



THE HOUSTON VALLEY HERALD

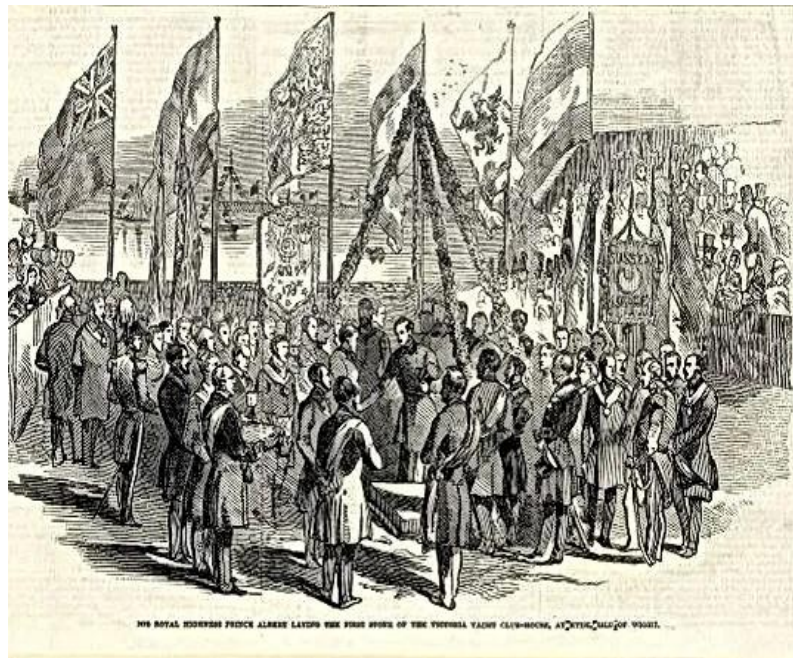
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Scottish or French?

By Jason D. Rees 32° KCCH



Freemasonry has used the same separate teaching system since the eighteenth century that still exists today: the brother travels through the first three degrees and then, should he desire further light, he can progress through the High degrees of Freemasonry. Since the 1730s the high degrees have been offered, and are known by different names: Perfect Master, Scottish Master, or Royal Arch. Once thought to be French in origin, recent documents have been discovered that have proposed that the genesis of the degrees and process lies in the ancient degree of Scottish Master.

We know that in 1733 of a “Scotch Masons’ Lodge” (sometimes written “Scotts”) meeting at the Devil’s Tavern in London where other lodges met. The words Scotch or Scotts do not represent the origin of the brothers attending, but rather the degree the brothers were working in. We find written the ceremony of “making and admitting them as Scottish Master Masons”. Many other accounts of the “Scottish Masters” degrees being performed between the years 1730- 1740 in England exist. The great English historian Robert F. Gould, who would have witnessed the rituals of these ritual, says the ritual was “based on discovering the ineffable word, lost long ago in a crypt by Scottish Crusaders”.

In Paris, in 1744, Abbe Perau stated, “I am well aware that there is a vague rumor among Freemasons, concerning a certain order that have their own ceremonies and secrets. However, apart from a few rare and short accounts attesting without doubt to its existence, very little is known about this first degree of Scottish Master.” As we can see in this account, Scotts Mason’s lodges were meeting and rituals performed on those whom already were raised to the degree of Master Mason. By the winter of 1743 Scotts Masters had gained recognition strength that in article 20 of the General Regulations adopted by the Grand Lodge of Paris states “as we learn that some brothers recently announce themselves as Scots Masters (maîtres Écossais).”

In two years’ time we see the first classification noted in the statutes of St. John of Jerusalem, dated June 24, 1745, in Paris saying “the ordinary Masters will gather with the Perfect and Irish Masters and three months after St John’s Day, the Elect Masters six month later, and those possessing higher degrees when they deem expedient”.

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Scottish Royal Arch

By Jason D. Rees 32° KCCH



We find ourselves as both Masons and good men working through life the best way we know how. Life is full of challenges, victories, losses, riddles, turmoil, and betrayals. How do we work through these and learn to accept the things we cannot change and to change the things we can?

As a Mason we look to our faith and scriptures, to our families, and to our fellow Masonic brothers. Our Masonic families are filled with Brothers who have gone through many of the same things and can offer their own points of view based on their experiences. We also can look at our degrees for allegories that provide us with examples of life; all we need to do is look at them with open eyes and hearts.

The thirteenth degree “The Royal Arch of Solomon” or “Scottish Royal Arch” is just one of those degrees. Deemed by Masonic historians and researchers as one of the oldest degrees in the Scottish Rite, there is much to learn from this degree. We all find ourselves trying to build or rebuild our lives. In this degree we see three Brothers on that quest: Adoniram, Yeu-Aber, and Satolkin. They find themselves around ruins of unhewn rocks that lead down through darkness to the unknown. As each brother takes a turn descending into the vault, attempting to reach the bottom, only one (Adoniram) succeeds. What he finds and how he finds it is a great lesson for all brothers to learn from.

Adoniram reaches the bottom by doing what the previous two brothers did not do, which was to carry a torch with him to provide light to help guide him through his journey into the darkness, and finding the sacred treasure. The torch Adoniram carries represents knowledge, the knowledge of faith and good counsel. With the knowledge of God which helps us avoid the rough rocks of life and where to place (or not place) our steps, we find that we always have a strong foot hold so as to not fall.

As he descends through the arches, we learn of the sacred number 9. The number 9 is a unique and fascinating number that

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In May of 1744 Estienne Morin was "initiated into the mysteries of the Scots Perfection" by a lawyer named Petit de Boulard. August 27, 1761, the Grand Lodge of St John of Jerusalem (which is the French Grand Lodge at Paris), in conjunction with the Grand Council of Regular Lodges, issued a patent to Brother Morin to promote and spread Freemasonry to the New World, thereby making Brother Morin Grand Inspector. This patent empowered him to form perfect and sublime Masonry in all parts of the world.

"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

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 (Click the "Newsletter" tab). Anyone is welcome to receive this publication via email as well. To join our mailing list, email 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

appears in many different areas of human knowledge, including astronomy, mythology, and astrology. In astronomy, the number 9 is perhaps most famously associated with the nine planets in our solar system. This was prior to the reclassification of Pluto as a dwarf planet in 2006; nevertheless, the number 9 still holds symbolic significance in astronomy, representing the completeness and order of our solar system.

In Norse mythology, Odin hung from the world tree Yggdrasil for nine days and nine nights to gain wisdom and knowledge. In Greek mythology, nine muses inspired creativity and art, while in Egyptian mythology, nine gods presided over the underworld. In the Bible the number 9 is mentioned 49 times. The number 9 symbolizes divine completeness and conveys the meaning of finality. Christ died at hour nine of the day, or 3 p.m., to make the way of salvation open to everyone. The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) is the only one of God's annual Feast days of worship that requires believers to fast. This special day, considered by many Jews to be the holiest of the year, begins at sunset on day 9 of the seventh Hebrew month (Leviticus 23:32).



We also see in this degree the 3 brothers work together to reach the sacred treasure by supporting one another with ropes: we too should help our fellow brothers as we are all on the same journey of life. The three brothers showed courage when looking down into the darkness and not allowing fear of the unknown to stop them along their journey. Once Adoniram made it to the sacred treasure, he knew he must share it with all: the light and divine nature of such a treasure was for all and all could learn from it. As Adoniram made it back out of the vault with the treasure, the blinding light of the treasure caused all to kneel, much as we kneel to God so that we may better grow in life and improve the world.

Adoniram, in discovering the treasure, is emblematical of the type of Mason who seeks knowledge from pure motives. Even the construction of the entrance to the vault was made of unhewn (unaltered) stones, which the alter to God was commanded to be made from. This too is an allegory to learn from: approach God as you are and he will make upon you his alter where you can atone and communicate with him. Not as the world would want with beautiful cut stones or a beautiful self but something that needs to be improved upon and reconciled with God.

As you move through life being lowered into that vault of trials and uncertainties, take with you the light of knowledge, hope, love, and understanding. Help those brothers who may not have all the answers and work together for the betterment for all. With the light of God and His knowledge, together we can bring the light to the world for all to learn and grow. By pursuing the path of honor and duty, we can faithfully perform the role assigned to us in this world.

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