



UNION LODGE # 3 A. F. & A. M. OF OREGON

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MASONIC NEWS & TRESTLEBOARD May 2015

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Tidings from the East

We live in an interesting time for the Fraternity. During World War II and afterwards, Masonry was a popular and well-established part of most communities. Suppressed under the Nazis, the Fraternity had been attacked and vilified, with untold numbers of Masons being killed in the concentration camps. After Hitler's defeat interest and membership in the Fraternity surged, and our own Grand Lodge of Oregon chartered the first Masonic Lodge in the newly-liberated Germany. Membership was seen as both desirable and patriotic, with soldiers and sailors joining as soon as they got home.

Our brethren in those days enjoyed a level of support and acceptance that led to many new Lodges being established, and Masonry grew in the state of Oregon until we had nearly twice as many Lodges as we do now. But the high tide would not last. With the backlash to the Vietnam War, and the distrust of all things "establishment" which followed, membership in the Fraternity dropped off and many Lodges were forced to close their doors. We are now seeing a resurgence of interest in the Fraternity, and the tide is turning once again as more people become interested in the Enlightenment which Masonry offers to its members and their communities.

The Fraternity has seen many ebbs and flows in the centuries of its existence, but there is one in particular that stands out in American history. Both colorful and shocking, the incidents surrounding that change still sound an echo in our political discourse today. It took place in the late 1820s, and has become known as the Captain Morgan Affair.

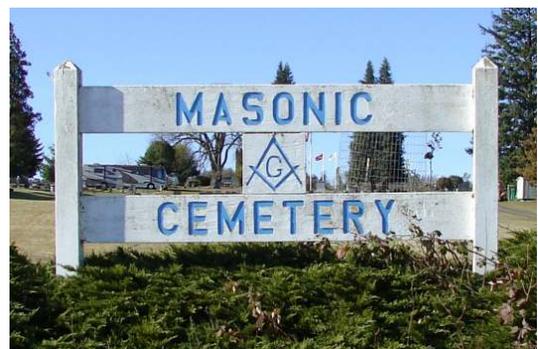
To really understand the impact that this incident had on Masonry, you have to understand just how popular and widespread Masonry was in the early United States. During the Revolution the Masonic Lodges, while officially neutral, offered an example of democracy and equality upon which the new country would later be modeled. While Masons served on both sides of the conflict, their contributions to

the American cause were well-known and widespread. Eight signers of the Declaration of Independence were known Masons, with another four who likely were. Many of Washington's generals were Masons. Washington himself remained active in Masonry throughout the conflict, sitting with many American military Lodges—and our Prince Hall Brothers can trace their own history back to the British military Lodges of that same time. Following the Revolutionary victory, Masonic parades and ceremonies drew huge crowds with their pomp and circumstance. The best and brightest men of the new Republic could be found in their local Lodges, and membership surged on the patriotic fervor of the time.

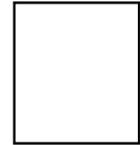
But those times were not to last, and within a few decades life in the new Republic was a very different thing. The War of 1812 had left the country impoverished, and the Capital in ruins. Shortages were everywhere, and inflation and unemployment were rampant. The British were still stopping American ships and impressing their sailors, and conspiracy theories were common coin. People blamed the Illuminati with trying to take over or suppress the new government. Others felt it was the Pope. Priests across the northeast fired their flocks to a fever pitch, extolling their own virtues and attacking anyone else as evil. There were so many pastors preaching Fire and Brimstone that one area of New York would become known as the Burnt-Over District. Believing that there was a Popish plot to take over the new government, a crowd in Pennsylvania would later attack and burn a Convent, killing a number of nuns.

It was in this super-charged political and social atmosphere that William Morgan would step on to the stage of Masonic history.

Continued next month



Monday, May 25th is Memorial Day. A perfect day to pay a visit to the Union Lodge Masonic Cemetery in McMinnville or the Masonic Cemetery or the Masonic Cemetery on Mineral Springs Rd. West of Lafayette.



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Published monthly when possible by Union Lodge # 3 A.F. & A.M.
You are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Deadline
for copy is the 15th of the month preceding publication date.
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- May 2** Tuality # 6 Stated 10:00 am
- May 5** Union Lodge # 3 Stated 7:30 pm
- May 5** Holbrook #30 Stated 7:30 pm
- May 6** Rickreall # 110 Stated 7:30 pm
- May 7** Newberg # 104 Stated, 7:30 pm
- May 13** Sheridan-Dayton # 64 Dinner 6:00 pm
Lodge 7:00 pm
- May 26** Union Lodge Trustees 6:30 pm - Officers 7:30pm

Some Bits of Masonic Trivia

The Holy Book must be opened upon the altar before a Masonic Lodge may be opened. Freemasonry is not concerned with doctrine or dogma or sect or denomination, but only with "that natural religion in which all men agree." Therefore, the Holy Book is called the V.S.L. or Volume of Sacred Law or the Book of the Law. If the members of a Lodge are Christian, Moslem, Jewish or Buddhist, the V.S.L. of their particular belief is opened upon their altar. The V.S.L. is, therefore, a symbol of the revealed will and teachings of the Great Architect of the Universe - a name under which any Freemason can worship that Deity in Whom he puts his faith and trust.

In China, about 300 B.C., Mencius wrote "A master Mason, in teaching his apprentices, makes use of the compasses and the square. Ye who are engaged in the pursuit of Wisdom, must also make use of the compasses and the square." Additionally, in a book called Great Learning, 500 B.C., we find that "A man should abstain from doing unto others what he would

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not they should do unto him; and this is called the principle of acting on the square."

By Ancient custom, the King was always covered while his subjects were never covered in his presence. The American custom of the Master of the Lodge wearing a hat as a symbol of his authority is apparently a result of that ancient custom.

The town of Keystone, near Mount Rushmore in South Dakota, was named by a gold prospector in 1877 for his York Rite Chapter watch charm.

The first registered livestock brand in Montana was the Square and Compasses dating back to before May 25, 1872 when brands were first registered. It is still in use today.

A Lodge may not be adjourned for any purpose. No member has the authority to present a motion for adjournment since that would usurp the Master's power. A Lodge must be in one of three conditions: Closed, open and at work, or at refreshment.

Ben Franklin published the first Masonic book in America in 1734, a reprint of Anderson's 'Book of Constitutions.'



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