



AMICUS ILLUMINISMI

THE SEMIANNUAL BULLETIN OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF HISTORY, HERITAGE, AND EDUCATION

THE HISTORY OF THE TAYLOR COLLECTION IN THE HOUSE OF THE TEMPLE LIBRARY

B. CHRIS RULI, 32° KCCH, ARCHIVIST AND HISTORIAN, VALLEY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

In the autumn of 1904, the House of the Temple received the private book collection of a prominent Washington, D.C., physician and Scottish Rite Mason named Dr. Leroy M. Taylor, 33°. Taylor's collection, composed of approximately 2,000 books, became the first significant donation to the Scottish Rite, Supreme Council, 33°, S.J., since Albert Pike's own bequeathal established its library. While the collection's size is impressive, its broad composition of rare and coveted books made the donation all the more significant. During his long life in Washington, Taylor amassed a collection that included books on natural science, philosophy, medicine, politics, history, esoterica, and mysticism, which rivaled even Pike's own library. Despite our historical focus on Pike's collection, Taylor's bequeathal is equally significant and has remained a foundation pillar of the House of the Temple Library for more than a century.

Dr. Taylor's family moved to Michigan, where he obtained his elementary education, and then Washington, D.C., where he found work as a Senate page, a messenger for the Post Office Department, and a clerk in the General Land Office. Taylor followed in his father's footsteps after the Civil War and entered into the field of medicine. He opened up a drug store located on the northwest corner of 7th and M Streets in Washington and later entered into medical practice with his colleague Thomas Kearny. His marriage to Rose Utermehle, daughter of a prominent and wealthy family in Washington, enabled Taylor to focus his attention on leisure pursuits and travel.¹

Taylor's interest in Freemasonry began in 1858 when he applied for membership in Federal Lodge No. 1 under the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia. He was initiated on May 18, 1858, passed on June 15, and raised seven days

later on June 22. He pursued the appendant bodies much later in his life and appears to have struck up a relationship with Grand Commander Albert Pike. He joined the District of Columbia Scottish Rite on March 4, 1884, receiving the 32° later that year on October 1. He was elected a Knight Commander of the Court of Honour two years later on October 20, 1886, and coroneted a



Portrait of Dr. Leroy M. Taylor

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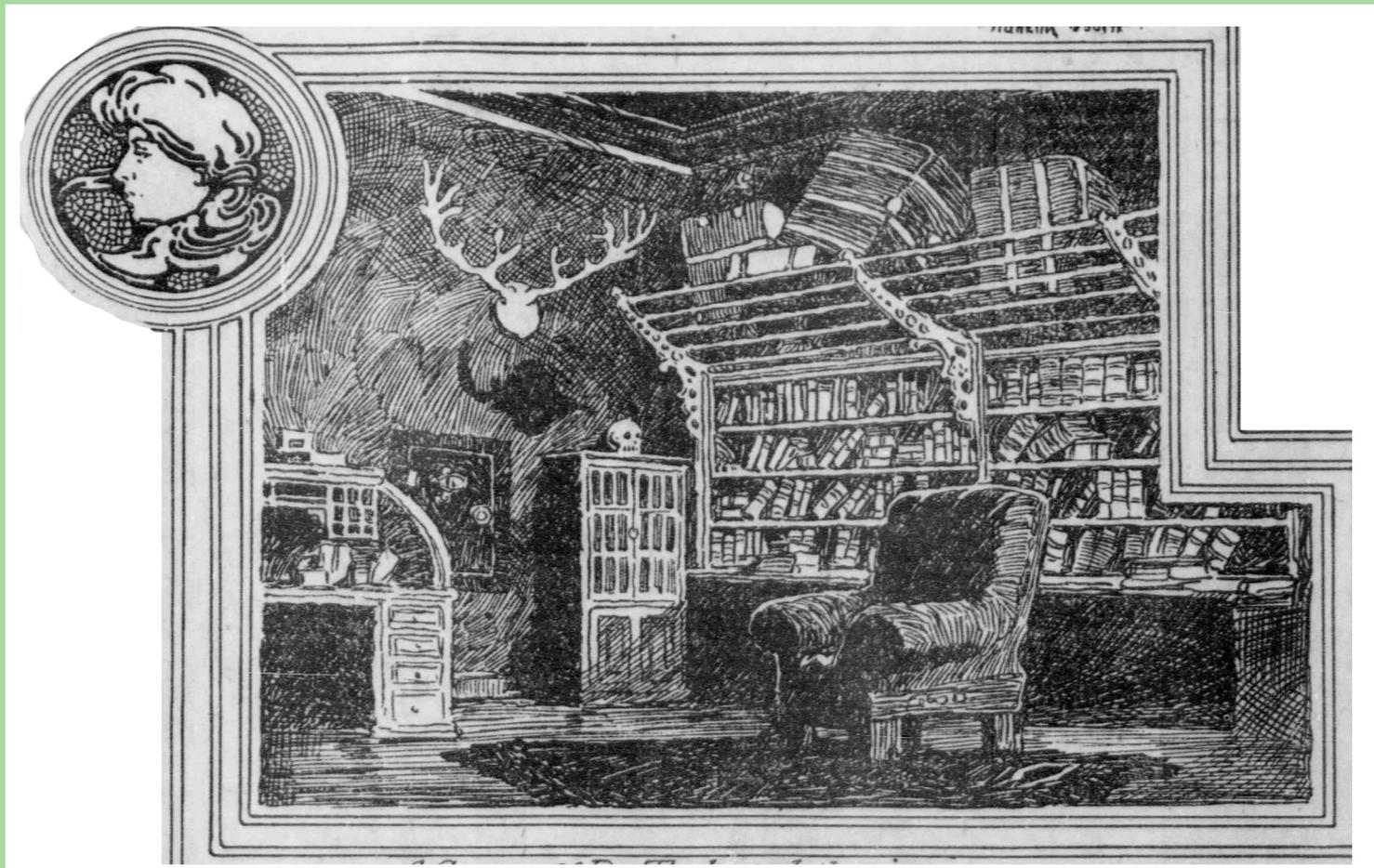
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An illustration depicting Dr. Taylor's library. *The Washington Times*, October 30, 1904.

33°, Inspector General Honorary, on October 22, 1890. Meanwhile, he joined two other organizations affiliated with Pike: the Masonic Veterans Association of the District of Columbia and the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland, in which Pike served as its chief executive.²

Taylor's life took an unexpected turn after the death of his wife, Rose, in January 1901. He moved out of the home he shared with her and took up residence in a large complex or warehouse that he had built to house his ever-growing collection of fine furniture, art, books, and other treasures. Struck with grief over his profound loss, Taylor "shut himself off. . . all but his most intimate friends." He left Washington regularly to travel around the country and the world and often returned with relics to add to his collection. Stories soon spread around the neighborhood of Taylor's acquisitions and his involvement in the spiritualism movement. Rumors swirled that he purchased "wonderful mirrors that would show the future" and books that granted readers "supernatural abilities" through magic. In September 1904, Taylor left Washington to visit the World's Fair exposition in St. Louis. He became ill shortly after his return and died on September 27, 1904.³

His death made headlines across Washington's newspapers in part due to his well-guarded private lifestyle and residence, which one paper referred to as "the last castle in Washington." A few lucky reporters gained access to his home and discovered a labyrinthine interior decorated with ornate furniture and oddities from foreign travels. His library, which also served as his formal sitting room and office, became the centerpiece of each exposé. Taylor decorated the space with lavish Turkish and Persian rugs, fine leather upholstery, and an ornate desk situated on the north end of the room.⁴

He installed shelves next to his desk and each contained glass bottles filled with different materials and chemicals. A hidden button was discovered underneath one glass bottle marked "poison" that, when pressed, enabled the shelf to slide and expose a secret panel and hidden vault behind the wall.

When reporters exited the library into the main corridor, they discovered dozens of locked doors marked with numbers:

The lockers and closets bring the number of interior doors to almost 100. No two of the keys are alike, and each key is numbered in accordance with the number [...] electric wiring is attached to every door and window.⁵

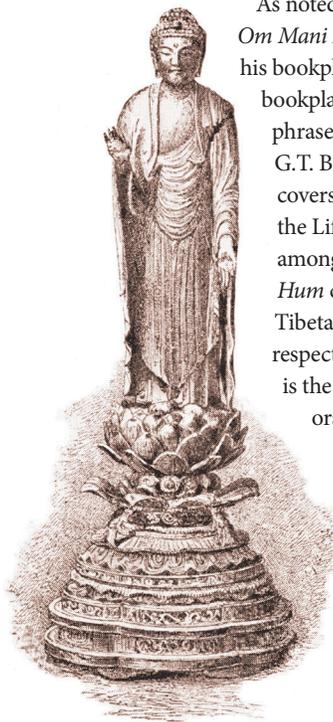
A large oil painting of his late wife, draped in black crepe, hung in one of his many bedrooms, although "the room [was] never occupied, which gives additional weight to the statement that the doctor was a Spiritualist."⁶

Taylor's funeral services, a modified Scottish Rite Rose Croix service, was performed at the House of the Temple Library under the supervision of Grand Commander James Richardson and members of the D.C. Scottish Rite. His body was then transported to Rock Creek Cemetery and interred by his wife's side. As a final act of his appreciation for the Scottish Rite, Taylor bequeathed his entire book collection to the House of Temple Library—approximately 2,500 books. He also allocated \$500, or \$17,000 today, to be used for cataloging and preparing the Taylor Collection. Grand Commander Richardson makes the first reference to Taylor's donation in his annual allocation on October 16, 1905:

It contains every book obtainable by him on the literature of Spiritualism, Theosophy, Psychology, Necromancy, Mythology, Astronomy, Ethnology, Religions, Secret Societies of all ages and countries, and literature bearing on quaint and out-of-the-way subjects. This is the largest and most valuable donation of books ever made to us at one time since Grand Commander Pike.⁷

Earlier that year, the House of the Temple Library produced a special 98-page catalog to help navigate the collection. It contains Taylor's

Om Mani Padme Hum: A Jewel in the Lotus, a Jewel in the Taylor Books



2. BODHISATTVA.

Bodhisattva emerging out of a lotus flower (a symbol of transcendence).

Bodhisattva is defined by James Fieser and John Powers, *Scriptures of the World Religions* (Sixth Edition) as a "compassionate being who resolves to bring others to liberation" (p. 109). Illustration from the Taylor Collection: Paul Carus, *Buddhism and Its Christian Critics* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1899). Source: Taylor Collection, House of the Temple Library

As noted in the main article, the Sanskrit Buddhist mantra *Om Mani Padme Hum* was placed by Dr. Leroy M. Taylor on his bookplates, and each book in the Taylor Collection has this bookplate. To find out the meaning and significance of this phrase, we turn to one of the books in the Taylor Collection: G.T. Beltany, *The Great Indian Religions* (1892). This book covers traditions and practices of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Life of the Buddha, Jainism, and the Zoroastrian Books, among other topics. The explanation of *Om Mani Padme Hum* comes under a discussion of Tibetan Buddhism: "The Tibetan Buddhists have outdone every other [faith] in one respect [...] in praying by machinery," (p. 313) Not only is the "jewel formula," as this mantra is called, repeated orally, "but they get it repeated by turning machines or extending flags [...] on which the sacred formula is written." (p. 314)

The writer Beltany continues:

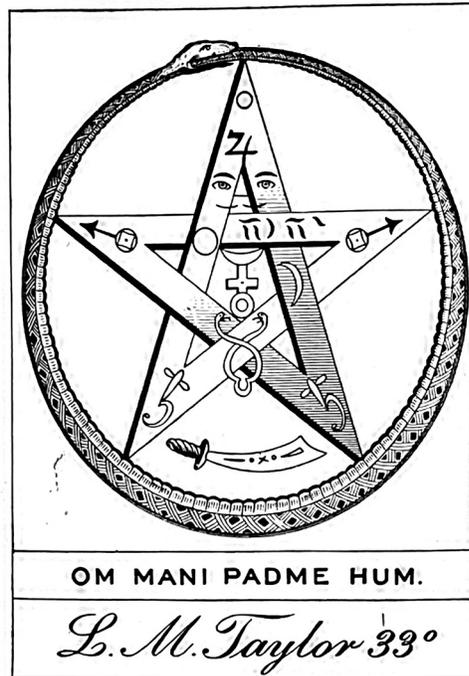
This formula consists merely of the sentence, *Om Mani Padme Hum*. The first syllable is the Hindu sacred syllable [aum]; the next two words mean, "the Jewel in the Lotus," an allusion, it is said, to Avalo-Htesvara as the patron of Tibet appearing [...] on a Lotus. The last syllable is regarded by some as an Amen. (p. 314)

One Sir Monier-Williams is quoted in *The Great Indian Religions* speaking of the ubiquitousness of this prayer and that it is believed "to be a panacea for all evil, a compendium of all knowledge, a treasury of all wisdom, a summary of all religion." Beltany then speaks of the "prayer cylinders [that] are of metal [with] the mystic invocation engraved on the outside, while the cavity is filled with paper in rolls, on which it is written [this] prayer [as] many times as possible." (p. 314)

As for the lotus itself, we learn from this prized book in the Taylor Collection that "the lotus flower, raising its head in the lake, unaffected by the water," reflects being "unaffected by the world's impurity." (p. 141) Such is perhaps the nature of many of the tomes in this very unique collection devoted to spirituality and mysticism.

The jewel-in-the-lotus prayer (which he possibly came across in this very volume) must have been of great significance to Dr. Taylor, for he placed it in his treasured books—volumes which he felt aided him in his quest for intellectual and spiritual enlightenment.

—Mark Dreisonstok, Managing Editor, *Amicus Illuminismi*



This bookplate featuring the Sanskrit Buddhist mantra *Om Mani Padme Hum*, the tetragrammaton, the pentagram, and Dr. Taylor's name and 33° Scottish Rite status is itself a "jewel in the lotus" of each book in the Taylor Collection.

portrait, a brief Masonic biography, and a brief description of each book organized by theme. It also included his personal insignia along with the Sanskrit phrase *Om Mani Padme Hum*, which roughly translates as "praise to the jewel in the lotus." (See sidebar above.) Special notes are included with certain books to highlight their rarity or uniqueness. Among the more unique books in the collection are *A Treatise of the Sibyls* (David Blondel, 1661, London), *The History of the Oracles* (1688, London), *Exposition of Hieroglyphical figures... painted upon an arch in St. Innocents Church in Paris* (Nicholas Flammel, 1624 London. Reprinted 1889 one of only 100 copies), and *Magnetic Magic* (L. A. Cahagnet, 1898, one of one-hundred known copies printed).⁸

This unique collection has since been added to the library's digital catalog and is available online for public access. The physical books are stored in the main reading room at the House of the Temple. Those interested in accessing the Taylor Collection may schedule a visit at the House of the Temple Library.

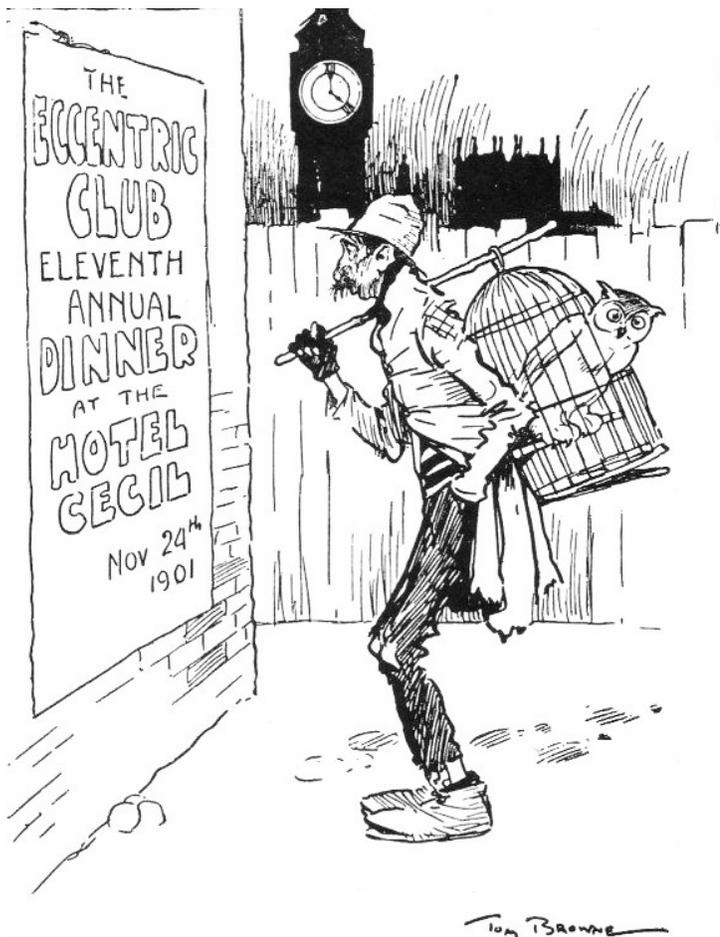
ENDNOTES

1. "Washington's Hidden Castle," *The Washington Times*, October 30, 1904.
2. *Transactions of the Supreme Council of the 33d and last Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America*, 1905, Washington, D.C., 1905, 347-348.
3. "Washington's Hidden Castle," *The Washington Times*, October 30, 1904.
4. *Ibid.*
5. "Palace in an Alley - Strange Abode of the Late Dr. Leroy M. Taylor," *The Washington Post*, October 25, 1904.
6. "Washington's Hidden Castle," *The Washington Times*, October 30, 1904.
7. *Transactions... 1905*, 348.
8. *The Taylor Collection in the Library of the Supreme Council, 33°*, Washington, D.C. 1905.

The Lighter Side of the Taylor Collection: *The Night Side of London*

LARISSA P. WATKINS, HOUSE OF THE TEMPLE LIBRARIAN

As a medical doctor and a keen observer of human nature, Dr. Leroy M. Taylor, the namesake of the Taylor Collection, paid special attention to human beings behaving in out-of-the-ordinary ways. This awareness is revealed occasionally in his collection, which includes some books on the eccentric nature of people. Among them is *The Night Side of London*, written by Robert Machray and illustrated by Tom Brown (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1902). In this book are depicted people who leave behind their daily, stodgy Victorian routine to release themselves freely and creatively at night.



"The Eccentric Club"



Piccadilly Circus, Midnight

As the book *The Night Side of London* states:

This book is a record of things seen in London by night in the first two years of the twentieth century—a record made by pen and pencil. The artist and the author worked together, visiting the places described, and seeing the scenes herein set forth; the volume is therefore the result of what may be called their common observation.

The observations of author and artist are far from common, and such scenes include "Singing in the Streets," "The Dancers Quickly from up on the Floor," "A Savage Club Concert," and "The Bar at the National Sporting Club." Machray's humorous text and Brown's whimsical pictures (sampled above) bring a smile to the face even today!

INCIDENT AT TEPLITZ

MARK DREISONSTOK, 33^o, MANAGING EDITOR, *AMICUS ILLUMINISMI*

KNOWEST THOU THE CLOUD-RIDGED MOUNTAIN TOP?

—BR. J.W. VON GOETHE

Although associated with Germany and Austria, the family of composer Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was originally from Flanders (thus, the Flemish prefix *van*). Beethoven's father was a strict disciplinarian who used young Ludwig's musical prowess in piano and violin to make money off of him as a *Wunderkind*, we read in Stewart Gordon's *History of Keyboard Music*. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadworth, 1996; p. 142): "In spite of his patronage by the nobility, Beethoven was not cowed by aristocrats." While Viennese society noted his genius and natural personality, we learn further in Gordon, "he steadfastly refused to be subservient" to the rich and powerful. (p. 143)

An example of Beethoven's independence of spirit is found in the famous "Incident at Teplitz," and here is where a Mason enters the picture—indeed, the namesake of the House of the Temple's Goethe Collection. In July 1812, Beethoven was ill and also suffered from financial worries. He thus arranged to visit the Bohemian spa town of Teplitz, renowned for its hot springs and idyllic location. Royalty often visited the spa, especially during the summer of 1812 as Napoleon was conducting his campaign against Russia. Sudip Bose writes in *The American Scholar* (July 27, 2017): "Beethoven, the consummate anti-aristocrat, had no wish to hobnob with such a crowd." Nonetheless, notes Bose, Beethoven was eager to make the acquaintance of Germany's premier literary figure, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. (Sudip Bose, "Measure for Measure: When Beethoven Met Goethe")

Beethoven greatly admired Br. Goethe, who was initiated as a Freemason at Amalia Lodge in Weimar.* The famous composer set to music "Mignon's Song," a poem which Goethe wrote for his Masonic-influenced novel *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship). We quote the poem briefly here:

Knowest thou the temple with pillars
decked?
Where shining hall and chamber
shimmering
Poised marble figures gaze at me [...]
Knowest thou the cloud-ridged
mountain top?

(Jonathan R. Corbett, translator)

Beethoven, in fact, composed other magnificent works setting Goethe's words and ideas to music. Once the two men met, according to Bose, the two seemed to get on marvelously well, sharing conversations and long walks together—even

discussing a possible joint musical work based on Goethe's writings. Yet nothing came of this plan. According to one account, perhaps apocryphal, the reason is as follows.

One day the composer was walking with the poet when they encountered a large group of nobles. Goethe took off his hat and bowed. Beethoven, however, continued to make his way through the crowd, tipping his



"LET ME RETAIN THIS SEMBLANCE OF AN ANGEL TILL I BECOME ONE:" MIGNON SINGS SEVERAL SONGS IN THE TWO *WILHELM MEISTER* NOVELS IN WHICH SHE APPEARS, INCLUDING THIS VERSE (G.H. LEWES, TRANS.). AN ILLUSTRATION OF GOETHE'S FEMALE PROTAGONIST MIGNON, DRESSED AS AN ANGEL AND SINGING IN FRONT OF CHILDREN, CAN BE FOUND IN A RARE BOOK IN THE HOUSE OF THE TEMPLE'S GOETHE COLLECTION, *FEMALE CHARACTERS OF GOETHE FROM THE ORIGINAL DRAWINGS OF WILLIAM KAULBACH BY G.H. LEWES* (NEW YORK: STROEFER AND KIRCHNER), AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF AN 1867 GERMAN EDITION.



Carl Röhling, *The Incident At Teplitz*. Source: Wikimedia Commons

hat slightly and in clear distaste. Goethe's deference to the nobles of the Weimar Court irritated the composer to no end. Goethe, for his part, wrote that he found Beethoven to be "a totally untamed personality." The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who seems to have credited the story, asks us to "imagine Beethoven as he appeared beside Goethe, say, at their meeting at Teplitz: as semi-barbarism beside culture, as the masses beside the nobility, as the good-natured man beside the good and more than 'good' man, as the visionary beside the artist [...]" (*The Gay Science*; Thomas Common, trans.)

Perhaps such independence of spirit is necessary in the case of a man like Beethoven, for we read in the Masonic *New Age Magazine* of February 1922 that there is a reality in "the Infinite, beyond the ken of the average man, [in which] Beethoven heard [the] celestial music." ("Corner of the Library," p. 109) While William Rounseville Alger, 33°, in the *New Age* of September 1904 is discussing "The Study of Character in America," it may be universally and often true that conventional society "does not furnish favorable conditions for the production of genius and excellence [...]"

*For Br. Goethe's Masonic history, please see "The Goethe Collection at the House of the Temple," *Scottish Rite Journal*, Nov./Dec. 2021, p. 10, by the present writer.

MARSHALING THE PHOTO ARCHIVE:

DEDICATED MASONS, STATESMEN, AND A VINTAGE MOVIE STAR

ARTURO DE HOYOS, 33°, GC, GRAND ARCHIVIST

The personal files of 32° Scottish Rite Masons, Knights Commander of the Court of Honour, and 33°, Inspectors General Honorary, maintained in the House of the Temple are an essential part of the database of the Membership in our Jurisdiction. It is also a key source of information about honored Scottish Rite Brothers of our jurisdiction. Many of those files contain not only nominations for KCCH and IGH, but in many cases the images of the Brothers elected to those Honours going back to the second half of nineteenth century contain some additional information regarding their Masonic activity. The files were kept in special storage and maintained by the office of the Grand Executive Director until 2000. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, with the rapid development of digital technology, the necessity of keeping physical files ceased. These physical documents logically transferred to the archival category.

According to the archival mandatory rules and regulations, these documents, in order to preserve them for posterity, must be stored in a proper temperature- and humidity-controlled environment as well as scanned for back-up copies. The ongoing renovation and modernization of the House of the Temple, however, obliged us to vacate some storage rooms to make way for new exhibitions. We

then launched an urgent "red category" task, which we called "The Cabinet Files Evacuation Project."

This multilevel project started by department staff and one intern on August 4, 2022. The first stage of it was to empty ninety-five file cabinets. Each file cabinet contained about six-hundred personal folders, thus, about 57,000 personal folders were relocated in alphabetic order in the archival boxes and put in the overflow library or available file cabinets in the main library.

The second and current stage of the project has been to create the Photo Archive, separating and removing from the files those photos of honored Brothers which are the most disposed to improper care. The preliminary estimate is about 20,000 photos, which should be scanned, cataloged, labeled, placed in a special archival sleeve, then archival boxes, and preserved in the required

environment. The nominations for Knights Commanders of the Court of Honour and 33°, Inspectors General Honorary, will be kept in the archival boxes and eventually scanned to enrich our digital database considerably.



Br. William Edward Annin

Despite the limited time we can devote to the project, we have scanned 5,261 images, and they are available per request of the Secretaries of the Valleys and genealogical researchers. Based on the year-long experience, we plan to make some technical adjustments, which might speed up the completion of the project and its quality.

We would like to offer here some selections from the growing photo archive. These examples are salient illustrations of the outcome of the project, as well as a demonstration of how the photo archive might serve. For the Scottish Rite Valleys which do not yet have a hall of Honored Brothers, it might be an opportunity to create one on their websites. Those who are doing genealogical research of the Scottish Rite membership of their relatives will have, along with the information on the membership card, an image of, say, a grandfather or grand uncle.

Perhaps someone would like to choose a topic of a comparative aesthetic history of the portrait's photography. In this case, our photo archive will be one of the best of its kind. Possibly someone would like to trace a photo studio in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century, when the number of them rapidly increased as they flourished everywhere. In this case, our photo archive will be a compelling database for this research.

A photo portrait of Ill. William Edward Annin, 33°, is a sample of the photo art from

the last quarter of the nineteenth century (pictured). Br. Annin was elected an Inspector General Honorary on October 23, 1895. At that time, he was a well-known journalist in Nebraska, serving as Washington correspondent for the *Omaha Bee*. He was born in Jersey City, graduated from the College of New Jersey, and obviously had a strong connection with his birthplace. Perhaps for this reason, he went to The Gilbert Photo Co., Hight Art Photography to have his picture taken. At that time, branches of Gilbert Studios were in Atlantic City, Philadelphia, and Washington.

Another sample of the photo art from this timeframe is from the opposite side of the globe—Hawaii. Br. William Auld (pictured) was elected Knight Commander of the Court of Honour on October 23, 1895. He took his portrait at

L. Williams Portrait and Landscape Photographer at Honolulu. On the back of the photo, the Studio advertised that it has “The only collection of Island Views. Curiosities from all parts of the Pacific. Elegant collections of Hawaiian ferns and sea mosses.”

The accompanying pictures represent the patterns of photo art of the first quarter of twentieth century. The images of the brothers are less static, more relaxed, with the trace of creativity of the photographers. The extravagant back sides of the pictures have faded away. Instead of them came practical purple- or black-ink stamps, or embosser stamps.

Another picture of note is Ill. Orin Ashton, 33°, from the Valley of Oklahoma, who was coroneted by the Supreme Council on October 19, 1917. The photo was



Br. William Auld

taken by Watton Studio, located at 204 Terminal Arcade, Oklahoma City. The ink stamp was a warning by the publishers.

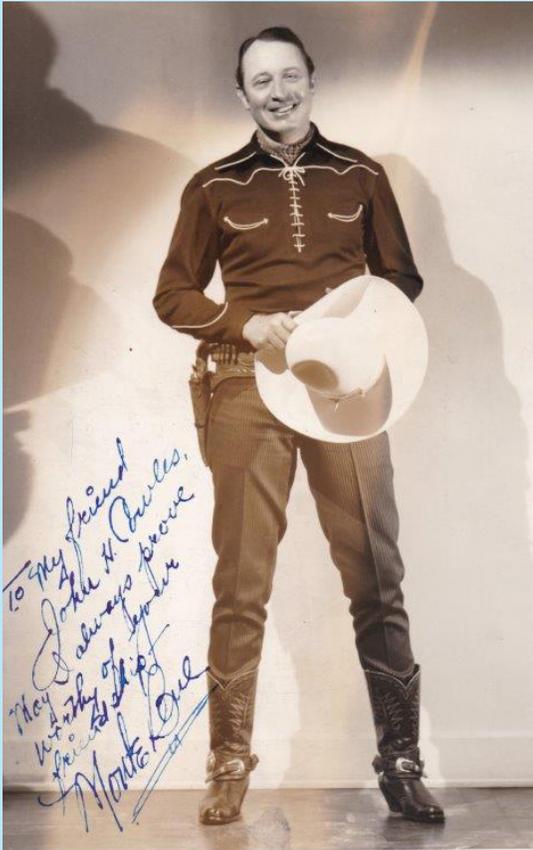
The tradition to take photos in the Inspector General Honorary cap slowly began to take root in 1921. In the Memoriam section of the *Transactions* for that year, of the ninety-four pictures of Inspector Generals Honorary, only two were wearing caps. The first was Ill. James Brooks, Jr., 33°, from the Valley of Omaha. However, his cap (instead of the Cross we would expect) had an embroidery of the Double-headed Eagle. Unfortunately, there was no photo in the personal file of Ill. Brooks, Jr., 33°. An additional study might be done as to why the Orient of Nebraska, and Omaha Valley particularly adapted the cap with the image of the Double-headed Eagle.

The second Inspector General Honorary was Ill. Clinton A. Snowden, 33°, from the Valley of Seattle, who was pictured in the cap adorned by a Patriarchal Cross, a symbol which was adopted by the Supreme Council for a particular session. The recommendation to take a photo of a newly coroneted Inspector General Honorary wearing a cap progressed over almost four decades. Only at the beginning of 1970 did the majority of coroneted Scottish Rite Brothers have photos taken wearing the cap.

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, in addition to the cap, man's jabots were in fashion, and many Inspectors General Honorary took their pictures in this garment. Among them was Ill. Lee Levon Aslanian, 33°, from the Valley of San Francisco, coroneted on December 12, 1987, by SGIG for California Douglas Lemons, 33°.



Br. Orin Ashton



Br. Monte Blue, Hollywood actor in many classics of the silver screen

portrait of Colfax Schuyler, who in 1855 was elected for the first time to the U.S. House of Representatives from the 9th Congressional district of the State of Indiana. Representative Schuyler served the country as the 25th Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1863 (the midst of Civil War) to 1869, when on March 4 of that year he became 17th Vice President of the USA. In 1856, Congressman Schuyler submitted a petition to Lebanon Lodge No. 7, was admitted as Entered Apprentice, and then completed the Blue Degrees at St. Joseph Lodge, No. 45, in his hometown of South Bend, Indiana.

Another famous and highly intriguing person from Indiana is Gerard Montgomery Blue, better known as Monte Blue. Blue got his start working as a laborer at the movie studios of legendary film director and Freemason D.W. Griffith, enjoying his breakthrough with a part in Br. Griffith's 1916 epic film *Intolerance*. Blue would then appear in a 1918 Tarzan movie, the Universal film serial *Secret Agent X-9* (based on a then-famous comic strip), and the Humphrey Bogart-Edward H. Robinson classic film *Key Largo*. He also had bit parts in many other famous Hollywood films, including

The American Hollywood actor signed his photo in our archives (a photo taken at the studio of Preston Duncan, Hollywood) as follows: "To my friend John H. Cowles, May I always prove worthy of your friendship. Monte Blue." He was raised a Master Mason in Utopia Lodge No. 537, Los Angeles, and in 1927 became a Prince of the Royal Secret in Los Angeles Consistory, and, according to the reference volume *10,000 Famous Freemasons* by William R. Denslow, "was noted for his impressive Degree work in that branch of Fraternity."

A follow-up article about the photo archive of the House of the Temple will appear when this project is complete and all statistics have been verified. In the meantime, we encourage the secretaries of all of our Valleys to join us, that together we might create a splendid historical photo-base of the Honored Scottish Rite Brothers of our Jurisdiction.

A small sticker indicates this photo was taken on 760 Market Street, San Francisco, by Dr. Henry C. Albert. Towards the end of the twentieth century, the names of the photo studios on the back sides of the common pictures were reduced to this simplicity. Some of them discontinued marking the back sides at all. A sample of the picture with no studio mark is the photo of Ill. Carl Christian Bosselman, 33°, from the Valley of Denver, who was coroneted by SGIG Jess Gern, 33°, on November 26, 1983. The office of the Secretary of the Valley put on the back side of the photo a sticker with an identifying number for Ill. Bosselman, his full name, date of coronation, and the name of the consistory as well as who nominated Br. Bosselman for this Honorary Degree.

the legendary screen classic *Casablanca* (1942).

Beside the images of the Honorary Brothers, our photo archive is proud to hold a special section consisting of the images of prominent people who were Freemasons. Some of these pictures were reproduced from the Collections of the Library of Congress but have an archive collectable quality. Among them is a



Belshazzar's Feast in the central courtyard of Babylon in Br. D. W. Griffith's film classic *Intolerance* (1916)
Photo: Wikimedia Commons

“Whisking” Visitors Away to Ancient Egypt: Shriners Whiskey Decanters at the Family of Freemasonry Exhibit

OLIVIA CURCIO, MUSEUM CURATOR

In the November/December 2023 *Scottish Rite Journal*, Director of Development Matthew T. Szramoski, 33°, introduced the House of the Temple’s Family of Freemasonry Exhibit to *Journal* readers. Here we will examine one particular collection of interest in the exhibit: whisky decanters which, in effect, “whisk” visitors to the exhibit away to Ancient Egypt!

The Shriner-themed whiskey decanters on display come across more like works of art than ordinary bottles of Jim Beam. Crafted in the 1970s, these commemorative ceramic decanter bottles were made in collaboration with select American whiskey brands, often for the Imperial Session of the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. They serve as souvenirs and collectors items even to this day. The more than half a dozen bottles in our collection were donated by the Orient of Kentucky and span ten years of Shriners history from 1970 to 1979.

The visitor’s attention might be drawn to one decanter in particular, that commemorating the 1970 Shriner’s Imperial Session hosted in Indianapolis, Indiana, by the Murat Shrine. In recognition of this Session, the decanter sports an outline of the State of Indiana with Indianapolis marked on it. The out-facing side of the decanter features a gold relief of the funerary mask of King Tut. Underscoring the theme of Ancient Egypt, the decanter is in the shape of a pyramid.



The decanter from the El Kahir Shrine in Cedar Rapids, Iowa (above), is similarly shaped like an ancient pyramid, evoking the world of Egyptian antiquity. This bottle was made in 1975, though not in this case in direct commemoration for the 1975 Imperial Session, for that was held in Toronto. The impressive Shrine logo of a sphinx, two claws, a five-pointed star, a scimitar, and a crescent are seen on one side and the Shrine temple and city name (along with a pyramid of red bricks) on a seal on another. The seal also features the Arabic-language greeting: *Es Selamu Aleikum* (peace be upon you). This unique container as well as the 1970 Indianapolis vessel discussed above were produced by—and filled with!—Jim Beam.

As already suggested, some of the bottles in our collection were made by other whiskey producers, like this fez-shaped decanter from Ezra Brooks (left). This design was to commemorate the 1976 U.S. Bicentennial, with the Imperial Session that year being held in Kansas City, Missouri. While the decanter holds to the Shriners logo and its Egyptian and Near Eastern stylistics, there are—in the Spirit of 1776—three colonial-era drummers painted on the front. The top of the tassel serves as the cap for the bottle.

Also by Ezra Brooks is the 1978 clown-shaped decanter made for the Imperial Session in Detroit, Michigan, recalling the Shriners’ devotion to fun as well as their mission to help children. Shortly before this Session, the International Shrine Clown Association was made official, so it is fitting that this decanter is in the shape of a clown wearing the fez regalia of the Shriners. Here we would note that the Shriners Clown Association was formed to serve as ambassadors for the Shrine and to enhance that Masonic organization’s philanthropic mission with fundraisers and donation drives.

To learn more, be sure to see these decanters as well as more memorabilia in the new Family of Freemasonry Exhibit at the House of the Temple. Such a visit is certain to enhance appreciation of how ancient cultures and philanthropic ideals are celebrated in Freemasonry in both light-hearted and introspective ways.



AN ANALYSIS OF THE COIN COLLECTION AT THE HOUSE OF THE TEMPLE

KYLE HOUSTON, FORMER HOUSE OF THE TEMPLE INTERN

THE COIN COLLECTION AT THE HOUSE OF THE TEMPLE

The House of the Temple's coin collection has been relatively undocumented and unidentified. The coins entered the collection at an unknown time and were donated by an anonymous donor. The collection is seemingly all from one source. Greek coinage from Magna Grecia seems to have been examined previously, but to little effect. Besides minor mint labels for those from Magna Grecia, no other coins had any information or tags. The collection spans an impressive range, boasting coins from the Achaemenid era to the high Roman period while also spanning a fantastic geography ranging from Sicily to Sardes. Much of the collection surrounds bronze prutot coins from Judea, ranging from the Hellenistic to the high Roman eras. There are also a significant amount of Hellenistic coins and coins from other Greek polities, especially those in Magna Grecia. Few of the coins are silver, and most of the collection is bronze. The collection has been organized by relative socio-cultural geography, but some items are lumped into other groups for consistency. For example, Herodian issues are in the Roman tab, while Hasmonean issues are under the Greek tab. Numbers refer to their respective images. In these sections, the coins are organized by date where possible. Coins are described by their issuing authority, e.g., "of Augustus." Available denominations are included on the title line; otherwise, coin materials and potential dates are listed alone.

THE COLLECTION

ACHAEMENID COINS

Silver Siglos, 500-400 BCE. Mint: Sardes

Obv.: Crowned, bearded, kneel./run. fig. r., w/spear and bow.

Rev.: Incuse.

15mm; 5.3g

COINS OF HELLENISTIC, GREEK, AND HASMONEAN POLITIES

Bronze coin, 400-300 BCE. Mint: Thurii

Obv.: Apollo head l., laur.

Rev.: Charging bull

18mm; 5.4g

Bronze Hemilitra, 405 BCE. Mint: Syracuse

Obv.: Arethusa head l.

Rev.: Dolphin r., cockle shell below

15mm; 2.8g

Bronze Litra, 405-367 BCE. Mint: Syracuse

Obv.: Athena head l. with Corinthian helmet

Rev.: Hippocamp

23mm; 7.5g

Silver Tetradrachm of Alexander III of Macedon, 336-323 BCE.

Obv.: Beardless head of Herakles r. wearing lion skin headdress

Rev.: Zeus seated on stool-throne left, holding eagle on outstretched right hand, and scepter in left

Greek leg: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ

25mm; 17.1g

Bronze Hemilitra of Timoleon, 334-317 BCE. Mint: Syracuse

Obv.: Zeus head l.

Rev.: Horse standing l.

12mm; 2.3g

Bronze coin, 400-300 BCE. Siculio-Punic; Mint unknown

Obv.: Kore(?)

Rev.: Horse Head

17mm; 4.2g

Bronze coin, 400-300 BCE. Siculio-Punic; Mint: Palermo (?)

Obv.: Persephone l.

Rev.: Prancing horse r.

18mm; 5.7

Bronze coin, 400-300 BCE. Siculio-Punic; Mint: Palermo

Obv.: Persephone l.

Rev.: Prancing horse r.

15mm; 6g

Bronze coin, 400-300 BCE. Siculio-Punic; Mint: Palermo

Obv.: Unknown bearded male r.

Rev.: Prancing horse

18mm; 6.1g

Bronze coin, 350-200 BCE. Siculio-Punic; Mint unknown

Obv.: Ceres head l.?

Rev.: Horse head r.

20mm; 5.2g

Bronze coin of Agathocles, 317-289 BCE. Mint: Syracuse.

Obv.: Artemis head r. with quiver

Rev.: Winged thunderbolt

21mm; 8.8g

Bronze coin of Agathocles, 317-289 BCE. Mint: Syracuse

Obv.: Possible overstrike of Apollo, both r. With quiver (?)

Rev.: Large tripod

25mm; 9.6g

Silver Stater Of Ptolemy I, 294-282 BCE. Mint: Alexandria

Obv.: Diademed Head of Ptolemy I r., aegis tied around neck, tiny Δ behind ear

Rev.: Eagle with closed wings standing left on thunderbolt Symbol

(Left Field): P (above), Lorber Monogram 212 symbol (below)

Greek leg: ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ Ι, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ

27mm; 13.3g



Bronze coin of Hiketas II, 287-278 BCE. Mint: Syracuse
Obv.: Laureate head of Zeus Hellanios l.
Rev.: Eagle standing l., possibly on thunderbolt
 15mm; 4.8g

Bronze Litra, 214-212 BCE. Mint: Syracuse
Obv.: Diademed head of unknown male, r.
Rev.: Standing Artemis, worn
 20mm; 6.1g

Bronze Prutah of John Hyrcanus I, 134 - 104 BCE. Mint: Jerusalem
Obv.: Archaic Hebrew inscription surrounded by wreath
 Hebrew leg: Illegible
Rev.: Double cornucopia adorned with ribbons;
 pomegranate between
 14mm; 2.5g

Bronze Prutah of John Hyrcanus I, 134 - 104 BCE. Mint: Jerusalem
Obv.: Archaic Hebrew inscription surrounded by wreath
 Hebrew leg: Illegible
Rev.: Double cornucopia adorned with ribbons;
 pomegranate between
 13.5mm; 2.1g

Bronze Prutah of Alexander Jannaeus, 103-76 BCE. Mint: Jerusalem
Obv.: Lily within circle
Rev.: Anchor within dotted border
 Greek leg: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ
 15mm; 2.4g

Tyrian Shekel (Tetradrachm), 54/53 BCE. Mint: Tyre
Obv.: Bust of Melqarth/Herakles r., wreathed
Rev.: Eagle standing on beak of ship, *bet* between legs
 Greek leg: Partially gone, but likely in full ΤΥΡΟΥ ΙΕΡΑΣ
 ΚΑΙ ΑΣΥΛΟΥ
 28mm; 14.3g

ROMAN COINAGE AND HERODIAN COINAGE

Bronze Prutah of Herod the Great, 40-4 BC. Mint: Jerusalem
Obv.: Anchor within dotted border
 Greek leg: Illegible
Rev.: Double cornucopia, caduceus between, five dots
 above, within border of dots
 13.5mm; 1.5g

Bronze Prutah of Procurator Marcus Ambibulus, 9-12 CE.

Mint: Jerusalem

Obv.: Ear of grain curved r.

Rev.: Eight-branched palm tree bearing two bunches of dates

Greek leg: L M or L ΛΘ

16.5mm; 1.9g

Bronze prutah of Valerius Gratus. 15-26 CE. Mint: Jerusalem

Obv.: legend surrounded with wreath tied at base with X

Latin leg: TIB KAI CAP

Rev.: Palm branch upright

Greek leg: IOY ΛΙΑ ΛΔ

15mm; 2g

Silver Denarius of Tiberius, "Tribute Penny," 14-37 CE.

Mint: Lugdunum

Obv.: Head of Tiberius r., laureate, right.

Latin leg: TI CAESAR DIVI AVG F AVGVSTVS

Rev.: Female figure r., draped, seated, right holding branch,
 left holding scepter, on chair with ornamented legs;
 below chair, a single line

Latin leg: PONTIF MAXIM

18.5mm; 3.8g

Bronze Prutah of Procurator Pontius Pilate, 26-31 CE. Mint: Jerusalem

Obv.: Lituus surrounded by script.

Leg: Illegible

Rev.: Date within a wreath

Leg: Illegible

16.5mm; 2g

Bronze Prutah, Jewish War, 67-68 CE. Mint: Jerusalem

Obv.: Amphora

Greek leg: Illegible

Rev.: Vine leaf on branch with tendril

Greek leg: Illegible

17mm; 3.3g

Bronze coin of Titus, 69-79 BCE. Mint: Gadara

Obv.: Head of Titus r., laureate

Rev.: Two cornucopias(?)

Greek leg: partially legible date, likely LZAP

16.5mm; 4.5g

Bronze coin of Vespasian, 72-73 CE. Mint: Ascalon

Obv.: Draped bust of Tyche, r. wearing turreted crown and veil

Rev.: war-galley r., with oars

Greek leg: OP ΑΣ

14mm; 4.4g

Bronze coin of Trajan, 98-117 CE. Mint: Ascalon

Obv.: Head of Trajan, r.

Latin leg: Illegible

Rev.: Tyche standing l., with standard and aplustre.

Possibly incense altar l.

Greek leg: ΑΣΚΑΛΩ

22mm; 11.3g

Bronze Coin of Marcus Aurelius/Lucius Verus, 161-169 CE.

Mint: Aelia Capitolina

Obv.: M. Aurelius and L. Verus busts confronted

Latin leg: partially intact; possibly VERO AVG

Rev.: Serapis, r.

Latin leg: Illegible

22mm; 10.1g

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE COLLECTION

The House of the Temple's collection is not surprising in its purview. Freemasonry and Masonic institutions often collect ancient artifacts, either holding them in a lodge for the sake of collection or using them in a museum context, like those in the Temple. Grand Archivist and Grand Historian Arturo de Hoyos is himself a numismatist, the main reason the coins were displayed in the first place in the Grand Archivist's collection. While the date of acquisition is unknown, it is certain they were donated by an individual whose name has been lost.

The makeup of the coins does make sense in a Masonic context. One of the most apparent links would be the Tyrian Shekel, as the link to Hiram, king of Tyre. The construction of the first Temple in Judeo-Christian theology has heavy Masonic connections (if interested, see <https://www.freemason.com/king-solomon-temple-freemasonry/>). While Hiram of Tyre should not be confused with Hiram Abiff, a much more familiar figure in Masonic rhetoric, there is a clear link to Freemasonry. Hiram of Tyre is seen as having sent building materials for the construction of the first temple and has his place in Freemasonry for this act. (1 Kings 5: 1-10) The connection to Tyre is present and explains why such a coin would interest Masons.

The considerable amount of coins from Judea can also be explained in similar terms. The first Temple is an obvious connection, but the land of Judea in a Judeo-Christian context also holds the hearts of many Masons. A lot of esoteric knowledge ingrained within Freemasonry stems from Abrahamic beliefs, often grabbing the attention of Masons. Representations of this can be seen in a wide variety of Masonic contexts, a good example being the degrees of the Scottish Rite: 16°, Prince of Jerusalem; 25°, Knight of the Brazen Serpent; and 23°, Chief of the Tabernacle, to name a few.

The Prutot are spread across a wide range of dates. Each Prutot brings a different part of Jewish history into the mix. Prutot from Seleucid Jerusalem point towards a time of oppression by the Seleucids, culminating in the Maccabean Revolt and the creation of the Hasmonean Kingdom in 141 BCE. Those found during this era point towards a period of relative strength for the Jewish population as the kingdom expanded beyond its original borders. Coins from the Herodian era point towards the start of Roman rule in the region, as Herod the Great was a Roman client king. Those from the First Revolt reflect on a much darker era of Roman and Jewish history, reflected in Titus's destruction of the temple in 70 C.E.

The other major subcollection from Magna Grecia spans a lesser period but greater geography. A good portion is from Syracuse. The city-state was one of the most potent Hellenistic entities in the Western Mediterranean. It boasts lovely coins, likely the reason behind many of their inclusions in the collection, especially so with one boasting a great Corinthian helmet. Many of the others originate from Sicily under Carthaginian rule, bringing a unique blend of Punic and Hellenistic cultures into the coinage, reflected in the many horse head reverses. This makes these stand out from many other Greek coins from the era. Unfortunately, many of these were mislabeled, often labeled as from Kroton. Nevertheless, it reflects the unstudied nature of the coins, likely put there as a quick thought by a collector at some point before the collection came to rest at the House of the Temple.

The inclusion of many Hellenistic and Roman coins is likely due to

a similar engagement with ancient history, albeit less direct. Studying history and numismatics is common in Freemasonry, especially concerning the Greek and Roman worlds. These coins likely stood out to many and were interesting, and thus were selected. The stature of many Roman and Hellenistic silvers was also appealing; they were pretty to look at as objects of inquiry. The Achaemenid Siglos was likely snatched up for this reason; while there are ties to the Achaemenid Empire in Freemasonry, it was most likely an object of inquiry and was thus included in the donation.

In terms of the coins themselves, most fall in the Hellenistic and Roman eras. A bulk of the collection is Prutot from Jerusalem, and another good percentage is from Greek polities within Magna Grecia. The remainder of the types, styles, and denominations are dispersed throughout the collection; only a few others share the same type. The collection has coins that fall around their peers' characteristics in terms of diameter and weight. However, the wear on many of the coins does result in a bit of reduced weight compared to many of their affiliates. The immense wear on the bronzes is likely due to large amounts of circulation; none of the coins could be dubbed as being in "perfect condition." With Gresham's Law in mind, this points to the bronzes, especially the Prutot, as being used extensively across their lifespan.

The lack of knowledge on how the collection ended up in the House of the Temple makes it extremely difficult to conduct further research. Metallurgical testing was not conducted due to the nature of the coins as museum display objects. However, this could be done in the future. Instead, metal content was examined via cross-referencing and visual analysis. For example, the Prutot's color, wear, and visual aspects lend themselves to being clearly bronze. The silvers are also easy to identify since they were relatively clean and not nearly as worn. Unfortunately, a die study or horde analysis seems impossible, as the collection spans such a massive range, and since we only know relative mint dates and not dates of deposition or how long the coins circulated.

For all analyzed coins, various sources have been used to cross-reference and confirm identity. The biggest and most significant of which is the collection contained within the American Numismatic Society's MANTIS database. All silver coins were identified using MANTIS. Many bronzes were as well; a good portion of coins from Magna Grecia was cross-referenced with the same source. Numista was another extremely helpful resource; it allowed for a massive cross-referencing for silver and bronze coins. For many coins, especially those from Thurii and those of a Siculo-Punic origin, Wildwinds was utilized. The few Roman Provincial coins were identified using a combination of MANTIS and the Roman Provincial Coinage website. With the bronze Prutot, a combination of Vcoins, CoinArchives, MANTIS, The Jewish Museum, and Wildwinds was used. Dating was done in standard BCE-CE formatting, often calculated from date marks. The Forum for Ancient Coins was helpful as well in finding out how certain items were identified. The Welsh Museum system (<https://museum.wales/>) was also quite beneficial in this undertaking. The Classical Numismatic Group also had many lists which were helpful in identification and dating, such as in assisting in the dating of the Tyrian coinage, and Edward E. Cohen's text on the Shekels of Tyre was instrumental.

The Siculo-Punic issues were the most difficult to analyze. The horse heads on the reverse make it very easy to determine they were of the Siculo-Punic era, but exact dating was extremely difficult. The obverses often left much to be desired, and even some of the reverses, especially with one coin whose reverse has been so faded that only the smallest sign of a horse is visible. This was made even more difficult by the incorrect labels.

Access to the collection was made easy by the nature of working at the location. Olivia Curcio, House of the Temple Museum Curator, was tremendously helpful for this study, as she oversaw the process of handling

the coinage. The coins were carefully removed from their collective cases, meticulously examined, weighed on an electronic scale in grams, and measured using a standard tape measure in millimeters. The coins were handled with extreme care to not damage any aspects and to keep the collection intact for display and later study.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Jeremy Simmons at the University of Maryland as well as Arturo de Hoyos at the Scottish Rite for their assistance and guidance in this project. Thanks are also due to Isabelle Klimanov for her support with the coin graphics.



The Rough Ashlar Speaks!

Recalling “A Fable in Stone”

MARK DREISONSTOK, 33°,
MANAGING EDITOR,
SCOTTISH RITE JOURNAL

The first decade of the *Scottish Rite Journal*, which began in 1904 under the title of *The New Age Magazine*, included creative fiction. In time, the magazine became more focused on non-fiction: Masonic articles with periodic forays into history, civics, and science. Still, on rare occasions, fiction pieces would continue to appear. One such narrative is the delightful “A Fable in

Stone.” Written by Lt. Col. Robert M. Walker (retired), 32°, the story was published in the February 1963 *New Age*. The story is unique in that it allows the Rough and Smooth Ashlars—both salient aspects of the Masonic metaphor of the Temple as the Mason’s journey of moral self-development from imperfection to seeking perfection—to speak for themselves!

“The Rough Ashlar was unhappy,” the fable begins, “and showed it in every craggy line of his irregular face.”

“Why should I be different?” he asked the Perfect Ashlar. “Other rough ashlars sit beside me and the Master puts them on the work

bench and shapes and smooths them until they become perfect ashlars like you. But when he looks at me, he shakes his head and walks away.”

“I think I know,” the Perfect Ashlar told him. “One of your corners has been broken off. This means that if [the Master] smooths you down to where all of your sides are straight and true, you will be too small. To be perfect, you must not only be perfectly smooth and true on all surfaces, but you must also be of exactly the proper size, or the other stones will not fit against you and the wall of the temple will not be perfect.”

The Rough Ashlar is unhappy, for the broken corner is no fault of its own.

Now a third character enters the story: the Master, who has overheard the conversation. The Rough Ashlar demands: “Why can I not be a perfect ashlar and take my rightful place in the temple wall?” The Master responds:

“Everything in this world has aspirations, everything from you to the temple itself, and even me... You feel you cannot be part of the temple because one of your corners has been broken off. Believe me, this did not happen because the hand of the quarry man was shaking, or because he was careless, or hated or you. Call it an accident. Call it anything you want, but you cannot wish it away nor can complaining change it.”

The Master then deepens the Masonic metaphor, noting the distinction between external perfection and internal perfection, much as penetrating minds are able to distinguish between internal and external beauty:

“The polished sides of the perfect ashlar are only the external signs of inner perfection. For who knows, the perfectly finished and polished sides of a carelessly selected stone may still conceal a weakness that will someday permit a portion of the wall of our temple to fall... The thing for you to remember is that a truly perfect ashlar is one that is sturdy and strong throughout, regardless of its surface beauty.”

The Master continues on to make an insightful point about how the Rough Ashlar may also have its use:

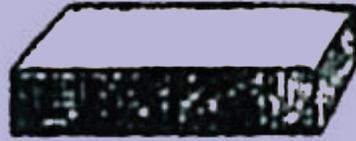
“Now look around you. In that courtyard over there the hooves of horses will tread and chariots will roll, and where the feet of Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason will

SECTION III



The Master at the Tracing Board lecturing on the Rough Ashlar (left) and the Perfect Ashlar (right). “A Fable in Stone” reimagines this scene from the Entered Apprentice Degree as a moral tale which treats the Rough Ashlar from an unconventional, sympathetic point of view.

Source: Robert Macoy, *The Book of the Lodge* (1855)



travel untold times. There we must have sturdy rough ashlar with their roughened and slightly irregular surfaces so that hurrying feet will not slip, for this courtyard is exposed to the elements, and rain on a smooth stone makes treacherous footing indeed. This is an im-

portant function and one that only rough ashlar can perform."

The Master encourages the Rough Ashlar, for "there will be another, even more important place for you in the temple." The workmen, it seems, have discovered one of the essential

foundation stones to be cracked, have removed the broken stone, and need to replace it with another, more durable stone. "Are you that stone?" the Master asks: "You are only a rough ashlar, but are you perfect enough in your inner strength [to] be buried in the earth" and hold up the mighty wall of the temple? The Rough Ashlar, now enlightened, agrees and is lowered into place by two Apprentice Masons.

Later, as people come from all over to admire the great temple, "the southeast corner seemed just a little straighter and just a little more sturdy than the rest." Extending far beyond the conventional lecture on the Rough and Perfect Ashlars which the Master explains on his Tracing Board to the Entered Apprentice in lodge, our creative fable concludes:

The years and then the centuries passed, and war and weather took their toll... Finally, the sands of time drifted across its ruins until at last only a few fragments of Masonry were to be seen rising out of drifting sand. The last fragment of what was once the greatest temple to ever be seen by the eyes of man was a part of the wall that had marked the southeast corner of the building. The Rough Ashlar had proved worthy of his trust.

This allegorical story thus contains a number of key Masonic insights. There is the Masonic notion of discernment in which merit exists beyond rough or smooth exteriors, for in Masonry individuals are valued based on their internal rather than external worth. There is a subtle reference to Psalm 118: 22: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner," reminding us that we at times overlook, to our detriment, great teachers, prophets, and ideas because they are not superficially attractive. Finally, the tale exudes encouragement to those who feel that they lack remarkable talents and gifts; in spite of this, they have crucial roles to play in both the sacred and the secular worlds. As the poet Milton enjoins us: "They also serve who only stand and wait."

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FREEMASONRY BUILDS ITS TEMPLES IN
THE HEARTS OF MEN AND AMONG NATIONS

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF
THE SUPREME COUNCIL 33^o
ANCIENT & ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE OF
FREEMASONRY SOUTHERN JURISDICTION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
1733 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON 9, D. C.

LIBERTY EQUALITY
FRATERNITY

THE TEMPLE RAISED FOR ETERNAL PRAISE: “THE COPPERPLATE PRINTER”



Jan Luyken (1649–1712) was a Dutch poet who thoroughly embodied the Baroque Age’s ability to see the world in emblems, that is, pictorial moral examples drawn from vignettes of everyday life. This type of allegory is central to Masonry’s own use of stone-cutting as a metaphor for a person’s moral life. In this section of *Amicus Illuminismi*, we feature Luyken’s famous poem, “The Copperplate Printer,” in which the printing of books is seen as emblematic of the Divine Hand creating each of us in His own image, with the purpose of building the Divine Temple. For our illustration, we have chosen the title page from Luyken’s *De Onwaardige Wereld* (*The Unworthy World*), itself rich in emblems of palms, a flying heart, and a foot on the globe. Jonathan Corbett, translator of the poem below, writes of this image: “Heaven’s eternal light and love, borne from above; an energy of accord flowing ne’er, illuminating the gladdened hearts of all with beauty, wisdom and the spirit Divine, these souls so dear.”

—Mark Dreisonstok, 33°,
Managing Editor, *Amicus Illuminismi*

The Copperplate Printer

A blank sheet upon copper plate is laid.
Through the printing press it doth race,
Acquiring physical form, engraved.
The soul likewise, when upon the
Eternal Good pressed,
Receives God’s image, impressed,
And a Temple for His eternal praise is
raised.

(Jonathan R. Corbett, translator)

Title page to *De Onwaardige Wereld*
(*The Unworthy World*) by Jan Luyken.
Source: Wikimedia Commons. 1710.