor bigotry he was now fighting, and he knew he could not outflank this enemy: it was death itself pursuing him. What the former President did not know was that an unlikely hero was on the way.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born in Florida, Missouri on November 30, 1835. As a young man he became a Mississippi River pilot. The world would eventually know him by his pen name of Mark Twain. On December 26, 1860 he furnished a petition for the degrees in masonry to Polar Star Lodge No 79 of Saint Louis, was initiated shortly thereafter on February 18, 1861, and was raised in July of 1861. Soon after being raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason, he left to work as personal secretary to his brother who was the Secretary of the Nevada Territory. His travels and work caused him to put on hold his fraternal activities and his masonic membership was suspended, but on April 21, 1867 he petitioned for readmission to his home lodge and was reinstated.

Mark Twain is known for his writings such as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). There is not a great deal of evidence to point to his masonic devotion, though in his writings he would use various Masonic references such as in *The Innocents Abroad* he used the phrase "great Architect of the Universe."

By the fall of 1880 Twain had formed a deep friendship with Grant; they had spoken often and met on several occasions.

Cont'd on next page



**Victor Palla 33° Inspector General Honorary  
Library & Museum Curator: Books for the New Mason**

1. Claudy, Carl H. - *Introductions to Freemasonry*
2. Bede, Elbert - *The Landmarks of Freemasonry*
3. Newton, Joseph F. - *The Builders*
4. Street, Oliver Day - *Symbolism of the Three Degrees*
5. Coil, H.W. - *A Comprehensive View of Freemasonry*

(All of these books are available to borrow from the Grand Lodge Library in Waco)

**“Journey Passport” Program**

The Houston Valley is participating in the “Journey Passport” program which includes 33 challenges that allow participants to earn six unique Scottish Rite challenge coins. The passport program is designed to take brothers throughout the Valley of Houston and the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite. To learn more and get a passport, contact Brother Jason Rees 32° KCCH at: [acompass@yahoo.com](mailto:acompass@yahoo.com)

**The Houston Valley Herald Email List**

This publication is printed monthly and distributed at stated meetings of the Valley of Houston for the benefit of the brethren assembled. *The Houston Valley Herald* is also available online at [www.HoustonScottishRite.org](http://www.HoustonScottishRite.org) (Click the “Newsletter” tab). Anyone is welcome to receive this publication via email as well. To join our mailing list, email [acompass@yahoo.com](mailto:acompass@yahoo.com)



**What’s in your Library??**

**Books Every Scottish Rite Mason should have:**

1. *A Bridge to Light* by Rex Hutchinson
2. *Morals and Dogma (Annotated Edition)* by Albert Pike and annotated by Arturo de Hoyos
3. *Freemasonry’s Royal Secret The Jamaican “Francken Manuscript” of the High Degrees* by Arturo De Hoyos
4. *The 1783 Francken Manuscript* by Henry Andrew Francken with introductory essays by Allan Foulds, Aimee Newell, and Jeffrey Croteau.
5. *Albert Pike’s Esoterika* edited by Arturo De Hoyos
6. *Scottish Rite Ritual Monitor & Guide* by Arturo De Hoyos

**New Releases:**

***The Perfect Elect: A Transatlantic Adventure The ‘Sharp’ Documents Volumes 1 & 2* by Jean-Pierre Gonet** edited and translated into English by Joseph Wages

**Important Manuscripts to research for masonic education:**

- Regius MS 1350-1450
- Halliwell MS 1390
- Cooke MS 1450
- Trinity College Dublin MS 1711
- Graham MS 1726
- Copiale MS 1730s
- Richard Rawlinson’s MS 1734
- Kloss MS (year unknown)
- Baylot MS 1750-1760
- Francken MS 1764

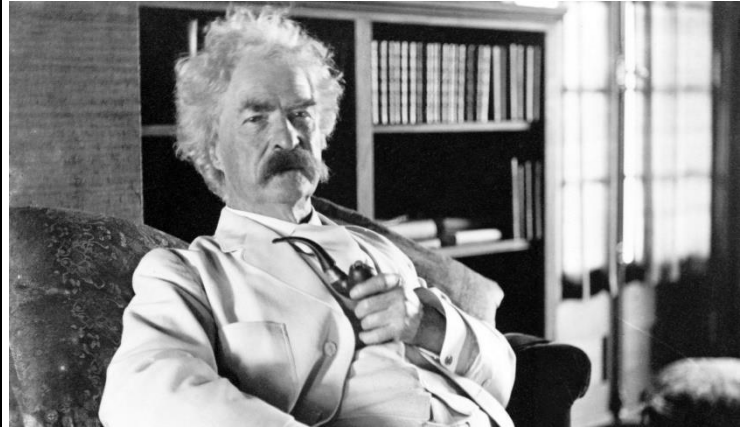
*Cont’d from front, “Freemason helps a hero in need”*

On November 23, 1884 Twain traveled to meet with Grant and, upon examining a contract Grant was about to sign with a publishing company, Twain found it was heavily in favor of the publisher and would leave very little for the Grant family. Twain then offered Grant a choice: 20% royalty or 70% percent of the total profit for Twain to assist him in writing his memoirs. Grant chose the latter and signed the contract.

By the following February, the cancer had ravaged Grant’s body to the point that he could no longer leave the house, and he slept sitting up. Twain was stunned by the condition Grant was in and feared he would not live to finish his memoirs. Grant persevered, brushing off several close calls and finished. Only three weeks later, on July 23, 1885, he passed away and a grateful nation mourned. President Ulysses S. Grant’s memoirs were an immediate success and earned his beloved widow \$450,000 – that would be almost \$14,500,000 today! The lesson: doing the right thing for a friend can have everlasting ramifications.

Sadly, Mark Twain’s passion for Freemasonry was impacted by his engagement to Olivia Langdon. He asked for a demit and remained unaffiliated for the rest of his life.

*Mark Twain (below)*



**“Good Timber” by Douglas Malloch, masonic poet**

The tree that never had to fight  
 For sun and sky and air and light,  
 But stood out in the open plain  
 And always got its share of rain,  
 Never became a forest king  
 But lived and died a scrubby thing.  
 The man who never had to toil  
 To gain and farm his patch of soil,  
 Who never had to win his share  
 Of sun and sky and light and air,  
 Never became a manly man  
 But lived and died as he began.  
 Good timber does not grow with ease,  
 The stronger wind, the stronger trees,  
 The further sky, the greater length,  
 The more the storm, the more the strength.  
 By sun and cold, by rain and snow,  
 In trees and men good timbers grow.  
 Where thickest lies the forest growth  
 We find the patriarchs of both.  
 And they hold counsel with the stars  
 Whose broken branches show the scars  
 Of many winds and much of strife.  
 This is the common law of life.

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