

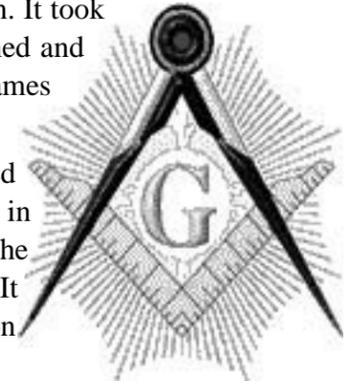


**Vol. 25** **January 2010** **No. 1**

THE CALIFORNIA ENCOMPASSER IS THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND YORK RITE BODIES OF CALIFORNIA AND IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY TO PROVIDE AN INFORMATION VEHICLE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP. THE PUBLICATION IS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE MEMBERSHIP AT ALL CONVOCATIONS, ASSEMBLIES AND CONCLAVES OF THE YORK RITE WITHIN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA. EDITOR: SK J.E.ARMSTRONG CONTENT SUBMISSIONS TO: JEA800@YAHOO.COM

**The Ceremony of Making a Free-Mason**  
Submitted By: Ken Hope

In England in June 1717 four London lodges met to form a Grand Lodge. At this time it was a radical concept introduced into Freemasonry. Freemasonry had only two degrees, that of the Entered Apprentice and Fellow of the Craft. There was no ritual, no laws for governance or edicts, by-laws, constitutions, or jurisdiction. It took almost the rest of the 18th century for most of this to happen. The Grand Lodge was formed and they met quarterly, but no minutes of these meetings were kept until 1723 when the Rev. James Anderson (1679-1739) presented the first set of Constitutions.



There were no petitions, committees, or balloting on candidates. Names were recommended by a member; those present discussed the merits of the candidate and agreed to admit him in the Craft. There was no waiting time before a degree was conferred and no interval between the first and second degrees, in fact the Fellowcraft degree was conferred on the same evening. It was mandated in 1777 that the Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft degrees be conferred on different evenings. It is in 1725 that we find the first evidence of a Master Mason Degree.

The admission ceremony was in the form of a feast and was the same for the Apprentice and Fellowcraft. It consisted of an opening prayer followed by a reading of appropriate charges and regulations. Then the candidate took his oath, which was declaring his fidelity to the King, to the Master, Craft, and a promise that he would obey the regulations and not bring shame to the Craft. There were no penalties in these oaths.

During the latter part of the 18th century the ceremonies became more elaborate and took on the form that we know today. The ritualists in England that made the greatest impact on this transformation during the period of enlightenment were: William Hutchinson (1732-1814), Wellins Calcott (1726-1779), and William Preston (1742-1818). Hutchinson philosophized and symbolized the ritual. Calcott improved on that and became the first of the "roving lecturers" teaching the lectures etc.

Calcott came to the US and among his pupils were Robert Livingston (1746-1813), Paul Revere (1735-1818), and Joseph Warren (1741-1775). He is credited with introducing "moral and social virtues" in the closing prayer, "subdue their passions and improve

**CONTINUED: Free Mason Pg. 4**



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## RECOMMEND A NEW MEMBER

Companions, let us help you recommend new members for your Chapter!

Yes, we said “recommend.” While recruitment of members in Blue Lodge is not permitted, we are entirely free to recruit members for our Chapters from those Master Masons we may know in Blue Lodges.

If you will give our Grand High Priest the name and address of such a potential member, he will personally write him to tell him of your recommendation and to encourage him to apply to your Chapter.

You may send recommended names by e-mail to our Grand High Priest at [grandhighpriest@comcast.net](mailto:grandhighpriest@comcast.net)

The information we need from you is:

- **Recommended Brother’s name and address.**
- **Your name and address.**
- **Your Chapter’s name and number.**

Please send us lots of recommendations. Your Chapter, our Rite and those you recommend will benefit.



## Content Submission Guide & Schedule

- **Data submission deadlines** are as follows;
  - 1st quarter issue [**November**]
  - 2nd quarter issue [**February**]
  - 3rd quarter issue [**May**], and
  - 4th quarter issue [**August**].
 --- Data received after dates noted will be published in the following quarterly issue.
- Data types; pdf, doc, docx, xls, xlsx, and txt...jpeg, tiff, bmp; most general digital file types.
- Submissions over 8MB in volume must be submitted by \*FTP (File Transfer Protocol). Please contact the editor.
- Articles & announcements about your Chapter, Council and Commandery wanted.

## ITEMS OF NOTE...

— In This Issue —

- **Greetings Companions... – Letter**
- **...Making a Free-Mason... – Article**
- **Grand Chapter 2009/2010 – Itinerary**
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- **Grand Commandery 2009/2010 – Itinerary**
- **Royal Arch 2 Cryptic Rite... – Article**
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- **Grand York Rite of California**
- **Masonic Art Exchange**
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- **...Royal Ark Mariner... – Article**



# Grand York Rite of California

## •WEB SITE ITEMS

<http://www.yorkriteofcalifornia.org>

Many local York Rite Bodies in California publish a “Trestle Board” or “Bulletin” or “Newsletter” for their members. These individual “Trestle Boards” can be posted to the California York Rite Web Site and then are available to the Masonic Fraternity membership and your members, for their reading enjoyment, no matter whether-so-ever dispersed around the world.

High Priests, Illustrious Masters, Commanders, Secretaries, Recorders; this site is available to keep your members apprised of all activities in your Chapter, Council, and Commandery, no matter whether so ever dispersed. Send your publications to me, in Word or PDF.

For further information regarding this web site or to have your publication posted please contact:

**Richard E. Thornton - [richard@rethornton.com](mailto:richard@rethornton.com)**



## MASONIC ART EXCHANGE



<http://masonic-ae.com>

This project started as a group on facebook and has taken on a life of it's own. We have published our forth newsletter and already are receiving a great response to it's contents. Regular site visitors will noticed the addition of new pages: as promised we are developing the site to make it a greater resource.

We encourage you to become a member of the facebook group - if you are not a 'facebooker' please feel free to join our forum, we are also on Twitter.

Like the group in facebook, the newsletter and the forum of our web site is in its infancy. It is our hope for it grow as we continue on this joint adventure.

For now the site is a portal to the various ways of joining the group and also to accessing the newsletter but it will grow with your help.

S&F

David Naughton-Shires  
MAE President & Founder



## Should Study Masonry: *CONTINUED*

of the great historical background and the inspiring achievements that Masonry has made during its long and honorable existence.

If your Masonry means something more than a passing impulse or fancy on your part, you certainly must be interested in any endeavor which promises to aid you "to improve yourself in Masonry."

The Masonic Society affords every member of the Craft who sincerely desires to improve himself in Masonry one of the most certain and fruitful means of individual improvement and general Masonic advancement.

## Aleister Crowley: Freemason!

Courtesy of: Bro Martin P Starr

Crowley was born Edward Alexander Crowley on 12 October 1875 in Leamington, Warwickshire, [England] the son of prosperous Plymouth Brethren parents. He was educated privately, at schools run by the Plymouth Brethren, and finally at Tonbridge, to matriculate at Trinity College, Cambridge in the autumn term of 1895. Here he was first able to step free of his family and their narrow intellectual atmosphere which forbade virtually all literature. After reflecting on the limits of mortality and human endeavour, in a search for a method to explore the spiritual world, Crowley took up the study of medieval Magic, starting with *The Book of Black Magic and of Facts* (1898) of AE Waite. Crowley, intrigued by Waite's hinting that 'he knew of a Hidden Church withdrawn from the world in whose sanctuaries were preserved the mysteries of initiation, wrote the author in the spring of 1898, asking for an introduction; Waite (who was not yet a mason) replied with the suggestion that Crowley read *The Cloud upon the Sanctuary of Karl von Eckartshausen*, an early 19th century devotional text of 'Rosicrucian' mysticism, which he studied assiduously over the Easter vacation of 1898. A chance meeting in Switzerland later that year brought Crowley into contact with the 'Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn', the fin-de-siècle's most influential English esoteric society.

Crowley's initiation into the grade of Neophyte of the Golden Dawn took place in the [second] Mark Mason's Hall, Great Queen Street, on 26 November 1898. In a real sense, this was Crowley's first distant brush with Freemasonry, as

the Golden Dawn was created and led by an interlocking directorate of esoterically inclined freemasons, with ritual and organizational structure closely modelled on the Craft and certain Appendant Bodies. The parallels and blatant borrowings (e.g., the sceptres of the First and Third Principals in the Holy Royal Arch are used in the Golden Dawn rituals by the 'Hierophant' and 'Hegemon') which seem so obvious to a contemporary student, however, provoked little comment by Crowley, who took his initiation with deadly seriousness as his entry into the 'Hidden Church of the Holy Grail'.

By the time Crowley joined the Golden Dawn in 1898, Westcott had 'withdrawn his labours' from both the First and Second Order the year prior owing to official pressure from the Home Office. Westcott also tired of the increasingly dictatorial methods of his colleague Bro. Samuel Liddell Mathers, fellow member of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, Westcott's right hand in the creation of the Golden Dawn and the sole author of its magically-inclined 'Rosicrucian' Second Order, 'Ordo Rosae Rubeae et Aureae Crucis'. Crowley met Westcott in person only once, on 17 April 1900, but he saw Mathers frequently and had a high regard for the latter's abilities as a magician and a scholar. It is hardly surprising that when the London 'adepts' began openly to turn against Mathers in early 1900, Crowley immediately pledged himself to Mathers's defence. Mathers, setting a fine example of masonic amity, proceeded to denounce Westcott privately for having forged the alleged correspondence with the German adepts upon whose foundation the warrant for the Golden Dawn was established. Crowley was sent to London as Mathers's envoy and the whole fabric of the Order began to unravel in the face of the accusations of fraud levelled against Westcott.

As far as Crowley was concerned, the matter ended with the 'Battle of Blythe Road' in April 1900, reducing the Golden Dawn to a fight in a police court over regalia. Little did Crowley know that his part in the break-up of the Golden Dawn, and his subsequent efforts to force Westcott to 'come clean' publicly as to its origins, made certain he would be shunned by Westcott's friends and colleagues when endeavouring to regularize his position in England as a mason.



## MEETINGS COMPANIONS AND SIR KNIGHTS,

It's time for me to "do it again in 2010". I am referring to being the General Chairman of the Grand York Rite Sessions. With the rest of the GYRS Executive Committee: James Baum, Dave Glass and Tom Krummell, have been working on a sessions for all to enjoy. We still feature the Golf Tournament, Drill Team Competition, Vespers, Order of High Priesthood, Thrice Illustrious Master and Past Commander's Association and of course the Grand Banquet, Grand Chapter, Grand Council and Grand Commandery, the hospitality, fun and fellowship. We are adding some programs back after an absence and something new.

Sessions begins Saturday, with our Golf Tournament and we are bringing back the AMD In-Gathering which will include at least one research paper, the Red Branch of Eri and the Master of Tyre Degree.

Sunday, a new event, York Rite College members will gather together for a breakfast. Battalion and Belles will have their brunch. The Drill Team Competition in the afternoon followed by the annual Vespers service. Of course, the Grand York Rite Banquet is that evening. But we are not done yet; The Order of the Golden Poppy is coming back after a six year absence! Join us for this fun degree open to all Masons after the banquet.

Monday is the Grand Chapter day with the breakfast for the Companions and the Ladies, meeting, lunches and installation. Attention all sitting and Past High Priests: Don't forget to send your registration form to the Grand Secretary for the Order of High Priesthood that will be conferred that afternoon.

Tuesday is the Grand Council day. Both the Breakfast and the Lunch will be combined with the Companions and the Ladies. For all Illustrious Masters, Past and Present, the Thrice Illustrious Master will be in the afternoon – be sure to send your form into the Grand Recorder. After the Installation and reception, The Order of Zanzibar featuring Most Worshipful Ken Nagle will be conferred for any Cryptic Mason.

Wednesday is Grand Commandery day. Breakfast for all Sir Knights and their Ladies starts the day. Then our meeting and lunches. That afternoon is the Past Commanders Association will be conferred for the Eminent Commander, Past and Present – be sure to send that form to Rickey Ward. Culminating with the installation and reception.

Part of the success of the sessions is due to the Souvenir Program Ad sales. Please continue to support the Grand York Rite Sessions in this endeavor. There are many costs for the Sessions that you may not realize: like Sound System rental from the hotel, the Ladies Hospitality Room, the name badges and tickets. Revenue generated from the Souvenir Program helps in those costs and we appreciate your continued support. You will find the Ad Request form in the Encompasser and online at [www.ca-gyrs.org](http://www.ca-gyrs.org).

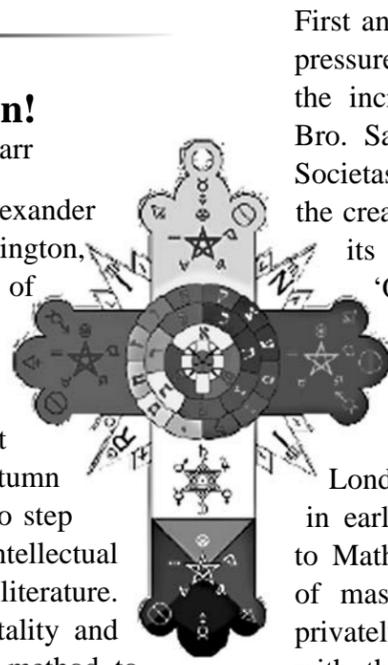
The early bird catches the... freebie! Turn in your Ad Request form by Feb. 28, 2010 and you will be entered into a drawing free ad for the 2011 Sessions. Turn in your reservation form by Feb. 28th 2010 and be entered into a drawing for a free room night for 2011 Sessions. Winners will be drawn at the Sunday night banquet.

Finally, volunteers are always needs to help on the Sessions Committees, especially the Ladies Hospitality and the Registration. Please contact me at [chairman@ca-gyrs.org](mailto:chairman@ca-gyrs.org) or call (626) 336-1846.

Fraternally,

Roy M. Haber

CA GYRS General Chairman



FLORY CROSS OF THE GOLDEN DAWN



 **2010 Grand York Rite Sessions April 24<sup>th</sup> to April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Bakersfield, CA**

Each person attending must fill out a registration form (Please print your names and titles as you would like it printed on your badge)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Lady / Guest: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lady / Guest Title(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Shuttle Requested? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Arriving Via:  Driving  Bus  Train  Flight Departure Via:  Driving  Bus  Train  Flight  Yes  No  
 No Meals Requested  Drill Team Participant I am a member of: RAM # \_\_\_\_\_ CM # \_\_\_\_\_ KT # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you prefer your meals confirmation:  email (default)  none  phone call (latest time to call \_\_\_\_\_)

Day/Date	Time	Event / Meal	Price	Total
Sat April 24 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 AM tee time <b>Open to all attendees</b>	Golf Tournament List preference of others in your foursome: _____	\$50.00	
	12:00 PM	AMD In-Gathering Registration (AMD dues card required for entry) ___ Master of Tyre Degree (includes certificate and lapel pin) ___	\$2.00 \$12.00	
Sun April 25 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	York Rite College Breakfast <b>Sausage Egg Buscuit</b> ___ <b>Veg</b> ___	\$20.00	
	11:30 AM	Battalion & Belles Brunch <b>Marriott's Executive Plated Breakfast</b> ___ <b>Veg</b> ___	\$25.00	
	6:30 PM	Grand York Rite Banquet <b>Tri Tip</b> ___ <b>Chicken Marsala</b> ___ <b>Fresh Atlantic Salmon</b> ___ <b>Veg</b> ___	\$39.00	
	10:00 PM	Order of the Golden Poppy ___	\$10.00	
Mon April 26 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 AM	Grand Chapter Breakfast: <b>Marriott Silver Buffet</b> ___ Open to the Companions <b>and</b> Ladies	\$15.00	
	12:00 PM	RA Ladies Luncheon: <b>Chicken Sandwich</b> ___ <b>Veg</b> ___	\$20.00	
	12:15 PM	Grand Chapter Luncheon: <b>Italian Turkey Club</b> ___ <b>Veg</b> ___	\$20.00	
Tue April 27 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 AM	Grand Council Breakfast <b>French Toast Buffet</b> ___ Open to the Companions <b>and</b> Ladies	\$15.00	
	12:15 PM	Grand Council & Ladies Luncheon <b>Fried Chicken</b> ___ <b>Veg</b> ___	\$20.00	
	8:00 PM	Order of Zanzibar ___	\$10.00	
Wed April 28 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 AM	Grand Commandery Breakfast: <b>Country Breakfast</b> ___ Open to the Sir Knights <b>and</b> Ladies	\$15.00	
	12:00 PM	KT Ladies Luncheon <b>Classic Chicken Salad</b> ___ <b>Veg</b> ___	\$20.00	
	12:15 PM	Grand Commandery Luncheon <b>Meatloaf</b> ___ <b>Veg</b> ___	\$20.00	

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Contact the **Bakersfield Marriott at the Conv Center** 801 Truxtun Ave. Bakersfield, CA 93301 @ **(800) 267-3983** tell the agent that you are in the **Grand York Rite Group** for your hotel reservation **before 03/25/10** Room rate: \$90.00 +tax

Questions, please contact: Roy Haber, General Chairman (626) 336-1846 [chairman@ca-gyrs.org](mailto:chairman@ca-gyrs.org)  
 or: James Baum, Executive Officer (760) 843-9258 [executiveofficer@ca-gyrs.org](mailto:executiveofficer@ca-gyrs.org)  
 S:EC Dave Glass (about meal reservations) (916) 454-5335 [reservations@ca-gyrs.org](mailto:reservations@ca-gyrs.org)

No refunds after April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 unless approved by the Grand York Rite Sessions Executive Committee  
**More forms (including the Order of High Priesthood, Thrice Illustrious Master & Past Commanders Association), menus and the schedule are available from [www.ca-gyrs.org](http://www.ca-gyrs.org).**

**Grand High Priest Itinerary 2009/2010**

**December** 7th thru 11th Cruise San Diego Mark Harris (415) 922-2916  
**January 2010 - N/A**  
**February** 5th thru 7th Grand Officers Conference Bakersfield  
**March - N/A**  
**April** 24th thru 26th Grand Sessions Bakersfield Chapter meets on Monday 26th



**Grand Master Itinerary 2009/2010**

**December** 7th thru 11th - York Rite Cruise! Contact Mark Harris, 415-922-2916, [songmastertravel.com](http://songmastertravel.com)  
**January 2010 - N/A**  
**February** 5th thru 7th - Grand Officers Conference, Bakersfield, Double Tree Hotel  
**March - N/A**  
**April** 25th thru 28th - Grand Sessions, Bakersfield  
 27th - Grand Council Sessions



**Grand Commander Itinerary 2009/2010**

**December - N/A**  
**January 2010 - N/A**  
**February** 6th thru 7th - Bakersfield Grand Officers Conference  
**March** 1st - Fresno Amaranth Grand Court  
 28th - Fresno Rainbow for Girls Annual Assembly  
**April** 4th - Washington, DC K.T. Easter Observance  
 25th thru 29th - Bakersfield Grand Sessions





# 2010 GRAND YORK RITE SESSIONS Souvenir Ad Program Order Form

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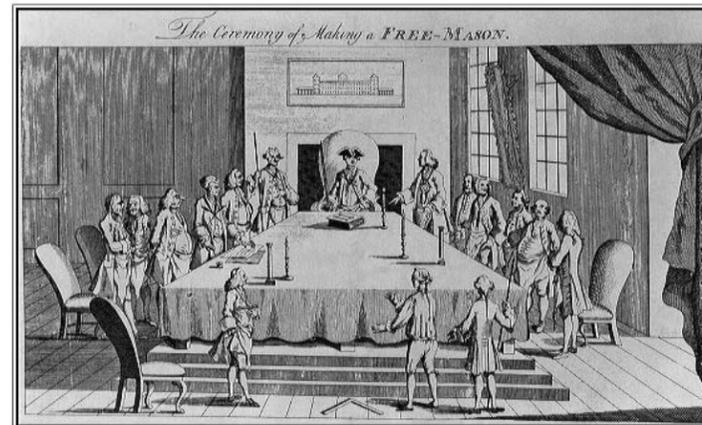
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### Making a Free-Mason: CONTINUED

themselves in Masonry” and “it is the internal and not the external qualifications that make a man a Mason.”

Nobody had a greater influence than William Preston (1742-1818) in England and Thomas Smith Webb (1771-1819) in America. Today all Grand Lodges in the US, except Pennsylvania that follows the Irish form, follow the Preston-Webb form of lectures and ritual.



### Royal Arch Mason to Cryptic Rite Mason

Submitted By: Gary D. Miller

The Cryptic Rite or degrees derives its name from the setting of the degrees of Royal Master and Select Master in the underground crypt beneath King Solomon’s Temple. The word ‘cryptic’ means hidden, hence its use in describing these degrees.

The originator of the Cryptic Rite as we know it was the American Masonic ritualist Jeremy Ladd Cross (1783-1861). He was a student of the most famous ritualist in America, Thomas Smith Webb (1771-1819). These degrees were first called “Cryptic” by Bro. Dr. Rob Morris (1818-1888) a prominent American poet and Freemason. The General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International was organized on August 25, 1880.

### The Royal Master Degree

This is the first degree of the Cryptic Rite. Candidates who receive the degree are impressed with its dignified ritual and relevant teachings. It contains one section which is generally regarded as an outstanding display of symbolism and content of philosophy. The ritualistic presentations in the degree explain the articles contained

in the Holy of Holies of King Solomon’s Temple, including the Ark of the Covenant.

### The Select Master Degree

The scene of this degree is laid in the underground vault of King Solomon’s Temple. The events which characterize the degree are stirring enough to make it one of intense interest. The ritualistic presentations contain the story to “complete the Circle of Perfection” in Ancient Craft Masonry.

### The Super Excellent Master Degree

The degree of Super Excellent Master is one of the best devised, most impressive, and beautiful degrees. It is most enlightening and relevant to one’s daily life. The essence of the degree is foretold in the presentation by the Principal Sojourner in the Royal Arch Degree.

### Why Every Mason Should Study Masonry

Submitted By: njdgusa@aol.com

Those who are not actively engaged in the effort to promote Masonic education find it hard to understand many of the problems. One thing exceedingly hard to counteract is the mass of fallacies which have been foisted upon the Masonic public by so many writers and speakers. Unfortunately such misinformation is to be found in the pages of many Masonic books regarded as authoritative. The great mass of people are inclined to accept the words which appear on the printed page as gospel.

The most difficult thing of all is to overcome the apathy of the Masonic public in general. The great numbers do not seem to have any interest in getting at the root of a problem but are willing to take anything that is said as truth. Views of Masonic history are much changed, we now have facts where only speculation existed before. Why such a lack of progressive thinking should exist is hard to explain, but there is no denying its reality and there is no denying its hampering influence on Masonic scholarship.

The love of tradition is so strong in Masonic circles that some information once thought to have a foundation in fact remains a myth regardless of how thoroughly scholars have proven its falsity.

To really appreciate Freemasonry, we should supplement the knowledge we gain through its impressive ceremonials by some study of the origin and development of these ceremonials and their symbolic meaning. Likewise, to gain a clear conception of what Freemasonry stands for and how it is related to all the problems of life, we should study something **CONTINUED: Should Study Masonry Pg. 5**

# ORDER OF THE ROYAL ARK MARINER IN ENGLAND

BY: YASHA BERESINER,  
RAMGR (ENGLAND)

England and the United States of America are two great nations divided by a common language and, it seems, by identical Masonic orders placed in different contexts. The Order of the Royal Ark Mariner, which has always been and remains a minor degree beyond the Craft, is today controlled and conferred in England by Mark Grand Lodge. Its equivalent American “location” would appear to be the York Rite, but it is not so – there, it is found at the top of the list of the Allied Masonic Degrees. Thus, by force of circumstance in the United States, the Royal Arch degree is a pre-requisite for the Royal Ark Mariner, which is true also for Scotland, Ireland and many other jurisdictions. It seems to be England alone (and a few persistent jurisdictions that follow everything the English do) where a Mark Mason qualifies for the Royal Ark Mariner Degree without further ado.

This difference may be explained by the origins of the degree, so far as they are known, which began in England.

It was just a few years after the establishment of organized Freemasonry on June 24, 1717 – when the Premier Grand Lodge was formed in London – that Freemasonry, as a simple two-degree system, began to spread its wings, throughout Europe. Clearly, a mere two legends did not provide sufficient ritual or colorful dress for our European brethren, and before long a wide range of new degrees and orders began to appear on the continent. There is a record from the mid - 18<sup>th</sup> century that shows a list of more than 1,000 Masonic orders and degrees in existence simultaneously! It was within this context and ambiance that the Royal Ark Mariner degree was devised by unknown authors who adopted the theme of Noah’s flood, a Biblical event for which archaeological evidence strongly suggests actual physical occurrence. As mentioned, it is not known where the degree originated, but it is unlikely that it was brought to England from the United States a little before 1780, despite that theory being advocated by an extraordinary and indefatigable Freemason named Thomas Dunkerley.

Further, there is no clear evidence to show that a Grand Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners had been working early in the 18th century and was reconstituted in London in 1772 under H.R.H. The Duke of Clarence. He was supposedly the Grand Commander of the Order, with the royal brothers, the Dukes of Sussex and Kent, as members. This repeated claim originates in a document at Mark Masons Hall in London, but its authenticity is doubted. It was signed by John F. Dorrington, whose name we shall come across again.

The first proper written evidence we have of a conferral of the Royal Ark Mariner Degree dates to 1790. The minutes of the Knights Templar Encampment of Antiquity No. 1 in Bath record that “William Boyce took all the degrees of ye Red Cross also Royal Ark Mariner.” There have been several interesting, though blatantly false, attempts to invest the degree with greater antiquity. Not least of these was the Regulations for the Government of Royal Ark Masons, as approved by the Grand Lodge of the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners. Published on February 20, 1871, the document states:

*“... this Fraternity having existed from time immemorial, and working by universal constitution – do hereby agree to the following Regulations for the guidance of the Order from this date....”*

A most interesting and relevant incident was also reported as occurring in 1790 in a publication, unrelated to Freemasonry, titled *The History and Description of the Town and Borough of Ipswich*, which was written by G.R. Clarke and published in 1830. It would appear that at the local elections in the Borough of Ipswich:

One of the candidates, a Sir Jon Hadley D’Oyley, was assisted by a person of the name of Noah Sibley, a man of some parts and oratory, (who had) established a club or society, at a house in St Clements’s, purporting to be a particular branch of Freemasonry, called the Good Samaritan, or the Ark Mason: the oath of introduction was binding upon every member to unite in brotherly love and friendship and to assist each other as much as possible on every occasion.... Their public exhibitions were attended with much ceremony in their various processions through the different streets of the town when a model of Noah’s Ark and a variety of insignia and banners were displayed.

Setting aside the impropriety of the use of the fraternity for political advantage, the implication of the existence now of the Ark Mariner as a degree is of considerable interest. Was this club or society the start of the Order? Noah Sibley, whose correct first name was Ebenezer, was involved in many aspects of Freemasonry, and held the office of Deputy Grand Commander Noah at the time of his death in 1799. The degree of Royal Ark Mariner, that had by that point been worked in Craft lodges, Royal Arch chapters, Knights Templar encampments and Mark lodges, appeared to have effectively expired after Sibley’s death.

The degree had benefited, however, from the involvement of several prominent Masons, not least that of the remarkable and ubiquitous Thomas Dunkerley. The illegitimate son of George II, Dunkerley had enjoyed and given up the office of Provincial Grand Master of Hampshire, where he was a member of a lodge in Portsmouth. In the 1780s, he held the post of Provincial Grand Master for the Isle of Wight and Dorset, and he had been intensively involved in many of the degrees beyond the Craft, not least the Mark degree and the Order of the Knights Templar. When the Ipswich incident took place, Dunkerley was Provincial Grand Master for Essex, and the possibility of his making a point of meeting Ebenezer Sibley, even if only to reprimand him, has not been lost on various Masonic historians. Thus it is not too surprising to find a report in *Freemasons’ Magazine* in August 1794 stating that “the Diluvian Order or Royal Ark and Mark Mariners held a meeting in London at the Surry Tavern in the Strand under Thomas Dunkerley, Grand Commander of the

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long and honorable existence.

If your Masonry means something more than a passing impulse or fancy on your part, you certainly must be interested in any endeavor which promises to aid you “to improve yourself in Masonry.”

The Masonic Society affords every member of the Craft who sincerely desires to improve himself in Masonry one of the most certain and fruitful means of individual improvement and general Masonic advancement.



United Orders.”

“United” refers to the Knights Templar Encampment, under the auspices of which the Royal Ark and Mark Mariners were meeting. With Dunkerley’s death in 1795, his duties were assumed by Robert Gill, an exceedingly active Freemason, who is distinguished inter alia for holding the post of Grand Senior Warden at the time of the Union of the two English Grand Lodges in 1813. Mark Grand Lodge has a warrant dated 1796 and signed by Gill as Acting Grand Commander Noah, which states: “A Dispensation Granted on board the Grand & Royal Ark Vessel Moor’d at Surry Tavern Strand London... I do empower. .. Bro Charles SINCLAIR... to hold Royal Ark Vessel enter Ark Mariners etc.”

Ebenezer Sibley is again mentioned in this document, which now gives powers to various individuals to make Royal Ark Mariners by virtue of the warrant. In the same year, Lord Rancliffe, the Irish Peer and Provincial Grand Master for Leicestershire & Rutland and Grand Master of the Knights Templar, took up the mantle of Commander Noah. Sibley was appointed his Deputy and Gill the Assistant. This was the end of Royal Ark activity prior to the Union.

Even if someone new had taken on the Royal Ark Mariners after Sibley’s death, the Union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813 would have disrupted any potential development, as it did for all orders and degrees with the exception of the Royal Arch. The Duke of Sussex was adamant and ruthless in suppressing all but the three Craft degrees, which now “incorporated” the Royal Arch. Those brethren able to keep various orders alive had to do so until the Grand Master’s death in 1843. Thereafter the many orders began to flourish and prosper. It began with the Knights Templar and the Ancient and Accepted (Scottish) Rite in 1846, followed by the Mark Grand Lodge in 1856.

Meanwhile there were interesting developments so far as the Royal Ark Mariner degree was concerned. The persistent, if not obstinate will of a number of brethren kept the degree alive over the dark first half of the 19th century. With the appointment of a new more liberal Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge in the Earl of Zetland, there were two opposing Royal Ark Mariner camps. On the one hand, John Dorrington, who surfaced again as early as 1843, laid futile claim to the continuous existence of a Royal Ark Mariner Grand Lodge, stating that it had been reconstituted in 1772 and that he saw himself as the Grand Commander Noah. Simultaneously, several Mark lodges, most prominently the Time Immemorial Old Kent and St Mark’s Lodges of Mark Master Masons, continued to confer the degree of Royal Ark Mariner, claiming authority by virtue of the original “Gill warrant” of 1796. The latter, originally a Scottish Mark lodge now belonging to the English Constitution, held a Royal Ark Mariner meeting of great consequence on May 2, 1870, at the George Hotel in Aldermanbury in London. Many prominent Mark Masons were present, and several were elevated in a three-part ceremony – all with the consent of Mark Grand Lodge. Among those so elevated was one Morton Edwards.

Dorrington was, at this time, still presiding over London meetings of the Royal Ark Mariners and continuing to lay claim to his own standing as the Grand Commander Noah. Either by persuasion of Dorrington or his own fiery ambition, the newly elevated Morton Edwards held a meeting in Dorrington’s house on May 13, 1870. He was here appointed and invested Deputy Grand Commander Noah – just ten days after his elevation. In July, a new warrant signed by John Dorrington reconstituted the Grand Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners of England and Wales and Dominions and Dependencies of the British Realm. Morton Edwards, a fledgling two-month old Royal Ark Mariner, was appointed Grand Commander Noah.

At first, in the early days of the establishment of Mark Grand Lodge, with its own teething problems, scant attention was paid to these events. Grand Lodge accepted the authority and activities of the Time Immemorial Lodges under its jurisdiction. The formation of a new Grand Lodge, however, even one representing a different order, was seen as an affront to the Time Immemorial Mark Lodges and to Mark Grand Lodge itself. In what may have been a precautionary move, the Rev. Canon G.R. Portal, then Grand Master of Mark Grand Lodge, along with several Grand Officers, was elevated to the Royal Ark Mariner Degree at a meeting of the Old Kent Lodge of Mark Master Masons on June 14, 1870. Swift action followed. In May 1870, a committee consisting of twelve members was appointed by the Grand Master to look into the subject. On August 2, 1870, the committee reported to an emergency meeting of Grand Lodge that it had gathered all the evidence and heard those involved in the various aspects of the Royal Ark Mariner Degree, which had been worked at intervals since 1790.

The committee’s report stated that the degree was not one of consequence or importance, and that the establishment of an additional Masonic supreme organization, namely a grand lodge for its control, was undesirable. It was recommended, therefore, that the Mark Grand Lodge should allow Mark lodges under its jurisdiction to confer the degree against the payment of a fee to Grand Lodge. At the quarterly communication of December 6, 1870, the MW Grand Master suggested omitting from the minutes relating to the May 31 meeting the part relevant to the Royal Ark Mariner, because these were in conflict with certain bodies claiming the right to work the degree. The dispute was finally resolved with two payments to Morton Edwards: one of £15.00 for the equipment belonging to the so-called Royal Ark Mariner Grand Lodge, and an additional £25.00 given personally to Edwards, against which he surrendered all rights to the degree.

Thus on June 6, 1871, having been himself first installed as Grand Commander, the Grand Master of Mark Master Masons of England etc. was able to announce in Grand Lodge that the Royal Ark Mariner Degree was now under the protection of Mark Grand Lodge and that a Grand Master’s Royal Ark Council had been specially set up to administer the degree.

This assimilation of the Royal Ark Mariner degree was the first of the “conquests” of Mark Grand Lodge. From here, the absorption of loose and floating degrees and orders continued until the present exalted and extended authority of the Mark Grand Lodge in England was reached.

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