

What Do You Know About Masonry?

Unknown

NOTE: With the permission of the Worshipful Master, this Bulletin should be read as an examination of the Masonic knowledge possessed by the brethren. Read a question, and ask the brethren to answer it. If the answer is correct, pass to the next question; if the speaker is incorrect, or not sufficiently clear in his explanation, read the answer, prefacing it with the statement: "This Bulletin gives the correct answer asetc."

This Bulletin forms a "stunt" for the amusement and edification of the brethren. It can be made to cover an hour, or an hour and one-half of entertainment, if the brethren are responsive and willing to answer questions. If it is the Worshipful Master's pleasure, the questions may form a contest, each being asked of brother after brother until one is found who can answer it, then asking him to take a seat in the East. At the end of the contest, the brethren who know the most about Masonry will crowd the East, and those who know the least will remain upon the benches. A prize may be given to the brother able to answer the most questions, and so on. The brother reading this Bulletin should inform himself as to the answers to the first ten questions (space is left to write the answers), which differ in all Jurisdictions.

Questions About This Jurisdiction

Who is the Grand Master in this Jurisdiction?

Who is the Grand Secretary in this Jurisdiction?

When was this Grand Lodge formed?

Of how many Lodges was it formed?

Name the oldest Lodge in this Jurisdiction.

When was this Lodge Chartered?

How many Master Masons in this Grand Jurisdictions?

How many Lodges are in this Grand Jurisdiction?

How many Masonic Districts in this Jurisdiction?

Who is the District Deputy in this District?

General Masonic Questions

Q. When was the Mother Grand Lodge formed?

A. In 1717, in London, England

Q. Who was the first Grand Master of the Mother Grand Lodge?

A. Anthony Sayers, Gentleman.

Q. When were the Constitutions first printed?

A. In 1723

Q. How many Lodges formed the Mother Grand Lodge?

A. Four.

Q. What were theyr names?

A. They had no names in those days; they were simply “The Lodge meeting at the Rummer and Grapes Tavern,” “The Lodge meeting at the Goose and Gridiron Tavern,” etc.

Q. What Presidents have been Masters of Lodges?

A. George Washington, of Alexandria Lodge, Alexandria ,VA; James Buchanan, of Lodge No.43, Lancaster, PA; and Harry S. Truman, Grandview Lodge No.618 of Missouri.

Q. What Presidents have been a Grand Master?

A. Andrew Jackson. He was never a Master of a Lodge, but was elected from the floor of the Grand Lodge to be Grand Master of Tennessee; and Harry S. Truman, Missouri, 1940

Q. Who was William Morgan?

A. A renegade Mason who disappeared, and who was falsely said to have been murdered by Masons because of his intention to publish an expose` of Masonic Ritual.

Q. What famous German poet was a Freemason?

A. Goethe, the author of many poems, including one on Freemasonry, the first verse of which runs: The Mason's ways are A type of existence, And his persistence Is as the days are Of men in this world. The future hides in it Gladness and sorrow; We press still thorow Naught that abides in it Daunting us – onward.

Q. What famous English architect was a Freemason?

A. Sir Christopher Wren, who built, among many other famous structures, the great St. Paul's Cathedral, in London.

Q. Name three famous American Revolutionary Day patriots who were Grand Masters?

A. Paul Revere; General Warren, who fell at Bunker Hill; and Benjamin Franklin.

Q. Name the Presidents of the United States positively known to have been Masons?

A. Washington, Monroe, Polk, Buchanan, A. Johnson, Garfield, McKinley, T. Roosevelt, Taft, Harding, F.D. Roosevelt, Truman, L.B. Johnson (and a few since then).

Q. Was Lincoln a Freemason?

A. In his heart, yes. He was never Raised in any lodge, so far as the records go.

Q. Is there a General Grand Lodge of the United States?

A. There is not. One was proposed in the early days of Freemasonry in this country, and George Washington was approached as a possible General Grand Master, but refused.

Q. Will there ever be one?

A. Impossible to say what the future will bring forth, but the sentiment of every Grand Lodge is unalterably opposed to it. The Grand Masters Conference is on record against it. The Masonic Service Association has written into its constitution a provision against it.

Q. Would a uniform ritual in all Jurisdictions be desirable?

A. Had the ritual been uniform from the beginning it might have been desirable. As all Jurisdictions have their own form of the ancient ritual, any change now, looking toward uniformity, would be deplorable. It would be resented by all who love the ritual of their own Jurisdictions, and would inevitably lose many historical allusions and connotations now preserved in the various rituals. All the rituals teach the same lessons and impart the same knowledge, only the wording being different. An attempt at uniformity would gain little, and might lose much.

Q. What is the meaning of the “Profane” as applied to a non-Mason?

A. Literally, “without the temple;” uninstructed, uninformed, ignorant of Masonry, not a member of the Order. In this connection it does not describe the non-Mason as a blasphemous person.

Q. What is the meaning of the word Abif?

A. Literally, “His Father,” meaning one having authority, an elder, a wise man looked up to. Hiram Abif thus means “Hiram, my father,” a man venerated for his wisdom and his accomplishments.

Q. Why do we call Master “Worshipful?”

A. From the old English word “worchyp,” meaning “greatly respected.” In the Wycliffe Bible, “Honor thy Father and thy Mother” is written, “Worchyp thy fadir and thy modir.” “Worshipful Master,” does not mean “Master to be Worshipped,” but “Master, greatly respected.”

- Q. Why do we have a Grand Master, a Grand Lodge, instead of a Great Master, a Principal Lodge?
- A. “Grand” here means first, or primary. It is also so used in grandfather, or grand total; the first or principal father of the family; the principal total.
- Q. Is a Worshipful Master obliged to wear a hat?
- A. No. It is his privilege, and his alone, to remain covered in the lodge. In ancient days the king or ruler remained covered, his subjects removing their headgear as a sign of respect. Brethren remove their headgear before entering a lodge as a sign of respect; the Master remains covered to signify that his position is that to which the greatest respect should be paid. The hat is a symbol of his office. But he is not obliged to wear if he does not desire to do so.
- Q. Why do Masons salute the Worshipful Master on entering and/or retiring from the lodge?
- A. To avow before all the brethren that they remember their obligations; a visible evidence that they recall what they promised and under what penalties they are bound. In most Jurisdictions a Mason salutes before casting his ballot, to signify that he does so with memory of his obligations as a Mason, and with the good of the Order and his lodge uppermost in his mind. The Master answers the salute to signify not only recognition, but that he stands upon the level with his brethren, bound by the same tie which binds them.
- Q. Has a would-be visitor to the lodge who requests a Committee a right to ask to see the Charter of the lodge?
- A. He has the same right to ascertain that the lodge he would visit is “legally constituted,” as the lodge has to ascertain, by an examination of his knowledge and his credentials, that he is a regular Mason.
- Q. Has a would-be visitor the right to demand a committee?
- A. All affiliated Masons have the right to visit other lodges, provided that right is not in conflict with the prerogative of the Master to exclude from the lodge any brother whose presence, in his judgment, would interfere with the peace and harmony of the meeting; or the right of any brother of the lodge to object to the presence of a visitor with whom he

cannot sit in peace and harmony. A well-informed and courteous visitor will not demand, but request a committee to examine him.

Q. How many members must compose such a committee?

A. Unless the Grand Lodge has ruled a certain number, the committee may consist of as many as the Worshipful Master desires to appoint. Two or three are customary; a committee of one is not uncommon, although it is a courtesy to the visiting brother to send out at least two.

Q. Has the visitor the right to demand that the committee take the Tiler's Oath with him?

A. A well-informed committee will not wait to be asked. The visitor has a perfect right to hear the brethren who are to examine him on Masonry state under oath that they too are regularly Initiated, Passed and Raised Masons.

Q. Can a Master sit in Lodge without an Apron?

A. He can. So can he keep his hat on in church. But he should not, if aprons are available. A Mason is not properly clothed in lodge without an apron. At a communication attended so largely as to use all the aprons available, it would be unthinkable to exclude late comers who would clothe themselves properly if they could. Most Master Masons, if all the aprons are in use, will use a pocket handkerchief as a substitute, merely as evidence to all that they know how a Mason should be clothed.

Q. Should a lodge bury an Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft with Masonic honors?

A. Mackey states that the right of Masonic burial is one possessed only by Master Masons. Preston, the author of the original Masonic burial service, says in his "Illustrations of Masonry:" "No Mason can be interred with the formalities of the Order unless it be at his own request, communicated to the Master of the Lodge of which he died a member; foreigners and sojourners excepted; nor unless he has been advanced to the Third Degree of Masonry, from which restriction there can be no exceptions. Fellowcrafts or Apprentices are not entitled to the funeral obsequies."

Q. May a brother appeal from the decision of the Master of the Lodge?

A. He may not. If he attempts such an appeal, a well-informed Master will rule him out of order. Appeal from the Master's acts and decisions lies to his Grand Lodge or the Grand

Master “ad interim.” The Master’s decisions on all that occurs in his lodge are final, until reversed by the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge. In some Jurisdictions appeal on some matters may be made to the District Deputy, and his decision overrules that of the Master, but he may in turn be overruled by the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge.

Q. Can a lodge adjourn?

A. No. A lodge must always be in one of three conditions: At labor, at refreshment, or closed. Nor can a lodge dictate to the Master when the lodge must be opened or closed. A Master cannot legally open his lodge before the Stated time, but he can open it as much later as he chooses; he has the sole power of calling special communications, and can close any communication at any time.

Q. Is it permissible to offer a motion to lay on the table?

A. It is not. The Master has the complete control of debate. He may initiate it, curtail it and close it at his pleasure. No motion which curtails his power to control and limit debate should ever be offered. If offered, the well-informed Master will decline to put it.

Q. Where can information similar to that conveyed in these questions and answers be readily obtained?

A. From the Code, by-laws and Constitutions of the Grand Lodge; from the ritual and manual of the degrees; from hundreds of fine Masonic books. The invaluable “Mackey’s Jurisprudence,” the “Little Masonic Library,” and a good Masonic encyclopedia are all excellent sources.

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