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An Analysis of the Emergence of Early Masonic Symbolism

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this thesis is English Masonic symbolism set within the limits of the middle of the seventeenth - to the late eighteenth-century which allows for the study of the earliest sources. The objective of the thesis is to analyse and compare the sources of early Masonic symbolism to determine when particular symbols first appeared and how they developed into themes through the eighteenth-century. This study is placed within the historical context of the early development of Freemasonry, its background and the type of member it attracted, and also the contemporary intellectual milieu in which the symbols emerged.

Before an examination of the sources is undertaken a discussion on the theory and meaning of the term symbol is provided. A number of theories and definitions are addressed from various fields of study, such as anthropology, psychology and theology. This in turn forms the basis of a definition of Masonic symbolism as it is to be used during the course of the thesis.

The sources themselves are divided into two: literary and visual. The first are comprised of a number of manuscripts, which may be described as Exposures or Expositions of Masonic ritual, in the form of catechisms. The second are a collection of objects, engravings and drawings that clearly depict Masonic symbols. Data concerning the specific symbols from both these sources is collated and presented in tables. This format allows for a comparison between the appearance of symbols in literary form, as they are described in the Expositions, and as they are shown in visual form. The conclusions that are drawn from this study ascertain the nature of early Masonic symbolism and whether it emerged in spite of various contemporary movements and intellectual fashions, or that its development was in fact influenced by them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND TABLES

INTRODUCTION

The subject of Freemasonry is a diverse one incorporating many areas of research, which include the history of the origins, members, lodges, Grand Masters; the 'additional degrees' and Orders; Masonic charity; and Freemasonry abroad. The area to be studied in this thesis will be Masonic symbolism; attention will also be given in one chapter to the early history of Freemasonry in England. The majority of books and research on the subject of Freemasonry have been written and conducted by Freemasons for other Freemasons. Most of these presume a basic knowledge of the workings of Freemasonry and its terminology. The following study does not depend on such a knowledge and does not attempt to incorporate such details. Where specific terms are used in the text, they will be explained as far as necessary. No attempt has been made to comment on the nature of Freemasonry, or to interpret and explain any of its principles and tenets. Involvement in the internal workings of Freemasonry has been avoided. The thesis will not attempt to establish the origins of Masonry, of which much has been written and there is much speculation. The subject will be addressed briefly, however, in the chapter dealing with the contemporary setting in which Masonic symbolism developed.

The period that will provide the time-frame for the work on Masonic symbolism is the late seventeenth-century to the end of the eighteenth-century. There is no interest in the developments that occurred in Freemasonry after this date, such as in the ritual or in any of the additional degrees and their symbolism. It is also important to emphasise that this thesis is conducted within the confines of English Freemasonry, particularly London. The reason being that Freemasonry as a 'modern' organisation originated in England, and the first institution, the premier Grand Lodge, was formed in London. England was also the setting for the development of the ritual and organisation of Freemasonry.

This thesis, as the title suggests, will comprise an analysis of the emergence of early Masonic symbolism in England. What is meant by the use of the words 'emergence' and 'early' must be clarified. The primary sources that will be used in this study provide the earliest evidence of the appearance of Masonic symbols in England, in written form. The latter part of the thesis examines these symbols together with the symbols appearing in visual sources, and how the two forms of symbolism developed throughout the eighteenth-century. It is in this first sense that 'emergence' is used. In a second sense, it denotes the historical setting in which the symbols first emerged. For instance, the intellectual background of the seventeenth-century which preceded the earliest evidence of Masonic symbolism, and the contemporary milieu of the eighteenth-century in which it developed. It is in this context that 'early' is used. The earliest record of Masonic symbolism, which is found in the ritual is 1696; a more detailed system is evident in 1730. The eighteenth-century may be regarded as the period in which, according to the evidence, Masonic Craft symbolism developed before the ritual was officially approved in 1815.

There are two sets of primary sources examined in this thesis. The first are literary sources which comprise a group of texts in the form of catechisms depicting the earliest example of Masonic ritual, dating from 1696 to 1730. As there was no officially approved ritual until 1815, these so called 'Exposures' or Expositions of the ritual are the only guide to the nature of Masonic symbolism at this early stage in the development of English Freemasonry. The Expositions reveal that the early symbols are found in the context of the ritual and ceremony. It should be clarified here that the symbols referred to as 'literary' or 'written' symbols throughout the thesis are those that are described in the ritual and recorded in the catechisms. The second set

of sources are 'visual' examples which will be compared to the symbols found in the literary sources. There are a greater number of visual examples of Masonic symbolism found consistently through the eighteenth-century, although the majority are discovered later than the earliest literary examples. The visual sources compiled for this thesis comprise a significant collection of photographs and prints of jewels, certificates, frontispieces and aprons, which depict examples of early Craft symbols from 1730-1798. A painting is also included which contains Masonic features, dated *circa* 1617.

The evidence of the appearance of Masonic symbols in written form appears in two periods: 1696 to 1730, and then later in 1760. The gap between these two periods in the publication of Expositions in England will be filled with examples of French catechisms of Masonic ritual, which mirror closely the ritual being performed in England at the time. The comparison between both sources shows how the symbol developed throughout the eighteenth-century. This examination of Masonic symbolism is set within the historical context of contemporary thought, taking into account the early history of Freemasonry, its early members and their interests. The actual working and organisation of the institution of Freemasonry is not relevant here and will not be discussed in any detail.

The literature on the subject of Masonic symbolism is extensive and varied covering the interpretation of the meaning of individual Masonic symbols, the importance of Masonic symbolism in more general terms - its history, origins and influences, and the significance of the ritual. Some of the literature is contentious on the issue of the origins of Masonic symbolism. Historians such as Gould argue over the issue of whether the essentials of the three Craft degrees existed before the formation of the first Masonic institution, the premier Grand Lodge of England, in 1717. Also, whether the symbolism of Masonry was a legacy or inheritance from the medieval operative masons, or was it borrowed from the Rosicrucians and other hermetic sources after 1717 by the speculative Masons. These questions have provoked much literature tracing the history of the symbols, with many eighteenth-century writers researching the history of architecture and the symbols used in Ancient Egypt and China as methods of instruction. This is followed through to the early Platonic schools of thought and to architecture of the thirteenth and fourteenth-centuries, where divine concepts were symbolised in stone. Another debate is whether the hermetic influence was introduced before or after 1717, and how much of the symbolism of the ritual was original to the early speculative Masons. The origins of many of the symbols and the origins of Freemasonry itself are both connected to the argument of whether the modern institution was a direct continuation from its operative past, or whether many of its practices had their origins in the general cultural heritage.

The main body of research on all subjects concerning Freemasonry is compiled in the transactions of the Quatour Coronati Lodge No. 2076, entitled *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum (AQC)*, dating from the nineteenth-century to the present day. Several articles from this corpus will be used, as well as books written by both prominent Masonic authors and non-Masonic writers.

These works contain some of the more prominent theories as to the history and origins of Freemasonry. In the context of this thesis such works are acknowledged and used as important secondary sources for details of the early history and development of Freemasonry. The literature demonstrates that the history of Freemasonry is not self-evident or simplistic but multi-faceted. It is not possible to contend that the origins were attributed to one particular set of facts or another.

There are many complex reasons for the development of Freemasonry, both social and political, but it is not the intention of this thesis to examine these in great detail. Chapter three addresses the known facts concerning the history of Freemasonry without making suppositions about any one particular theory.

Articles written by Masonic historians are used in chapter four addressing the intellectual climate of seventeenth - and eighteenth-century England, as they directly refer to particular aspects of that period which may have influenced the choice of specific symbols in Masonic ritual. Several non-Masonic works are also used to provide an understanding of the important intellectual themes of the period, for example, literary, philosophical and scientific. Conclusions regarding the significance of external influences on the development of Masonic symbolism are drawn at the end of the chapter and in the conclusion,

This study does not provide a personal interpretation of the meaning or the origins of the Masonic symbols which it isolates and examines. It is based on the primary historical sources - the early Masonic catechisms - reprinted in the work with the same title, by Knoop, Jones and Hamer (1963), and is not based on philosophical explanation. The thesis does, however, address the question of the influences which may have effected the choice of many of the symbols in the period of the seventeenth - and eighteenth-century. None of the literature that has been written prior to this study provides such a detailed analysis of the symbols from the original texts and the principle sources of early visual symbols in the format which is presented here, set within the context of the contemporary intellectual climate, and the development of English Freemasonry. One author, Carr (1970), does conduct a detailed study of the early Masonic catechisms and examines a number of questions found in the collection of texts. Some of these are of a symbolic nature but he also includes other questions, for example, those pertaining to the preparation of the candidate, his mode of entrance and subsequent movements, various postures, gestures, words and signs, which aid the understanding of the nature of the early ritual. This thesis focuses on the questions that relate specifically to symbolism but does not include any reference to symbolic words, gestures or signs. Carr's objective is to trace the origins of modern ritual and practice by analysing the texts for the purpose of examining and comparing the early indications of Masonic ritual and custom. He does not set his analysis within the context of the early history of Freemasonry, the prominent intellectual influences, or the theory of the meaning of symbol as does this thesis.

The detailed analysis of English Masonic symbolism provided in this study involves the discovery of the specific dates of the first appearance of symbols from the original catechisms and the visual sources, and the plotting and tabulating of these findings chronologically. This part of the thesis comprises its most significant contribution to the study of Masonic symbolism, and the originality of the comparison between the appearance of literary and visual symbols merits emphasis. Other works on the subject of Masonic symbolism, for instance, Dyer (1986) *Symbolism in Craft Freemasonry*, MacNulty (1991) *Freemasonry - A Journey through Ritual and Symbol*, Rylands (1895) 'Notes on some Masonic Symbols', Casla (1994) *Masonic Symbols and Their Roots*, Gould (1890) 'On The Antiquity Of Masonic Symbolism', concentrate on individual themes, such as the origins of Masonic symbolism, or an interpretation of individual symbols and an explanation of their meanings. This thesis, however, provides a detailed analysis of the early symbols and their development, at the same time suggesting what may have influenced the early speculative Masons in their - conscious or subconscious - choice of particular symbols and themes.

Before the structure of the thesis is outlined some of the terminology that is to be used throughout the study must be clarified. 'Freemasonry' is used here to mean the organisation that it became after the founding of its first institution, the Premier Grand Lodge in London in 1717. The word is also used in its general sense, referring to the Society as a whole and all its aspects. It is not necessary to define Freemasonry in the context of this thesis. As a general term it is not to be examined by itself, and no specific issues about the institution are to be developed. To obtain a basic understanding about the main concerns of Freemasonry an official statement from the pamphlet 'What is Freemasonry', 1986 by the Grand Lodge of England, defines it as

> **one of the world's oldest secular societies . . . a society of men concerned with spiritual values. Its members are taught its precepts by a series of ritual dramas, which follow ancient forms and use stonemason's customs and tools as allegorical guides. The essential qualification for admission and continuing membership is a belief in a Supreme Being. Membership is open to men of any race or religion who can fulfil this essential qualification and are of good repute . . . .**

The word Freemasonry is often shortened to 'Masonry', and when used as an adjective the word 'Masonic' is used.

The term 'Craft' refers to the first three degrees, which are known as Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason. These are practised in a lodge and comprise the main structure of the ritual. The Craft is the basic form and oldest part of Freemasonry, evidence of the first degree being found in 1696. All Freemasons are members of the Craft and must have gone through the three degrees. The other Masonic degrees are additional to the Craft and a Freemason, after completing the third degree, is free to join any. The word Craft also has another meaning which will be used and this refers to the 'craft' of stone masonry. In this case, the word has a lower case 'c' as opposed to the upper case 'C' in Craft. This also refers to the word Masonry, which is given an upper case when it is used as the shortened version of Freemasonry, and a lower case when referring to the profession and skill.

The term 'degree' is used in the sense that it is a step or a stage in the ritual process. The three Craft degrees are the steps through which a candidate is initiated, and through which he becomes a full member of the Craft and a Master Mason. Each degree in the Craft is thought of as a stage in the journey from darkness and ignorance, to light and knowledge or truth. In each degree the candidate is given a different password and sign, and each are characterised by a distinct set of symbols. The symbolic nature of the three degrees has resulted in them being known as the 'Symbolic Degrees'.

The terms 'operative' and 'speculative' are used to differentiate between the old operative stonemasons and the free and accepted speculative Masons. Operative mason refers to the working mason, the word 'mason' is given a lower case letter. Speculative refers to the 'gentleman' Mason or Freemason, meaning one who engages in thought or reflection upon a particular subject. In this case the word Mason is given an upper case letter. Speculative Freemasonry is the 'modern' organisation which officially began in 1717, with the premier Grand Lodge of England.

8

It should be pointed out that the term 'speculative' becomes 'Speculative' when it is referred to as a theme. This will be seen predominantly in chapters two and five, where the Masonic symbols noted in the early catechisms are grouped into themes. The nine symbolic themes are all given upper case letters to differentiate them from how the words are used more generally, for example, Architecture and Geometry.

The most important terms that must be defined are 'Masonic symbol' and 'Masonic symbolism', and it is necessary to clarify how these are to be used within the context of this thesis. The latter term may be understood as meaning the actual system of symbols as they are used in the ritual of the three degrees of Craft Freemasonry. It is a general term which encompasses all the symbols found in the early ritual and examined in the course of this study, both in literary and visual form; it also refers to the nine symbolic themes that are formulated as logical groupings of the symbols. To define and clarify the term 'Masonic symbol' is more difficult. Throughout the course of this thesis individual symbols are examined as part of a whole ritual system, and understood within their historical context. When Masonic symbols are referred to directly a distinction is made between two different forms or types: literary and visual. In other words it is difficult to describe 'a Masonic symbol' here because, in practical terms, there is no one specific type or classification. A point made by Eliade (1986) supports this case,

> **It is necessary not to lose sight of one characteristic which is specific to a symbol: its *multivalence*, which is to say the multiplicity of meanings which it expresses simultaneously. This is why it is sometimes so difficult to explain a symbol, to exhaust its significations, it refers to a plurality of contexts and it is valuable on a number of levels. If we retain only one of its significations, in declaring it the only "fundamental" or "first" or "original" signification, we risk not grasping the true message of the symbol (1986: 5).**

It can also be said that the term 'Masonic symbol', in the sense that it is used in this thesis, may be understood on a number of levels and in a plurality of contexts, embodying a number of meanings. For example, in a literary context a Masonic symbol may be interpreted on two different levels – functional and conceptual – within a ritualistic structure. Functional symbols consist of jewels, lights, pillars, tools, parts of Solomon's Temple, virtues, and other objects such as Jacob's Ladder, the Master's apron, and the five orders of architecture. These are used to symbolise particular moral values, precepts and qualities. Conceptual symbols or symbolism is found to signify intangible, symbolic aspects of the ritual. This is exemplified in references to the direction of the lodge, the 'first' lodge, where the key to the lodge is kept, the three points of a Mason, and the position of the officers in the lodge. In a visual context the symbols may be seen on a functional level, incorporating those symbols in literary form that can be visualised. These symbols have several interpretations, for example those indicating virtues and principles, the original temple, and emblems of office.

The meaning of the term 'Masonic symbol' is more thoroughly characterised at the end of the first chapter, with the help of the work of theorists such as Eliade, Leach, Turner, Munn and Firth, and defined in the concluding remarks of the thesis. It can be said here, however, that Masonic symbols are communicated within a ritual context, comprising both religious and secular types, but their most important features are that they are contextual, allegorical and liturgical.

9

The structure of the thesis is divided into five chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. The first chapter comprises a discussion of the theory of symbol, its general and specific significance. It will provide a preliminary discussion of terminology, distinguishing between 'symbol' and certain related terms, for example, allegory, sign, index, and icon. The chapter will differentiate between three main types of symbol - religious, natural, and ritual - the latter is found to be most relevant in terms of relating it to a definition of Masonic symbolism. It will also comprise an examination of specific definitions of the term symbol by prominent theorists, showing their individual interpretations of the meaning of symbol. Several of those with a relevance to Masonic symbolism will be highlighted. The collection of definitions will also be compared to a dictionary definition to show how the theorists have elaborated on a more basic definition of symbolism. The final part of the chapter will be a consideration of the historical development of the study of symbolism, including the modern interest in symbolic theory. A discussion of the theory of symbolism is necessary as a prelude to the examination of early Masonic symbolism, and in obtaining a clearer interpretation of the meaning of a Masonic symbol. The theory of symbolism, in general terms, thus provides a basis for the more specific study of the nature of Masonic symbolism.

The second and fifth chapters analyse the primary sources of Masonic symbolism; the catechisms or Expositions, which provide the earliest historical record of Masonic ritual and symbolism. The purpose of chapter two is to address the emergence of the earliest symbols in late seventeenth - and early eighteenth-century England. The aim of the study is to show how the symbols were used in the early ritual, and how their use differed in many of the catechisms before 1730. This analysis will form an introduction to the fifth chapter, which concentrates on the development of specific symbols and themes, both literary and visual, through the eighteenth-century, and a comparison between the two sources.

The literary symbols examined in the second chapter are taken from the form of the ritual found in the early texts. Various symbolic questions from the catechisms dated 1696 - 1730 are examined, the responses in the texts compared and the results displayed in table form. A number of symbolic aspects of the ritual revealed in the catechisms will be taken into account, particularly concerning the lodge, its significance, position and contents. A study of Masonic symbolism using the textual sources is important at this early stage in the thesis as it provides an understanding of what constitutes a 'Masonic symbol', and allows a familiarity with some of the symbols and themes which are referred to throughout the study. Chapter three and four provide a contemporary setting for the period in which the symbols introduced in chapter two emerged, and a contextual basis for the important examination of Masonic symbols and their development in the final chapter.

The symbols taken from both the visual and literary sources in the fifth chapter are collated and displayed in two tables with the date that they are first apparent. These are then compared and shown in a third table to demonstrate the development of the main symbolic themes throughout the eighteenth-century. The symbolic themes that are established and used in both chapters are: Solomon's Temple; Architecture; Working Tools; Speculative; Numbers and Colours; Geometry; Virtues; Old and New Testament.

The third and fourth chapters provide a historical context for the analysis of Masonic symbolism. The third chapter concentrates on the history of the development of Freemasonry; the history of the use and evolution of the system of symbolism runs parallel to this. It will provide an outline of the main features of the three stages in

the history of English Freemasonry; 'operative', 'accepted' and 'speculative'. This will include a study of the operative evidence including the mason's guilds and companies and their system of rules and regulations, using primary sources such as the 'Old Charges' of the fourteenth and fifteenth century. The appearance in the middle to late seventeenth-century of accepted Masons and their lodges, and the cross-membership many of them had with such bodies as the Royal Society will also be included, as will the relevance of the social scene in late seventeenth-century London, taking into account the first speculative lodges which met in numerous taverns, coffee-houses and clubs.

The organisational development of Freemasonry in the early eighteenth-century will briefly be addressed, such as the establishment of the first Grand Lodge and the *Constitutions*, the first official history written by James Anderson in 1723. The intention of the chapter is to provide a context for the study of Masonic symbolism, which developed in the same period as the 'modern' speculative society, and to gain an insight into the types of members who joined and their 'outside' interests, which may have affected the evolution of the symbolic system.

The fourth chapter is an important one, addressing the question of possible contemporary influences on many themes of symbolism. It considers the social and intellectual climate in which early Masonic symbolism developed and provides a wider context, correlating the existence of a growing Masonic symbolic system with the main ideas, thought and movements inherent at the time. Chapter three suggested reasons for the use of the symbolic themes of building, architecture, geometry and tools, such as the historical background to speculative Masonry. Chapter four will look at possible areas in the intellectual milieu of the late seventeenth-century, through the eighteenth-century, that may have influenced the early speculative Masons to use particular symbolic themes in the ritual. The chapter will focus on specific areas of the period which are directly relevant to Freemasonry, as well as areas which highlight the general background and thought of the time. It will not be an attempt to prove, explicitly, the degree of influence that specific aspects had on the use of each symbol. It is a matter of supposition how much of the contemporary climate Masons may have absorbed, consciously or sub-consciously, and how this may have influenced the development of Masonic symbolism.

The fourth chapter will identify the broad trends of the period and will seek to characterise the general spirit of the age which paralleled the developing Masonic symbolism. Fundamental changes in the outlook and thought of the period and how these affected other aspects of the time will be emphasised, such as the growth of science and philosophy and the effect these had on literature and religion. The main part of the chapter will look at Alchemy, the Rosicrucians, the Royal Society, the importance of the Bible in literature, popular literary themes, emblem books, and the fashionable styles of architecture. The question will be addressed of whether the symbolism of early Craft Freemasonry was consistent with the intellectual and social climate of the period in which it formed and developed.

This thesis, therefore, sets out to do three things: first, to form a theoretical basis for an understanding of the terms 'Masonic symbolism' and 'Masonic symbol', by addressing a number of theories and definitions of symbol in general terms, and adapting these to a working definition of a Masonic symbol as is it to be used throughout the study; second, to analyse the earliest evidence of the appearance of Masonic symbols, to determine how they were used and presented in their ritual form, and to discover the first occurrence of specific symbols in both literary and visual form, comparing the similarities and differences of these findings. The use

and appearance of symbols in the original texts will also be compared and commented upon; third, to provide a historical context for the study of early Masonic symbols and their development, within both a subjective structure - the history of speculative Freemasonry - and an objective structure - the contemporary influences.

The questions that will be addressed, therefore, in this thesis are: when did Masonic symbols in literary form first appear, specifically, the exact date individual symbols emerged, and the period in which particular themes developed? How did the various catechisms differ in their use of symbols and symbolic questions in ritual form? Were the symbols, symbolic themes and the developing symbolic system in Freemasonry consistent with the intellectual and scientific thought of the day, and of the various interests of the early members, or did they develop within a closed institution, irrespective of the influences occurring in society at large? The chapters as they have been set out above will use a wide range of sources in considering the questions posed here. This will be achieved within the boundaries of a study of the primary sources of English Masonic symbolism of the late seventeenth and eighteenth-century. The examination and comparative analysis of these sources will provide the main objective of the thesis.

CHAPTER ONE

A THEORETICAL DISCUSSION OF THE MEANING OF SYMBOL

The intention of this chapter is to provide a study of the meaning of the term 'symbol' and its general and specific significance. Such a study is necessary as a prelude to examining the nature of Masonic symbolism and in understanding the meaning of the term in the context of Freemasonry. Due to the plethora of discussion on the subject of symbolism it has not been possible to include every theory or to address each work in detail. The most prominent and influential theories in several fields of study will be used to show how the various debates have evolved. The point of the chapter is not to provide a critique of the different theories, much has been written on this subject and it is largely irrelevant to this study. The focus of the chapter is to use the chosen theories in order to relate them to a definition of Masonic symbolism relevant to this thesis. This general discussion of the theory of symbolism also demonstrates the diversity of the use of symbol and is not restricted to theories that only specifically relate to Freemasonry. For example, in the section on types of symbol, 'religious' and 'natural' are addressed as well as theories relating to ritual symbolism, which are more directly relevant to Freemasonry. This chapter, therefore, forms a basis for the work on Masonic symbolism. The concluding remarks will show how particular theories may be used to define Masonic symbolism in the context of this thesis.

The structure of the chapter comprises four parts. The first will be a preliminary discussion of terminology, distinguishing between 'symbol' and certain related terms, for example, allegory, sign, index and icon. It is necessary to include this differentiation, as 'allegory', in particular, is an important feature in the broader understanding of Masonic symbolism. The second part will provide a clarification of three types of symbol - religious, natural, and ritual. The third will comprise an examination of specific definitions of the term symbol by prominent theorists: explicit statements showing their individual interpretations of the meaning of symbol. It will be shown how these differ from the standard dictionary definition, which, in turn, will also demonstrate the multivalent characteristic of symbolism, emphasising the possibility of a variety of interpretations within different fields of study, as well as within the same. The final part will be a consideration of important theories of symbolism this century, in various fields of study, which have contributed to a greater understanding of the significance of the term symbol, and its application.

A general definition of the term symbol according to the Collins dictionary is "something that represents or stands for something else, usually by convention or association, especially a material object used to represent something abstract". This chapter will discuss how this dictionary definition has been modified and developed by historians of religion, psychologists and anthropologists. In this first part, however, the definition will provide a focal point for a discussion of related terms.

The term 'allegory' is closely allied to that of symbol and it is necessary, therefore, to clearly distinguish between the two. The Collins dictionary definition of the term allegory is: 'a poem, play, picture, etc. in which the apparent meaning of the characters and events is used to symbolise a deeper moral or spiritual meaning - use of such symbolism to illustrate truth or a moral'. The two definitions of symbol and allegory given above suggest that the general nature of a symbol is representative, the expressible or understandable representing the inexpressible, the unseen, or

'abstract', something that can be related to or understood better than what is being represented. The main character of allegory appears to be illustrative of a truth or moral and less direct, where the visual is used to symbolise the conceptual: an idea, a truth or a moral; it is something that must be discovered and interpreted. Allegory is an important feature of Masonic symbolism and is the primary medium used to convey the truths and morality behind much of the symbolism.

Another distinction between allegory and symbol is given by Cirlot (1962: xi), who describes allegory as "a mechanical and restricting derivative of the symbol", and symbol as "a dynamic and polysymbolic reality, imbued with emotive and conceptual values: in other words, with true life". Regarding allegory within a literary and mythological context, Cirlot argues that there are elements of allegory that may be regarded as 'symbols', however, these he describes as "artificial creations designating physical realities and nothing else". 'True' symbols he suggests, indicate "metaphysical and spiritual principles" and possess "an emotional content" (Cirlot, 1962: xlii). In Cirlot's view, therefore, allegory is something artificial and mechanical, lacking the ability to engender real feeling, whereas a symbol is something real which can induce true feeling of emotion.

Dillistone (1986: 79) addresses allegory in the context of 'spoken' and 'written' words, where he distinguishes it from analogy. He notes that these terms were the two leading symbolic forms used by scholars in the Middle Ages. Within this context analogy was the method applied to the interpretation of nature and human existence, pointing towards divine mind and intention; allegory was the method applied to sacred texts, seeing them as a cover under which divine truths had been hidden. In other words, allegory was looking beyond what seemed to be the obvious meaning in ordinary discourse, to the moral, mystical and spiritual truths embodied in literal words. The ability of allegory to suggest a moral or mystical truth is important in understanding its use in the communication of Masonic symbolism from one party to another.

Firth (1973) also examines allegory as one category which is allied to symbol. He claims that allegory is often described as a kind of "sustained metaphor in narrative form", but in his view its essential features include the "representation of one event or series of events in detached form, to allow separate consideration of the implications, commonly of a moral order" (1973: 71). In the context of art, Firth acknowledges the view-point of Hauser[1] who contrasts allegory and symbol. In Firth's own words, Hauser regards allegory as the "translation of an abstract idea into a concrete image", however, in terms of a symbol, "idea and image are often fused into one indivisible entity". Hauser also argues that variability of interpretation and the apparent inexhaustibility of meaning of the symbol is its most essential characteristic. In this sense, allegory can be seen as a kind of 'riddle' to be solved, whereas symbol is capable only of giving interpretation, not of providing a solution (cited in Firth, 1973: 72-3).

It is clear, therefore, from the distinctions cited above that in differentiating between the terms allegory and symbol, the latter is attributed a greater complexity than the former. It is also apparent that one of the main differences of a symbol in comparison to allegory is its multivalency in interpretation and different levels of meaning.

Another related term that needs to be clarified from symbol is 'sign', as in basic terms the two may be seen to have similar functions. The Collins dictionary definition of the term sign is "something that indicates or acts as a token of a fact, condition etc. that is not immediately or outwardly observable". An alternative

definition within a psychological context is given by Jung (1964) [2] who illustrates his impression of the difference between sign and symbol with the use of the spoken or written word by man. Jung maintains that man's language is full of symbols, but he often employs signs or images that are not strictly descriptive; these are meaningless in themselves but possess a recognisable meaning through common usage. These, Jung stresses, are not symbols, but signs that denote the objects to which they are attached. He produces a more precise differentiation between the two terms,

> **sign is always less than the concept it represents, while a symbol always stands for something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. Symbols, moreover, are natural and spontaneous products (1964: 55).**

Once again, it should be noted, symbol is regarded as something 'natural', embodying a deeper meaning than sign, or even allegory, which are both regarded as constituting a lesser significance. They are one-dimensional compared to the multi-dimensional nature of a symbol.

Another distinction between the terms is provided by Dillistone (1973), who characterises sign and symbol within two systems. The first comprises the sign and is described as

> **. . . an ordered system, controlled system, mechanically functioning system and man the slave within the system is expressed through an exact, univocal, one - track system of conventional signs (1973: 162).**

The second system Dillistone describes as,

> **an open system, in which indeterminacy, randomness, disorder and uncertainty are tolerated and seen as having an essential part to play for the continuance of life and creativity - all this being expressed through a system of symbols (1973: 162).**

In his other work, Dillistone (1986: 229-30) presents a more precise view when he argues that a sign "needs to be precise, uniform, unmistakable". A symbol is ambiguous, it allows for the 'unknown' and opens to a "world of mystery, transcending all human powers of description". A sign, therefore, in comparison to the symbol is mechanical, repeatable and predictable. It is clear that a sign is something less than symbol, it appears to have a very simple function that does not contain any range of meaning. Sign, by its very nature is restricted to a one-dimensional framework which is clear-cut and purely 'external'. A symbol, however, is more ambiguous, it has the ability to express many meanings which in themselves have no simple interpretation. Dillistone suggests that a problem may arise when there are two or more systems of signs, where different names are given to objects and events, and what in one culture is regarded as unchanging may in another be open to change. He points to the possibility of the emergence of a 'secret society' which tries to "construct a system of signs in the form of a *code*; each word or image stands for an objective reality whose existence is known to members of the secret circle but to no one else" (Dillistone, 1986: 230). This is particularly relevant in the context of Freemasonry, where any notions of secrecy pertain to the use of signs in the form of gestures and words that are used to identify a Mason and indicate which degree or stage he is at. Knowledge of such signs are kept strictly between members and are passed on at each stage of the ritual.

A philosophical view of the relation between sign and symbol is related by Morris (1987: 219), who refers to the work of Ernst Cassirer. Morris focuses, in particular, on his reflection on the various aspects of human culture, such as language, art, history, religion and science, which he sees as facets of a 'symbolic universe'. These, however, are all subject to Cassirer's distinction between sign and symbol, which are seen as belonging to two different universes of discourse. The first, sign, belongs to the physical world of being. It is an 'operator', there being an intrinsic or natural connection between the sign and the thing it signifies. The second, symbol, on the other hand is 'artificial', a 'designator' and belongs to the human world of meaning. Thus human knowledge by its very nature is symbolic. This distinction is interesting as it offers an opposite theory to that of Dillistone and Jung, who both regard symbol as 'natural' and 'spontaneous'. Cassirer also claims, unlike those cited previously, that the two terms can be placed within different contexts, which clearly accentuate their disparity. For instance, that a symbol belongs in the 'human world', and a sign within the 'physical'. It is significant that Cassirer also stresses the fundamental presence of meaning in relation to a symbol, which appears to be lacking in a sign.

Firth also examines various categories allied to symbol which share something of its representative quality, particularly in the context of language. The first category, 'simile' is described by Firth as a "kind of comparison, indicating the perception of a common, often abstract quality shared by two objects, with overt statement". The second, 'metaphor' also makes a comparison but "implicitly, making a direct transfer of an idea and substituting one term of comparison for the other". The third category, 'emblem', "may show no discernible direct relation to its object, but may rely on some past association of ideas". 'Image' is used frequently in literature and public affairs. This is concerned primarily with "forming a mental entity, giving shape in the 'mind's eye' to a set of qualities perceived in or attributed to the object". Finally, Firth links symbol to all the above, but stresses the "directness or likeness of the relationship to its referent is muted or attenuated", so the relation between symbol and referent often seems arbitrary (1973: 71).

It can be seen, therefore, from these studies that there is little agreement in the distinction between the meaning of the terms sign and symbol. Some assert that 'sign' has a diminished function in relation to symbol, that it does not hold the power of meaningful representation at a specific level as symbol is capable. Alternatively, however, a symbol is also regarded as a term categorised under the general heading of 'sign'. In this sense, sign is attributed the characteristic of a multi-faceted concept where symbol is merely a part. A symbol, therefore, in comparison to the other terms is less straightforward and distinct. It is a term which is used not as a comparison, but something which can add a different quality, meaning, or value to its 'referent'. It is clear that a symbol can be used, like the other terms, in a literary context, but this is only one area in which it may be assigned, it has the capacity to be applied to numerous frames of reference.

The second part will now examine three types of symbol, namely, ritual, religious and natural. These categories have been chosen because they have more relevance in terms of the subject areas that comprise Masonic symbolism, particularly ritual symbolism. It also demonstrates how 'symbol' is used and interpreted within three specific contexts.

One of the most significant and earliest writers who studied the importance of ritual symbols was Durkheim (1915), who developed a theoretical model that envisaged social (ritual) symbolism as the "switch point between external moral constraints and groupings of the socio-political order, and internal feelings and imaginative

concepts of the individual actor". [3] Durkheim used the notion of totemism in central Australia to illustrate the basic terms of the model. His notion of collective representations demonstrates his concern with the social conditions of individual experience, societal relationships, and their imperatives in collective symbols. Bell (1992: 20) points out that in Durkheim's discussion of cult in *The Elementary Forms* he reintroduces ritual as the means by which collective beliefs and ideals are simultaneously generated, experienced, and affirmed as real by the community. Hence, ritual is the means by which individual perception and behaviour are socially appropriated or conditioned. One of the clearest statements, however, made by Durkheim on the importance of symbolism says, "Without symbols social sentiments could have only a precarious existence . . . social life, in all its aspects and at every period of its history, is made possible only by a vast symbolism" (1915: 231).

Another writer on the subject of ritual symbols is Turner (1967), who distinguishes between different types of ritual symbol. He asserts, firstly, that a symbol has a "polarisation of meaning", where at one 'pole' collect a set of referents of a natural or physiological character relating to general human experiences of an emotional kind, arousing desires or feelings. At the other 'pole' collect another set of referents that refer to principles of social organisation and to norms and values inherent in the social structure. Turner refers to these as the sensory or 'orectic', and ideological or 'normative' poles of meaning (1967: 28). Turner's second point in ascertaining the meaning of a ritual symbol is the importance of distinguishing between three levels of meaning. First is its 'exegetical' meaning, which is the level of indigenous interpretation, whether by layman or ritual specialist. Second, the 'operational' meaning, which is how the symbol is utilised within the ritual context. Third, the 'positional' meaning, which is the meaning of the symbol as determined by its relationship with other symbols. Turner's approach to ritual symbolism, therefore, is mainly sociological, as he contends that on the whole the ritual symbols that he has studied, for example Ndembu, refer essentially to the basic needs of social existence and to the shared values on which communal life depends (1967: 50). This is an important theory of ritual symbolism and is adapted to a definition of Masonic symbolism in the concluding remarks of this chapter.

A sociological examination of the nature of ritual symbols is seen in the work of Munn (1973) who provides an informative view of what is meant by a ritual symbol. She clarifies what she means by ritual by describing it, on the one hand, as a "symbolic intercom between the level of cultural thought and complex cultural meanings", and on the other, "that of social action and immediate event"(1973: 579). Munn defines the relationship between symbols and ritual when she describes ritual as a

> **generalised medium of social interaction in which the vehicles for constructing messages are iconic symbols (acts, words, or things) that convert the load of significance of complex sociocultural meanings embedded in and generated by the on going processes of social existence into a communication currency. In other words, shared sociocultural meanings constitute the utilities that are symbolically transacted through the medium of ritual action (1973: 580).**

Symbols clearly play an important role, according to Munn, in the functioning of ritual, where symbols are used as a means of communication within a social context; it is the action of ritual which allows the cultural meaning to be expressed through the medium of symbols. It is clear from Munn's work that, according to her

definition, without symbols there could be no ritual; symbols are the very substance of the ritual. Her point concerning symbols being used as a means of communication is directly relevant to the use of symbols in Masonic ritual. This will be developed later.

Munn suggests that the value domain controlled by ritual symbols is that of shared sociocultural meanings. She expands on this by stating that ritual symbols are "testaments to the joining of individuals in objective social relationships that have personal, subjective relevance and internalised normative value". Munn clarifies this point later in her paper when she argues that ritual symbols may be said to "regulate and affirm a coherent symmetrical relationship between individual subjectivity and the objective societal order". Once again, she suggests that ritual symbols 'co-imply' normatively defined social relationships of internal significance and value. She finishes by advocating that ritual symbolism is a "system of social action" (Munn, 1973: 606).

A more recent view of ritual symbols is in the work of Lewis, [4] related by Bell (1992: 19), who discusses the general application of the notion of ritual to conduct or behaviour, rather than thought or feelings, and distinguishes ritual and symbol as separate from each other, unlike Munn who suggests symbol is an integral part of ritual. Lewis regards ritual as 'action' and differentiates it from symbols, which he regards as a conceptual aspect of religion along with beliefs and myths. Lewis maintains that beliefs, creeds, symbols and myths emerge as forms of mental content or conceptual 'blueprints'; they direct, inspire, or promote activity, but they themselves are not activities. Ritual will act out, express, or perform these conceptual orientations.

The second type of symbol to be addressed is the religious symbol. Jung (1964) expressed the view that they were essential to modern or 'rational' man, whom he believed was losing the real meaning in his life; such symbols, however, were intrinsic in the life of 'primitive' man. He emphasises their importance when he states, "the role of religious symbols is to give a meaning to the life of man"(Jung: 89).

Another commentator on religious symbols is Dillistone (1973: 81), who stresses their importance in terms of how their relevance has changed with time. He contends that all known symbol-systems up to the seventeenth-century were constructed essentially within a religious context. At this time God and the symbol were one, where God could only be spoken of in symbolic terms. In this context Dillistone defines 'symbolic' as meaning that which has some connection with human experience, but forever transcends it. Therefore, in these conditions the only true symbol was that used to name or direct attention towards the 'One', on whom the universe depended. Such a religious symbol could take on various forms in terms such as, 'Clock-Maker', 'Designer', 'Mathematician' and 'Architect'. Dillistone refers to a religious symbol in its literal sense, alluding directly to God and the spiritual. It is interesting to note that God or the Supreme Being is referred to in Freemasonry as the 'Great Architect of the Universe'.

An earlier view by the anthropologist Geertz (1966), states that sacred symbols

> **function to synthesize a people's ethos - the tone, character and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood - and their world-view - the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order (1966: 3).**

According to Geertz, religious symbols are those which synthesise and integrate "the world as lived and the world as imagined"; they also serve to produce and strengthen religious conviction. It is clear that Geertz perceives the value of religious symbols in social terms and sees them as an essential part of a society.

The importance of symbols in the context of religion is exemplified in Geertz's definition of religion, in which he states,

> a *religion* is : (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic (1966: 4).

In assessing the nature of symbols, Geertz points to their different applications. For example, he mentions the number six and the Cross as being 'symbols' and argues that "they are all symbols, or at least symbolic elements, because they are tangible formulations of notions, abstractions from experience fixed in perceptible forms, concrete embodiments of ideas, attitudes, judgements, longings, or beliefs" (Geertz, 1966: 5).

An important work on the religious symbol has been conducted by Tillich (1966 :15-16), who found that the religious symbol combines the general characteristics of the symbol with the peculiar characteristics it possesses as a religious symbol. The four general characteristics of the symbol Tillich defines as: first, its 'figurative quality', which implies that the inner attitude which is oriented to the symbol does not have itself in view but rather that which is symbolised in it; second, its 'perceptibility', which suggests that something which is intrinsically invisible, ideal, or transcendent is made perceptible in the symbol and is in this way given objectivity; third, its 'innate power', which suggests that the symbol has a power inherent within it that distinguishes it from the mere sign which is impotent in itself; fourth, its 'acceptability as such' implying that the symbol is socially rooted and socially supported.

Tillich demonstrates how these four characteristics are relevant to the religious symbol also. He stresses, however, that religious symbols are distinguished from others by the fact that they are a

> representation of that which is unconditionally beyond the conceptual sphere; they point to the ultimate reality implied in the religious act, to what concerns us ultimately (1966: 17).

Tillich maintains that religious symbols must express an object that by its very nature transcends everything in the world that is split into subjectivity and objectivity. He contends that 'a real symbol' points to an object which never can become an object. A 'religious symbol' represents the transcendent but cannot make the transcendent immanent. Tillich stresses that they "do not make God a part of the empirical world"(1966: 17).

The final and one of the most notable writers on religious symbolism is Mircea Eliade. To Eliade the symbol is something that embodies great significance and its role is more than merely representative or illustrative. It is a phenomenon that can transmit man's experience from one level to another and has the power to endow his own reality with greater meaning. Eliade demonstrates this in an essay entitled 'The

Symbolism of Shadows in Archaic Religions' [5] in which he describes the function of a symbol in relation to man, where it "translates a human situation into cosmological terms". He explains that in revealing the cosmic context of the symbol man is placed in the presence of the mystery of creation, in other words the sacred. In effect, therefore, the symbol relates a religious experience (1986: 13).

In another work, Eliade (1961: 11) claims that a symbol is "the very substance of spiritual life", which includes those symbols that have been secularised, or changed as a result of the technical and scientific western world. He also studies several phenomena, each providing an aspect of the structure of religious symbolism, for example, the symbolism of the Centre, Time, the Moon, Water and Fertility. Eliade contends that such symbols can be regarded as universal in the sense that they are intrinsic to the life of both 'primordial' and 'modern' man, in different societies and cultures, each symbol deriving completeness of meaning within a religious context. Through examination of the particular symbols mentioned above Eliade warns of the danger of generalisation and simplification, showing an awareness of the difficulties in interpreting these symbols, thereby stressing the importance of the use of texts, rituals and monuments (1961: 24).

To take one of these symbols as an example, for instance, the Centre, Eliade argues that every inhabited region which sees itself as a microcosm has a Centre, a place that is sacred above everything else. This can be applied universally, both within an ancient and modern context. The actual myths pertaining to the Centre or Centres of the Earth, however, are often perceived as real, particularly in the ancient world. They are often manifested in 'hiero-cosmic' symbols, for example, the 'Pillar of the World' and 'Cosmic Tree' (1961: 40). It should be emphasised here that Eliade tends to assume that the ancient world was the truly religious world, in contrast to 'modern man' and his secular environment.

It can be seen, therefore, from these various theories of the meaning of religious symbolism that it is essential to the life of man and is an aid to his achieving a higher level of spirituality. Religious symbols have been described as a medium between man and God, where an increased understanding and awareness of the latter can be achieved through the use of symbols. The only way that the unseen divine can be represented or visualised by man is symbolically. What has been noticeable from the various opinions is the recognition of the difference in religiosity and perception of religious symbols between ancient and modern society; 'modern' being defined as post seventeenth-century. It has been suggested that modern man appears to have lost, or forgotten the all-encompassing nature of religion, where primary importance is attached to symbols that point to the divine, or evoke a sense of the 'holy' themselves.

To consider the third type of symbol - natural symbols - there are several views on this subject from various fields of study, particularly anthropological. From a psychological perspective, however, Jung provides an interesting definition when he distinguishes between 'natural' and 'cultural' symbols. The former, he describes as "derived from the unconscious contents of the psyche, and they therefore represent an enormous number of variations on the essential archetypal images ....." On the other hand, the latter

> **are those that have been used to express 'external truths', and that**
> **are still used in many religions. They have gone through many**
> **transformations and even a long process of more or less conscious**

development, and have thus become collective images accepted by civilised societies (1964: 93).

Dillistone (1986: 33-4) studies the possibility of natural symbols within a context of natural symbolic forms, which he regards as symbols of 'divine being'. His first example is the human body, a biological phenomenon common to humanity as a whole which, consequently, can be seen as a 'common' symbol. Dillistone describes the body as a "superb symbol of wholeness, of variety-in-unity, of proportion, of power in males, of beauty in females". He uses the example of the body of Christ as representing a symbolic structure which for the Christian integrates and co-ordinates all other natural symbols. Dillistone stresses the feature of expansiveness in a natural symbol, where it allows for variations in interpretative significance depending on the cultural outlook of a particular society.

This point is exemplified in another example of a natural symbol, the Land, which may be attributed different interpretations depending on the society or culture. Another natural phenomenon used as a symbol of divine being, according to Dillistone, is Light. He suggests that Light symbolism can be used verbally and visually, it has a 'mysterious' and 'numinous' quality. For instance, a candle, torch, lamp, and lantern are all suitable symbols of the divine presence in the world. One of the most powerful and widely applied of all natural symbolic forms is that of Fire, which functions supremely as a symbol relating to the dual character of human experience; it warms and destroys. It is also perceived as a dramatic symbol of purgation and a significant source of energy (1986: 58, 64). The use of light in the form of candles is a feature of Masonic ritual, but it is doubtful whether they are used to symbolise a divine presence. They are often placed in a group of three in the form of a triangle. This may represent the trinity, or an important geometric figure.

Water is another example of a primary natural symbol and holds considerable importance as a symbol of salvation. Within a Christian context it is cleansing and purifying, playing a central role in the sacrament of Baptism. Dillistone refers to a comment by Mircea Eliade in *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, 1979, in which he states,

> water symbolizes the whole of potentiality: it is the *fons et origo*, the source of all possible existence. . . water symbolizes the primal substance from which all forms come and to which they will return (cited in Dillistone, 1986: 67).

Eliade draws upon several different cultures and concludes that water is associated with cosmologies in the creation of life, regeneration and miraculous renewals. Consequently, Dillistone asserts that Water may be regarded as a "universal natural symbol".

Douglas (1970) presents a theory in contrast to Dillistone's, where she argues that there are no natural symbols, only social. Douglas regards the body and society as interdependent, suggesting that different systems of symbols based on bodily processes derive their meaning from social experience, and are 'coded' by a community with a shared history. Douglas also claims that such symbols are in many cases more natural than language itself, the difference being that they have been culturally learned and culturally transmitted. For example, she states,

> Natural symbols will not be found in individual lexical items. . . The physical body can have universal meaning only as a system

> which responds to the social system, expressing it as a system. What it symbolizes naturally is the relation of parts of an organism to the whole. . . The two bodies are the self and society: sometimes they are so near as to be almost merged: sometimes they are far apart. The tension between them allows the elaboration of meanings (1970: 112).

It is evident that Douglas expounds the theory that the body does not represent a 'natural symbol' by itself, but is related fundamentally to society itself. The other two systems are, therefore, affected by each other and to understand and interpret the meaning of one, it must be regarded in relation to the context of the other.

Douglas also stresses the importance of human language and ritual, which are also profoundly influenced by the structure of society and vice-versa. She maintains that every society discovers its most authentic symbols by drawing upon the analogies offered by the patterned behaviour of a human body. She states that "we must look for tendencies and correlations between the character of the symbolic system and that of the social system", which leads to the suggestion that as social life is variable there can be no universal patterns of symbols. Douglas believes, therefore, that the quest for natural symbols can only be "unrewarding, if not ridiculous" (1970: 11).

This short study of natural symbols shows that there are several different theories as to their meaning and interpretation. Such symbols have been described by Jung, for example, as belonging to the unconscious, taking the form of archetypes. The function of such natural symbols is to inform, or remind the conscious of fundamental symbols; the conscious having repressed through time any awareness of these ancient and primitive symbols. Consequently, in this context natural symbols are attributed a crucial role in human existence. Alternatively, natural symbols have been explained in a more literal sense by Dillistone who describes them as symbols of nature, which have in many cases been used universally as symbols relating to the divine being. Douglas, however, does not acknowledge natural symbols in this literal sense, but describes them as belonging to two systems, social and physical, which in the organisation of various societies are inextricably related to each other. Therefore, in whatever form natural symbols have been interpreted, it is clear that they are attributed great significance in the workings of the individual and in society in general.

The third part will now comprise an examination of specific definitions of the term symbol endorsed by theorists in various fields such as, anthropology, psychology, and philosophy. The choice of theorists has been made on the basis of clarity and precision of their definition. Others who have written in some detail on the subject of symbolism, but who have not explicitly defined the term symbol will be discussed in the final part. The order in which the definitions are presented is not chronological, but may be seen in the context of a particular discipline which is sometimes followed by a contrasting view. The Collins dictionary definition of a symbol cited at the beginning of the chapter will provide a basis for establishing how the definition has been modified within different contexts.

A psychological definition is provided by Jung, who is quite clear in his view of what is meant by the term symbol,

> a symbol is a term, a name, or even a picture that may be familiar in daily life, yet that possesses specific connotations in addition to its

conventional and obvious meaning. It implies something vague, unknown, or hidden from us (1964: 20).

Jung, maintains, that as a consequence,

> . . . a word or an image is symbolic when it implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. It has a wider "unconscious" aspect that is never precisely defined or fully explained (1964: 20-21).

Jung appears to suggest that for something to be accepted as symbolic it must have a dual meaning: first, its obvious or what could be termed 'external' meaning; and second, its 'internal' meaning, which has a depth that is elusive in terms of defining it. Jung also connects symbol to the unconscious, or the unknown part of the psyche, where it is only through dreams that the conscious part of the psyche is made aware of these symbols.

Jaffe (1964)[6] expresses Jung's definition slightly differently. She describes the symbol as "an object of the known world hinting at something unknown; it is the known expressing the life and sense of the inexpressible". In this sense, a symbol appears to be something which enables man to represent the 'unknown' by something which is familiar and conceivable to him. In other words, man is using his own reality to symbolise that which lies 'beyond', or lies outside his own boundaries of what is real, and is therefore incomprehensible. For example, the Christian practice of symbolising Jesus Christ by a cross, or representing God by light.

A relatively early definition, within a philosophical framework, is given by Whitehead (1928), who provides a comprehensive definition:

> The human mind is functioning symbolically when some components of its experience elicit consciousness, beliefs, emotions, and usages, respecting other components of its experience. The former set of components are the 'symbols', and the latter set constitute the 'meaning' of the symbols. The organic functioning whereby there is transition from the symbol to the meaning will be called 'symbolic reference' (1928: 9).

This definition may also be compared to Jung's as it deals with symbolism within the psyche, however, Whitehead contends that the parts of the mind which evoke consciousness are the symbols. Alternatively, Jung argues that it is from within the unconscious that symbols are revealed, and it is left to consciousness to decipher the meaning. Whitehead does not describe in any detail the 'other' components of the mind, but it could be suggested that he is referring to the rational area of the mind, or to the unconscious itself.

Whitehead does expand upon how he perceives symbolism within life in general. For instance, he states that symbolism is not an "idle fancy or corrupt degeneration", instead, he believes it to be "inherent in the very texture of human life". He also propagates the idea that language itself is a symbolism, arguing that mankind "has to find a symbol in order to express itself" and that 'expression' is 'symbolism'. This latter comment relates to Whitehead's main definition where he stresses the importance of emotions and beliefs and their role in constituting a symbol. Whitehead, therefore, does not define symbol within a restricted framework, but sees it as something intrinsic to life itself, particularly where he perceives language

and expression, or 'communication' as symbolic. He regards a symbol as something positive, endowing that which it symbolises with greater meaning. For example, Whitehead maintains that the "object of symbolism is the enhancement of the importance of what is symbolised" (1928: 73-4).

Within an anthropological context, a more recent view is given by Firth who provides a detailed definition of the term symbol, where he states,

> **The essence of symbolism, lies in the recognition of one thing as standing for (re-presenting) another, the relation between them essentially being that of concrete to abstract, particular to general. The relation is such that the symbol by itself appears capable of generating and receiving effects otherwise reserved for the object to which it refers - and such effects are often of high emotional charge (1973: 15-16).**

It should be recognised that Firth is not talking of society in general, but is constructing his theory of the importance of symbolism around his experiences of a particular society, in this case the Tikopia people of Western Polynesia. In terms of his definition Firth uses an effective description of a symbol when he characterises it as 'representing' something. He reflects upon the relation of a symbol to the thing symbolised as that which is actual or tangible, representing that which is insubstantial or abstruse. Firth does, however, introduce a slightly different angle of thought from those cited above when he suggests that the symbol may be endowed with a certain quality of the object it represents. As a consequence, it may be assumed that the symbol itself is able to receive the reactions usually attributed to the actual object. So in a sense, a popular or well recognised symbol may become the object of worship or attention formerly given to the thing being represented. An example could be the Cross becoming the object of reverence instead of Christ himself.

A slightly different conception of symbolism is related by Toynbee (1976), who concentrates on the intellectual facet of the symbol. He contends,

> **A symbol is not identical or co-existensive with the object that it symbolizes. . . It would be an error to suppose that a symbol is intended to be a reproduction of the thing that it is really intended, not to reproduce, but to illuminate. . . The effective symbol is the illuminating one, and effective symbols are an indispensable part of our intellectual apparatus. If a symbol is to work effectively as an instrument for intellectual action - that is to say, as a 'model' - it has to be simplified and sharpened to a degree that reduces it to something like a sketch-map of the piece of reality to which it is intended to serve as a guide. . . (1976: 53).**

Toynbee uses an effective adjective to describe a symbol when he uses the word 'illuminating', which clarifies the previous reference to symbol as 'enlightening'. Toynbee is of the opinion that the symbol does not bear any significant physical relationship to the thing it symbolises. He characterises the symbol as a 'guide' to the piece of reality it represents, in other words the symbol is suggestive, it carries an enigmatic quality about it and is not merely an obvious statement about that which it represents. It is also apparent that the symbol is effectively 'illuminating' something of reality, not something that is outside the normal conception of what is real, or the 'unknowable'.

An earlier theory in contrast to the one above is the definition given by Goodenough (1953), who defines a symbol as,

> **an object or pattern which, whatever the reason may be, operates upon men, and causes effects in them, beyond mere recognition of what is literally presented in the given form . . . The symbol carries its own meaning or value and with this its own power to move us** (1953: 28).

The last point in this definition is an alternative view to those cited previously, which have claimed that the symbol takes on the quality of the object being symbolised. Goodenough, however, emphasises one of the attributes of a symbol, suggesting that it is endowed with a meaning and value of its own, enabling it to affect a significant response in man. It is interesting to note that Goodenough writes of the effects of symbolism upon man as an individual, as opposed to the human psyche, to society, or to reality itself.

A more general definition is provided by Dillistone who develops what he calls a 'three-fold pattern of relationship' in which he deduces that a symbol can be regarded as:-

> 1. **A word or object or thing or action or event or pattern or person or concrete particular**
>
> 2. **Representing or suggesting or signifying or veiling or communicating or eliciting or expressing or recalling or pointing to or standing in place of or typifying or denoting or relating to corresponding to or illuminating or referring to or participating in or re-enacting or associated with**
>
> 3. **Something greater or transcendent or ultimate: a meaning, a reality, an ideal, a value, an achievement, a belief, a community, a concept, an institution, a state of affairs** (1986: 13).

From this detailed definition Dillistone explains that the first point is more visible, audible, tangible, proximate, and more concrete than the third point. According to the definition of Goodenough, for example, the function of a symbol is to bridge the gulf between the world of 1. and the world of 3. This factor, Dillistone stresses, is important for the proper functioning of the life of any particular society. Dillistone concludes from this that a symbol connects two entities, or brings them together. He designates point 1. in his basic pattern as the 'symbol', and point 3. as the 'referent', stressing that each depend on the other.

This examination of various definitions shows the diversity in interpretation of the meaning of the term symbol. Several of the definitions correlate with each other, where certain of their basic ideas correspond, however, they often differ due to a different frame of reference or context. In terms of the Collins dictionary definition, which states that a symbol *represents* or *stands* for something else, only two of the definitions given above agree. Firth, for example, suggests that a symbol is one thing that stands for, or represents another; Dillistone, also maintains that a symbol is able to represent, signify, or communicate. Jung, in contrast, argues that a symbol 'implies'; Jaffe, that a symbol 'expresses'; Toynbee, that it 'illuminates'. Toynbee and Goodenough both conflict with the dictionary on the issue that a symbol represents by *connection* or *association* that which is being symbolised. For instance, Toynbee

contends that a symbol is not co-existensive with the object being symbolised, while Goodenough maintains that a symbol has its own meaning and value and, therefore, has its own power to move.

There is general agreement that a symbol represents something quite different and more than itself, or as the dictionary suggests, something *abstract*. Jung, for example, states that a symbol implies the unknown and is more than its obvious meaning. Jaffe suggests that it is the known expressing the inexpressible. Firth argues that the relationship between the symbol and the symbolised is concrete to abstract, or particular to general. Toynbee proposes that a symbol is a guide to a piece of reality. Finally, Dillistone contends that a symbol represents something greater, or transcendent than itself. A symbol, therefore, according to the theories examined, has the ability to make that which it represents more intelligible, meaningful and comprehensible to man. Most importantly, it is multi-dimensional alluding to layers of meaning that must be uncovered before it can be fully understood. The most significant of these definitions in terms of Masonic symbolism will be identified and related to Freemasonry more specifically, in the conclusion to this chapter. What this part has achieved is to examine and compare a collection of definitions from a variety of sources to give a more precise understanding of the meaning of symbol as it has been interpreted throughout this century and later, how some of these help in defining Masonic symbolism itself.

The fourth and final part will now consider some of the main works on symbolism in various prominent fields of study this century, for example, anthropology, social anthropology, psychology, philosophy and theology. This allows for important studies of symbolism that do not specifically refer to comparative terms, such as allegory or sign, and which do not offer a concise definition, to be included in this chapter.

<u>Anthropological studies of symbolism</u>
Firth (1973: 108-9) explains that early anthropological studies of symbols were comprised mainly of the empirical observation of 'exotic' rites and pursuing the meaning of images on classical vases and monuments. Anthropologists opposed the Romantically-orientated study of specific symbols as universal types of imagery, holding a greater interest in symbolic behaviour of a more pronounced institutional kind with a specific cultural definition. The latter part of the nineteenth-century revealed a more careful consideration of the immediate ethnographic context of symbols. Firth suggests N. D. Fustel de Coulanges and Edward Burnett Tylor were the 'Fathers' of modern anthropology. Other prominent names in the early development of anthropology are: James Frazer - *The Golden Bough*; Emile Durkheim - *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*; Radcliffe-Brown; and Bronislaw Malinowski.

One of the most influential contemporary anthropological studies of symbolism is that by Victor Turner, who produced a comprehensive theory of symbolism from his studies on ritual. One of Turner's most important works, *The Forest of Symbols*, 1967, comprises a study of the function of symbols in the structure of social life, focusing extensively on the analysis of symbols within the Ndembu ritual. One of the most important properties of a symbol, according to Turner, was the capacity for a single symbol to incorporate many meanings in different contexts, or at different levels of understanding within the same general context. Turner referred to this as the property of 'multivocality'. He also created the term 'dominant symbols', which he argued held an important position in any social system and whose meaning was mostly unchanged throughout time. He believed 'other' symbols to be smaller units

of ritual behaviour which still influence social systems. Turner was primarily concerned with the properties of symbols as factors in social action and stressed the most important symbolic feature of any society as being ritual.

Edmund Leach is significant in the study of ritual action and belief, which he regarded as forms of symbolic statement about the social order. In the work entitled *Elements in Social Organization*, 1951, Leach presents a precise consideration of symbols referring to symbolism in art, money, name change, dreams and funerary practices. He also defines ritual as "primarily symbolic in character". In more general terms, Leach saw symbolism as having two primary connotations: the first, in the broad sense, where symbols may occur when some components of the mind's experience evoke activity and values ordinarily associated with other components of experience. He suggests language and art are symbolic in this sense; the second, in the narrower sense is where symbols are objects or actions that represent other entities in virtue of some arbitrarily assigned conceptual relation between them. This view includes 'actions' as possible symbols.

Leach can be regarded as treating symbolic aspects of culture as a system of communication. He argued that symbols cannot be understood in isolation and that there is no universal symbolism, even though there may be some common symbolic themes. Leach describes symbols as 'polysemic', where they derive their meaning only when contrasted with other symbols as part of a group. To understand symbolism, in Leach's opinion, is to explore in detail a specific 'ethnographic context'. This particular work of Leach's is significant in terms of its relevance to Masonic symbolism and how it is to be understood in this thesis. Leach's view, as it is cited here, will be applied more directly to a definition of Masonic symbolism in the concluding part of this chapter.

Claude Levi-Strauss' contribution to modern anthropological theory is significant, particularly in the study of linguistics and depth psychology, within the context of myth and symbols. His 'structuralism' renewed interest in myths and symbols as basic phenomena, opposing the classical 'functionalist' approach headed by Malinowski and the more traditional 'symbolic approach', describing symbols primarily in terms of their meanings. Levi-Strauss expounded the view that myth and symbol belong to their own systems within which they are subject to certain basic relationships and patterns of transformation. Levi-Strauss was concerned with the problems of the universality of human nature, arguing that social anthropology embodies communication of man with man by means of signs and symbols. His structuralism provided a great contribution to anthropologists' understanding of symbolism (Heisig, 1987: 202-3).

Psychological studies of symbolism
One of the main areas of concern in the work of Sigmund Freud was to use the dream symbols of the neurotically disturbed as fundamental data on which to base his theories of how the individual's perception of the past is effected by the internal conscious and unconscious dynamics of the psyche. Cohen (1980) stresses the importance of the concept of 'primary process' in much of Freud's theory, a characteristic of a very early stage of development in which fantasy can link things together. This is directly related to the theory of symbolism; symbolisation within Freudian psychoanalysis develops out of this early tendency to equate things. Cohen emphasises that it cannot be argued that every form of symbolism, for example, natural language, mathematics and musical notation, has the functions that Freudian psychoanalysis attributes to the symbolising process. It is possible, however, to

attribute these functions and characteristics to other forms of symbolism, for instance, myth, ritual, or poetry.

There are two principal ways, according to Cohen, in which psychoanalytic theory can explain or contribute to the explanation of cultural symbols, and to the social process of cultural symbolisation. The first, is to assert that certain processes of 'unconscious splitting', 'displacement' and 'condensation', and the accompanying ones of 'defence' will, as they occur in the individual, also spontaneously manifest themselves in shared cultural forms, such as myth and ritual. This way of explaining the meaning of cultural symbols was used by Freud. The second, alternatively, is to assert that certain processes of cultural symbolisation will always, or at least sometimes, activate or make use of certain 'dynamic' unconscious sources that give such symbols part of their character, or provide them with some of the meanings that are 'condensed' in them (Cohen, 1980: 50-7).

One other viewpoint on the work of Freud which addresses his theories on the concept of symbolism comes from Firth (1973: 130), who compares Freud's views on symbols to Durkheim's. For example, he asserts that Durkheim was concerned primarily with the symbolism of groups, as an abstract exercise of interpretation, whereas Freud was concerned with the symbolism of individuals within a clinical setting, as a clue to a solution of pragmatic problems. Durkheim was also interested in symbols which were expressive of harmony and solidarity of the individual within his society. Freud, however, saw symbols as expressive of disharmony of the individual with his society, represented especially by his nearest of kin.

Symbols for Freud, therefore, were disguises to avoid confrontation with a painful reality. Since symbols were a product of repression, Freud's aim was to relieve people from suffering such repression by leading them to understand its roots, thereby attempting to free them from the "tyranny of their symbols".

Jung developed several of Freud's ideas on symbolism and introduced many of his own to produce an important and influential system of thought concerning symbols. Jung wrote many works on the subject, for example, *Psychological Types* and *Psyche and Symbol*, 1958. Many of his ideas on symbols are contained in a chapter entitled 'Approaching the Unconscious' (1964), in which he concentrates on the unconscious form of symbols produced by man in the form of dreams. Jung describes dreams as "the most frequent and universally accessible source for the investigation of man's symbolizing faculty . . .our dream life, . . . is the soil from which most symbols grow". He argues that the primary function of dreams is 'compensatory', in the sense that they attempt to restore the psychological balance of the psyche by producing dream material that subtly re-establishes the total 'psychic equilibrium'. Jung contends that symbols within dreams "occur spontaneously, for dreams happen and are not invented; they are, therefore, the main source of all our knowledge about symbolism." It is clear, however, that symbols do occur elsewhere, for instance, Jung states, "they appear in all kinds of psychic manifestations. There are symbolic thoughts and feelings, symbolic acts and situations"(1964: 55).

One of the most important concepts of Jung's work on symbols is the notion of the archetype, which can briefly be described as a symbolic image of great power, and part of the content of the collective unconscious which is universal, not individual in character. Jung relates this to the 'biological', 'prehistoric' and 'unconscious' development of the mind of 'archaic man', whose psyche was similar to that of an animal. Jung surmised that this "immensely old psyche forms the basis of our mind". This idea exemplifies the fact that Jung believed the world of 'modern man'

had been dehumanised by science and consequently had lost its emotional 'unconscious identity' with natural phenomena. As a result, Jung suggests that this loss is "compensated for by the symbols of our dreams... they bring up our original nature - its instincts and peculiar thinking". Examples of the archetype are: the 'anima', the female component of the male unconscious; the 'animus', the male component of the female unconscious; the Wise Man; and the Great Mother (Jung, 1964: 96-7).

Jung saw symbols not merely as private symptoms of unresolved repressions, as did Freud, but rather as expressions of the psyche's struggle for 'realisation' and 'individuation'. His work influenced thinkers such as Richard Wilhelm and Heinrich Zimmer, anthropologists like Paul Radin, and particularly the work of Mircea Eliade.

Philosophical studies of symbolism

Cassirer made the symbol central to the development of his interpretation of reality. Cassirer was convinced that man had advanced to his present eminence in the world through the use of symbolic forms, and it was only through the construction of new symbolic forms that this eminence could be maintained. For example, in the work *An Essay on Man* he states, "It is symbolic thought which overcomes the natural inertia of man and endows him with a new ability constantly to reshape his human universe" (Cassirer, 1944: 62). Cassirer refers to symbolisation as the root of all social communication, and to man as a symbol-making species called 'homo symbolicus'.

Theological/Religious studies of symbolism

Paul Tillich in *Systematic Theology*, 1964, argues for the positive and essential role that symbolism plays in religious language. He asserts that a symbol actually participates in the reality to which it is directed, and holds a significance in the place of sacraments in Christian experience. For example, Tillich states,

> **The sacramental material is not a sign but a symbol. As symbols the sacramental materials are intrinsically related to what they express; they have inherent qualities (water, fire, oil, bread, wine) which make them adequate to their symbolic function and irreplaceable. . . . A sacramental symbol is neither a thing nor a sign. It participates in the power of what it symbolizes, and therefore it can be a medium of the Spirit** (Tillich, 1964: 103).

This shows Tillich's emphasis on the interpretation of the function of symbols in mediating the spiritual presence. Another function of symbols is to 'unlock' dimensions of the inner spirit of the human subject, so that there comes into being a correspondence with aspects of 'ultimate reality'. A particular characteristic of a symbol, in Tillich's view, is its likeness to living beings, for instance, where the symbol emerges from the darkness and lives through its relationship with a particular culture; when it ceases to evoke a vital response, it dies.

Mircea Eliade, in his work *Images and Symbols*, 1961, argues for the possibility of universal symbols, where an ancient symbol is developed in such a way as to provide a new meaning for a different culture. He describes the disclosing of multiple variants of the same complexes of symbols as endless successions of 'forms' which, on the different levels of dream, myth, ritual, theology, mysticism and metaphysics, are trying to 'realize' the archetype.

Eliade attaches great importance to the concept of a symbol, believing symbolic thinking to be "consubstantial with human existence", emphasising the idea that all

rites and symbols are related to cosmogenic myths about creation and about the structuring of the living cosmos from a primordial reality of chaos. For example, he links lunar symbolism to the regeneration of the cosmos, of life itself, and with ideas of polarity and resurrection. He also links the symbolism of the Cosmic Tree to periodic regeneration of the universe and to symbolic links between heaven and earth. The function of water symbolism in the form of baptism and the flood, he associates with the re-enactment of the primordial chaos and dissolution of all forms.

Another important point that Eliade develops concerning symbol is the idea that "symbolism adds a new value to an object or activity without any prejudice to its own immediate value". In a sense it "breaks open the immediate reality without minimizing it"(1961: 178). Eliade influenced the field of anthropology, particularly, concerning the importance of myth in the universal cultural sense, the universal role of the symbol and its intrinsic value in the life of mankind, from 'archaic' to 'modern'.

In conclusion, it is clear that symbolism, or more particularly a symbol, is a complex phenomenon which can not be easily defined or interpreted. It was not the intention of this chapter to arrive at one possible meaning of the term symbol, or the correct one, but to show a 'symbol' as something multifarious and multivalent. It is evident from this study that a symbol is rarely regarded as one-dimensional, but rather as something which has the ability to communicate several dimensions. For example, a symbol may give a more obvious 'external' value to an object, place, or thing, at the same time having the power to endow a more 'internal', esoteric meaning, most clearly understood by the particular culture, society, or individual using it.

Within this chapter 'symbol' has been differentiated from other similar terms, such as sign, image, index and allegory. Without clarification it is possible to underestimate the value of a symbol by confusing it with other terms which on the surface may have a similar meaning. It was also necessary to distinguish between various groups of symbol, for instance, 'religious', 'ritual', and 'natural'; terms which were commonly used among several authors and which were of relevance to the studies used in this chapter. This illustrated the extensive use of the term symbol and how it elicits a different interpretation within different fields of reference.

The third part of the chapter provided the clearest example of the possibility of diverse interpretations of the meaning of symbol within various areas of study, such as anthropology, psychology and philosophy. From the assorted definitions it became evident that the term symbol holds different meanings even within the same field of study. This was demonstrated in the anthropological field where each writer interpreted symbol differently depending on their own experiences of its use in practical research. It was clear, however, that several definitions acknowledged ideas from other theories and often a basic idea was apparent in a few definitions, but merely developed slightly differently. It was also shown how various theories differed from the standard dictionary definition of the term symbol.

The final part of the chapter considered the development of the study of symbolism this century using prominent theories from four particular areas of study. This examination was useful to show how ideas have changed and developed, and how each significant theory has influenced those that followed. It also became clear that certain theories did not remain in the particular field of the writer, but were acknowledged, used and referred to within other areas. For example, Eliade in his study of religion drew upon the work of Freud and Jung, which is clearly apparent in his work. The study also showed, like the examination of definitions, something

of the complexity and diversity in the nature and meaning of the term symbol, and the necessity of considering the various interpretations and theories before a full understanding of the complex nature of a symbol can be obtained.

This study of the theory of symbol forms an important base for the following work on Masonic symbolism. In the context of Freemasonry the definitions and theories which are most helpful and which relate to how the term 'Masonic symbolism' is to be used and understood throughout the thesis are those which focus on ritual symbolism. In the study of Masonic symbolism it is important to stress the centrality of ritual; it is within the liturgical setting of the ritual, comprising the three Craft degrees, that the significance of the symbols is made clear. It is necessary, therefore, to relate some of the views on symbolism that have been examined in this chapter in helping to clarify the meaning of 'Masonic symbolism'.

Masonic symbols are in two forms: (a) 'literary'; the symbols that are written and described in the catechisms and which are spoken by the officers and initiates in the lodge during the ritual ceremony; (b) 'visual', the symbols which are depicted in the ritual through the medium of tracing-boards and lodge-plans, and in decorative form on drawings, certificates, and jewels. A number of the symbols communicate a specific moral tenet of Freemasonry, and the symbols - as a system - reveal the general philosophy of the society. It can be said that the moral practices inherent in Freemasonry are communicated via symbols within a ritual setting. The fact that the message the symbols convey is of a moral nature, which is often imparted allegorically, makes the definitions of the term allegory, discussed at the beginning of the chapter, relevant to the understanding of how the term 'Masonic symbolism' is to be used in the following study. Allegory is an important feature of Masonic symbolism and is a primary medium used to convey the truths and morality behind many of the symbols. Allegory, in both written and visual form, therefore, is used to symbolise the conceptual: an idea, a truth or a moral. It is something that must be discovered and interpreted; it is for the initiate to find the 'truths' behind the symbols he experiences during the course of the ritual.

There are several theories of symbolism that have been included in this chapter which help to define the nature of Masonic symbolism as it is to be understood in this thesis. The work of Munn (1973) on ritual symbolism, for example, is significant, particularly, her references to ritual symbolism as a medium of communication. For instance, as it was cited earlier, she contends that within a generalised medium of social interaction the vehicles for communication are "iconic symbols (acts, words, or things) that convert the load of significance of complex sociocultural meanings . . . into a communication currency". Munn purports that symbols play an important role in the functioning of ritual; it is the action of ritual which allows the cultural meaning to be expressed through the medium of symbols. Munn argues that symbols are the very substance of the ritual. This may be related to the use of symbols in Freemasonry, where the moral standards are 'expressed through the medium of symbols'. It is the ritual which endows Masonic symbols with a collective meaning and force, and it is the symbols which give sense and purpose to the ritual.

Firth also comments on the communicative nature of ritual stating that

> Ritual is a symbolic mode of communication, of 'saying something' in a formal way, not to be said in ordinary language or informal behaviour. This idea of 'not to be said' in an ordinary way means that a special character of ritual is its reserve, its apartness, its 'sacred' quality (1973: 176).

Firth explains that 'sacred' is not necessarily a criterion in the definition of ritual, that there can be secular rituals and secular symbols, and rituals vary in the degree of their sacredness. He argues that ritual is one of the great fields for the study of symbolic behaviour; the primary search for the meaning of symbolism in ritual is focused upon social relations. It is not possible to define Masonic symbols as 'sacred' in any overwhelming spiritual or religious sense, although it can be argued that there are religious aspects to Masonic symbolism. The quality of sacredness comes, as Firth suggests, from the special character of ritual that provides a formal setting, where words and actions take on a higher level of meaning through a symbolic mode of communication. It can be said that the moral system of Freemasonry is given symbolic expression through ritual.

Two final theories of symbolism that help to define the meaning of Masonic symbolism within the context of this thesis may be seen in the work of Leach and Eliade. Leach (1951) recognises an important aspect in understanding symbols which correlates well to how Masonic symbols are analysed in this thesis. Primarily, this is seen in his view that symbols cannot be understood in isolation, that there is no universal symbolism, even though there may be some common symbolic themes. Leach also describes symbols as 'polysemic', where they derive their meaning only when contrasted with other symbols as part of a group. This is how the subject of Masonic symbolism is approached throughout this study. There is no attempt to define each symbol, the meanings and interpretation of individual symbols is not the object of the thesis. The nature and development of Masonic symbolism as a whole is what is relevant. The symbols are understood in terms of their relation to other symbols, and their inter-relationship is recognised in the development of common symbolic themes. This, in turn, is examined within the context of Masonic ritual and in the greater structure of the contemporary scientific and intellectual thought. To understand symbolism, in Leach's opinion, is to explore in detail a specific 'ethnographic context'. To understand the main features of the structure of Masonic symbolism - as a system - is to place it and examine it within its ritual context.

Eliade (1961: 172) stated that the "History of a symbolism is the best introduction to the philosophy of culture". By focusing on the specific symbols that emerged in the early eighteenth-century and the possible contemporary influences, the history and development of Masonic symbolism may be examined. A study of the symbols used in Freemasonry also, as Eliade suggests, gives an insight into its philosophy and morality. Eliade also makes a similar point to Leach concerning the importance of a symbolism as a whole

> . . . it is not by 'placing' a symbol in its own history that we can resolve. . . to know what is revealed to us, not by any 'particular version' of a symbol but by the <u>whole</u> of a symbolism. The particular versions - various particular meanings of a symbol - are resolved as soon as one considers the symbolism as a whole and discern its structure (1961: 163).

In terms of the study of the theory of symbolism conducted in this chapter, there have been several views that have helped to define the meaning of the term 'Masonic symbolism' in the sense of how it will be used throughout this thesis. In this study Masonic symbols are found to be contextual, in the sense that they are not analysed in isolation, but are acknowledged as being part of a system of symbolism that is in essence ritualistic. This is placed within a time-frame of 1696 - 1798, which provides the earliest evidence of Masonic symbols as they are described in the ritual and shown in visual form. This is then placed within the wider framework of the

contemporary intellectual scene, which provides an all-encompassing structure to the development of Masonic symbolism throughout the eighteenth-century. 'Masonic symbolism' may also be described as allegorical and communicative; the symbols communicate various truths and morals that are imparted allegorically. The ritual has a cohesive effect on the symbols as a 'system'; it provides a structure in which they inter-relate, correspond and obtain their meaning. Outside of the ritual the symbols lose their value and effectiveness and become obsolete.

The next chapter analyses the earliest evidence of Masonic symbols - in literary form - which are taken from the early examples of ritual catechisms. The use of symbols in these texts is examined and compared, particularly the differences and similarities in the symbolic nature of the questions and answers.

NOTES

1. *The Social History of Art* , 1952.

2. Chapter entitled 'Approaching the Unconscious'. In: Jung, C. (ed.) (1964) pp. 18-103.

3. Munn, 1973: 583.

4. Lewis, G. (1980) *Day of Shining Red: An Essay on Understanding Ritual.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 10-11.

5. In Apostolos-Cappadona, 1986: 3-16.

6. Jaffe, A. (1964) 'Symbolism in the Visual Arts'. In: Jung, C. (ed.) (1964) pp. 230-71.

CHAPTER TWO

THE EMERGENCE OF MASONIC SYMBOLISM IN LITERARY FORM

Q. What is Freemasonry. . .

A. Freemasonry is a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. [1]

This description may be regarded as the most generally accepted and commonly used definition of Freemasonry. It is presented at the beginning of this chapter to demonstrate the central importance of symbols in English Craft Masonry. The definition also reflects the primary role of symbols within the philosophy of Freemasonry, to impart moral principles portrayed within an allegorical form. The terms allegory and symbol have been defined and differentiated in the first chapter, it is necessary here, however, to apply their meaning within a Masonic context. Allegory can be understood as a form of spoken symbol which relates a fictional story to illustrate a moral principle that is for the listener to interpret and understand. Symbols in Freemasonry are used to illustrate in both literary and visual form the morals being taught, and often stand as visual, physical representations of an intangible, hidden meaning. Allegory and symbol, together, form an intrinsic part of Masonic ritual; the number of symbols used in the three degrees of the Craft have prompted the degrees to be collectively known as the 'Symbolic Degrees'.

The purpose of this chapter is to address the emergence of the earliest symbols in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century England. The sources that will be used for this study are the Masonic catechisms, which comprise the earliest form of the ritual and, consequently, the earliest examples of symbols in literary form as they are described in the ritual. The aim of the study is to show how the symbols were used in the early ritual and how their use differed in many of the catechisms before 1730. The form that such an examination will take is the use of tables, which will enable a clear comparison of specific questions and answers from the different texts. The data will be taken directly from the original sources and the original grammar and spelling will remain unchanged. This analysis will form an introduction to the final chapter which concentrates on the development of specific symbols and themes, both literary and visual through the eighteenth-century, and a comparison between them. The symbols taken from the catechisms will be grouped into similar themes that are used later, which are: Solomon's Temple; Architecture; Working Tools; Speculative; Numbers and Colours; Geometry; Virtues; Old and New Testament. It should be stressed that the symbols taken from the texts are those which were clearly visualised later in the century, and will not include symbolic acts, gestures, signs, movements and words, which are common features of Masonic ritual.

It is not the intention here to contribute to the debate amongst Masonic historians as to the origin of Masonic symbolism, this will be approached in the fourth chapter, where contemporary influences on the choice of symbols are suggested. The meaning and interpretation of the symbols is another contentious issue that will not be drawn on here. Many of the symbols are not unique to Freemasonry, their use in a more universal context imbues them with a variety of meanings. The use of symbols in Masonry, or more particularly in the ritual, endows them with a particular meaning for Masons. There is no official sanction, however, regarding the correct interpretation of the symbols, or an authorised definition of their significance; they

appear to be open to individual interpretation. One of the main functions of the symbols used in Freemasonry is as vehicles of conveying moral instruction.

The Expositions of the ritual dating from 1696 to 1730 will provide the main sources for this chapter. A study of these will reveal the nature of the early symbols which existed before the ritual was developed and standardised by the Lodge of Reconciliation in 1815. The catechisms provide the earliest historical record of Masonic ritual and symbolism from which the 'official' ritual evolved. The majority of the catechisms are of English origin, although it must be acknowledged that a few, particularly the earliest, are Scottish. The actual geographical origins of Freemasonry will not be argued here; the debate between whether it was Scotland or England that gave birth to Freemasonry is not relevant to this thesis.

The symbols used in this chapter have been categorised as 'literary' and 'visual', terms which have been explained previously and which will be developed in the final chapter. In the present context, the symbols taken from the catechisms are referred to as 'literary' in the sense that they are taken directly from the text. An alternative categorisation is offered by Hamill (1992), who divides Masonic symbolism into two forms: the 'physical' and the 'philosophical'. The physical, he describes as "represented by our regalia and Jewels and the furniture of a lodge", and the philosophical, "by the words and expressions that we use in our rituals" (Hamill, 1992: 1). It is the latter form that will be used here.

The sources themselves are a collection of texts in both manuscript and print form. The texts originally comprised the form of giving the Mason Word and the questions and answers used to test persons claiming to be Masons. The catechisms went through considerable change during the eighteenth-century becoming more elaborate in character and distinctly more speculative in nature. Taken in chronological order the texts show the development from a one to a three degree system. The first to present the ritual in three parts was *Masonry Dissected* in 1730, which revealed the Craft degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master Mason. The earliest catechisms of *circa* 1700 show a simpler form of symbolism expressing a more basic system of morality. The later catechisms of *circa* 1730 display more detail concerning symbolic themes such as, Solomon's Temple, Orders of Architecture, Geometry, and the three principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

The collection of texts used in this chapter will comprise the earliest in 1696, to *Masonry Dissected* in 1730. The study will end at this date, as for several years after there were no Expositions published in England which contributed any new details concerning ritual or symbolism. After 1737 a number of translations of French 'Exposures' appeared in England, reflecting a ritual similar to that already being performed. These may have had an influential effect on the English ritual developing at the time, which there is little evidence of, but it is not the intention here to analyse the extent of any possible influence. Other Masonic degrees were also being formed in England during the middle of the eighteenth-century with their own rituals. The catechisms of 1696-1730, therefore, may be said to represent the ritual and symbolism of English Craft Masonry in its earliest and 'purest' form. It must be clarified here that the texts only suggest the form of ritual that was being practised in lodges in the early eighteenth-century; there is no conclusive evidence to show that they represent what was actually being performed. As there was no official ritual at the time the various differences in the wording and content of the Expositions may indicate that practices amongst lodges varied. Although the origins and authenticity of the catechisms are disputable, they provide the only written examples of early

Masonic ritual and symbolism, which formed the basis of the official, authorised version in 1815.

The group of texts that will be used can be divided into three categories: the first, comprise the texts from the years 1696 to *circa* 1711, which are predominantly operative in nature. The earliest manuscripts, namely, the *Edinburgh Register House* MS 1696 and the *Chetwode Crawley* MS *c.* 1700, represent the Scottish operative form of working in the period of the late seventeenth-century. The second, includes the texts dating from *circa* 1720 to *circa* 1727, which reveal an increase in speculative elements, evident, for example, in questions concerning the physical characteristics of the lodge itself and its contents; geometry, and the pillars. The appearance of such symbolic details suggests the growing influence of the speculative Masons on the developing ritual. The third category comprises one specific text, namely, *Masonry Dissected*, dated 1730. The changes that are clearly apparent in this text are significant, such as the introduction of the Hiramic Legend, explanation of the Letter G, and additional details concerning Solomon's Temple - the Middle Chamber and Winding Stairs. The most significant change is the division of the ritual into three parts designating the three degrees. There is a distinct development, therefore, in the form and content of the texts from the first to the third category, showing a progression from a mainly operative form of practice to a predominantly speculative one.

In regard to the structure of the catechisms, Carr (1970) describes the majority as being 'bipartite', consisting of

> **(a) a brief narrative describing salutations, signs, of some part of the ceremonies,**
> **(b) a series of questions and answers which were doubtless used as tests of recognition, and possibly as a means of rehearsing the ceremonies for the edification of the lodge** (Carr, 1970: 339).

Some of the documents, however, are differentiated from this two-part style by the addition of a short part, the intention of which appears to be an introduction to the text and its origins. In a few cases a version of the *Constitutions* is given before the questions and answers, including a description of the historical origins of Masonry. The manuscripts entitled the *Dumfries No. 4 MS c.* 1710 and the *Graham* MS 1726, show a distinct variation from the standard texts. For example, the former includes three sets of questions and answers, some of which are clearly Christian in character, and also the 'Charges of a Freemason' as given in the *Constitutions*. The *Graham* MS also contains material which is distinctly scriptural in nature, including the Noachian legend, similar to the Hiramic legend in *Masonry Dissected*. The specific Christian and Old Testament additions in these two texts will be addressed in more detail later in the chapter. The general questions of a symbolic nature which appear in the texts are those that will be analysed and compared here. These will include questions concerning the lodge; the pillars; details of the building of the Temple; architecture; geometry; colour and number; and any uncommon features in individual texts. Questions relating to the actual ceremonies depicting the work inside the lodge and questions used for the purposes of recognition, will not be included.

For practical reasons the titles of the Expositions have been abbreviated when quoted in the six tables used in this chapter. A list of these abbreviations is given below.

TEXT	ABBREVIATION
The *Edinburgh Register House MS*, 1696	E. R. H.
The *Chetwode Crawley MS*, c. 1700	C. C.
The *Sloane MS No. 3329*, c. 1700	S. No. 3329
The *Dumfries No. 4 MS*, c. 1710	D. No. 4
The *Trinity College, Dublin, MS*, 1711	T. C. D.
'A Mason's Examination', 1723	A M's. E.
The Grand Mystery of Free-mason's Discover'd, 1724	G. M. Fms. D.
The Whole Institution of Masonry, 1724	W. I. M.
Institution of Free Masons, c. 1725	I. Fms.
The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened, 1725	W. I. Fms. O.
The *Graham MS*, 1726	G.
The Grand Mystery Laid Open, 1726	G. M. L. O.
'A Mason's Confession', c. 1727	A M's. C.
The *Wilkinson MS*, c. 1727	W.
'The Mystery of Free-Masonry', 1730	M. Fmy.
Masonry Dissected, 1730	M. Diss.

The first group of questions to be addressed from the catechisms concern details of the lodge. This group appears in all the texts and there are numerous questions relating to a number of features of the lodge. The intention is to compare the form of the questions and the variations of response. For example, the question is put to the candidate, "Where was you entered?" or "where were you made a Mason?". [2] This is metaphorical in that it implies the original or archetypal lodge. The responses to this question are varied, as demonstrated in **Table 1**.

The text *The Grand Mystery Laid Open* does not include this question, but like five of the texts in the table above it does allude to the importance given to St. John and to why he is held to represent Masonry. For example, it states ". . . He was Head of all the Christian Lodges, . . . from his Superiour knowledge in the wonderfull Art of Masonry (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 91-92). The two St. John's - Baptist and Evangelist - were chosen to be the patron saints of Craft Masonry, a tradition started by the English craft guilds of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries. Dyer (1986) associates the two saints with the symbol of the point-within-a-circle. Prior to the union of the Grand Lodges in 1813, Dyer argues that the two parallel lines symbolised the two "Grand Parallels of masonry, the Saints John, the Baptist and the Evangelist". Half yearly festivals were held on their commemoration days, 24th June and 27th December at which time installation meetings were traditionally held (Dyer, 1986: 98).

There are several other symbolic questions relating to the lodge which may be seen in **Table 2**. Four questions have been taken from the texts and the corresponding answers are given in each case, most of the texts contain at least two of the questions. In table form the different responses to the four questions are more clearly comparable.

Text	Response
E. R. H. C. C.	At the honourable lodge
S. No. 3329	in a just and perfect or just and Lawfull Lodge
D. No. 4	in ye trwe lodge of st John
T. C. D.	In a full, & perfect lodge
A M's. E.	I am of the Lodge of St. Stephen's
G. M. Fms D. I. Fms. A M's C.	In a just and perfect Lodge
W. I. M.	HOLY ST JOHN
W. I. Fms. O.	St. *John*
G.	by a true and perfect Lodge
M. Fmy.	The Holy Lodge of St. John
M. Diss.	From the Holy Lodge of St. *John's*

Table 1

To take each question individually, it is evident that a few of the responses to the first question "what makes a true and perfect lodge?" are similar. For example, the *Edinburgh Register House* MS has a similar answer to the *Chetwode Crawley* MS, and 'The Mystery of Freemasonry' has a similar response as 'A Mason's Examination'. All the texts give details of the number of Masons of a specific office that are required for a lodge to be 'official' and 'correct'. In terms of the actual numbers, five and seven appear to have particular symbolic significance, and the square and compass also have a clear importance. One response that is markedly different is that given in the *Graham* MS in which the answer to the question "what is a perfect Lodge" is "the senter of a true heart". This may refer, metaphorically, to the notion that the lodge, or temple is within each Mason and is more than just a physical structure. The response, in this text, as to the number of Masons in a perfect lodge is more ambiguous, giving "any od number from 3 to 13". Two other texts, *The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons Discover'd* and the *Institution of Free Masons* give a rather cryptic reason to explain why the numbers in a lodge are odd. To the question "Why do Odds make a Lodge?" they both respond, "Because all Odds are Mens Advantage". The *Graham* MS, however, gives a response that is notably Christian in nature, "- still in refferance ffrom the blesed trinity to the comeing of christ with his 12 apostles". Dyer argues that the reference to 'Odds' suggests a male influence and states that this

> . . .seems to show that the use of odd numbers where possible was symbolic that free and accepted masonry was restricted to men and that a more general use of even numbers would show feminine influence (1986: 53).

TEXT	Q. What makes a true & perfect Lodge?	Q. How stands the Lodge?	Q. Where was the first lodge?	Q. How high is the Lodge?
E. R. H.	seven masters, five entered apprentices	east and west as the temple of jerusalem	in the porch of Solomons Temple	
C.C.	Seven Masters, ffive Apprentices	East & West, as the Temple of Jerusalem	In the porch of Solomons Temple	
S. No. 3329	a just and perfect Lodge is two Interprintices two fellow craftes and two Masters	east and west as all holly Temples stand		without foot yards or Inches it reaches to heaven
D. No. 4	.			inches & spans Inumberable
T. C. D.	three masters, 3 fellow craftsmen, & 3 enterprentices	East, & west like ye temple of Jerusalem		As high as ye stars inches, & feet innumerable
A M's. E.	A Master, two Wardens, four Fellows, five Apprentices, with Square, Compass, and Common Gudge		In *Solomon's* Porch; the two pillars were called *Jachin* & *Boaz*	
G. M. Fms D.	God and the Square, with five or seven right and perfect Masons	Perfect East and West, as all Temples do		
W. I. M.		East & West		
I. Fms.	God and the Square, w' 7 or 5 right & Perfect Masons	Perfect East & West as all holy Temples do		
W. I. Fms. O.		*South, East* and *West*		
G.	the senter of a true heart . . . any od number from 3-13			
A M's. C.	Five fellow-crafts, and seven entered prentices	East and West, as Kirks and chapels did of old		
M. Fmy.	A master, two Wardens, and four Fellows, with Square, Compass, and Common Gudge		In Solomon's Porch, the Pillars were call'd Jachin and Boaz	
W.	seven	Due East & West as all holy Places are or Ought to be		Feet & Inches Innumerable
M. Diss.	Seven or more . . . One Master, two Wardens, two Fellow-Crafts and two Enter'd 'Prentices	Due East and West		

Table 2

It is interesting to note that both the *Wilkinson* MS and *Masonry Dissected* differentiate between a 'Just and Perfect Lodge' and 'a Lodge'. For instance, *Masonry Dissected* gives 'Seven or more' as the response to the former and 'five' to the latter. One other point concerning the first question is that several of the texts include a reference to where a perfect lodge should be placed. The *Edinburgh Register House* MS and *Chetwode Crawley* MS give, " a dayes Journey from a burroughs town without bark of a dog or crow of a cock". The *Sloane* MS also mentions a crow of a cock and bark of a dog but adds "on the highest hill or lowest Valley of the world. . ." The *Dumfries* mentions "on the top of a mountain or in ye midle of a boge. . .". This may be a reference to the necessary precautions that were taken to ensure privacy and secrecy in the lodge.

The responses to the question "How stands the Lodge?" are more consistent. The general answer which also appears to suggest the hallowed nature of the lodge itself is that the lodge stands in an east - west direction as holy temples do, in particular, the Temple of Jerusalem. The *Wilkinson* MS and *Masonry Dissected* provide an additional question to differentiate between where the lodge stands and how it is situated. The response by the *Wilkinson* MS to the question of how the lodge is situated is "Due East & West as all holy Places are or Ought to be", and to where the lodge stands, "Upon holy Ground in the Vale of Iehosophat or Elsewhere". The use of the letter 'I' is probably an alternative spelling, or a spelling error for the more common 'Jehosophat'. *Masonry Dissected* responds similarly to the previous text giving the answer "Due East and West", to where the lodge is situated and "Upon Holy Ground, or the highest Hill or lowest Vale, or in the Vale of *Jehosaphat*, or any other secret Place", to where it stands. The *Graham* MS provides an interesting explanation for the position of the lodge in addition to the reason "because churches stands east and west and porches to the south", accounting for why north is excluded. The question is asked, "why not north allso - " and the response is given, "in regard we dwell at the north part of the world we burie no dead at the north side of our churches so we cary a Vacancey at the north side of our Lodges - " (Reprinted in *AQC*, **80**, 77).

There are four texts which contain the question "Where was the first Lodge" and they are all unanimous in responding, "in the porch of Solomon's Temple". 'A Mason's Examination' and 'The Mystery of Freemasonry' also include the names of the pillars at the entrance of the porch, namely, 'Jachin and Boaz'. Reference to these pillars in the other texts will be examined later. The question concerning the first lodge and the responses to it indicates the importance of Solomon's Temple in the history of Freemasonry, and how each lodge is symbolic of what is believed to be the 'original'.

The last question that is featured in the table above relates to the height of the lodge, and is contained in four texts. This question appears to be metaphorical in light of the responses which are all similar. The general impression is that the question is not referring to the physical lodge that any Mason reciting the catechism may find himself in. Rather, it implies a symbolic lodge such as the original lodge or the lodge/temple that a Mason must find within himself. This is reflected in the responses which give "Feet & Inches Innumerable", "without foot yards or Inches it reaches to heaven" and "As high as ye stars inches, & feet innumerable".

TEXT	Q. How many lights in your lodge?	Q. Are there any jewels in your lodge?
E .R. H.	three the north east. s w, and eastern passage The one denotes the master mason, the other the warden The third the setter croft.	Yes three, Perpend Esler a Square pavement and a broad ovall.
C. C.	Three, The Northeast, the Southwest, & the Eastern passage. The one Denotes the Master mason, The other the Words and the Third The ffellow-Craft.	Three, Perpendester, a Square pavement and an Broked-mall.
S. No. 3329	three the sun the master and the Square	there are three the Square pavemt. the blazing Star and the Danty tassley
D. No. 4	two . . . ye sun riseth in ye east & sets all men to work & sets in ye west & so turns all men to bed/ 3 . . . ye master the fellow craftsmen & ye warden	
A M's. E.	Three; the Master, Warden, and Fellows.	Four; Square, Astler, Diamond, and Common Square.
G. M. Fms. D.	Three; a Right East, South, and West . . . The Three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.	Three; a square Asher, a Diamond, and a Square.
W. I. M.	Twelve . . . Father. Son. Holy Ghost. Sun. Moon. Master Mason. Square. Rule. Plum. Line. Mell. and Chizzel.	
I. Fms.	Three a Right East, South & West. . . . The three Persons of the holy Trinity Father S. & H. Gt	Three a Square where a Diadem & a Square
W. I. Fms. O.	Twelve, . . . *Father, Son, Holy Ghost, Sun, Moon, Master Mason, Square, Rule, Plum, Line, Mell* and *Cheisal.*	
G.	12 . . . the first 3 jewells is ffather son holy ghost - sun moon master Mason square Rule plum Lyne Mell and cheisall	
A M's. C.	Three . . . The south-east, south, and south-west.	Three . . . A square pavement, a dinted ashlar, and a broached dornal.
M. Fmy.		Three, the Master, Wardens, and Fellows.
W.	three great lights . . . Sun. Moon. & Master Mason	Three Immoveable Jewels . . . the Mosaick Pavement, the dented Asler & the broach Urnell . . . three Moveable Jewels . . . Square, Levell & Plumb
M. Diss.	Three . . . Sun, Moon and Master-Mason . . . Three fix'd Lights . . . East, South and West.	Six. Three Moveable, and three Immoveable. Moveable . . . Square, Level and Plumb-Rule. Immoveable . . . Trasel Board, Rough Ashler, and Broach'd Thurnel.

Table 3

The third table of questions which relate symbolically to the lodge are those that concern its contents, specifically, the 'jewels', 'lights', and 'key' of the lodge. Questions relating to the jewels and lights show a variety of responses containing a number of symbolic themes, for example, Working Tools and Speculative. **Table 3** comprises two questions that are common to the majority of texts and the corresponding replies. The first question, concerning the number of lights in the lodge, provokes a fairly consistent response from the texts. The most common number is three, the only variations proving to be two and twelve. The majority of responses also feature three cardinal points to represent the 'lights', which in four of the texts symbolise three principal officers of the lodge. The responses that differ to this include references to the sun, square, moon, working tools, and the Trinity. Six texts include symbols from the theme Speculative, for example, the sun and the moon; four texts feature symbols from the theme Working Tools, such as the square, rule, plum and chisel; five texts contain explicit Christian references to the Trinity. The *Graham* MS is particularly Christian in nature and gives an accompanying paragraph with the list of twelve lights describing each one. The concluding sentence of the text appears to explain the symbolism of the twelve lights,

> **what refferance can be prest on thes 12 Lights - we draw refferance from the 12 patriarches and allso from the 12 oxen we reid of at the 7 chapter of first king that caryed up the molten sea of brass which was tipes of the 12 disciples was to be tought by christ** - (*AQC*, 80, 77-80).

Two of the texts give explanations for what has been used to represent the 'lights'. For example, the *Wilkinson* MS asks why the 'three great lights' represent the sun, moon and Master Mason, and responds, "the Sun to Rule the day, the Moon ye Night and the Master Mason the Lodge". The Exposition entitled *Masonry Dissected* gives the same explanation, adding a note describing how the lights are physically represented in the lodge, "N.B. *These Lights are three large Candles placed on high Candlesticks*". The text also gives a note allowing a similar explanation for the fixed lights in the lodge,

> **N.B. These fix'd Lights are Three Windows, suppos'd (tho' vainly) to be in every Room where a Lodge is held, but more properly the four Cardinal Points according to the antique Rules of Masonry** (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 113).

The uses of the fixed lights are defined in *Masonry Dissected* as "To light the Men to, at and from their Work". The explanation for why there are no lights in the north is " Because the Sun darts no Rays from thence". It is clear from the positioning of the lights and the lodge itself that they are based on the movement of the sun, as is the position of the officers in the lodge, which will be discussed later.

The second question on the table concerns the number of jewels in the lodge; in most of the texts three appear consistently. The common jewels include a 'Perpend Esler', a 'Square', a 'square pavement' and an 'ashlar'. Four of the texts do not include a reference to the jewels of the lodge whereas they do refer to the lights. An interesting development in the use of jewels in the lodge emerges in the *Wilkinson* MS and *Masonry Dissected*, dated 1727 and 1730 respectively. Here the jewels are divided into two categories: 'moveable' and 'immoveable', numbering six jewels all together. The description of the jewels is the same in both texts, apart from one of the immovable jewels, which in the *Wilkinson* MS is described as 'the Mosaick Pavement', and in *Masonry Dissected* as the 'Trasel Board'. Both the texts provide an explanation for the

use of the various jewels. The description in the *Wilkinson* MS suggests that a few of the jewels are also used as the specific working tools of the first and second degree. The question is asked when referring to the immovable jewels, "What's the first use of them", which is answered,

> the Mosaick Pavement for the Master to draw his design upon; the dented Asler for the fellow Craft to try their Iewells on; And the broach Urnell for the Entered Apprentice to work upon (Knoop et al, 1946: 27).

The use of the moveable jewels is given as "the Square to see yt. Corner Stones are laid Square; the Levell that they are laid Levell And ye Plumb to Raise Perpendiculars"(Knoop et al, 1946: 27). The explanation given for the use of the jewels in *Masonry Dissected* is similar to that above. It may be noted that the use given for the 'Trasel Board' here, and the 'Mosaick Pavement' in the *Wilkinson* MS is the same. This may suggest that the latter text is referring to the original way of displaying the 'Master's designs', by physically drawing them on the floor of the lodge using chalk or charcoal. The use of the 'Trasel Board' in *Masonry Dissected* as a medium for the Master's moral instructions refers to the modern way of depicting the drawings, where they are permanently drawn on the tracing-board and displayed in the lodge in the relevant degree. Dyer (1986) makes the point that the three moveable jewels also serve as the working tools of the second degree "which has to do with geometry", and the immovable jewels are so called "because they lie open in the lodge 'for the brethren to moralize on' " (1986: 91).

One question concerning the contents of the lodge which has not been tabled, yet features in the majority of the texts, applies to a key. The subject of a key invokes several questions and answers which vary between the texts. For example, the *Edinburgh Register House* MS and the *Chetwode Crawley* MS give similar accounts,

> Q. where shall I find the key of your lodge, Ans. Three foot and an half from the lodge door under a perpend esler, and a green divot. But under the lap of my liver where all my secrets of my heart lie.
> Q. Which is the key of your lodge. An: a weel hung tongue.
> Q. where lies the key. Ans: In the bone box (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943).

The *Sloane* MS adds the question " wt. is the Keys of your Lodge Doore made of ", the response is given, "it is not made of Wood Stone Iron or steel or any sort of mettle but the tongue of a good report behind a Brothers back as well as before his face". In answer to the question of where lies the key, the *Dumfries No. 4* MS replies "in a bone box covered wt a rough map", and continues to explain what these metaphors mean, "my head is ye box my teeth is the bons my hair is the mapp my tongue is ye key". The texts *A Mason's Examination* and *The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons Discover'd* show a similar set of questions to those above, but also include one referring to a Chain to the key, asking "How long is it?", and the answer is given, "As long as from my Tongue to my Heart". The *Institution of Free Masons* adds another question on the subject of the key, "23. What is its Virtue? To open & Shut & to Shut & open". *A Mason's Confession*, after describing where the key is appears to issue a stark warning of the consequences of revealing the secrets,

> . . . for if I tell any thing in the lodge, my tongue is to be taken out from beneath my chowks, and my heart out from beneath my left oxter, and my body to be buried within the sea-mark, where it ebbs

and flows twice in the twenty-four hours (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 96).

After describing the location of the key of the lodge, this text also provides a note which appears to explain the symbolism of the key,

> **N.B. This is meant of their oath, under which the secrets of the lodge are hid from the *drop*; that is, from the unentered prentice, or any others not of their society, whom they call *drops*.** (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 98)

The suggestion that the symbolism of the key relates to Masonic secrets is confirmed in *Masonry Dissected*, which includes references that are common in many of the texts, but is more direct in associating them with secrets. The collection of questions and answers in this text concerning the key include a note explaining its symbolism and also that of the 'Bone-Box' and the 'Tow-Line',

> **Q. What are the Secrets of a Mason? A. Signs, Tokens and many Words.**
> **Q. Where do you keep those Secrets? A. Under my Left Breast.**
> **Q. Have you any Key to those Secrets? A. Yes.**
> **Q. Where do you keep it? A. In a Bone Box that neither opens nor shuts but with Ivory Keys.**
> **Q. Does it hang or does it lie? A. It hangs.**
> **Q. What does it hang by? A. A Tow-Line 9 Inches or a Span.**
> **Q. What Metal is it of? A. No manner of Metal at all; but a Tongue of good report is as good behind a Brother's Back as before his Face.**
> **N.B. *The Key is the Tongue, the Bone Box the Teeth, the Tow-Line the Roof of the Mouth*** (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 114).

It is clear, therefore, that references to the 'key of the lodge' appear in the majority of the texts and relate to the secrets of the lodge, of which the duty of every Mason is to keep within himself. The 'key' to these secrets is the mouth which each Mason should keep shut. Some of the responses indicate the importance of honesty between Masons when it is advocated that what is said to a Mason's face should not differ to what is said behind it.

Before moving on from the discussion of questions concerning the lodge it is necessary to note various uncommon features in some of the texts. There are a number of questions that are peculiar to a few individual texts. For example, the *Sloane* MS and the *Trinity College, Dublin* MS acknowledge the place of the Master in the lodge. The former asks "wch. is the masters place in the Lodge" and answers,

> **the east place is the masters place in the Lodge and the Jewell resteth on him first and he setteth men to worke wt. the masters have in the foornoon the wardens reap in the Afternoon** (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 42).

The latter named text asks "Where sits ye master?" and responds "In a Chair of bone in ye middle of a four square pavement". Four other texts give details concerning the position of the Master and the principal officers in the lodge. Their positioning relates to the movement of the sun and is defined in terms of the cardinal points. For example, *The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons Discover'd* asks "Where is the Mason's Point?" and replies "At the East-Window, waiting at the Rising of the Sun, to set his

Men at Work". The same is asked of the Warden's point, "At the West-Window, waiting the Setting of the Sun, to dismiss the Entred Apprentices". The *Institution of Free Masons* gives a similar account using the 'Masters Post' and the 'Wardens Post'. The *Wilkinson* MS and *Masonry Dissected* give more detailed descriptions of the positioning of the officers in the lodge, but some of their responses differ and shall be noted.

> Q. Where does the Master stand? A. In the East.
> Q. Why so? A. As the Sun rises in the East and opens the Day, so the Master stands in the East to open the Lodge and to set his Men at Work.
> *Masonry Dissected* adds - *[with his Right Hand upon his Left Breast being a Sign, and the Square about his Neck]*
> Q. Where does the Warden stand? A. In the West.
> Q. Why so? A. As the Sun sets in the West to close the Day, so the Wardens stand in the West to close the Lodge and dismiss the Men from Labour, paying their Wages.
> *Masonry Dissected* adds - *[with their Right Hands upon their Left Breasts being a Sign, and the Level and Plumb-Rule about their Necks]*
> Q. Where does the fellow Craft stand? A. In the South.
> Q. Why so?   A. To hear and receive Instructions and welcome strange Brothers.
> Q. Where does the Entered apprentice stand? A. In the North.
> Q. Why so? M. Diss. - A. To keep off all Cowans and Eves-droppers.
> W. - A. To heal & Conceal Receive Instructions & Strenghthen the Lodge (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 113, 1946: 24-5).

It is evident, therefore, that the position of the lodge itself, the lights of the lodge and the place of the officers in the lodge, are based on the four cardinal points, and the movement of the sun. The significance of the use of these points is suggested by Jones (1956: 290) who states, "The east symbolises wisdom; west, strength; north, darkness; and south, beauty". The additions in *Masonry Dissected* include references to the emblems of office, which in the case of the Master is a square and the Warden, a level and plumb-rule.

Two of the texts, namely, *The Whole Institution of Masonry* and *The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened* make a reference to the 'Master of all Lodges', which they both describe as "God and the Square". This emphasises the importance that both of these are attributed in the lodge. Two other texts ask the question "Who rules and governs the Lodge, and is Master of it?". The question is metaphorical as is seen by the response in the *Institution of Free Masons*, which answers "Iehovah the right Pillar". The question following "How is it govern'd" is responded "Of Square, Plumb & Rule". *The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons Discover'd* responds similarly. The right Pillar is more commonly known as 'Jachin', and with the left Pillar 'Boaz' is an important and prominent feature of a lodge.

Two rather unusual features of three of the texts are references to 'angles' and 'levels' of the lodge. For instance, the two texts just cited ask "How many Angles in St. John's Lodge?" and respond "Four, bordering on Squares". *A Mason's Confession* refers to 'levels' rather than 'angles', directing the question "How many levels are there in your lodge?" and responding "Three. . . . The sun, and the sea, and the level". This response may be an alternative to those cited above concerning the 'height of the lodge'.

The *Graham* MS includes a feature which is not apparent in any of the other texts. It regards what a Mason sees when he first enters the lodge, which may be interpreted metaphorically. The question is asked "what did you see in the Lodge" and answered "I saw truth the world and Justice and brotherly Love". To emphasise what a Mason leaves behind when he becomes a Mason the catechism continues, "what was behind you - perjury and hatred of Brotherhood . . ." The intimation is to highlight what may be discovered on entering Masonry, which may be interpreted as an 'enlightenment' from darkness and ignorance.

The last few additional questions relating to the lodge are found in the *Wilkinson* MS and *Masonry Dissected*. Those which are common in both concern the 'Furniture' of the lodge and the 'Form' of the lodge. For example the 'Form' of the lodge is given in the *Wilkinson* MS as "An Oblong Square". Alternatively, in the other text it is described as "A long Square", its length being "From East to West", its breadth "From North to South", its height "Inches, Feet and Yards innumerable, as high as the Heavens", and its depth "To the Centre of the Earth". The question pertaining to the height of the lodge is found in the other texts, as shown in **Table 2**. The detail shown in *Masonry Dissected* is obviously not literal, but refers symbolically to the all-encompassing nature of the lodge, and how it is more than just a physical structure. In regard to the 'Form' of the lodge the *Wilkinson* MS provides an explanation for its 'oblong' shape, stating that it is in the "Manner of our Great Master Hirams grave".

Concerning the 'Furniture' of the lodge, both texts describe it as the "*Mosaick* Pavement, Blazing Star and Indented Tarsel", which are defined as "*Mosaick* Pavement, the Ground Floor of the Lodge, Blazing Star, the Centre, and Indented Tarsel the Border round about it". *Masonry Dissected* includes an additional question, "What is the other Furniture of a Lodge" and replies "Bible, Compass and Square". These items are said to belong to, "Bible to God, Compass to the Master, and Square to the Fellow-Craft". This last question points to the importance that the three objects are attributed in the lodge, and they are usually placed on the 'altar' in front of the Master's chair. Again, it is demonstrated that particular working tools are also used as emblems of office and the degrees, in this case the Compass is associated with the Master, and the Square with the degree of Fellow-Craft.

Two final points concerning the lodge may be seen exclusively in the two texts above and pertain to the 'Centre' and 'Covering' of the lodge. The *Wilkinson* MS is the only text to allude to the Centre, asking "What is the Center of yr Lodge" and responding "the Letter G". This is followed by the explanation that the 'G' signifies "Geometry". *Masonry Dissected* refers to the 'Covering' of the lodge, describing it as "A clouded Canopy of divers Colours (or the Clouds)". This suggests that many lodges may have been conducted in the open air.

It is evident from this analysis of the questions and answers relating specifically to the lodge, its position and contents, that the symbolism of the lodge plays an integral part of early Masonic ritual. The fact that almost every aspect of the lodge is included in the catechisms emphasises the symbolic importance of the lodge and its content in the ritual. Many of the questions evoke metaphoric rather than literal answers indicating that the subject is often not the physical lodge, but the 'original' or mythical lodge that was found in the porch of Solomon's Temple. The nature of the responses suggest that the Masonic lodge is a symbol of the temple of God that must be found within oneself. This idea is also found in the Bible, which states "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor., 3: 16). Hamill (1992) notes that there had been considerable interest since the Renaissance in Solomon's Temple "as the ideal for a perfect physical

temple and as a symbol of the perfect spiritual Temple man was expected to build within himself" (1992: 5).

The questions that relate to the contents of the lodge, such as the lights, jewels and furniture, are more literal in that they refer to the objects and symbols which are found physically in a Masonic lodge. The various inconsistencies in the descriptions of the lodge suggest that the ritual was by no means uniform, and differences were widespread. However, the differences and additions in the texts are not significant enough to suggest that there was not considerable agreement regarding the symbolic themes of the lodge in the ritual of early eighteenth-century England.

The chapter will now focus on other symbolic themes that can be found in the early ritual, in particular those which involve the theme of Solomon's Temple. One of the most important symbols relating to this theme found in the majority of the texts is that of the Pillars. There are several references to different pillars in Masonic ritual in the form of two, three, or five. Two pillars always refer to the pillars in the porch of the Temple; three and five refer to the orders of architecture. The details pertaining to the pillars, not including those of an architectural nature, appear in seven of the texts. The form of the questions and content of the answers differs in many cases. The questions and answers are collated and compared in **Table 4** below.

Text	Question	Response
D. No. 4	how many pillers is in your lodge / what are these	three / ye square the compas & ye bible
G. M. Fms. D.	How many Pillars? / What do they represent?	Two; *Iachin* and *Boaz*. / A Strength and Stability of the Church in all Ages
I. Fms.	How many Pillars? / What do they represent?	Two Iachin & Boaz. / Strength & Stability to the Church in all Ages.
W.	How is yr Lodge Supported / What do they Signify	by three great Pillars / Wisdom to Contrive; Strength to Support & Beauty to Adorn
M. Diss.	What supports a Lodge? / What are they called? / Why so?	Three great Pillars. / Wisdom. Strength and Beauty. / Wisdom to contrive, Strength to support, and Beauty to adorn.

Table 4

Two other texts mention the pillars Jachin and Boaz, but not in the actual catechism, rather in a separate note of explanation. For instance, *The Whole Institution of Masonry* provides what is given as "The Explination of our Secrets", which includes a description of Jachin as signifying the quality 'Strength' and Boaz, 'Beautiful'. A note at the end of the text describes Jachin and Boaz as "Two Brass Pillars of Wonderful Beauty set up in Solomon's Porch at the West end of the Temple. 32 cubits high 12 cubits in Circumference". *The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened* gives a similar description of the qualities of the pillars, adding,

> **For proof of our two Pillars you may read the 7th Chapter of the 1st of *Kings* from the 13th Verse to the 22d, where you will find the wonderful Works of *Hierome* at the building the House of the Lord** (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 82).

Regarding the details concerning the pillars in the table above it is evident that only two directly refer to the pillars Jachin and Boaz. Within this context they are said to symbolise the strength and stability of the Church. The other texts mention three pillars. The *Dumfries No. 4* MS, for example, provides a unique response suggesting the three pillars symbolise the three integral objects of the lodge - the square, compass and the Bible. The *Wilkinson* MS and *Masonry Dissected* endow the three pillars of the lodge with the qualities of 'Wisdom', 'Strength' and 'Beauty'. The latter text, which is divided into three parts demarcating the three degrees, includes two descriptions of the pillars. One is shown in **Table 4** which is included in the first part of the text in the *'Enter'd 'Prentice's* Degree'. The second instance appears in the *'Fellow-Craft's* Degree', which describes two pillars. The question is asked "When you came through the Porch, what did you see?" and the response, "Two great Pillars". The names of these pillars are given as 'Jachim and Boaz'. It is clear that these are the pillars of Solomon's Temple, as following this are five questions concerning specific Biblical details of the pillars, such as their height and decoration. The questions and answers are as follows,

> **Q. How high are they? A. Eighteen Cubits.**
> **Q. How much in Circumference? A. Twelve Cubits.**
> **Q. What were they adorn'd with? A. Two Chapiters.**
> **Q. How high were the Chapiters? A. Five Cubits.**
> **Q. What were they adorn'd with? A. Net-Work and Pomegranates**
> (Reprinted in Knoop et al, 1943: 115).

A note explains that these details may be seen in I *Kings*, Chap. 7. It is important to note, therefore, that there is a clear difference between the two pillars of Solomon, and the moral lesson to be taught on the three pillars of the lodge.

Another important theme visible in several of the texts is that of Architecture. Reference to the orders are contained in four texts and the details may be compared in **Table 5**. It is evident from the details in the table that the texts are all consistent on the matter of the number and type of orders of architecture used. The appearance of the five orders in the texts may be interpreted as an operative feature that demonstrates the importance of the tradition of masonry and building in Freemasonry, and the place it holds in the ritual. Reference to the five orders is not apparent in the text *Masonry Dissected*, which may suggest that they were not included in the official ritual that had developed by 1815.

Text	Question	Response
A M's. E.	How many Orders be there in Architecture?	Five; Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite, or Roman.
G. M. Fms. D.	Whence is an Arch derived? / How many Orders in Architecture? / What do they answer?	From Architecture. / Five; the Tuscan, Dorick, Ionick, Corinthian, and Composit. / They answer to the Base, Perpendicular, Diameter, Circumference, and Square.
I. Fms.	Whence is an Arch deriv'd? / What doth it resemble? / How many orders in Architecture? / What do they answer to?	From Architecture. / The Rainbow / Five, Tuscan, Dorick, Ionick, Corinthian, Composit. / They answer to Base Perpendicular Diameter Circumference & Square
M. Fmy.	How many Orders be there in Architecture?	There be five, Tuscan, Dorick, Ionick, Corinthian, and Composite or Roman.

Table 5

References to three pillars remain and these are associated with the corresponding moral attributes. Visually, the three pillars of a lodge are depicted as the three orders of architecture, Doric, Ionic and Corinthian.

It is interesting to note that in two of the texts the five orders are related to five geometrical forms. This may appear to be an operative characteristic, but was undoubtedly a speculative 'invention'. There are several references to geometry in some of the texts and all of these can be understood to be speculative features. For example, in the discussion of the symbolism of the lodge it was noted that the *Wilkinson* MS included a reference to the 'Centre' of the lodge, which was found to be the letter G, denoting 'Geometry'. *Masonry Dissected* reveals the significance of the letter G in the second degree when the question is asked "Why was you made a Fellow-Craft?" and answered "For the sake of the Letter G". It follows that the 'G' signifies "Geometry, or the fifth Science". The letter 'G' is also mentioned in regard to what is seen in the 'middle Chamber', in this context the 'G' symbolises the 'Grand Architect'.

The other symbolic feature of the theme of Architecture is the interpretation of an arch. In two of the texts it is said that the arch is derived from architecture; in one, it is added that this resembles a rainbow. The texts 'The Mystery of Freemasonry' and 'A Mason's Examination' both state that the pattern of an arch is derived "From the Rainbow". It is not clear whether this is a simple allusion to the similarity in the shape of an arch and a rainbow, or whether it has a hidden symbolic meaning. It could be suggested that it is a Christian reference to the Biblical story in Genesis, which tells of the rainbow being a symbol of God's covenant with man.

The theme of Colour, and especially Number is also used as an important symbol throughout many of the texts. Five texts include a reference to colour and they are unanimous in the context in which it appears - that of the clothing worn by the Master. For example, the *Dumfries No. 4* MS contains questions pertaining to how the Master may be recognised. It is established that he is known by the 'habit' that he wears; the question following asks "what couller is his habit", the reply is "yellow & blew meaning the compass w^c is bras & Iron". 'A Mason's Confession' gives the same colours, but the question refers to a 'mason's livery', the response is "A yellow cap and blue breeches; - meaning the compasses". Another text, 'The Mystery of Free-Masonry' provides a more detailed explanation of what the colours yellow and blue symbolise. Regarding the Master's clothing, which is described as "a yellow Jacket and Blue Pair of Breeches", a note is added maintaining that "the Question and Answer are only emblematical, the Yellow Jacket, the Compasses, and the Blue Breeches, the Steel Points". *Masonry Dissected* provides the same note. It is evident, therefore, that the colour of the Master's habit symbolises the compasses, which are sometimes used as an emblem of the Master, or one of the objects that is related to the Master, accompanied by the square and Bible.

There are many references to number symbolism in the texts and **Table 6** contains questions and answers that have not yet been included. It is evident from the details on the table that the most common numbers are three, five and twelve. Other numbers included are four, six, seven and thirteen. It should be noted that these numbers also appeared in the previous analysis of the number of Masons in a lodge and the number of lights and jewels. The *Dumfries No. 4* MS and the *Graham* MS use the numbers three and twelve to symbolise specific Christian features, such as the Trinity and Apostles. Several other texts use numbers in the context of Masonic principles of which there are three and four. The *Graham* MS refers to five points of fellowship, which may be interpreted as the five points at which Masons greet each

other. *Masonry Dissected* also refers to four signs of recognition. Dyer (1986: 52) explains the importance of the numbers three and seven when he states, "there is no doubt that three was regarded as a general masonic number, while seven related to completeness or perfection". In regard to the interpretation of these numbers Dyer contends that they were the result of several influences,

> **There seems little doubt that the original inclusion of three as a dominant number was of a religious origin when masonry was essentially Christian, but that other strong reasons were found later to support its continued use. Seven may also have come from a Biblical origin, though whether religious of historical it is not possible to determine, but again additional reasons were found for its use. The incorporation of five may have been first a matter of convenience or it may have arisen from the Pythagorean or Cabalistic influence; there is no doubt that both of these had an effect on the use of numbers in masonry. . . (1986: 55).**

The last part of this chapter will be assigned to addressing various symbolic features peculiar to some of the catechisms. For instance, a few of the texts differentiate between two levels in Masonry, possibly an early reference to the degrees. The suggestion is made that before a Mason may be given the 'secrets' of the second degree he must have passed through the first degree. This is symbolised by a reference to the 'kitchen' and 'hall'. For example, the *Chetwode Crawley* MS states, "I see yow have been in the Kitchen, but I know not if yow have been in the Hall? Ansr. I have been in the Hall as well as the Kitchen". 'A Mason's Examination' asks "Are you a Free-Mason?/How shall I know it?", the response is, "By Signs and Tokens, from my Entrance into the Kitchen, and from thence to the Hall". 'The Mystery of Free-Masonry' adds notes after the questions explaining the symbolism, "Q. Have you been in the Kitchen? N.B. *You shall know an Enter'd Apprentice by this Question.* A. Yes, I have. Q. Did you ever dine in the Hall? N.B. *A Brother Mason by this Question.* A. Yes I did".

There are a few Christian references in a number of the texts, none more so than in *Dumfries No. 4* MS and the *Graham* MS, which both contain a distinctive Christian character. They both allude to the Old and New Testaments, mentioning Christ and his Apostles, the Trinity, and details concerning the building of the Temple. Both texts refer to 'Hiram', although it is not clear whether this is the same Hiram as in Masonic legend. The *Dumfries No. 4* MS mentions Hiram and the laying of the foundation stone of the Temple, for example it refers in one case to the Biblical 'Hiram of Tyre' who "laid the first stone in ye foundation of ye temple. . . in ye south east corner of ye Temple". In regard to the Temple, the text gives an overtly Christian reply to the question of "what signifies the temple",

> **ye son of god & partly of the church ye son soffered his body to be destroyed & rose again ye 3ᵈ day & raised up to us ye christian church wᶜ is ye true spiritwal church (1943: 58).**

The text also makes a reference to "The Golden candlestick wt his six branches & seven lights". One of the most significant peculiarities in the *Dumfries No. 4* MS is its inclusion of Jacob's Ladder, which is not mentioned in any of the other texts. This symbol is a prominent feature of many examples of Masonic symbolism visualised later in the eighteenth-century, where three rungs of the ladder are often shown to symbolise the moral virtues Faith, Hope and Charity. In the text above it appears that the three rungs are symbolic of the Trinity, "Q. how many steps was in jacobs

ladder A. 3 Q. what was ye 3 A. father son & holy spirit". Such overt Christian references are not apparent in later rituals, and the 'official' ritual of 1815 was undoubtedly de-christianised to allow a more universal Freemasonry to develop.

Text	Question	Response
D. No. 4	how many flowers is in ye massons possie / what call you ym / what stands at the wardens back / what is yr upon ym	3 & 12 / trinity & ye twelve Apostles / 3 shelves / yr is 3 Rulers
G. M. Fms. D.	How many Steps belong to a right Mason? / How many particular Points pertain to a Free-Mason? / How many proper Points? / What a-Clock is it?	Three / Three; Fraternity, Fidelity, and Tacity. / Five. . . / It's going to Six, or going to Twelve.
G.	. . .the secrets off ffree Masonry. . .	in 3 parts in refferance to the blesed trinity. . . 13 brenches in refferances to Christ and his 12 apostles. . . Six ffor the clargey and 6 ffor the ffellow craft. . . five points off ffree Masons fellowshipe . . . ffive points hath refferance to the ffive cheife signes. . . and allso to the ffive points off artitectur and allso to the ffive orders of Masonry. . . five primitive one devine and ffour temporall. . .
A M's. C.	How many points are there in the square? / What are these five?	Five. / The square, our master under God, is one; the level's two, the plumb-rule's three, the hand-rule's four, and the gage is five.
M. D.	How many Principles are there in Masonry? / How many Principle-Signs? / How came you to the middle Chamber? / How many? / Why Seven or more?	Four. . . Point, Line, Superfices and Solid. / Four. . . Guttural, Pectoral, Manual and Pedestal. / By a winding Pair of Stairs. / Seven or more. / Because Seven or more makes a Just and Perfect Lodge.

Table 6

A few of the texts give an alternative to the Temple of Solomon in the form of the Tower of Babel. For instance, the *Sloane* MS includes an optional set of questions, the first of which asks "where was the word first given" and responds "at the Tower of Babylon". The text *Institution of Free Masons* refers to both Temples, ". . . for wc Masons were ordain'd at the Building of the Tower of Babel & the Temple of Ierusalem". In a prelude to the catechism, *Masonry Dissected* alludes to the significance of the Tower of Babel in the history of Masonry, stating, "For at the Building of the Tower of Babel, the Art and Mystery of Masonry was first introduc'd".

The text entitled *The Grand Mystery Laid Open* is the only example of a clear Kabalistic influence in any of the texts. Much of it is incomprehensible, citing a number of unidentified names, such as 'Istowlawleys', the name by which all the 'Members' are distinguished; 'Laylah Illallah', the first Mason, and 'Checchehabeddin Jatmouny', who invented the secret Word. This name is described as a "Cabalistical Word composed of a Letter out of each of the Names of Laylah Illallah as mentioned in the Holy Bible". The text also refers to 'six Spiritual Signs',

the names of which are said not to be "divulged to any new admitted Member, because they are Cabalistical".

The *Wilkinson* MS contains two interesting features: it differentiates between two different types of Freemason and describes the moral attributes of the square and compass. The first feature is significant as it acknowledges a difference between an operative and a speculative Mason. For example, the question is asked, "What did you learn by being a Mason", and the answer, "As a Working Mason to hew stone & Raise Perpendiculars - as a Gentleman Mason, Secrecy Morality & good ffellowship". *Masonry Dissected* also includes this distinction, asking "What do you learn by being a Gentleman-Mason?", the reply, "Secresy, Morality and Goodfellowship". This is followed by the question "What do you learn by being an Operative Mason?" and the response, "Hue, Square, Mould-stone, lay a Level and raise a Perpendicular". It is clear that the role of the operative mason is seen on a practical level and the gentleman or speculative Mason, on a more spiritual and moral level.

The other feature of the *Wilkinson* MS is that it uses the square and compass to symbolise a moral boundary. They each represent particular moral qualities of their own, but in this case they embody the primary symbol of the Craft itself and one which, allegorically, provides an important moral lesson. The question is asked "if a Mason be lost where is he to be found" and answered, "Between the Square & the Compass". The reason for this is explained, "because a Mason sho^d always be upon the Square and live within Compass".

The last of the significant additions to be noted in the texts comes from *Masonry Dissected*, which reveals several developments from the rituals prior to 1730. The most apparent difference is that the structure of the ritual is divided into three, corresponding to the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master Mason. The majority of themes that have been studied in this chapter appear in this text in the first degree. One addition is a reference to how the Master is served, which is given as "With Chalk, Charcoal and Earthen Pan". The qualities that these objects are said to symbolise are given as "Freedom, Fervency and Zeal". The second degree concentrates on the letter G, which symbolises both geometry and God in the form of the 'Grand Architect'. Reference is also made to the 'middle Chamber' of the Temple of Solomon which, metaphorically, the Mason has now progressed into from the 'Porch', and via a winding staircase. The Mason will complete his journey in the 'Sanctum Sanctorum'. The most prominent aspect of the third degree is the Hiramic Legend, and *Masonry Dissected* is the first text to include it. The legend of Hiram, the Master-Mason at the building of the Temple, who was murdered by three Fellow-Craft masons for not revealing the Master's Word, appears to be enacted in the lodge itself. Particular emphasis is laid upon the 'raising' of the candidate in the same manner as Hiram, by 'Five Points of Fellowship'.

In conclusion, this chapter has studied and examined the earliest use of symbolism in English Freemasonry. The sources used for this purpose have been a collection of catechisms dating from 1696 to 1730. These have revealed the nature of Masonic ritual in its early stages of development and shown the type of symbolic themes that existed in the first few decades of the eighteenth-century. A study of the texts has indicated a clear development in the structure of the ritual and in the detail of the symbolism. This is demonstrated, for example, in the theme of Solomon's Temple, where by 1730 more detail is given concerning its construction and interior. It is evident that this theme and those of the Working Tools, Geometry and Architecture, show how significant the tradition of building and masonry is in the ritual, and how

the operative influences gradually become balanced by an increase in speculative elements. This is manifested in the more esoteric nature of some of the texts, with references to principles and various moral lessons.

One of the more prominent subjects in the catechisms concerns the symbolism of the lodge, its position, structure and contents. It was shown that several themes were included within this context, for example, Speculative and Working Tools. It also became clear that many of the questions and answers concerning the lodge were metaphorical, in the sense that they were referring to either the 'original' lodge, or the 'spiritual' lodge/temple. An important concept relating to the position of the lodge itself, the officers within it, and some of the 'lights', was the four cardinal points. It was suggested that the prominent use of these indicated the movement of the sun and light, which can also be interpreted as the search for truth and knowledge; the movement from the west to the east.

The theme of Number was a prominent feature throughout the texts, particularly, three, five, seven and twelve. The use of these numbers indicated the Christian nature of some of the texts, for example, where three symbolised the Trinity, and twelve, Christ's Apostles. By 1730, all Christian references appear to have been withdrawn from the ritual, and in *Masonry Dissected* God is referred to in more universal terms as the 'Grand Architect'.

The study has clearly shown how the symbols were used and developed in the early ritual, and how their use differed in many of the catechisms. Looking at the texts chronologically a considerable change from 1696 to 1730 is perceptible. The earliest texts of *circa* 1700 reveal a simpler form of symbolism expressing a more basic system of morality, with the later catechisms becoming more elaborate and detailed. A thorough analysis of the group of catechisms revealed a number of similarities, differences and discrepancies between the texts. Comparison of the different questions and responses showed that several of the catechisms were very similar. For instance, the *Edinburgh Register House* MS and the *Chetwode Crawley* MS were consistently analogous, evident in their responses to questions concerning the lodge, its lights and jewels. The texts were also similar in content, portraying a basic form of symbolism and lacking the speculative features of later texts. Other catechisms that proved to be comparable were *The Grand Mystery of Free-mason's Discover'd* and the *Institution of Freemasons*. The similarities perceptible between them were: the Christian nature of their response to the number of lights in a lodge, which they gave as 'three', symbolising the Trinity; their response to questions on the subject of the lodge; a reference to the place of the Master in the lodge, only apparent in two other texts; questions concerning the pillars Jachin and Boaz; and details of the five orders of architecture.

The catechisms entitled *The Whole Institution of Masonry* and *The Whole Institutions of Freemasons Opened* also resembled each other closely, for example, in their inclusion of a question regarding the 'Master of all Lodges', which they both described as 'God and the Square'. This was noted to be a feature exclusive to these two texts. They both gave similar explanations for the meaning of the pillars Jachin and Boaz, another feature not discernible elsewhere. The last two texts that were found to bear an obvious likeness were the *Wilkinson* MS and *Masonry Dissected*. They both showed a distinct progression in symbolic detail from previous catechisms. For instance, on the question of the jewels of the lodge they distinguished between 'Moveable' and 'Immoveable', and *Masonry Dissected* added a reference to 'fix'd lights'. The two texts also provided explanations for the use of the jewels, which the previous texts did not. The catechisms added questions on the 'Furniture' of the lodge and the 'Form'

of the lodge. They were the first to mention the qualities 'Wisdom, Beauty and Strength' in relation to the three pillars of the lodge.

The similarities between all of these texts suggest that there may have been original manuscripts from which several copies were made, or different versions printed, the originals not having survived. It may have been that when one version was printed, 'adapted' copies were made and printed under another name. Whatever the reason for the comparability between a number of the texts, the differences between many of them prevents the assumption that they were accurate documentation's of a uniform ritual.

These differences and uncommon features in several of the texts were found to be significant. The *Graham* MS and the *Dumfries No. 4* MS were distinctive in their overtly Christian character. They both made repeated references to Christ, the Trinity and the Apostles. A few of the other texts refereed to the Trinity, but by 1730 there were no Christian allusions present in the ritual. The *Chetwode Crawley* MS, 'A Mason's Examination' and 'The Mystery of Freemasonry' all posed the question of whether the candidate had been in the 'kitchen' and in the 'hall'. This suggests the progress from one stage to another, or possibly a two degree system. It is interesting that these texts hint at a multi - degree structure, as early as 1700 in the case of the *Chetwode Crawley* MS. There certainly is no evidence to suggest that there was any knowledge or practice of a three degree system of ritual before 1730.

Two final points of interest concerning uncommon features of the group of texts examined in this chapter are: first, that the Catechism *The Grand Mystery Laid Open* was distinctive due to its apparent Kabalistical nature. The obscure and unrecognisable names were not present in any other text; second, the *Wilkinson* MS was the only text found to include a distinction between a 'Gentleman' and a 'Working' Mason, and a brief explanation of the differences between them. This reference is proof of the differentiation in early eighteenth-century England between the speculative - gentleman Mason and the operative - working mason.

The chapter has demonstrated the nature of early Masonic symbolism and how it is used and applied within the context of the ritual. The use of tables has allowed a comparative analysis of the texts, showing how they differ in the application of a particular symbolic theme, and also the various additions and 'peculiarities' which some of them have. From such an analysis the primary purpose of many of the symbols can be seen to be as instruments to teach and illustrate moral values and principles, the focus of the three degrees. In this context the symbols are communicated in allegorical form, which contributes in creating a rich and expressive ritual. The symbolism and allegory, the combination of image and words, represent a dynamic system in which the interpretation of the symbolic themes reveals a complex number of meanings. In interpreting these, the important moral lessons and principles of Freemasonry may be understood.

Having looked in detail at the development of early Masonic symbolism in the ritual, the next chapter places this in the context of the historical development of English Freemasonry itself. This will include some of the interests of the early members, which may have affected the choice and use of symbolism in Masonry.

NOTES

1. 'What is Freemasonry'. 1986. London: The Grand Lodge of England.

2. The MSS. are reproduced exactly, even where this contravenes modern English grammar or spelling.

CHAPTER THREE

<u>A HISTORICAL STUDY OF EARLY ENGLISH FREEMASONRY</u>

> **The evidence relating to the emergence of modern freemasonry is complex, confusing, and often fragmentary** (Stevenson, 1988: 1).

> **The origin of Freemasonry is one of the most debated, and debatable, subjects in the whole realm of historical inquiry** (Yates, 1975: 252).

The two opinions quoted above suggest that the study of the history of Freemasonry is a problematic one, primarily, due to the nature of the evidence. There is no definitive source which reveals exactly how, when, or where Freemasonry originated; the same may be said for the origins of Masonic symbolism. It is important, therefore, to include a discussion of the history of English Freemasonry to suggest possible influences on the choice and use of some of the early symbols. The origins of Masonic symbolism obviously have a parallel history and development to that of Freemasonry. It is necessary, therefore, to include the latter in this study of the emergence of Masonic symbolism.

There are a plethora of theories and opinions as to the origins of Freemasonry, based on fact, fiction, and in same cases 'myth'. Many of the theories focus on the emergence of 'modern' Freemasonry post 1717, and whether this was a direct development from 'operative' masonry or whether it grew independently of this. Analysis of the facts and theories shows that there are three essential periods in the history of English Freemasonry, which have produced three 'types' of Mason; the 'operative' mason, the 'accepted' Mason, and the 'speculative' Mason.

The period of the operative mason was throughout the fourteenth - to the sixteenth - centuries in which there was a strong tradition of masonry practised by medieval stonemasons. They were organised into guilds and companies and the primary evidence of their practice is contained in manuscripts known as the 'Old Charges', which contain various moral rules and regulations. Accepted Masons may be described as 'gentlemen' members of the operative companies, such as the London Mason's Company, who patronised the industry and were interested in the building craft and architecture. The period of speculative Masons officially begins with the establishment of the Premier Grand Lodge of England in 1717. This was the first institution of modern Freemasonry, which developed into the United Grand Lodge of England and Wales in 1815. There is evidence to show the existence of these three 'types' of Masons. However, the boundaries between the periods in which they predominate are not so clearly defined. It is not apparent whether there was a direct evolution from operative to speculative, or whether the evolution of speculative Freemasonry was due more to the intellectual, social, and scientific influences of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England. It is this point which evokes the disparity in opinion.

The intention of this chapter, therefore, is to provide an outline of the main features of the three stages in the history of English Freemasonry. Attention will be given to primary sources, such as the 'Old Charges' of the fourteenth- and fifteenth - century, and the *Constitutions* of 1723 and 1735. The first part of the chapter will include a study of the operative evidence: the mason's guilds and companies, their system of

rules and regulations, and the emphasis on geometry and architecture. The second part will consider the appearance in the middle to late seventeenth-century of accepted Masons and their lodges, and the cross-membership many of them had in societies such as the Royal Society. The third and final part will address the relevance of the social scene in late seventeenth-century London, taking into account the first speculative lodges, which met in numerous taverns, coffee-houses and clubs. The organisational development of Freemasonry in the early eighteenth-century will also be included: the establishment of the first Grand Lodge, and the *Constitutions* - the first official history written by James Anderson in 1723. This chapter is important in providing a historical context for the work on early Masonic symbolism conducted in chapter two, and its development in chapter five. The chapter suggests the possible origins of symbolic themes such as Geometry and Architecture, and also the 'type' of members that were drawn to the society and some of their interests.

In this first part attention will be given to the advance from the medieval religious guilds to the craft guilds and livery companies, showing the importance these held as central organisations for the operative masons. It is not to be suggested that these associations inevitably developed into the Masonic system of the early eighteenth-century. However, the relevance of the 'Old Charges', such as the *Regius* and the *Cooke* MSS., which appear in the first official *Book of Constitutions* commissioned by the Grand Lodge in 1723, shall be emphasised. The importance of these manuscripts in the history of Freemasonry is stressed by Pick and Knight (1991), who argue that

> **The history of Freemasonry is not so much the story of the development of a Craft Guild, culminating in such organisations as the Mason's Company of London, as the development of a body of 'moral instruction' communicated by means of meetings held under the seal of secrecy (1991: 19).**

The religious guilds of the Middle Ages were fraternities spread extensively over several Roman Catholic countries, and according to Toulmin-Smith (1870: lxxxi-lxxxviii), many existed in each major town in England. In these associations importance was placed on the veneration of certain religious mysteries, and in the honour of particular saints. The guilds were often under the patronage of a saint, the Holy Trinity, Holy Cross, or the Holy Sacrament, holding Masses in honour of their patrons and visiting their respective churches on feast days. The work of such guilds involved organising services for departed members, the aid of pilgrims on pilgrimages, the mutual assistance of the guild-brothers in old age, sickness, impoverishment and wrongful imprisonment, and burial of the dead. Help was also given to non-members and to such local causes as the maintenance of schools. A variety of people took part in these guilds, both men and women, and organisation was based around meetings where officers were elected and an oath was sworn by members to fulfil their obligations.

Evidence of the work and the nature of these religious guilds is contained in records, some of which have been reprinted by Toulmin-Smith. Each is identified by a serial number and the name of the place where they were located. For example, a record numbered *cccix. 6.*, and headed *Guild of Garlekhith, London* gives the date of its inception and its patron saint,

> **In ye worship of god almighti oure creator, and hys moder seinte marie, and al halwes, and Seint Jame apostle, a fraternitee is**

bygonne of good men, in ye chirche of Seint Jame, ye yer of our lord M.ccc.lxxv., (1375) (Quoted in Toulmin-Smith, 1870: 3).

The purpose or aim of the guild is written, "for amendement of her lyves and of her soules, and to noriche more love bytwene ye brethren and sustren of ye bretherhede". It is evident that each member had to swear an oath to carry out the 'points' or regulations of the group, "and eche of hem had sworen on ye bok, to perfourme ye pointz vnderneath wryten. . .". The first of these points, and one which states the condition of entry, or the type of person accepted as a member is as follows, "pei schul be of good loos, condicions, and beryng, and yt he love god and holy chirche and his neghbours. . ." (Quoted in Toulmin-Smith, 1870: 3).

According to Westlake (1919: 66), the gradual expansion of membership during the fifteenth-century led to several guilds amalgamating, for example, the Holy Trinity in Aldersgate with St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, creating the 'Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity'. The Reformation had a significant effect on the development of the religious guilds and they were abolished in all Protestant countries. When the strength of anti-Catholic sentiment in England lessened, though, many guilds re-established for social purposes in the form of clubs and societies.

The town craft guilds developed alongside the religious guilds, and though they shared various similarities, the craft guilds had a different focus and purpose. Stevenson notes, for example, that the craft guild was "the institution through which a town's authorities sought to control and regulate the craft". The guild also gave a craft a 'corporate identity' providing it with "its rights and privileges concerning the organisation of the trade". The craft guild was similar to the religious guild in that it was also a 'religious confraternity' or 'brotherhood', which held special Masses and processions on the feast days of its patron saint. For each craftsman membership of a guild "defined their position in society and did much to give their lives shape and meaning" (Stevenson, 1988: 13-14).

The earliest evidence of the masons belonging to a city guild is found in one of a sequence of Letter Books and Journals, which provide a record of civic transactions and events, both social and political, beginning with the *Letter Book A* of 1275. Conder (1914) contends that the actual Company of Masons were a Fellowship by prescription, a voluntary uncharted Association. In 1481 they applied for the approval of the Court of Aldermen for their Ordinances and Regulations. The Mason's Company application is recorded in *Letter Book L*, known as the *London Mason's Ordinances*,

> **15 Oct., 21 Edward iv [A.D. 1481], came good men of the Art of Mistery of Masons of the City of London into the Court of the Lord the King in the Chamber of the Guildhall, before the Mayor and Aldermen, and prayed that certain Articles for the better regulation of the Mistery might be approved. . .** (Quoted in Conder, 1914: 82)

It is also evident from this document that the London Company attached themselves to the Guild of the Holy Trinity and held it in the position of the patron saint for the Company. For instance, it states, "That freemen of the said craft, mistery, or science shall, on the Feast of Holy Trinity. . . assemble together in some suitable place within the City. . ."(Quoted in Conder, 1914: 82).

As members of the mason's craft they also recognised the patron saints of the mason's fraternity, the Four Crowned Martyrs, otherwise known as Quatuor

Coronati,[1] martyrs of Roman legend dating from *circa* A.D. 300. One of the Articles contained in *Letter Book L* requires all masons within the city of London to attend an annual festival to honour the memory of the martyred saints, "That every freeman of the Craft shall attend at Christchurch on the Feast of Quatuor Coronati [8. Nov] to hear Mass, under the penalty of 12 pence" (Quoted in Conder, 1914: 83).

Before examining the significance of the 'Old Charges' it is necessary to set the growth and development of the masons' guilds and Company against the changes that were occurring within the building industry as a whole in the seventeenth-century. Knoop & Jones (1935: 4) argue that one of the biggest changes in the stone-building industry was from the chief employers in the construction of castles and ecclesiastical buildings, namely, the Church and the Crown becoming less involved, and the nobility, gentry and commercial classes increasingly so, particularly in rural areas. After the initial decrease in the demand for church building this changed significantly after the Great Fire in London, 1666, which resulted in a great influx of masons and builders into London to rebuild the city.

Another significant point concerns the change in the role of the master-mason, or craftsman and the emergence of the professional architect. Knoop & Jones attribute the growing differential between the two as being due to the change in architectural style, from the medieval Gothic to the 'continental and classical fashions'. The amalgam of the two professions was common in the fifteenth-century but became less so. Knoop & Jones (1949) define the role of the architect as distinct from a master-mason. They describe him as untrained in the art of building, lacking the practical skills of working with tools, instead possessing a wider acquaintance with the classical and continental styles of architecture, and proving relatively learned in the sciences, which were almost unknown to the medieval master-mason. An example of the seventeenth-century architect may be seen in the work of Indigo Jones, who was appointed Surveyor-General of the King's works in 1615. He designed several buildings, including the Banqueting House at Whitehall, and has been attributed with introducing the more classical styles of architecture into England during this period. One other notable seventeenth-century architect was Christopher Wren, a Fellow of All Souls and Professor of Astronomy at Gresham College, Oxford. In addition to his mathematical and scientific skills, he had also mastered the art of town-planning, which is defined as "the ability to see as a whole not only one building, but a greater totality in the design of which each individual building had its part and place" (Knoop & Jones, 1949: 197-9).

It can be contended that there may have been a connection between the emergence of a professional architect and the advent of speculative Freemasonry in England during the middle to late seventeenth-century. The parallel between the appearance of non-practising masons into institutions such as the London Company of Masons; the interest shown towards the craft on a more scientific level with the increased awareness of more classical forms of architecture; and the priority given to the re-building of London in the late seventeenth-century, may have affected and influenced the formation of non-operative lodges, which attracted like-minded men interested in the craft of building on a more philosophical level.

The importance of a collection of old manuscripts known as the 'Old Charges' will now be considered. They are significant in terms of the early development of Freemasonry because of their use by James Anderson, who in 1723, with the approval of the Grand Lodge, published the *Constitutions of the Freemasons*. Anderson mentions his use of the manuscripts in a section of his work entitled 'The Charges of a Freemason, extracted from the ancient Records of Lodges beyond sea,

and of those in England, Scotland and Ireland, for the use of lodges in London'. These are based on the Articles, Points, Rules and Regulations found in the collection of medieval manuscripts.

The texts of 113 copies of the 'Old Charges' or 'Gothic Constitutions' have survived, most of which are located in England. The majority reveal a basic similarity and consequently have been categorised into groups or 'families' depending on the degree of textual uniformity between them. Their similarity suggests that many derive from an original standard version which has not survived. The oldest of the 'Charges' are known as the *Regius* MS dated *circa* 1390, and the *Cooke* MS of *circa* 1420. The former text is in verse, the only one of the manuscripts in this form and is attributed a 'family' of its own. It is noted that the various groups of texts have a common structure. For example, they begin with an opening prayer, or Invocation, demonstrated in the *Cooke* MS

> **Thanked be God our glorious father and founder and former of Heaven and of earth and of all things that in them is, that he would vouchsafe, of his glorious God-head, for to make so many things of divers virtue for mankind; . . .** (Reprinted in Dyer, 1982: 143).

This is followed by an announcement of the purpose and contents, written in the *Cooke* MS as, ". . . how and in what wise the science of Geometry first began, and who were the founders thereof, and of other crafts more, as it is noted in the Bible and in other stories. . ."(Dyer, 1982: 143). The text entitled the *Grand Lodge No. 1* MS, 1583, suggests that its purpose is to give the history of the craft of masonry and also the charges that every mason is to adhere to,

> **Good brethren and fellowes out purpose is to tell you howe and in what manner wise this woorthy crafti of massonrie was begun and afterwards howe it was kept by woorthy Kings and Prynces & by many other worshipfull men and also to those that bee heire we will chardge ye by the chardges that longith to every free masson to keepe . . .** (Reprinted in Dyer, 1982: 143).

Another part common to most of the manuscripts is a brief description of the seven liberal sciences, one of which is geometry, clearly associated with masonry. For example, the *Cooke* MS states,

> **Ye shall understand that there be 7 liberal sciences by the which 7, all sciences and crafts in the world were first found and in especiall, for he is causer of all, that is to say the science of geometry of all other that be, the which 7 sciences are called thus.** (Reprinted in Dyer, 1982: 143).

The *Grand Lodge No. 1* MS also emphasises the primary importance of geometry in relation to the other sciences, "These be the vii liberall Sciences, the which vii be all found by one science, that is to saye Geometrey". The text continues

> **And this may a manne prove that the Science of the worlde is found by Geometrey, for Geometrey teaches a man to measure ponderation or weight of all manner of things on earthe, . . . Wherfore we thinketh that the Science of Geometrey is most woorthey that findeth all others** (Reprinted in Dyer, 1982: 144).

Other similarities between the texts include a traditional history of geometry, masonry and architecture, which comprises the main part of their content. The 'history' is based largely on the Old Testament, including references to Adam, Noah, Cain, Jubal, the two pillars in which details of all sciences and crafts were placed for protection from the Flood, Abraham, Euclid and his contribution to the science of geometry, Solomon, and finishes in England with King Athelston.

The texts are concluded by an explanation of the manner of taking the oath, followed by the regulations or 'charges', known as Articles and Points. This is finished with the oath itself. For example, in the *Grand Lodge No. 1* MS it is written as follows,

> **These Charges that we have now rehearsed unto you all, and all others that belong to Masons, ye shall keepe, so healpe you od and your halidome, and by this booke in your hands unto your power. Amen. So be it** (Reprinted in Dyer, 1982: 152).

The function of the groups of manuscripts collectively known as the 'Old Charges', from a practical point of view, was to regulate the craft of masonry. They also include procedures which were to be followed at the making of a mason, and also examples of the ritual of the Invocation and Obligation. In the seventeenth-century eleven copies of the 'Old Charges' were printed, such as the Watson MS, 1687, the Beaufort MS, 1690, Kilwinning MS, 1675, and the York MS No. 4, 1693. The renewed interest in the texts is attributed, according to Stevenson to

> **a connection being made between parts of the Charges and later Renaissance themes (the glorification of mathematics and the architect, and the obsession with the Hermetic quest for the lost wisdom of the ancients) . . . (1988: 22).**

This first part has examined some of the evidence for the existence of the old craft of masonry. It is not possible to surmise that the operative masons were the actual predecessors of the speculative Masons of the early eighteenth-century. It can be said, however, that the importance placed on geometry and architecture by the operatives, and their use of charges and regulations is also apparent in the society of Freemasons. The second part of this chapter will now examine some of the evidence to suggest the existence of 'accepted' Masons, early speculative lodges, a few of the important early members, such as Elias Ashmole, and their interest in the Royal Society.

The first printed reference to 'accepted Masons' is found in a Masonic pamphlet of 1676, known as a 'divertisement', published in the Poor Robin's Intelligence on 10th October,

> **These are to give notice, that the Modern Green-ribbon'd Caball, together with the Ancient Brother-hood of the Rosy-Cross; the Hermetick Adepti, and the Company of accepted Masons, intend all to Dine together on the 31 of November next. . .** (Reprinted in Knoop et al., 1978: 31).

This notice is followed by a comic menu and various references intended to make fun of the members of the societies mentioned. It also suggests an important point that a group of esoteric societies, two of them Freemasons and Rosicrucians, had sufficient in common for their members to dine together.

In the late seventeenth - and early eighteenth-century the terms 'accepted', 'adopted' and 'free' were all used to describe a member of the speculative Masonic fraternity. An early description of this society appeared in *The Natural History of Stafford-shire*, 1686, written by Robert Plot, keeper of the Ashmolean Museum and Professor of Chemistry at Oxford. For example, he writes,

> . . . the *Customs* relating to the *County,* whereof they have one, of admitting Men into the *Society of Free-masons,* . . . for here I found persons of the most eminent quality, that did not disdain to be of this *Fellowship* (Reprinted in Knoop et al., 1978: 31).

Plot goes on to note the use of 'secret signes' of recognition, and uses the term 'accepted mason' to describe the members

> . . . they proceed to the *admission* of them, which chiefly consists in the communication of certain *secret-signes,* whereby they are known to one another all over the *Nation,* . . . for if any man appear though altogether unknown that can shew any of these signes to a *Fellow* of the *Society,* whom they otherwise call an *accepted mason,* . . . (Reprinted in Knoop et al., 1978: 32).

Two interesting points that may be drawn from this passage are: firstly, the comment referring to the existence of secret signs known to members all over the country suggests that 'accepted Masonry' was a relatively widespread phenomenon at this time; secondly, the description of 'Free-masonry' as a 'Society' implies a distinct difference from the 'companies' of working masons. The term suggests the group were regarded on the same level as various other social and political societies during the late seventeenth-century.

Another example of the acknowledgement of the distinctiveness of the society is found in an Introduction [2] to the work, *Antiquities of Berkshire,* 1719, by Elias Ashmole. This describes the group as a 'fraternity' and contains a clear reference to the members of Freemasonry as 'accepted' and 'free'. For instance, Rawlinson writes,

> . . . From these is derived the Fraternity of Adopted Masons, Accepted Masons, or Free Masons, who are known to one another all over the World by certain Signals and watch Words known to them alone. . . . The manner of their Adoption, or Admission, is very formal and solemn, and with the Administration of an Oath of Secrecy. . . has been ever most religiously observed. . . . (Reprinted in Knoop et al., 1978: 42).

The second part of this passage contains an early reference to the initiation ceremony; the ritual was gradually being developed at this time into a system of three degree ceremonies. The remark alluding to Freemasonry being known throughout the world may be referring to the detailed history contained in the 'Old Charges', which endow the craft of masonry with an ancient and universal past.

A speech given by Dr Francis Drake on December 27th, 1726, to the Grand Lodge at York contains several significant points pertaining to the society. For instance, Drake makes a reference to the core principles of the order, "our three Grand Principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth to one another. . .". He also refers to Masonry as "the oldest Science the World has produced". It is apparent that among those present at the speech were both operative masons and 'gentlemen members', evident

when Drake differentiates between the 'Deputy Master', the 'Brother-Warden' and "my Brethren, the Working-Masons". This is important as it suggests that in the early eighteenth-century there were still circumstances when operative masons of the craft of masonry and initiated, speculative members of the society of Freemasons met together. One other point made by Drake establishes that the society was also open to men of all trades, not just masonry, which would not be the case if the meeting was for operatives, or working men of the trade of masonry only, ". . .You that are of other Trades and Occupations, and have the honour to be admitted into this Society. . ." (Reprinted in Knoop et al., 1978: 204-6).

One of the earliest recorded members of the society of Freemasons was Elias Ashmole. His life and interests are important, therefore, in demonstrating the type of early member that the society attracted. A primary source for such details is the *Memoirs. . .of Elias Ashmole*, printed in 1717, twenty-five years after his death, by Charles Burman. The original text is reprinted in the work *Elias Ashmole 1617-1692* by Josten (1966). It comprises a chronological arrangement of autobiographical notes which Ashmole began at the age of sixty-one. As well as providing evidence of one of the earliest recorded initiations into Freemasonry, they also allow an insight into the work and interests of one of the earliest documented English speculative Freemasons. For instance, Ashmole writes, in the third person, "While he was in Oxford, he became cheifely studious in natural Philosophy, the Mathematics, Astronomy & Astrology. . .". His note for August 1650 states, "This day was I chosen steward of the Astrologers Society about 2:hour [s] after noon" (Reprinted in Josten, 1966, II: 353).

From such entries in his diary Josten concludes that Ashmole was an "antiquary, polymath, and collector", who was particularly interested in the progress of scientific discovery. He was able to apply his mind to a variety of disciplines, such as "business, law, history, genealogy, heraldry, music, numismatics, medicine, botany, natural history, and to the mysteries of astrology, alchemy, and magic. . ." (Josten, 1966: 2). Josten also notes that in February 1652, Ashmole, through the practice of engraving Kabalistic signs on magic 'sigils', became interested in Judaic studies, undertaking Hebrew lessons with Solomon Frank, Rabbi of the Sephardic community of London.

Ashmole wrote many significant works throughout his life, one of which was entitled *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, published in London, 1652. He makes a note of this in his diary entry for January 26th, 1652, "6H:P.M. the first of my Theat: Chem: Brit: was sold to the Earle of Penbroke"(1966: 599-600). The full title of the work, which also describes something of its content is given as 'THEATRUM CHEMICUM BRITANNICUM containing severall Poeticall Pieces of our Famous English Philosophers, who have written the Hermetique Mysteries in their owne Ancient Language. . .'.

The two entries of Masonic interest contained in Ashmole's 'memoirs' relate to his initiation at Warrington in 1646, and his attendance at a lodge at Mason's Hall, London, in 1682. The record of his admittance into the lodge is the earliest recorded initiation of a non-operative Mason in England. [3] Ashmole writes,

> [1646] Oct:16. 4H 30' P.M. I was made a Free Mason at Warrington in Lancashire, with Coll: Henry Mainwaring of Karincham in Cheshire. The names of those that were then at the Lodge, Mr.Rich Penket Warden, Mr.James Collier, Mr. Rich: Sankey, Henry Littler,

John Ellam, Rich: Ellam & Hugh Brewer (Reprinted in Knoop et al., 1978: 40).

One important observation concerning this entry by Ashmole is that it demonstrates the non-political and non-denominational character of seventeenth-century Freemasonry. Evidence of this is apparent in the fact that the lodge in question welcomed both Ashmole, who was a Royalist, and Mainwaring, a Roundhead. It also contained members who were Protestants, and the sons of Catholic families such as Richard Sankey.

The second Masonic reference relates to the occasion when Ashmole received a summons to appear at a Freemason's Lodge at Mason's Hall, London, which was also home to the Mason's Company of the City of London. Several of the new members mentioned by Ashmole, below, were also members of the Company. For instance, William Woodman, William Grey, Samuel Taylor and William Wise were all members, whereas Ashmole was not. This again underlines the point that non-operatives were being admitted into trade organisations as well as speculative lodges. Ashmole writes,

> **10 March, 1682.**
> **At about 5H: P.M. I received a sumons to appeare at a Lodge to be**
> **held the next day, at Mason's Hall London. . . 11 March, 1682**
> **Accordingly I went, & about Noone were admitted into the**
> **Fellowship of Free Masons, Sir William Wilson Knight, Capt: Rich:**
> **Borthwick, Mr : Will: Woodman, Mr: William Grey, Mr: Samuell**
> **Taylour & Mr William Wise.**
> **. . . Wee all dyned at the halfe Moone Taverne in Cheapside, at a**
> **Noble Dinner prepaired at the charge of the New-accepted Masons**
> (Reprinted in Josten, 1966, **IV**: 1699ff).

It can be noted from Ashmole's 'memoirs' that he was also a member of the Royal Society. There is evidence to show that he was not the only 'learned gentleman' of the late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century to have been interested in both the Society of Freemasons and the work of the Royal Society (details of this cross-membership are given in chapter four). In Ashmole's references to the Royal Society and his own membership he mentions that he was in contact with two of the co-founders of the society, namely Dr Wilkins and Christopher Wren, "14 June, 1652, 11H. A.M.: Doctor Wilkins & Mr: Wren came to visit me at Blackfriars, this was the first tyme I saw the Doctor" (1966, **II**: 615). Regarding his acceptance into the society, Ashmole recalls, "This afternoone I was voted into the Royall Society at Gresham College" (1966, **III**: 810). On November 28th, 1660, in the Royal Society records, Ashmole reports a meeting between several members,

> **A preparatory meeting of 12 members of the future Royal Society**
> **took place at Gresham College, dealing interalia with a designe of**
> **Founding a College for the Promoting of Physico-Mathematicall**
> **Experimental Learning** (1966, **II**: 804ff.).

Ashmole's importance, therefore, lies in the fact that he was one of the earliest documented 'accepted' Freemasons in England. Robert Moray, initiated in Scotland in 1641, shared many of Ashmole's interests, for example, he played a significant role in the founding of the Royal Society and was also interested in alchemy and chemistry. The concerns of both men serve as an example of the type who were interested in the society of Freemasonry in the late seventeenth-century and who

became its early members. The interests that such members brought into Freemasonry should be noted for the possible affect these may have had on the development of the ritual, and consequently its symbolism, particularly the choice of symbolic themes, in the first few decades of the eighteenth-century.

The third and final part of the chapter will now take a brief look at the social aspect of early Freemasonry and the role of various clubs and coffee-houses in its development; the organisation of Freemasonry, including the establishment of the first Grand Lodge in 1717 and the United Grand Lodge in 1813; and an analysis of Anderson's *Constitutions*.

The social appeal of Freemasonry in the early eighteenth-century is quite apparent, seen particularly in the conviviality of the lodge and the 'banquet' following the end of a meeting. Such an incentive for joining the fraternity was not unusual, as this period of English history was a great age for the formation of small assemblies and clubs for social enjoyment. Clarke (1967) stresses the unique nature of London social life in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries. The coffee-house system, he argues, was especially characteristic, becoming popular as centres for the dissemination of the news of the day, before the printing of daily newspapers in 1702. Gradually they became more selective regarding their clientele with certain professions meeting in particular establishments. For example, a publication printed in No 1 of the *Tatler*, 1709, states,

> **All accounts of Gallantry, Pleasure and Entertainment shall be under the Article of White's Chocolate House; Poetry under that of Will's Coffee-House; Learning under the title of Grecian; Foreign and Domestic News you will have from the St. James's Coffee-House** (Quoted in Clarke, 1967: 3).

It is also evident that there was an increasing tendency to form clubs where only like-minded men met, for instance,

> **The parties have their different places . . . a Whig will no more go to the Cocoa-Tree or Ozinda's than a Tory will be seen at the Coffee-House of St. James' . . . Youngman's for officers; Oldman's for stockjobbers, paymasters and courtiers: and Littlewoods's for sharpers.** [4]

Particular taverns and coffee-houses became the meeting places of various clubs and societies, and it is evident that a number provided a meeting place for the majority of Masonic lodges in the early eighteenth-century. A list of the regular constituted lodges and the names of the Masters and members of each lodge are recorded in the *Minute Book No. 1* of 24th June, 1723, to 17th March, 1731. [5] It mentions, for example, 'The Horne Tavern' at Westminster, the Master of which was the Duke of Richmond, the Deputy, George Payne, and included James Anderson writer of the *Constitutions* as one of its members. Other examples of meetings-places for the Freemasons include: 'The Queen's Head', Great Queen Street (where the present Grand Lodge is situated); 'Three Compasses', Silver Street; 'Masons Armes', Fulham; 'Solomon's Temple', Hemming's Row; and the 'Free Masons Coffee-House', New Belton Street.

Several Freemasons held membership in other clubs around the city of London. For instance, Hextall (1914) mentions the *Je Ne Sais Quoi* club as having a direct connection with the members of the Freemasons fraternity, which met at the 'Star and Garter Tavern', Pall Mall. A description that appeared in *Attic Miscellany*, Vol. ii.

313-14, 1790, records the Prince of Wales as the 'Perpetual Chairman', with members such as the Duke of York, the Dukes of Norfolk, Bedford, Dorset, and Lord Barrymore. The article states,

> **Most of the members, if not all, being free and accepted Masons, His Royal Highness frequently forms lodges, where the sublime business of that ancient and highly honoured fraternity is carried on with masterly magnificence; where friendship, love, nobility of soul, universal benevolence, and all the sublime and ruling attributes of Masonic Science, diffuse their most sacred influence** (Quoted in Hextall, 1914: 34).

Although there is evidence to show that speculative lodges were meeting in the taverns and coffee-houses of London in the late seventeenth and eighteenth-century, it was not until 1717 that modern 'organised' Freemasonry began. The first step in the development of Freemasonry as an organised institution came about on June 24th of that year, when four lodges joined to form the premier Grand Lodge of England. A record of these lodges is contained in the *Constitutions* of 1738, "the Goose and Gridiron Ale-house in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*"; "the *Crown* Ale-house in *Parker's-Lane* near *Drury-Lane*"; "the *Apple-Tree* Tavern in *Charles-Street, Covent Garden*"; and "the *Rummer and Grapes* Tavern in *Channel-Row, Westminster*" (1738: 109).

The purpose of the Grand Lodge in its early years is suggested by Hamill (1986: 42), who contends that there "seems little doubt that initially the Grand Lodge was simply an opportunity for members of the London lodges to meet together socially". He maintains that there is no evidence to suggest that at this stage the Grand Lodge was concerned with lodges outside London and Westminster, or that it was acting as a regulatory body.

The year 1720 brought about significant change within the Grand Lodge system, primarily a result of the influence of George Payne, Grand Master in 1718 and 1720, and Desaguliers, Grand Master in 1719, and Deputy in 1722-3 and 1726. The former is credited with compiling the first Grand Lodge regulations in 1720; both were instrumental in persuading the second Duke of Montagu to accept the nomination as Grand Master. After the Duke's installation Grand Lodge met on a more regular basis and began to exercise powers as a regulatory body. The presence of a nobleman as Grand Master endowed the fraternity with greater credibility and respectability in the eyes of the public.

By 1730 the Grand Lodge had established itself as a governing body in London and had begun to extend its authority into the provinces and to export the Craft abroad, constituting lodges in Spain and India. The Grand Lodge also began to rule on matters such as regalia, and gradually took on a more judicial function. In 1737 Freemasonry was given royal approval by the admission of the Prince of Wales, eldest son of George II, which began the long association between royalty and Freemasonry.

The 1740's witnessed a split within the society, resulting in a separate Grand Lodge known as the 'Ancients'. Jacob (1991: 59) argues that the promotion of true citizenship within Masonry, benevolence and class harmony, overshadowed the dissension that had developed in many of the lodges over the issue of fraternal equality. Some members were critical of the social exclusivity of lodges and demanded a more egalitarian practice. The resulting division saw the emergence of

'antient' Masonry, which formed its own Grand Lodge in 1751 to rival the original Grand Lodge, which became known as the premier Grand Lodge of the 'Moderns'. Many of the 'Antient' Masons were Irish immigrants, such as Laurence Dermott who was appointed Grand Secretary of the Antients Grand Lodge. In 1756 he compiled a book of 'Constitutions' to rival those of Anderson, entitled *Ahimon Rezon*, Hebrew for 'Help to a Brother'. Much of the content was taken from Anderson and also Spratt's *Constitutions for the Use of Lodges in Ireland*, 1751. Three more editions with greater use of original material were published in Dermott's lifetime and a further four before 1813 (Pick & Knight, 1991: 91).

This division in English Masonry was felt in lodges throughout the world. By the 1760's most lodges in the American colonies belonged to the 'antient' version of Freemasonry. The Antients consisted mostly of men from an artisan background reacting against the predominance of gentlemen and nobility who, they believed, had caused many of the London lodges to fall into 'decadence'. Dermott, for example, attacked those "that have been preferr'd to Places as Offices of great Trust, and dignified with Titles of Honour, without having the least claim to Courage, Wit, Learning, or Honesty" (*Ahimon Rezon*, 1756: x). Dermott also glorified the builders, as opposed to the architects of Solomon's Temple and claimed they held a secret cabalistic wisdom transmitted through the original guild and embodied in the 'old' rules and regulations, or 'charges'. The motivation for the Antients was generally reformist, once they were free from the strictures imposed by the premier Grand Lodge, Antient lodges experimented in new rituals and degrees.

More could be said of the relationship between the two systems of Freemasonry and their respective development over the sixty year period of their rivalry. Within the confines and requirements of this chapter, however, it is enough to conclude that in the year 1813 twenty-one Articles of Union were drawn up between the two Grand Lodges, and were signed by both Grand Masters, namely, the Duke of Atholl of the Antients, and the Duke of Sussex of the Moderns. The union resulted in the formation of the present United Grand Lodge of England and Wales, and its first Grand Master was the Duke of Sussex.

Attention will be given, finally, to examining in more detail the contents of *The Constitutions of the Freemasons. Containing the History, Charges, Regulations, &c. of that most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity of Accepted Free Masons.* The first edition of 1723 was written and compiled by the Revd. James Anderson, a minister in the Church of Scotland, and officially sanctioned by a committee under the Grand Master, the Duke of Montagu. The dedication to the Duke, written by J. T. Desaguliers, reveals that much of the content is a compilation of several copies of the 'Old Charges'.

> **I need not tell your GRACE what Pains our Learned AUTHOR has taken in compiling and digesting this Book from the old Records, and how accurately he has compar'd and made everything agreeable to History and Chronology, so as to render these NEW CONSTITUTIONS a just and exact Account of Masonry from the Beginning of the World to your Grace's MASTERSHIP, still preserving all that was truly ancient and authentick in the old ones .**
> **. . (*Constitutions*, 1723: 1).**

It states, after the full title of the work, that the book is to be read "At the Admission of a NEW BROTHER". After approval was given to the *Constitutions* by Grand Lodge a copy was to be present at every lodge meeting and at every initiation.

The *Constitutions* do not appear to have been written as an academic or literary piece of work concentrating on accuracy and historical fact, but a book containing a 'history', of the development and significance of the craft of masonry and the science of geometry throughout the world. The intention was to give the society an ancient and honourable past, one which was patronised and practised by the great and noble throughout history. The 'history' is written in chronological order beginning with Adam and the origins of geometry, and ending in 1723. The *Constitutions*, therefore, provide an insight into the contemporary history and the historical world picture during the early eighteenth-century. For example, Anderson reflects the architectural taste of the period of rejecting the Gothic style of the Middle Ages, and encouraging the renaissance of the more classical, Augustan style.

> **King James VI of Scotland. . . the First King of GREAT BRITAIN he was also the First Prince in the World that recover'd the Roman Architecture from the Ruins of Gothick Ignorance. . . and in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries the AUGUSTAN STILE was rais'd from its Rubbish in Italy** (*Constitutions*, 1723: 48-9).

There are several differences that can be noted between the early editions of the *Constitutions* in the years 1723, 1726 and 1738. For instance, the first few lines of a 1722 copy are quite different to the 'official' version in the following year. These reveal a clear reference to the Holy Trinity, "The Almighty Father of Heaven, with the Wisdom of the Glorious Son, thro' the Goodness of the holy Ghost, Three persons in one Godhead, be with our beginning. . ." (*The Old Constitutions*, 1722: 1). The editions thereafter, however, as in 1723 and 1738 had been de-christianised, containing no reference to the trinity or Godhead, but rather to the 'Supreme Being' of Freemasonry. For example, the 1723 version alludes to "the great Architect of the Universe", and in 1738 to "The ALMIGHTY Architect and *Grand-Master* of the Universe" (*Constitutions*, 1723: 1, 1738: 1).

The main part of the *Constitutions* contains the history of Masonry beginning with the history of geometry, regarded as the 'essence' of Masonry. This is traced through biblical history, starting with Adam and culminating in the building of the Temple of Solomon. The importance of geometry as one of the seven liberal sciences is emphasised,

> **Adam, our first Parent, created after the Image of God, the great Architect of the Universe, must have had the Liberal Sciences, particularly Geometry written on his Heart;. . . this noble Science thus reduc'd is the Foundation of all those Arts (particularly of Masonry and Architecture) and the Rule by which they are conducted and perform'd** (*Constitutions*, 1723: 1).

A significant point that can be noted concerning the 1726 *Constitutions* is the reference to Hermes Trismegistus, whose work became prominent in the Renaissance and seventeenth-century England. Hermeticism relates to the writings and teachings ascribed to Hermes, particularly, the ancient science of alchemy. The reference does not appear in the 1723 and 1738 versions.

> **The great Hermes, sirnamed Trismagistus (or 3 times Great) being both King, Priest and Philosopher. . . He was the first that began to leave off Astrology, to admire the other Wonders of Nature. He prov'd there was but one God, Creator of all Things. He divided the**

Day into 12 Hours. He is also thought to be the first who divided the Zodiack into twelve signs. . . said to have invented ordinary Writing, and Hieroglyphicks, the first Laws of the Egyptians, and diverse other Sciences. . .(*Constitutions*, 1726: 7).

Several biblical figures are mentioned in the *Constitutions*, primarily, those known to have contributed to architecture and building work. An example is King Solomon, who is described in the 1723 version as "the *Prince of Peace and Architecture*", and his Temple is referred to as "the finest Piece of *Masonry* upon Earth before or since, and he *Chief Wonder* of the World". Mention is also made of the importance of the role of the Greeks in the art of masonry, particularly the work of Pythagorus and Euclid and their contribution to the development of geometry. The significance of the Roman influence, such as Vitruvius, "The Father of all true Architects to this Day", and his development of the Augustan style of architecture is noted (*Constitutions*, 1723: 19, 32).

Anderson's 'history' of masonry continues through Britain, from the Saxons and Danes, to King Athelstan, James I, Indigo Jones and his role in introducing the Augustan style into England, Charles II, and Christopher Wren, who is credited with the building of St. Paul's Cathedral in the style of St. Peter's in Rome. The 1738 *Constitutions* refer to the three Greek orders of architecture, namely, Doric, Ionic and Corinthian, corresponding to 'Wisdom, Strength and Beauty'(1738: 27, 38). The reference is significant, as the three orders feature in Masonic ritual in the form of three pillars, symbolising the qualities Wisdom, Strength and Beauty (see chapter five).

The part relating the history of masonry in the *Constitutions* is followed by *The Charges of a Freemason*, the rules and regulations of Masonic conduct. The 1723 version states that the 'Charges' are "Extracted from the ancient RECORDS. . . for the use of the Lodges in London: To Be Read At the making of NEW BRETHREN or when the MASTER shall order it". The general headings under which the 'Charges' are grouped are given as follows:

> **I. Of God and Religion.**
> **II. Of the CIVIL MAGISTRATE supreme and subordinate.**
> **III. Of Lodges.**
> **IV. Of MASTERS, Wardens, Fellows and Apprentices.**
> **V. Of the Management of the Craft in working.**
> **VI. Of BEHAVIOUR** (*Constitutions*, 1723: 62).

The 'Charges' are succeeded by the *General Regulations*, compiled by George Payne in 1720, containing a digestion of the Articles featured in the 'Old Charges' concerning the role of the various officers in the lodge and of the candidate.

In conclusion, this chapter has examined the significance of the early medieval operative masons and the appearance of non-operative members and lodges in the later seventeenth-century; the emergence of 'accepted' and 'free' Masons, many of whom were associated with the social meeting places in London; the development of Freemasonry as an organised system, with the formation of the first Grand Lodge, and the implication of the official *Constitutions*. There is little evidence to show the extent of the relationship between the medieval operative masons and the non-operative Freemasons, and consequently several contrasting theories have arisen. Clarke (1967: 5), for example, offers the view that it was the social setting of contemporary London that encouraged the development of speculative Masonry,

"the characteristic social life of London and the desire for new knowledge which evolved with it, assisted by the presence in the capital of the earliest scientific societies, was conducive to the revival of Masonry at the end of the seventeenth-century". This view also provides an example of the argument that Freemasonry was a 'revival' of masonry and not the beginning of something new at its decline.

Another theory concerning the appearance of Freemasonry relates to the change in architectural styles during this period. Yates (1972: 214) develops this argument when addressing the question of when Freemasonry actually began as an organised secret society. She agrees with the contention that speculative Masonry and its gradual disassociation from operative masonry began with the interest in Vitruvius and the revival of a classical style of architecture. This is referred to in Anderson's *Constitutions* with a reference to Indigo Jones, which may suggest that it was in association with the introduction and spread of the Augustan style that Freemasonry as an independent society began in England.

This point has been emphasised earlier with the proposal that the increase in non-operatives may have corresponded to the development of the architect as a profession. Jacob (1981: 38) argues, however, that it was the "fascination with ancient and 'secret' wisdom", popular among educated gentlemen in the seventeenth-century, which provided an attraction to Freemasonry; its medieval roots being the source of access to such wisdom.

It is clear that the society of Freemasons which appeared in the late seventeenth - and early eighteenth-century was connected, however remotely, to the practising or operative stone-masons. This is evident in the use of, and importance given to, the medieval 'Old Charges' of the craft of masonry in the *Constitutions of the Freemasons*, compiled by Anderson. The developing speculative Freemasonry, however, was also affected by late Renaissance ideas and the scientific and intellectual progress of the Enlightenment. This is apparent, for example, in the number of Freemasons who were also Fellows of the Royal Society, who showed a keen interest in, and often made significant contributions to, several of the contemporary movements, such as Alchemy, Hermeticism, Deism and Rosicrucianism.

The difficulty in defining the actual origins of Freemasonry is apparent when attempting to distinguish between the 'legendary' history of Freemasonry, as described in the *Constitutions*, and its literal origins. According to Masonic legend, Freemasonry traces its origins back to the building of Solomon's Temple and the origins of architecture itself. The actual evidence concerning the origins of Freemasonry as a society shown it to exist at the end of the seventeenth-century. The earliest evidence of 'modern' Freemasonry as an organisation, however, is 1717. The contentious issue surrounding the origins of Freemasonry concerns the question of whether operative masonry, the actual craft of building, and speculative Masonry, the moral and mystical interpretation of building - a secret society with esoteric rites and teaching - were separate and independent of each other, or whether one was a natural progression of the other.

This chapter has shown some of the evidence to show the development of the society of Freemasonry in the late seventeenth - and early eighteenth-century England. The chapter was not an attempt to provide a definitive answer to the question of how and when Freemasonry originated, but to demonstrate the complexity of its history, taking into account its background and some examples of its early members. The lack of tangible evidence in the history of Masonry, as a speculative organisation before 1717, also affects knowledge surrounding the emergence of its symbolism,

which is clearly tied to the history and development of Freemasonry. The question of how and when Freemasonry and its symbolism originated is not going to be analysed and proven in the course of this thesis, as much deliberation and theorising has already been given to the subject. Instead, importance is placed on analysing the real evidence of English Masonic symbols in both literary and visual form, from the late seventeenth-century through to the end of the eighteenth-century. This chapter has provided an important historical context for the emergence of Masonic symbolism within the structure of English Freemasonry as a whole. The previous chapter examined the earliest evidence of Masonic symbols, how they were used and developed in the ritual; the next chapter will provide a context for early Masonic symbols within a contemporary setting, suggesting possible influences on the use and choice of many of the symbolic themes.

NOTES

1. 'Quatuor Coronati' is also the name given to the oldest lodge of Masonic research No. 2076, London, warranted in 1884.

2. Written by Richard Rawlinson.

3. The earliest recorded initiation is of Sir Robert Moray, in 1641, Scotland.

4. From Mackay, J. *Journey through England*, cited in Sambrook, 1969: 74.

5. Quoted in Sanghurst, W. (ed) 1913. *Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha*. Vol. 10. London.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONTEMPORARY BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MASONIC SYMBOLISM

This chapter seeks to exemplify the context within which Masonic symbolism developed in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century. Although the origins of speculative Freemasonry in England can be traced through the seventeenth-century, the origins of Masonic symbolism are evident in written form only at the very end of the century. Visual examples of symbolism are not apparent until early in the eighteenth-century. The most significant period for the evolution of Masonic symbolism was the eighteenth-century, primarily because it was the period in which the main context for the symbols, the ritual, developed from a basic two-degree system into the three-degree form used ever since. Although the period also witnessed the development of several additional degrees and their accompanying symbolism, Craft symbols continued to develop throughout the century.

The following will comprise a study of various aspects of the period surrounding the development of Masonic symbolism, specifically, the late seventeenth-century through to the end of the eighteenth. The aim is not to provide a detailed analysis of the history of the period, or an attempt to examine all the details and facets of the time; such a treatment would be inappropriate here. Rather, the focus is on specific areas of the period which are directly relevant to Freemasonry, as well as areas which highlight the general background and thought of the time. The intention is to suggest possible influences for the particular symbolic themes used by the early speculative Masons in the ritual. The chapter will consider, therefore, various aspects of contemporary thought and society which may have influenced the development of Masonic symbolism. It will not be an attempt to prove, explicitly, the degree of influence that specific aspects had on the use of each symbol. It is a matter of supposition how much of the contemporary climate Masons may have absorbed, consciously or sub-consciously, and how this may have influenced their choice of symbolic themes; if they were physically 'chosen' at all.

The chapter will identify the broad trends of the period and will seek to characterise the general spirit of the age, which paralleled the developing Masonic symbolism. Fundamental changes in the outlook and thought of the period and how these affected other aspects will be emphasised, such as the growth of science and philosophy and the effect these had on literature and religion. The structure of the chapter will comprise four parts. The first will provide a general introduction of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including the central themes in areas such as religion, literature, philosophy and the arts; and the main changes in thought from one century to another. The second part of the chapter will concentrate on the relevant facets of the seventeenth-century which may have influenced early Masonic symbolism. For example, Alchemy, the Rosicrucians, the Royal Society and the importance of the Bible in literature. In the third part the central themes of the eighteenth-century will be addressed, such as the Enlightenment, discussions concerning Nature and Reason, and their effect on the religion, literature and philosophy of the period. The final part will examine more specific instances of certain contemporary themes and how they are reflected in Masonic symbolism.

Before an individual examination of the two centuries can be conducted it is necessary to make some general comments about the most notable advancements and important changes in each. The seventeenth-century may be defined as the

period in which a gradual change from Renaissance thought to that of the 'Enlightenment' or modern period, occurred. The seventeenth-century was dominated throughout Europe by a revolt against traditional thought, particularly in science, where great advances were made in astronomy and mathematics.[1] A new approach to the physical sciences proposed by Francis Bacon (1561-1626) at the beginning of the century became widely accepted by the end. Western philosophy was freed from two millennia of dependence on Plato and Aristotle by Rene Descartes (1596-1650) whose *Discourse on Method*, 1637, provided a new theory of knowledge. The period was marked by a significant increase in speculative thinking.

It is important to recognise the significance of the seventeenth-century and how it influenced the development of thought in the century that followed. Honour (1982) states that the Enlightenment of the eighteenth-century was formed out of the philosophical and scientific thought of the previous century, particularly from the contributions of Descartes, John Locke (1632-1704), who propounded a philosophy based on empirical observation and common sense, and Isaac Newton (1642-1727), who provided a rational explanation of the laws determining the structure and workings of the universe. Prominent writers and philosophers of the Enlightenment shared a faith in the power of the human mind to solve every problem, believing in human perfectibility and in the possibility of human omniscience. This optimistic belief resulted in all physical phenomena being studied and categorised, and all aspects of human behaviour scrutinised from a strictly rational viewpoint, for example, political systems, social customs, and religious practices (Honour, 1982: 459).

Eighteenth-century Europe was characterised by a number of compilations, encyclopaedic volumes and dictionaries of miscellaneous information, which appeared on a variety of different subjects. These sources provided an insight into Kabbalah, Neo-Platonism, the various Gnostic schools, and different forms of Eastern religious symbolism, for example, works such as, *Indian Antiquities* and *Dissertation on the Oriental Trinities* by Thomas Maurice, and *History of the Jews* by Beaval de Basnage, translated by Thomas Taylor, London, in 1709. Hirst (1964: 288) talks of a Renaissance tradition of symbolism, comprising a traditional way of thought and symbolic language, which she claims was still in existence during the late eighteenth-century as a reaction against the prevailing materialism, Deism and general indifference to the 'interior life'. She claims that scientific investigation of the natural world from the Renaissance had integrated the Christian mode of thought with the Jewish, the Greek and the oriental; the supposition was always that Wisdom is from the East. The tradition contained within it a mass of esoteric material; the Jewish Kabbalah, with its mystical interpretation of the scriptures, Alchemy, Neo-Platonic theories of Harmony and Hermetic literature.

The eighteenth-century, according to Harris (1968: 9), witnessed the disintegration of the great humanist tradition which for the previous four centuries had been one of the characteristics of European history. The disintegration was partly the result of the new view of the universe engendered by the science of Galileo (1564-1642), Kepler and Newton; the empirical philosophy of Locke and Hume (1711-76); and consequently the growth of a new spirit of individualism. It was marked by the development of new literary forms, particularly the novel, and the writing of history by 'masters' such as, Bishop Burnet (1643-1715), Hume and Gibbon (1737-94). The tradition of humanism held that the universe was a single, coherent and rational creation of the deity, and that man and all other beings, creatures and things, existed in a pre-determined hierarchy governed by God's laws. Both religion and

philosophy were concerned with promulgating those laws and with the search for the ideals of beauty, goodness and truth.

The scientists and philosophers of the seventeenth-century dispelled many of the predominant assumptions of classical humanism. The discoveries of Galileo, Kepler and Newton led to the view that there was a physical world governed by laws ascertainable by the human mind which were to be discovered, not by some reference to an authority such as the ancient philosophers or the Scriptures, but by empirical means. The eighteenth-century developed these ideas and held the view that the Scriptures enjoined moral conduct. If there was a purpose in God's moral laws the one most acceptable in the eighteenth-century was that they were conducive to the happiness of mankind. However, a moral precept enjoined by religion was acceptable only if it stood the test of reason and did not challenge traditional religious beliefs.

It was generally accepted by eighteenth-century thinkers that the criterion of human actions was whether they were productive of happiness. Utilitarianism therefore was inherent in the thought of the century and became the implicit assumption of most thinkers both in England and among the continental 'philosophies'. These changes in the approach to moral questions played an essential part in the emergence of a new philosophy of individualism, a product of the growth of empirical thought of the Enlightenment. The emergence of empirical philosophy and the consequent doctrine of individualism were among the achievements of seventeenth and eighteenth-century thought (Harris, 1968: 12).

In terms of literature, one of the most predominant influences of the time was the poetry of Milton (1608-74). This is apparent in works by several other poets, for instance, Pope (1688-1744), Gray (1716-71), Thomson (1700-48) and Samuel Johnson (1709-84), who attempted Miltonic themes and Miltonic diction. It is also clear that several poets remained devotees of classical authors; classical humanism continued to provide the basis of literary and artistic criticism even after the philosophical assumptions on which they were based had been superseded. In architecture and painting there was also a strong tendency to follow the classical tradition as well as the continental models. Aesthetic theory was for the most part a repetition of principles formulated by the sixteenth-century Italian Renaissance and the example of Michelangelo and Raphael. In practise, however, continental inspiration was usually modified to suit the English habits and taste. [2]

It is apparent that the seventeenth- and eighteenth- centuries provided a number of intellectual disciplines. It was possible to study the material world of science, or the evolution of societies in history, or the working of economic systems, without having to be concerned with the theological implications of the subject. The common factor in all these separate studies was the new empirical method and the application of utilitarian standards. The eighteenth-century was characterised, therefore, by changing attitudes and changing philosophies, the seeds of which were sown in the seventeenth-century.

Coming now to examine Religion, Literature, Philosophy and various contemporary societies in the seventeenth-century, the period can be regarded as intermediate between the Renaissance ideas of the sixteenth-century and the development of society in the early eighteenth-century. The new intellectual and scientific attitudes of the Enlightenment clearly had their roots in the middle to late seventeenth-century when there began a marked move away from Renaissance thought and practice. The change in intellectual thought was a result of the civil war which had

provoked an intensity of questioning of an individual's fundamental position regarding king, government, and religion. The existence of deep splits in society between Royalist, Republican, Protestant, Catholic, Puritan, and several other sectarian groups, stimulated and strengthened individual opinion. This is apparent in contemporary science, philosophy, literature and theology, which reflected the heightened views and personal feelings towards social and political circumstances and events.

The process of change in the seventeenth-century was not distinct; new and old ideas co-existed and interacted in the same discipline. For instance, early in the century there was no clear distinction between magic and science, but as the century progressed the 'old' ideas that were still adhered to were often reinterpreted and given new meaning. Through this amalgam of old and new ideas, however, certain changes can be observed. For example, at the beginning of the century the human and natural world were seen as unstable and transient. Beyond this was thought to lie a structured universe of order, a world of spirit and a law of nature that God had placed in man. Gradually this belief in a structure of order began to erode with the impact of a 'modern' scientific outlook, and a change from a God-orientated, traditional conception of nature, to a man-orientated view and a mechanical conception of nature became apparent.

A detailed analysis of religion in the seventeenth-century is not going to be provided here due to its complexity. It can be said, though, that religious feeling was strong during the period and permeated all aspects of society, politics, and intellectual thought. The very structure and nature of the official church was changed as a result of civil war, Anglicanism and Puritanism virtually disintegrated, and the Protestant Reformation dominated the last half of the century. The strength of religious feeling in the seventeenth-century is clear in many works written at the time. However, it is not the politics of such feelings that are of interest here, but how more specific areas of religion, such as the Bible affected writers of the time. This also holds greater relevance to Freemasonry, which bases much of its symbolism on aspects of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament.

The Bible in seventeenth-century England proved to have a significant influence on the work of a number of poets, writers, philosophers and scientists. The King James Authorised version of 1611 was prepared with royal approval by a committee which performed the task of translation over a period of seven years. Considerable use was made of all previous translations, for example, that of John Wycliffe in the 1380's; William Tyndale in 1525; Thomas Cranmer's 'The Great Bible' in 1539; The Geneva Bible in 1560; and the Rheims New Testament (Catholic Version) of 1582. The printing of a vernacular version of the Bible allowed a wider public access to it. Its influence is apparent in the literature of the period, most notably in poetry.

The leading poets of the century, according to Lewalski (1979: 39), were influenced, primarily, by the lyric poetry of the Bible. The five books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon were popularly identified as the poetical 'third part' of Scripture. Lewalski contends that all forms of Biblical lyric were understood to be represented in the Book of Psalms, the most frequently translated and widely imitated of all the Biblical books. Psalms was also regarded as a compendium of all theological doctrines and moral knowledge. The second major source of theoretical discussion concerning Biblical poetry may be found in poetic versions of commentary on the three canonical books of Solomon. It is important to note that Protestant poets often compared the spiritual progression in Solomon's three books to the three parts of the Hebrew Temple, suggestive in George Herbert's, 'The

Church-porch' and 'The Church'. To exemplify this Lewalski quotes Beza, who pointed to,

> the utter common court for the people, unto which *the booke of the Proverbs* may be compared: after that was the inner place provided for by the Priestes: and lastly the Sanctuarie called the Holy of Holies. Eeven so we may say, that the Church is as it were lead to enter into the Holy place by *the booke of Ecclesiastes, called the Preacher*, and from thence by this Canticle or Song, brought even to the entery [sic] of the Sanctuary, or Holy of Holies (quoted in Lewalski, 1979: 54).

It is interesting to note that the three degrees of Freemasonry are based on this progression.

Concerning the 'Song of Songs', Lewalski maintains that Christian exegetes, both Catholic and Protestant, agreed that the work was in some sense allegorical, evident, for example, in the portrayal of the images of the Bridegroom and Bride, reflecting the relation of Christ to the Church or of Christ and the individual Soul as part of the Church. Lewalski describes the work as "intensely symbolic and prophetical". Poets that were influenced by such themes, and Biblical lyric poetry in general were, for example, John Donne in his *Divine Poems*, 1637, including 'Temple' and 'Holy Sonnets', *A Hymn to God the Father*, 1635, and *Sermons*, 1629, one of the largest category of printed books in the seventeenth-century; George Herbert in *The Temple*, published in 1637, which included poems such as: 'The Church-floore' and 'The Church-Windows'; John Bunyan's *The Holy City, or the New Jerusalem*, 1665, *Pilgrim's Progress*, 1678, 'A Discourse of the Building of the House of God', 1688, which includes references to 'The Builder's God', and *Solomon's Temple Spiritualised*, 1688. Bunyan introduces the latter work by saying,

> But I have, in the ensuing discourse, confined myself to the Temple, that immediate place of God's worship; of whose utensils in particular, as I have said ... for that none of them are without a spiritual, and so profitable, signification to us. ...Now because, as I have said, there lies, as wrapt up in a mantle, much of the glory of our gospel matters in this Temple which Solomon builded, therefore I have made, as well as I could, by comparing spiritual things to temporal, this book upon this subject. (12th edition, Glasgow, 1773)

Solomon's Temple Spiritualised provides intricate details of all areas of the building of the Temple and the Temple itself. The contents comprise seventy points referring to a specific detail, for example, "1. Where the Temple was builded. 2. Who built the Temple . . . 12. Of the pillars which were before the porch of the Temple . . . 56. Of the holiest or inner Temple." The latter work is one of the most significant in terms of its relevance to Freemasonry, as Solomon's Temple is a central theme in Masonic symbolism.

John Milton was another writer whose work reflected a Biblical influence, and what can be described as Masonic themes. For instance, he refers to God as the 'Architect' in *Paradise Lost*, 1667, a term also used in Freemasonry. Milton writes, "And some the Architect: his hand was known"(I. 732), "Thou art thir Author and prime Architect" (10. 356). Milton refers to Solomon in *Paradise Regained*, 1671, when he writes, "Of wisest *Solomon*, and made him build" (2. 170), "Then Solomon, of more

exalted mind" (2. 206). It is clear, therefore, from this brief study that the Bible proved to be an important influence on writers of the seventeenth-century, particularly poets. Several themes that they used also appear in Masonic symbolism of the early eighteenth-century, notably Old Testament themes of the Temple of Jerusalem.

One other religious influence which is apparent in several works of the seventeenth-century is that of the Kabbalah. The influence of Kabbalah in Europe dates to the fifteenth-century with the work of Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), who was the first, according to Mintz (1980: 151), to bring Kabbalah into Christian philosophy. Mintz suggests that one of the appeals of the Kabbalists was their hermeneutic techniques, where they attempted to uncover hidden meanings through the use of analogy, allegory and numerology, and their belief that all things are connected in a network of symbolic relationships. Mirandola attributed such techniques to Plato who, he wrote, "himself concealed his doctrines beneath coverings of allegory, and veils of myth, mathematical images, and unintelligible signs of fugitive meaning"[3]. Similarly, Freemasonry describes itself as "a peculiar system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols"(see chapter 2, note 1).

Mirandola's work on numerology was used in the seventeenth-century; others who were interested in the metaphysical status of number included Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535), John Dee (1527-1608) and Robert Fludd (1574-1637). Mintz maintains that they sought out various permutations of number, for example, five and three, and linked them to other aspects of the Cosmos, resulting in them being read as principles of creation. The main theorists of this 'mathematicism' in the seventeenth-century were Fludd, who wrote *Mosaicall Philosophy* in 1659, and Thomas Vaughan (1621-1666); both were also interested in Rosicrucianism. Vaughan, for example, wrote a Preface to a Rosicrucian work entitled, *The Fame and Confession of the Fraternity of R.C., commonly, of the Rosie Cross*, 1652.

There appears to have been a general interest in Kabbalah in the seventeenth-century. Salmon states that, "The Cabbala and Hermetic, neo-Platonic themes influenced most of English sixteenth and seventeenth-century culture; the works of Spenser, Donne, Browne and Burton all reflect this influence" (1972: 91). Salmon argues that the primary aim of Mirandola and his followers was to discover the reality that lay behind the material world. They shared a similar aim with the Royal Society, that of the quest for the 'Secrets of Nature', and it was this that associated the English scientists of the period so closely with the Kabbalists.

Acknowledging the influence of Kabbalah in seventeenth-century England, it is relevant to assess more specific areas, such as its symbolism. Idel suggests that many symbols of the Kabbalah are used to decode the Bible, which he describes as the "symbolic text through which one can discern the divine processes" (1988: 213). In the attempt to find a general definition for Kabbalist symbolism, Idel admits the difficulty in recognising a comprehensive one, but accepts Erwin Goodenough's description of the symbol as, "an object or a pattern which, whatever the reason may be, operates upon men, and causes effects in them, beyond mere recognition of what is literally presented in the given form".[4] Idel asserts that this general conception of the symbol may serve as a fair description of most examples of Kabbalistic symbolism.

In its Christian context, Kabbalah, according to Idel, was 'transformed into a gnosis', which included esoteric theosophy, making it comparable to other ancient lores. He quotes Madame Helena Blavatsky (1831-1891), a follower of Renaissance Christian

Kabbalists, who defines their conception of Kabbalah as, "The Kabbalist is a student of 'secret science', one who interprets the hidden meaning of the Scriptures with the help of the symbolical Kabbalah, and explains the real one of these means". [5] It is clear, therefore, that from the late fifteenth-century until the late nineteenth-century, Kabbalist theosophies, in their classical and Lurianic versions, were sources of inspiration for European thought. English Platonists and scientists, such as Isaac Newton, paid significant attention to this system of Jewish thought. It is not the case that the Kabbalah became a major intellectual factor in European philosophy, but its presence was significant enough to be of note, particularly in European occultism.

The sixteenth-century saw an advance in Hebraic studies in general, but by the end of the seventeenth-century the art of Biblical philology had been developed. There were many works published during the century which emphasise the time given to studies in hermeneutics and theory of Biblical interpretation. Primary works written on Hebraic studies, for example, include, *Israel and England Paralled*, 1648, by Paul Knell; *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae*, 6 vols., written between 1658 and 1678, by John Lightfoot; and *The Figures of Types of the Old Testament*, 1683, by Mather Samuel. Works pertaining to Biblical hermeneutics in general include: *Harmony of the Gospels*, 1678, by John Eliot; *Clavis Mystica: A Key Opening Divers Difficult and Mysterious Texts of Holy Scripture*, 1636, Daniel Featley; *Christ Revealed, or the Old Testament Explained*, 1635, Thomas Taylor; and *A Critical History of the Old Testament*, 1682, Richard Simon.

Before turning to the significance of various movements and societies in seventeenth-century England, it is necessary to mention the importance of emblems within a literary context. The reason for their inclusion here is that the emblematic drawing accompanying the poem or lyric often depicted popular symbolic themes of the time, a few of which can be found in the symbolism of Masonry. Freeman describes an emblem book as a picture book "made up of emblematic pictures and explanatory words" (1978: 9). It was a collection of pictures, each accompanied by a motto and a moral exposition, usually in verse. For the emblem writer, Freeman argues, all objects have an allegorical significance, in both their patterned arrangement and in the fact of their being present at all. The forms which occur most frequently, apart from personified figures, are the short anecdote and the abstract symbol. The anecdote was drawn from, for example, classical myth and legend, from historical incidents, and from collections of fables. The abstract symbol was more widely used and was employed both as part of a composite picture and also by itself as the single subject of an emblem. Freeman defines more clearly the sense in which the term symbol is applied in the context of the emblem, explaining that they were included as one of the descendants of the Hieroglyphic, and the word symbol may be used in a limited sense in that connection.

The first emblem book seen in England was that of George Whitney, entitled *A Choice of Emblems*, 1586. In 1685, Francis Quarles (1592-1644) introduced a new type of emblem book in the form of his *Emblemes*. Freeman asserts that both these authors, and others, found their models on the Continent, and in general their work consisted of translations, or adaptations of foreign emblem books. By importing them, they made the books a part of English literature, each type being closely related to a particular phase in English literary taste. Quarles was one of the most popular emblem writers in the seventeenth-century, and over two thousand copies of his *Emblemes* and *Hieroglyphics of the Life of Man* were printed for the first edition. Quarles introduced new themes and new methods of allegorising them; his symbols represented the individual experience of the human soul in its search for sanctity. The singleness and simplicity of the older emblems was replaced by an elaborate

symbolical composition in which every detail had some special significance. Quarles modified his translation of continental Catholic devotional books to appeal to Protestant readers, concentrating on the moral and intellectual qualities of each theme.

The broader cultural context of the emblem books is emphasised by Daly (1988: 5), who stresses the importance of the emblem as an expression of the cultural life of the Renaissance and Baroque. He argues that the combination of motto, picture, and epigram may be regarded as an art form, and as a mode of thought. It finds expression in illustrated books and combinations of mottoes and pictures, as well as emblematic motifs found in paintings, wall and ceiling decorations, carving, stained glass and title-pages and frontispieces. These last examples prove to be significant sources of visual Masonic symbolism; specific examples are shown in the final chapter.

The subject matter of many of the most popular emblems is highlighted by Mosely (1989), who suggests the existence of a 'core' of emblem pictures. Examples of elements used in such 'core symbols' were a range derived from natural history, which contributed a large proportion of the symbols. For instance: the self-sufficiency of the tortoise and snail; the speed of the dolphin; and the devotion of the sun-flower that turns its face to the sun, as should the soul to God. Closely related to this type of symbol were those derived from Aesop fables, where the timeless symbol is replaced, or supported by a story. Another popular set of symbols, according to Mosely, were the historical and mythological, for example, the use of Hercules and the sword of Damocles, were frequently used as a metaphor for insecurity. The form of symbols most easily recognisable are the allegorical personification of abstract concepts, for instance, Fortune, Prudence, Time, Truth, the Sins, the Virtues, or Humour. These were represented both visually and verbally as human figures, and came to form part of the techniques of literary thought and practice in the seventeenth-century (Mosely: 12-14). This last point is significant in the context of Freemasonry, as the Virtues appear in the ritual and comprise a significant theme in Masonic symbolism, often depicted on certificates. Examples are cited in the final chapter.

The practice and theory of alchemy provides another important influence in the seventeenth-century, but due to the great scientific changes and developments that occurred in the period, the practice was generally discredited. However this was not before the principles and symbolism of alchemy had permeated various aspects of society. In its European form, Alchemy, according to Hirst (1964), dates from about the time of the Neo-Platonists and the various Gnostic sects. It has been suggested that it arose from a "fusion of Egyptian metallurgical and other arts with the mystical philosophies of the Neo-Platonists and Gnostics". [6] The pattern of four elements arranged in pairs and the idea of their convertibility, Hirst argues, was taken from Aristotle. The basic document for alchemy is the 'Emerald Table of Hermes' or 'Smaragdine Tablet', ascribed to the semi-mythical philosopher Hermes Trismegistus. Its thirteen cryptic propositions were accepted as the key to the secret of the Philosopher's Stone and the mystery of the universe itself. By the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth-century, the alchemic process was understood in a more symbolic sense (1964: 124).

In more general terms, Coudert (1987) argues that in every culture where alchemy has been popular it has been closely related to an esoteric and mystical tradition in which great emphasis is placed by the alchemist on secrecy. The Renaissance period marked the high point of alchemy in the West, where a great number of alchemical

texts were published. Due to the impact of the Reformation, however, and the seventeenth-century scientific revolution, alchemy was significantly changed and generally discredited. The 'organic', 'qualitative' theories of the alchemists were replaced by a more mechanical model; the alchemical balance between the spiritual and physical was destroyed and alchemy was divided into theosophy and the practical science of chemistry. One of the basic tenets of alchemy is also apparent in Masonic symbolism, the idea that whatever is imperfect, for example, lead, will eventually become perfect - gold. This would occur in the course of time or with the help of the 'philosopher's stone'(Coudert, 1987: 199). In Freemasonry this is reflected in the use of a rough and smooth 'ashlar' to symbolise the moral development of the initiate.

A stronger influence of alchemical symbolism in Freemasonry is accounted by Bernardo (1989), who argues that the main source of Masonic symbolism may be found in the tradition of alchemy. For example, in notions such as the 'regeneration of man' and 'the secret', and symbols such as the 'compass', 'square', 'rule', 'perfect ashlar', 'pillars', and 'five-pointed star'. Bernardo claims that most of the symbolism of speculative Freemasonry is an expression of the learned men who came into Freemasonry in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century, transforming its symbolism by employing their deep knowledge of alchemical thought (1989: 42). Although it is clear that Freemasonry shares several symbolic themes with alchemy, it is not evident as to how direct the 'borrowing' or actual influence was.

One of the main representatives of the alchemical movement in seventeenth-century England was Elias Ashmole (1617-92); alchemist, astrologer, antiquary, and the first recorded speculative Freemason in England. Yates (1972: 193-4) describes Ashmole's work, *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, 1652, as a collection of alchemical writings which were important in stimulating the contemporary alchemical movement in England. The type of alchemy which Ashmole was interested in was 'Rosicrucian', the alchemy as revised and reformed by John Dee, of which his *Monas Hieroglyphica*, 1564 was the epitome.

An important movement that developed prior to the seventeenth-century, but which still held a significant influence in the period, was Rosicrucianism. From a historical point of view, Yates argues that Rosicrucianism represents a phase in the history of European culture intermediate between the Renaissance and the 'scientific-revolution' of the seventeenth-century. It is a phase in which the Renaissance Hermetic - Kabbalist tradition was affected by another Hermetic tradition, that of alchemy. The Rosicrucian Manifestos, documents published in Germany in the early seventeenth-century, represent a combination of 'Magia, Cabala and Alcheymia' (Yates, 1972: xi).

The earliest known printed edition of the first Manifesto, known as the *Fama Fraternitas* of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, did not appear until 1614. The document includes a description of the mysterious 'Rosencreutz', founder of the 'Fraternity', the imaginary history of the Order, and the myth surrounding the finding of the vault in which Rosencreutz is buried; a central feature of the Rosicrucian legend. The document recounts through the allegory of the vault the discovery of a new philosophy, primarily alchemical and related to medicine and healing, but also concerned with number and geometry. The aim of this new philosophy, Yates suggests, was to bring about a 'general reformation' in learning, the mythical agents of its spread being the Rosicrucian Brothers. In 1615 the second Manifesto was published in Latin entitled the *Confessio*, a continuation of the *Fama*,

on the subject of the Rosicrucian brothers, their philosophy and mission (Yates, 1972: 41-45).

It is Yates' contention, therefore, that the term 'Rosicrucian' is a historical label for a style of thinking. She disputes the literal truth of the story of Rosencreutz and his Brotherhood, acknowledging only the existence of a religious movement using alchemy to intensify its evangelical piety with a large programme of research and reform in the sciences. The movement was inclusive of all religious attitudes, the Manifestos stressing Kabbalah and alchemy as the dominant themes of the movement. John Dee (1527-1608) is cited as a typical Rosicrucian thinker, with his combined alchemical and Kabbalist interests, and Michael Maier and the physician Robert Fludd as instrumental in the spread of Rosicrucian thought and influence on the European Continent and in England (Yates, 1972: 220).

The question of the literal existence of a Rosicrucian Society is also disputed by Hirst (1964: 321), specifically, whether such a society really existed as an actual secret organisation, or whether it merely represented an ideal, a philosophy towards which certain scholars aspired. She does accept, however, the early existence of Rosicrucian symbolism. For example, Hirst refers to a study by Pagel entitled *Paraselsus*, in which he points to the portrait of Paracelsus in the first edition of his *Philosophiae Magnae*, 1567, showing Jacob's ladder, a child's head appearing out of the earth, and a figure with a single eye, all standard features of this system. The Vitruvian figure in Cornelius Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia*, 1531, is surmounted by a 'single eye' (1964: 322). The 'single eye' described here is an important Masonic symbol, otherwise known as the All-Seeing Eye. Jacob's Ladder is also used as a Masonic symbol and is often represented as a three-runged ladder symbolising the virtues Faith, Hope, and Charity.

A more detailed study of the connections between Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry has been provided by Jackson (1984) who argues that those who were genuine Rosicrucians and those who developed speculative Masonry had a similar foundation of Christian mysticism, and consequently had a mutual sympathy. Both organisations would have attracted men of the same type and with the same ideals. Jackson notes several men who are known to have been associated with both Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism. One of the most important is given as Robert Fludd (1574-1637), a notable physician who wrote two pamphlets in defence of the Rosicrucian Manifestos in 1616 and 1617, which expressed admiration for the fraternity and a plea to be admitted as a member. It is evident that he never actually became a member. Fludd also wrote books on magico-medical subjects and became well known in England as a member of the alchemical school. There is no indisputable evidence suggesting that Fludd was a Mason or whether he had any clear associations with Freemasonry. There can be no denying, however, that he would have been aware of it, as he lived in Coleman Street in London, a few yards from Mason's Hall, and could well have been in contact with speculative Masons who shared similar interests (1984: 123).

Another contemporary who had clear connections to Rosicrucianism was Thomas Vaughan (1622-1666), who produced the first printed copy of the *Fama* in English in *circa* 1652. Jackson maintains that several of Vaughan's works which he published under the name Eugenius Philalethes were of a mystical nature and show that he was committed to the Rosicrucian philosophy. There is no evidence to suggest that Vaughan was a Freemason, but towards the end of his life he was under the patronage of Sir Robert Moray, the first known initiated Freemason. Moray (c. 1600-1675) was himself interested in Rosicrucianism and took an active part in the

founding of the Royal Society, being its first president. He has been described as "a renowned chymist, a great patron of the Rosie-Crucians and an excellent mathematician".[7] Jackson suggests that Moray's connection with the Royal Society, which included other men who may also have been Masons, would have provided a common ground where both organisations may have been discussed and the current Masonic thought influenced by Rosicrucian ideas (1984: 124).

One of the most significant men known to have been associated with both Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism is Elias Ashmole (1617-1692), who was also a founder-member of the Royal Society in 1661. His initiation into Freemasonry is recorded as the 16th October, 1646. He is described as an

> **Alchemist, antiquary, assiduous collector of records of the past, Ashmole's roots were in the hermetic universe, governed by magical correspondence when the new sciences were emerging. Yet he was not exactly out of date for his interest in alchemy reflects the very strong revival or renaissance of alchemy in the 17th century** (Yates, 1972: 235).

There is no evidence that Ashmole belonged to a Rosicrucian fraternity in England, though his interest in Rosicrucianism is not in doubt. For example the prologues to some of the texts he edited are strongly Rosicrucian; at least one Rosicrucian book was dedicated to him;[8] and a copy of the *Fama* in his own handwriting was found amongst his papers (Jackson, 1984: 124-125).

One of the more obvious links between Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry, may have been the mutual use of signs and symbols. He refers to a work by Gould [9] who quotes Woodford, who states,

> **That the importance of Hermeticism in respect of the true history of Freemasonry is very great . . . Freemasonry, in all probability, has received a portion of its newer symbolic *formulae* and emblematic types from the societies of Hermeticism . . . The rule and the plumb-rule, the perfect ashlar, the two pillars, the circle within parallel lines, the pointed star, which Pythagoras is asserted to have taken from Egypt to Crotona, and adopted as the mystical symbol of his fraternity. Lastly there is the Hexalpa or Hexalpha, otherwise Solomon's Seal of the Shield of David: this was also a Masonic mark and used all over the East in mediaeval times, as well as a mystical label and religious mark** (cited in Jackson, 1984: 127-8).

Although clear similarities are evident in the symbolism of Freemasonry and the Hermetic Orders, the symbols mentioned above were originally associated with the Egyptian and Greek mysteries, and though often used after this, there is no firm evidence to prove that the Freemasons of the seventeenth-century consciously borrowed them from this source. Jackson suggests that they may have copied hermetic symbolism which was already in use, or re-invented it. He comes to the conclusion that the only obvious symbols that are shared by both Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism were the Sun, the Moon and various geometrical figures. None of the key symbols of Craft Masonry have any connection with Rosicrucianism, the association of hermetic ideas in the two fraternities only became apparent in the development of the additional degrees in the eighteenth-century (Jackson, 1984: 128, 130).

The other society in seventeenth-century England to have had close associations with Freemasonry, which has already been referred to is the Royal Society. The Society originated, according to Bush (1945), *circa* 1645, with the meetings at Gresham College, London, of a group of scientists interested, primarily, in experiment and banning divinity and state affairs from discussion. This last point is significant as it relates to a similar ban in Freemasonry, stated in the *Constitutions* of 1723, that religion and politics were not to be discussed in the lodge. Bush maintains that such meetings occurred prior to this date, but the influence of Francis Bacon and his work, *The New Atlantis*, 1627, which advocated co-operative research, was regarded as an 'official' sanction for the development of the movement. In 1648 the focus of the group moved to Oxford where it increased in numbers, new members included the eminent scientist Robert Boyle and the architect Christopher Wren. By 1660 the group moved back to London and in 1662 obtained Royal sanction by Charles II. At the end of the seventeenth-century the predominant influence on the Society changed from Bacon to the work of Isaac Newton, who became president at the beginning of the eighteenth-century (Bush, 1945: 269-70).

More specific references to Freemasons who were also members of the Royal Society is related by Clarke (1967: 111-112), who contends that almost all the noble Grand Masters during the first fifty years of the existence of Grand Lodge were Fellows of the Royal Society. George Payne, the second Grand Master has been considered responsible for the number of Society members in Freemasonry; the third Grand Master, J. T. Desaguliers had become a Fellow of the Royal Society on the proposal of the then president Sir Isaac Newton in 1714. Other examples include the 2nd Duke of Montagu who became a Fellow in 1718 and was appointed Grand Master in 1721; the 2nd Duke of Richmond became a Fellow and Grand Master in the same year, 1724; and the Prince of Wales, who was appointed Grand Master in 1790 and became a Fellow later in 1820. A comparison can be made between the names in the 1723, 1725 and 1730 lists of Freemasons given in the first minutes of Grand Lodge, and the roll of Fellows of the Society in the first half of the eighteenth-century, given in *The Record of the Royal Society of London*. The 1723 list records the names of twenty-four Masons who were Fellows and of sixteen who later became one. About one in five of the Society's members were Freemasons, and such statistics show that the Fellows of the Royal Society took an exceptional interest in Freemasonry in the early days of Grand Lodge. During the eight years from 1723 to 1730 eighty-nine of them have been identified as Masons.

The third part of the chapter will now examine some of the important features of eighteenth-century England. The century has been named the 'Enlightenment', which essentially refers to the European intellectual movement as a whole. In general terms, the movement was associated with the influence of modern science and promoted the values of intellectual and material progress, toleration and critical reason in the areas of politics and religion, as opposed to authority and tradition. The Enlightenment in England was represented in theology by the tradition of British Deism, for example, the work of John Toland (1670-1722) and Matthew Tindal, and in politics by Whig liberalism. Representative of both these trends was the philosopher, scientist, and Presbyterian cleric Joseph Priestly (1733-1804). Others who were influenced by Enlightenment thinking included the utilitarian Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), the economist and moral theorist Adam Smith (1723-90), the historian Edward Gibbon (1737-94), and the radical political thinker William Godwin (1756-1836). One of the effects of Enlightenment thought was that individuals were able to think for themselves on matters concerning morality, religion and politics. This marked a change from opinions being dictated by political, ecclesiastical, or scriptural authorities. The practice of toleration in religious

matters also proved to be an important ideal of the new thought (Wood, 1987: 112-3).

In an attempt to find a useful general conception of the Enlightenment, Ford defines four attitudes which, he argues, are characteristic of and essential to the movement as a whole. The first is secular humanism, humanism in the sense of a reverence for classical antiquity, where men of the Enlightenment could admire the classic heroes without surrendering to the past. The second element is the reliance on analysis as the orderly, rational, deductive treatment of data assembled from experience and observation. Enlightenment was the product of learning and analysis, and the shared property of reasonable men. The third attitude of the Enlightenment was the conviction that basic changes were occurring in man's condition. The frame of the material world, human affairs and human behaviour were generally seen as changeable, and the changes themselves as potentially amenable to direction. The fourth attitude is the sense of liberation, where men of the Enlightenment saw themselves as seeking truth and purveying knowledge in the service of something higher: freedom - from 'senseless privilege', from superstition, from ignorance, and from 'capricious authority'. Therefore in summary, Ford defines the basic features of the Enlightenment as "secular humanism, a faith in rational analysis, a concern with the direction of unblinkable changes, and a sense of dedication to the cause of liberty" (1968: 25-27).

With this understanding of the primary ideals and modes of thought of the Enlightenment it is possible to address some of the main characteristics of the eighteenth-century itself. Intellectually, the period from the 1730's through to the 1780's was a unified period. By 1727 the great seventeenth-century revolution in thought was over and for the next six decades the influence of Newton and Locke dominated British thought. Their method of the use of critical reason and empiricism was considered to be the only way in which the various disciplines could achieve the status of sciences. It was not until the end of the century with the work of the Romantics that this outlook was seriously challenged. Although this commonly identified method induced a sense of unity there were areas, particularly in the source of knowledge that proved more divisive. This resulted in a split between the 'Ancients' and 'Moderns'; the Moderns adhered to the new scientific method, which originated with Bacon's doctrine of progress in knowledge; the Ancients, to authority. Spadafora (1990: 23, 84)) notes a clear veneration toward classical culture in the eighteenth-century. For example, the Palladian craze in architecture was inspired from the Romans, and neo-classicists in architecture and also literature consciously learned from the ancients. This intellectual and cultural tension that derived from the realignment of thought was also a result of the opposition between humanist and 'modern'. The men of the 'high' eighteenth-century, Spadafora argues, believed in the supremacy of the moderns and the existence or possibility of progress in learning, practical skills and techniques, and the fine arts. The adherents of the moderns were triumphant, their belief in progress in the arts and sciences prevailed, and classicism decayed. It is significant that Freemasonry also split into two Grand Lodges, known as the 'Antients' and 'Moderns'. This continued from the middle of the eighteenth-century to 1813, when both united to form the United Grand Lodge of England and Wales.

Another important characteristic of the eighteenth-century was the importance given to the concept of Nature, particularly in religion, ethics, philosophy and politics. Willey (1950: 2) contends that 'Nature' was never so universally acknowledged than from the Renaissance to the end of the eighteenth-century. The laws of Nature were equated with the laws of reason and were often regarded as the

same. The historic role of 'Nature' during the eighteenth-century was to introduce peace, concord, toleration and progress in the affairs of men; and in poetry and art, order, unity and proportion. Critics, poets, theologians and philosophers referred to Nature as their standard. Nature was often regarded as the product of divine wisdom, omnipotence and benevolence, s in a sense the existence of Nature provided the evidence of a deity. Some of the most powerful influences of the early eighteenth-century, scientific, philosophical and social, according to Willey, tended to divinise the idea of Nature, either in the sense of the physical universe or in that of the whole order of creation, including the moral order. For example, Shaftesbury (1671-1713) defended human nature against the traditional detractors of religion. He was a typical English moralist of the Enlightenment and his writings were collected in the work, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions and Times*, 1711, which proved very popular in the early eighteenth-century.

The popular belief in Deism was closely affiliated with much of the contemporary thought regarding Nature. The Deists found God in Nature and in the heart of man, but denied the authority of Revelation. Henry Bolingbroke (1678-1751) was a key figure in Deist thought in the eighteenth-century. In taking the philosophy of Locke and transforming it into a fashionable Deism, his object was to establish the principles of natural religion which would provide the middle ground between the particular religions of the organised churches and what he regarded as the anarchy of atheism. This proved to be a popular doctrine for a time, and Bolingbroke was one of the key figures of the first half of the century (Harris, 1968: 151).

The influence of the Bible in the eighteenth-century, particularly in the context of literature, is important and is relevant when compared to the use of Biblical themes in Masonic symbolism of the period. The development of Biblical hermeneutics was an important feature of the eighteenth-century and is described by Kroll (1991: 239) in terms of a 'hermeneutical revolution', which took place towards the end of the century. The difference of approach in the eighteenth-century was to judge Biblical events by criteria drawn primarily from non-Biblical or more empirically verifiable patterns of history. This was opposed to the former practice of treating areas of the Bible as factually precise. The increase in works on Biblical and textual criticism affected literature as a whole. Humphreys (1954: 168) contends that religion provided a standard of judgement and a mode of expression both consciously and subconsciously important. He maintains that familiarity with the Bible 'nourished the imagination' particularly within the context of rhyme, diction and imagery, and enriched the literature of the period. An example of the effect of the Bible on contemporary writing is emphasised by Patrick Murdoch who edited the *Works of James Thomson*, 1762,

> **It is certain he owed much to a religious education; and that his
> early acquaintance with the sacred writings contributed greatly to
> that *sublime*, by which his works will be for ever distinguished**
> (quoted in Humphreys, 1954: 168).

In judging the truth of the Scriptures, an important figure of the eighteenth-century who appeared to have been influenced by the contemporary work on Biblical exegesis, Bishop Butler, emphasised the importance of historical evidence. According to Harris, Butler argued for the importance of judging the historical authenticity of the revelation contained in the Old Testament by the same historical tests which would be applied to any other document. This also applied to the New Testament and the miracles described in the Gospels. Butler denied, however, that the discovery of the new scientific laws invalidated the idea of God as the 'Author of

the universe'. Butler attempted to show that the idea of God was compatible with the accepted idea of a rational universe and the laws of nature (Harris, 1968: 191).

Another significant feature of the eighteenth-century was architecture, which also appears as an important theme in Masonic symbolism, particularly, in references to the five orders of architecture: Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan, and Composite. Eighteenth-century architecture in England was characterised, according to Owen (1974: 163, 337), by a love of harmony and order. The main-stream of English architecture followed the Palladian tradition, originally introduced by Indigo Jones in the seventeenth-century and modified by the classical influence in the work of one of the leading British architects, Robert Adam (1728-1792) and his two brothers. The popular fashion and revival of the Palladian style was due, notably, to the influence of Richard Burlington (1694-1753), who became a practitioner of Palladianism after returning to London from Italy in 1714-15. This interest coincided with the publication in England of Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* and Leoni's edition of Palladio's *Four Books of Architecture*. After the death of Wren in 1723, Burlington and his student William Kent dominated the architectural scene in England until the middle of the century. There was, however, a reaction against ostentatious splendour which conflicted with the growing belief in the harmony between man and nature. This resulted in the use of the Baroque style, popularised by the English architect, Vanbrugh (1664-1726), and demonstrated in the architecture of Blenheim Palace in 1705. It may be noted that one of the common features of the new Palladian style, apparent in examples of houses by local architects in several country towns in England, was the use of ionic or corinthian pilasters in the doorway. As mentioned above, the orders of Ionic and Corinthian feature frequently as an architectural theme in Masonic symbolism.

The prolific nature of building work in the century, which began in the 1660's after the fire of London, is emphasised by Humphreys, who describes building as the 'national hobby'. Robert South in a preface to *A Sermon Preached as the Conservation of a Chapel*, 1667, praised the Restoration 'zest' for construction, noting that God "has changed men's tempers with the times, and made a spirit of building succeed a spirit of pulling down" (quoted in Humphreys, 1954: 221). Humphreys argues that the same spirit inspired the Augustans. It is clear that the general taste in the eighteenth-century was towards a classical style rather than the Gothic, and a distinct influence of humanism, classical antiquity and the Italian Renaissance.

Writers and architects, in general, admired the classics, where the human spirit was properly expressed and problems of form and purpose were rightly solved. The concept of Reason spoke for order and geometrical figure, for the square and circle, the oblong and oval, as signs of man's intellectual dominance. Wren (1632-1723), for example, used the classical ideals of linear order in 'Tract I' of *Parentalia*, published in 1750, in which he distinguished the 'customary' sense of beauty from the 'natural', from 'Geometry'. Wren stated that geometrical figures, ". . . all consent as to a law of Nature". He declared the square and circle to be the most beautiful with the oval and parallelogram coming next, and stated that "strait lines are more beautiful than curve" (quoted in Humphreys, 1954: 224). Wren's preference for geometrical figures may be seen as significant in the context of Masonic symbolism, where the theme of geometry occurs frequently. For example, a circle, square, line, point-within-a-circle and two parallel lines appear in both literary and visual form. The basic conditions of the 'new' style, in the sense of classical ideals that were adapted to English taste and conditions were order, coherence and unity.

Although the Palladian style was predominant in England through the first half of the eighteenth-century, Harris (1968: 296) notes that the age also witnessed a significant growth of interest in history other than classical. For example, antiquarians like Joseph and Thomas Wharton collected notes on the past; Hume wrote a detailed history of England from Roman times, as Anderson achieved in his *Constitutions of the Freemasons* in 1723, with an architectural history of England; the architect Batty Langley (1696-1751) produced a book on the Gothic, entitled *Ancient Architecture Restored and Improved*, 1741, in which he formalised the neo-Gothic into 'orders'. Walpole (1717-97) was influenced by the Gothic style, and as the Palladians had studied the Roman buildings to learn the secrets of proportion, Walpole did much archaeological research into the intricate details of Gothic cathedrals. His work initiated a 'Gothic Revival' which continued well into the nineteenth-century. Harris states, "the Gothic revival was no more than an aberration in the great eighteenth-century stream of classicism in architecture"(1968: 297). He maintains that the Palladian school ended around the middle of the century. The style that followed was dominated by the work of the architects Robert and James Adams, the former also became the main influence in interior decoration. For instance, his interior for Syon House, which he began in 1762 is described by Harris as "one of the finest creations of English art" (1968: 299). The Great Hall features two pillars at one end and a chequered floor, in the centre of which is a star within a circle *(Fig 1)*. All these features appear in Masonic lodges and are depicted on a number of Plans of the Lodge and lodge-drawings of the eighteenth-century.

The fourth and final part of this chapter will now examine more specific contemporary themes and how they are reflected in Masonic symbolism. The examples used also include a couple of cases that are outside the period of seventeenth and eighteenth-century England, but are good examples of the more common usage of symbols that appear in Freemasonry. The first selection includes illustrations and poems which depict Masonic themes. The first example is an engraving by Durer for a book by Wenzel Jamitzer, entitled *Perspectiva Corporum Regularium*, 1568, in which Durer uses Pythagorean geometric solids. The engraving *(Fig 2)* depicts several symbols, such as the sun, the terrestial and celestial globes with a compass pointed at them, and the working tools of a level, plumb-rule, ruler, square and compass. These are very common Masonic symbols and feature in the wording of the ritual and also in visual form, on certificates, aprons, jewels and lodge-drawings.

According to Hirst (1964: 80-81) a translation of Du Bartas's *Devine Weekes* by Joshuah Sylvester, entitled *Bartas, His Devine Weekes & Workes*, 1605, includes a section called 'The Columnes', which incorporates an early version of the 'Craft Legend', used in the 'Old Charges' of the Freemasons. The legend tells of the story in *Genesis* where the principles of all human knowledge are preserved upon two pillars made of marble and brick. This hidden wisdom contained the seven liberal arts and sciences, including geometry, and also the art of reading the concealed meaning in a given Hebrew text, through understanding the numerical value of the Hebrew letters. The title-page of Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas's poem depicts two pillars, one supporting a terrestial globe and the other a celestial globe *(Fig 3)*. The subject of the final section of the poem, entitled 'The Magnificence', [10] is Solomon's Temple.

The poem, *A Discourse of the House of God*, 1688, by John Bunyan, features details which can be described as Masonic. For example, in describing the building of the House Bunyan mentions the 'Working-Tools' of 'Rule, Plummet or Line' and a 'Compass' (I. 4, 6, 11). In the section on the 'Governours of this House', the *'Chief'*, 'In

his *Right-Hand, Seven glittering Stars are found*' (VII. 263). Seven stars are a common feature in Masonic symbolism and are usually depicted in visual form with the moon and sun.

An interesting description of the pentagram is given by Wilkins in his work, *Mercury*, 1641, which Kroll states "graphically explodes the mysterious pentagram"(1991: 206). Mention of this symbol in such a work in the early seventeenth-century is significant as it is also used as a symbol in Freemasonry, although it does not appear until well into the eighteenth-century (see Chapter 5). Wilkins's description of the pentagram states,

> **This marke was esteemed so sacred amongst the Ancients, that**
> ***Antiochus Soter*, a perpetuall conquerour, did always instamp it**
> **upon his Coine, and inscribe it on his Ensignes; unto which he did**
> **pretend to be admonished in a dream, by an apparition of**
> ***Alexander* the great. And there are many superstitious women in**
> **these times, who believe this to bee so lucky a character, that they**
> **alwayes worke it upon the swadling clothes of their young**
> **children, thinking thereby to make them more healthful and**
> **prosperous in their lives. Unto this kind also, some referre the**
> **characters that are used in Magick, which are mayntained to have,**
> **not only a secret signification, but likewise a naturall efficacie**
> (reprinted in Kroll, 1991: 206).

A number of references to Solomon's Temple feature in the period, which relate closely to Freemasonry. This is one of the principal themes found in Masonic symbolism and is an important aspect of the three degrees of Craft Masonry. The form which the theme takes is either in the Hiramic Legend of the third degree or in specific details of the Temple itself, such as the two pillars Jachin and Boaz, and the Holy of Holies, or Sanctum Sanctorum. Various descriptions of Solomon's Temple in seventeenth-century literature are related by Johnston (1899), who states that the leading English writers of the century who used the subject of the Temple were Broughton, Seldon, Lightfoot, Walton, Lee and Prideaux. The descriptions by Samuel Lee, the Puritan divine, are suggested by Johnston to be typical of the period and the subject. For example, Lee's work entitled *Orbis Miraculum*, 1659, consists of two parts: the first, comprises a description of the Temple itself, its surroundings and its contents; the second, the symbolical part, develops the inner significance of what has been described in the first part. The full title of the work is,

> **Orbis Miraculum, or the TEMPLE OF SOLOMON, pourtrayed by**
> **Scripture-Light: wherein All its famous Buildings, the pompous**
> **Worship of the Jewes, with its attending Rites and Ceremonies; the**
> **several Officers employed in that Work, with their ample**
> **Revenues: and the Spiritual Mysteries of the Gospel vailed under**
> **all; are treated of at large** (quoted in Johnston, 1899: 137).

The details of the Temple that Lee includes are, for example, 'The Two Pillars Standing In The Porch Of The Temple' and 'In The Porch' - 'The Two Brazen Pillars' (Johnston, 1899: 137-138).

FIG. 1

Syon House : the Great Hall (printed in Harris, 1968, plate 15)

FIG. 2

Plate V of Wenzel Jamitzer's *Perspectiva Corporum Regularium*, Nuremberg, 1568, by Albrecht Durer (reprinted in Hirst, 1964: 48)

FIG. 3

Title page to Josuah Sylvester's *Bartas, His Devine Weekes & Workes*, London, 1605
(reprinted in Hirst, 1964: 177)

Another English writer who referred to Solomon's Temple was Francis Bacon (1561-1626), in *New Atlantis*, 1627. Johnston argues that Bacon's reference to 'King Solomon's House' was not a reference to the Temple itself, but a fanciful name for a community of ideal beings, a Utopian community dependent on its progress on collective scientific research. Johnston suggests that Bacon may have selected the name Solomon as a symbol of wisdom (1899: 140). The earliest English treatise devoted to the subject of the Temple was written by John Lightfoot (1602-1675), renowned for his work on Biblical criticism. His work on the Temple is entitled, *A Prospect of the Temple, especially as it stood in the Days of our Saviour*, in which the Temple of Solomon and a detailed account of the pillars Jachin and Boaz is described. For instance, Lightfoot compares the structure of the Temple to a contemporary church, "And indeed Solomon's Temple did very truly resemble one of our Churches but only that it differeth in this that the Steeple of it (which was in the Porch) stood at the East end" (quoted in Johnston, 1899: 141).

The final example of the use of Solomon's Temple was in the 'Polyglot Bible', 1657, edited by Brian Walton (1600-1661), Bishop of Chester. The book was the work of many scholars and contains various oriental texts of the Bible with Latin translations, and a critical apparatus which includes the account of the Temple that had been published in the sixteenth-century by the continental scholar, Ludovicus Capellus. This work was entitled, *Templi Hierosolmitani Triplex Delineatio*; one part was from Villalpandus, another from Josephus, and the third from Maimonides and the Talmud. The chief source from which Villalpandus drew his account was the vision of Ezekiel. Johnston contends that this view became popular and its influence can be seen in most of the illustrations of the Temple that appeared in the second half of the seventeenth-century (1899: 141).

It is clear, therefore, that the description of Solomon's Temple provoked a considerable amount of interest in the seventeenth-century. This attention was not only apparent in the literature of the period but also in a number of models of the Temple, constructed and exhibited in the eighteenth-century. The two most significant models were constructed by Rabbi Jacob Jehuda Leon and Counsellor Schott. The exhibitions of the models of the Temple coincided with important periods in the history of Freemasonry. The model ascribed to Councellor Schott was exhibited in London in 1723 and 1730, the years in which the Grand Lodge of England was formed, and Anderson's *Constitutions*, containing the history, charges, and regulations of the Freemasons, were published. The second model, by Rabbi Jacob Jehudah Leon was on view in 1759-1760, the period in which Freemasonry split into the 'Antients' and 'Moderns', the former instituting their own Grand Lodge. The influential figure in the Antients, Laurence Dermott, compiled a separate book of Constitutions entitled *Ahiman Rezon*, (1764: xxxiv-xxxvi) in which he mentions the model of Rabbi Jacob Jehudah Leon. For example, he states,

> . . . **The free masons arms in the upper part of the frontispiece of this book, was found in the collection of the famous and learned hebrewist, architect and brother, Rabi, Jacob Jehudah Leon. This gentleman at the request of the states of Holland, built a model of Solomon's temple. . . This model was exhibited to public view (by authority) at Paris and Vienna, and afterwards in London, . . . At the same time, Jacob Judah Leon published a description of the tabernacle and the temple, and dedicated it to his Majesty, and in the years 1759 and 1760 I had the pleasure of perusing and examining both these curiosities (quoted in Chetwode Crawley, 1899: 151).**

Chetwode Crawley suggests that Schott's model was particularly popular, and suggests that it "cannot have been without effect on the rank and file of Freemasons at the very time when our legends were being moulded and harmonised" (1899: 150). He also argues that the model "must have exercised a real influence on the development of our Ritual" (1899: 150). Although this may have some truth in it, there is no evidence to suggest that the models of the Temple had a direct influence on the use of Solomon's Temple in Masonic ritual. It is significant, however, that such a general interest in the subject should coincide with the early development of Masonic ritual and symbolism. Chetwode Crawley also notes, among the non-Masonic interest in the Temple, a work by Isaac Newton entitled *Chronology of the Ancients*, published in London in 1728, which contains a chapter of 'a visionary description of the Temple'.

Schott's model was advertised in *The Daily Courant* of March 3rd, 1729-30, and contains some interesting details,

> *To be seen at the* Royal-Exchange *every Day*, The Model of the TEMPLE of SOLOMON, with all its Porches, Walls, Gates, Chambers and holy Vessels, the great Altar of the Burnt Offering, the Moulton Sea, the Lavers, the Sanctum Sanctorum; with the Ark of the Covenant, the Mercy Seat and Golden Cherubims, the Altar of Incense, the Candlesticks, Tables of Shew-Bread, with the two famous Pillars called Joachim and Boas. . . . the Model is 13 foot high and 80 foot round. . . . The printed Description of it, with 12 fine Cuts, is to be had at the same Place at 5s. a Book (quoted in Chetwode Crawley, 1899: 150).

The advertisement was repeated in *The Daily Courant* at intervals for several months, and also appeared in other newspapers of the day.

In conclusion, this chapter has attempted to address the question of what may have influenced the early speculative Masons into developing the particular symbolic themes and symbols used in Masonic ritual. The intention has been to provide a context for the development of Masonic symbolism in terms of the contemporary background and prominent features of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England. The aim has not been to prove, conclusively, the degree to which the early Masons were directly influenced by specific aspects of the period - the sources do not exist which permit unequivocal *proof* - but to suggest and point to aspects that may have influenced their choice of symbolic themes. Although some of the contemporary influences have been indicated, all the factors that may have lead to the development of symbolism in Freemasonry cannot be determined, or every detail about various influences known. What has been achieved, however, is a consideration of how thoughts and practices of the time may have been used by Freemasons and adapted to suit the symbolism of the ritual, and how emerging symbolic forms reflected the spirit of the age in England, as reflected in both literary and architectural sources.

The chapter has shown the progress made in scientific and philosophical thinking in seventeenth-century England, and how the century played a crucial role in the development from a Renaissance style of thought to a 'modern' period of intellectual 'enlightenment'. The century was also important for its various societies and movements, such as the Rosicrucians and Royal Society, both of which proved to be an attraction to Freemasons. A preoccupation with Biblical themes was a feature of the period particularly in literature, where the Old Testament had a clear influence

on poetry. Interest in Kabbalah and Hebraic studies in general was apparent, and which continued to be popular in the eighteenth-century. It is evident that during the period of the early development of Freemasonry, and consequently its symbolism, there existed in London men who had similar intellectual interests, who shared a commitment to the progress of thought and knowledge inherent at the time. There can be little doubt, therefore, that such 'thinkers' who became speculative Masons would have brought their interests into Freemasonry and, in turn, influenced the form and content of the developing ritual and symbolic themes.

It can be said that the general principles regarding the thought and social practice of the eighteenth-century were synonymous with the basic tenets of Freemasonry. Religion and philosophy of the period were ultimately concerned with the ideals of beauty, goodness and truth; Freemasonry stressed the importance of the principles of beauty, wisdom and truth. The emphasis on morals was also a strong feature of both the period and Freemasonry. Roberts (1972) emphasises this when he states, "Benevolence, fraternity, utility, morality; these were what freemasonry was about. . . Around these principles there clustered also masonic symbolism and imagery. . ." Roberts continues that the symbolism of the pillars of the Temple and the fidelity to the secret expressed in the Hiramic legend, "emphasised the moral virtues of solidarity, integrity and reliability. . . the symbols used in the ritual and iconography of masonry embody the types of moral virtues" (1972: 52). This corresponds to a number of essays and moral discourses that were written in the eighteenth-century which advocated social virtues such as, good nature, benevolence, forbearance, and the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity. The period after 1720 was one in which the great constitutional issues of the previous century had been resolved, and a religious equilibrium and a social stability had been achieved. As a result, there was a recognition of the importance of cultivating the inner life of the intellect and of morals. In Freemasonry, the working tools of operative masons, such as the level, square and compass, are used to symbolise particular morals, and the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity are an important feature of Masonic symbolism, often symbolised by three women. These symbols are visualised prominently on several Masonic certificates of the period (see chapter 5).

Another area in which the tenets of Freemasonry were compatible with the thought of the period was in the 'new secular culture', which Jacobs contends

> **was centred around urban sociability, invariably found in the ambience of purposeful social gatherings, coteries located in coffeehouses, as well as in clubs, salons, scientific academies, literary and philosophical societies, and most markedly. . . in the masonic lodges (1991: 30).**

Jacobs also notes that of all the new forms of sociability in the eighteenth-century, it was only in the Masonic lodges that the deity of enlightened culture, the Grand Architect of the Universe, was ceremonially invoked. Jacobs suggests that here, the Grand Architect seemed to be equated with the 'deity of the new science', "the guarantor of the order and harmony originally proclaimed by Descartes, but codified most especially by Newton" (1991: 31).

It can be concluded, therefore, that the principles, and more particularly the symbolism, of early Craft Freemasonry was consistent with the intellectual and social climate of the period in which it formed and developed. However much it is argued that speculative Masonry was a direct progression from the operative craft

before it, it cannot be denied that its development was influenced by the thought, ideas and movements prevalent in seventeenth - and eighteenth-century England.

NOTES

1. See for example Honour (1982: 426).

2. See Harris (1968: 13-18).

3. From *Heptaplus*, trans. Carmichael, D. 1965, p. 69. (cited in Mintz, 1980: 149).

4. From *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, 1954, Princeton. (4:28). (cited in Idel, 1988: 234).

5. Quoted from *Isis Unveiled*, 1972, Pasadena, Calif. p. xxiv. (cited in Idel, 1988: 264).

6. Quoted from Holmyard, E. T., *Nature*, 1929. No. 123, p. 520 in J. Read, *Prelude to Chemistry*, p. 8. (cited in Hirst, 1964: 123).

7. Anthony a Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, Vol III, col. 726. (cited in Jackson, 1984: 124).

8. An English translation, 1656, of *Themis Aurea, hoc est, de Legibus Fraternitas R.C.*, 1618 by Michael Maier, is dedicated to Ashmole as 'The only philosopher of our time'.

9. Gould, R. F. (ed.) 1951. *Concise History of Freemasonry*. pp. 52-54.

10. Sylvester, J. 1608. *The Devine Weekes & Workes*. pt. II: 79.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH MASONIC CRAFT SYMBOLISM IN

THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY: THE LITERARY AND VISUAL SOURCES

The following chapter will show the specific development of symbolism in Craft Masonry throughout the eighteenth-century. This will be achieved by charting various symbols from a number of contemporary sources, mostly Masonic, to determine when particular symbols first appear. Previous studies have made little attempt to plot the development of Masonic symbolism in such chronological detail. This chapter, however, will do this by using a variety of sources from the early eighteenth-century onwards, to demarcate the exact appearance of particular symbols, and how they developed. This process will be carried out using examples of both literary and visual sources to provide the basis for a comparison between these two primary sources of symbolism.

A clear format to illustrate the details of this study has been provided in the form of tables (A & B), which display the specific year in which individual symbols from the collection of sources first become apparent. Table A provides details of symbols and symbolic aspects of Masonic ritual taken from the catechisms. The symbols are grouped according to the year in which they first appear and not by text. Where a symbol is repeated in another year but in a different context, the symbol is bracketed. Table B shows the symbols which have been taken from various visual sources according to the year they appear. The number of symbols found in many of the sources is significant, therefore Table B also differentiates between those symbols which are noted for the first time, and those which have been evident in other sources in previous years. The information shown in Table A and B is collated, set out in themes and displayed in Table C. This table demonstrates the development of Masonic symbolism thematically, within ten year periods throughout the eighteenth-century.

The study of the development of Masonic symbolism in the period of the late seventeenth-century to the end of the eighteenth-century is essential if the history of the use of symbols in Freemasonry is to be understood. Any comprehension of the reasoning behind the choice of particular symbols by the early speculative Masons is mere supposition. When they are seen, however, within the context of the general influences and 'fashions' in contemporary society of the time, as detailed in the last chapter, the reasons why much of the symbolism was used become less obscure. It is possible in a study such as this to pin-point when certain symbols were introduced and also the extent of their popularity, which can be measured by the frequency of the symbols' appearance throughout the century. Consequently, it is possible to discover the earliest use of a number of different symbols and symbolic themes, particularly those which became an intrinsic part of Masonic symbolism from its inception, and which remain to the present day.

The actual sources used in such a specific study need to be sufficiently explained before assessment of the material collected may begin. The literary sources are comprised of exposures or 'Expositions' of the ritual, which became popular in England during the eighteenth-century. There were several reasons for their publication. The majority were genuine attempts to portray the developing ritual and ceremonial procedures, as there was no standard or official ritual published by the Grand Lodge until 1815. A few, however, were deliberately designed to mislead

the public from knowing the 'true' Masonic secrets, and some were just purely anti-Masonic. Such factors must be taken into account when abstracting symbols from each Exposition to differentiate between the 'genuine' and the 'deceptive'.

The Expositions of the ritual may be grouped into three main categories: those which were published before 1730; those between 1730 and 1760; and those after 1760. A study of the Expositions published in the eighteenth-century discloses the development of Masonic ritual, particularly the evolution of a three degree system, and the advance of the Hiramic Legend. The ritual provides the principal source of symbolism in Freemasonry, and its development had a parallel effect on the symbols used, most notably in those associated with Solomon's Temple. The literary sources used in this chapter contain details of the ritual in Craft Masonry, the oldest form comprising the three degrees. The Craft also forms the basis of any further involvement in, for example, the Royal Arch which developed in the 1740's, or any of the additional degrees.

In the first few decades of the eighteenth-century Masonic ritual was in its early formative stage. The period culminated with the Exposition entitled *Masonry Dissected*, the first text to give a clearly defined three degree system and a detailed Hiramic Legend. According to Jackson (1986: 1), it became the most popular and widely printed ritual in England between 1730 and 1760, influencing consequent publications both in England and on the Continent. Publication of such Expositions in print, manuscript form and in newspapers was prolific during the period 1700-1730. There is little evidence, however, of any significant Expositions published in England between 1730 and 1760.

The major source of information on ritual development during the period 1730-1760 was in Europe, particularly France, where printed Expositions can be found from 1737. Carr (1971: xi) defines the two characteristics of the French Expositions as a narrative style which clearly demonstrates specific movements and procedures in the ceremonies and an emphasis on dining and toasting routines. Although there are clear variations in terminology between the French and English texts, in references to procedures, tools, clothing and equipment, the French texts also provide a visual source, showing details of plans of the lodge and a number of floor-drawings. These were present in various references to floor-drawings and tracing-boards in the English ritual of this period; the French Expositions, however, produced actual drawings in the text, accompanied by descriptions identifying each symbol depicted. The way in which such floor-drawings were used in the lodge is shown in *Fig 4*. These drawings which, originally, were literally drawn onto the floor of the lodge using chalk or charcoal, were later developed onto more permanent surfaces in the form of a lodge-cloth. In the early nineteenth-century, these cloths were transformed into tracing-boards which have been used ever since (*Fig 5 a & b*).

The year 1760 marked the start of another significant period of ritual development in England. The Expositions printed in the first five years of that decade were the most important and influential compared to those that followed, which lack any particularly original or significant additions. Several of the more influential ones include engravings of detailed collections of symbols from the three degrees, similar in style to those featured in the French rituals. According to Jackson (1986: 5), the most successful from this period was entitled *Three Distinct Knocks*, published in 1760, which purported to give the ceremonies of the 'Antients' who formed a rival Grand Lodge in 1751. In 1762 another Exposition was printed, called *Jachin and Boaz*, and together they were popularly used as 'aides-memoirs' until the end of the century.

FIG. 4

Print/Plate - French engraving by Bernigroth. 'Introduction of the Candidate in the Lodge'. The Grand Master is shown seated wearing a hat, the small table in front of him holds an open Gospel. The floor-cloth shows the symbols of the second and third degrees, for example, the two pillars marked 'J' and 'B', and the words 'Force' and 'Sagesse', meaning Strength and Wisdom. Under the Blazing Star is given 'Beaute'. Seven steps and the mosaic pavement are also evident. The candidate, blindfolded, with bared left breast and right knee is introduced by the Junior Warden.
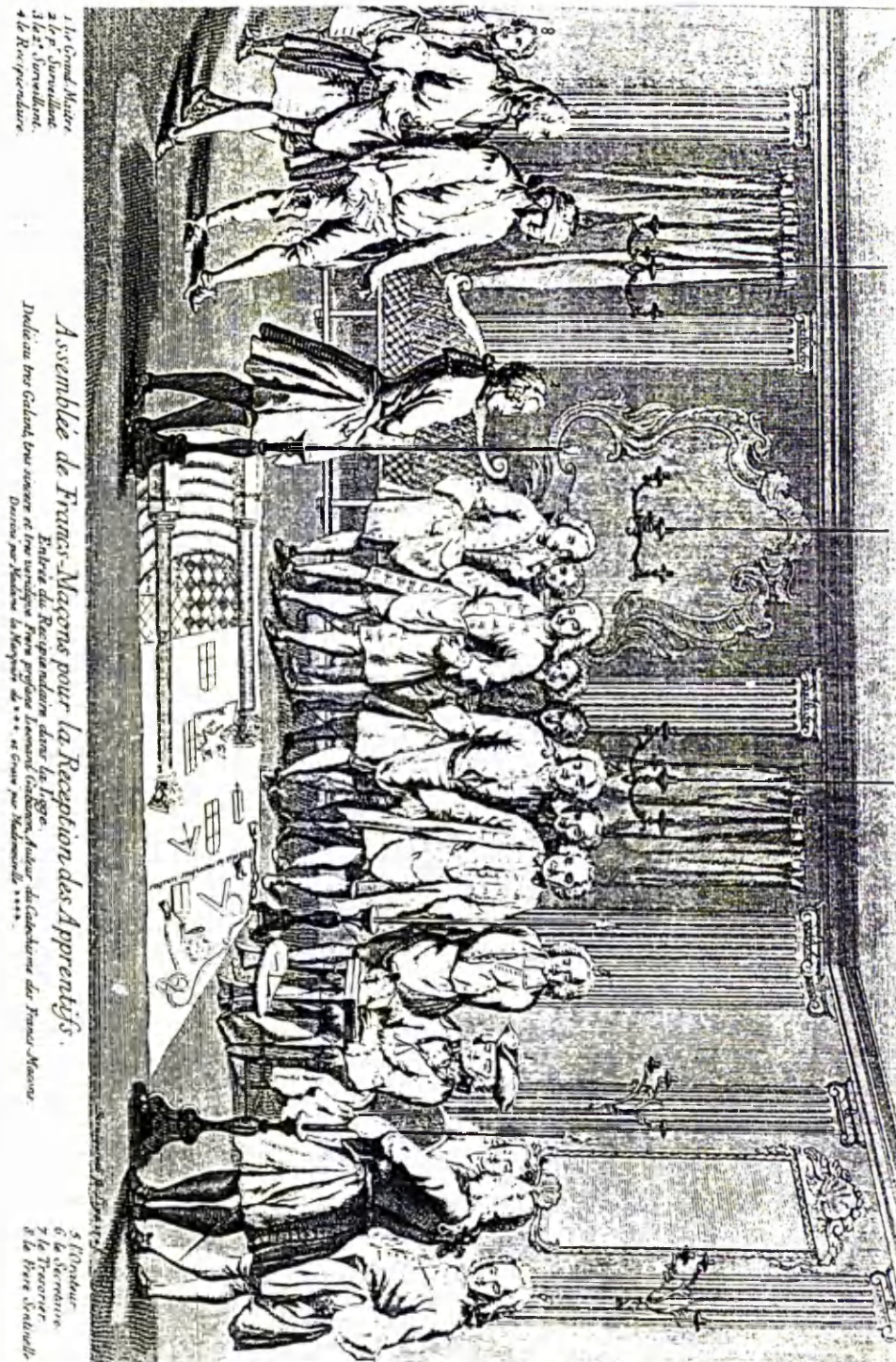
FIG. 5 (a)

Set of wooden Tracing Boards - designed and painted by J. Bowring, 1819

FIG. 5 (b)

Set of Tracing Boards - designed and painted by John Harris, 1847
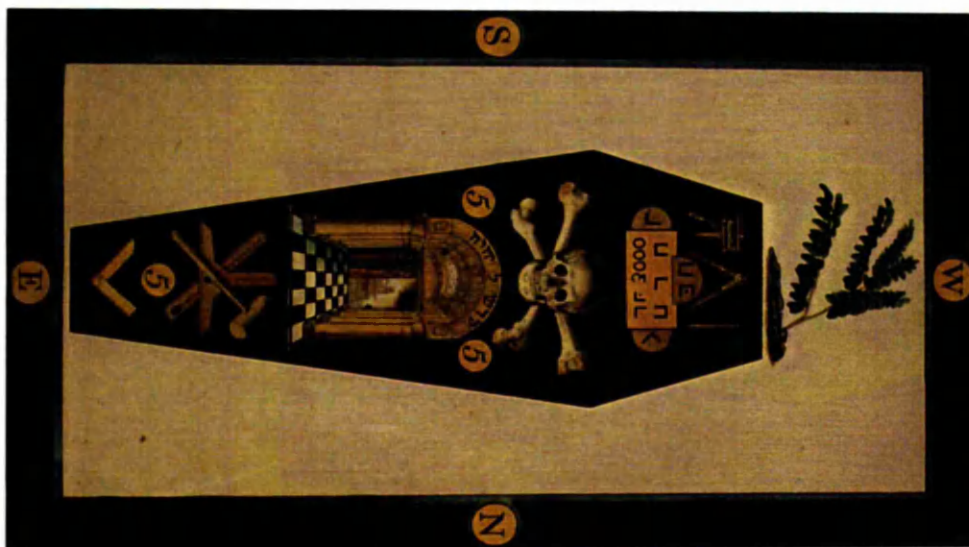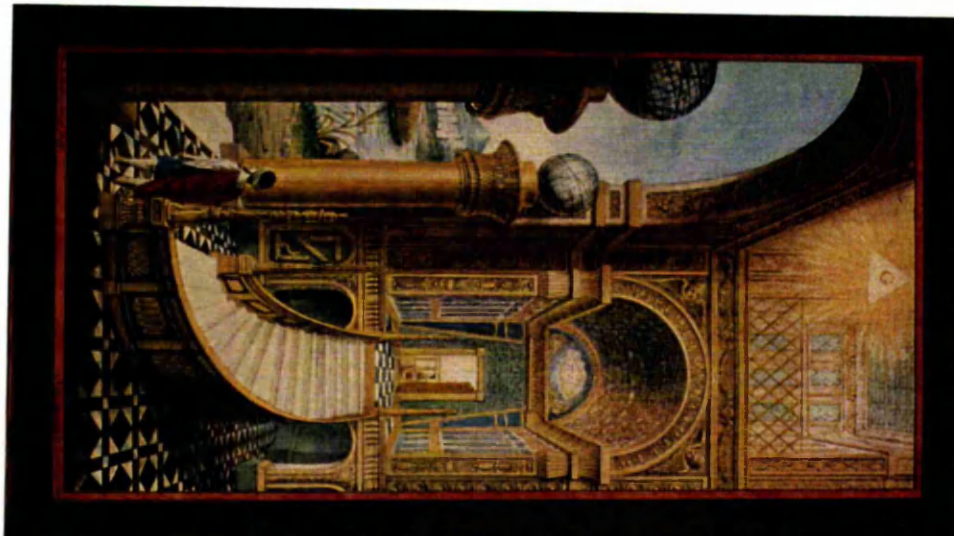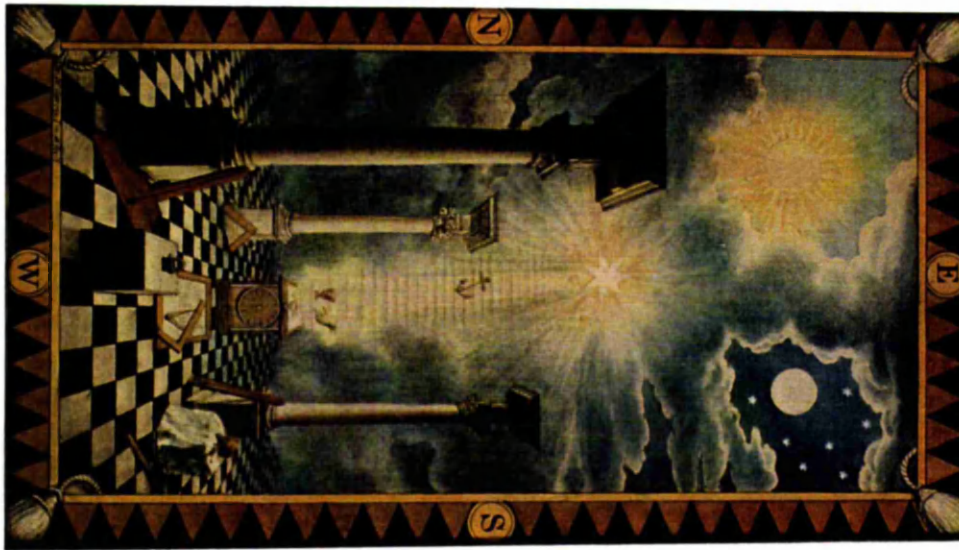
Having discussed the literary sources that will be applied in this chapter to establish the development of Masonic symbolism in eighteenth-century England, it is necessary to introduce the sources that will be employed as visual examples of symbols prominent in Craft Freemasonry at the time. An important point should be made here that there is a conspicuous absence of visual representations of Masonic symbolism before 1730, whereas symbols in written form are evident from 1696, with the earliest Exposition of the ritual. There appears to be no clear reason for a disparity in the time-scale between the emergence of written and visual sources of symbolism, and it is not the intention here to give a detailed analysis of all the possible reasons for this. It could be argued, however, that the gradual appearance of symbols in a visual form was the result of a change in the way the symbols essential to a particular ceremony were exhibited. Originally, symbols in the form of working tools, lodge furniture and what the candidate is shown and taught in the lodge appeared only temporarily. They were either drawn on the floor of the lodge or physically brought along, displayed during the meeting and taken away at the end. This was most likely done to minimise the chances of any 'secrets' or evidence of ritual practices being discovered. Floor-drawings and plans of the lodge are, however, an integral part of ritual working, and as the ritual and symbolism developed so the drawings would have required more detail. A more permanent way of visualising the symbols, therefore, would have become more practical and this led to the introduction of floor-cloths and tracing-boards.

The visual sources are an eclectic group when compared to the sources that provide the literary examples of symbolism and comprise frontispieces, jewels, certificates, engravings, aprons and gravestones. The collection of frontispieces and engravings used in this chapter provide some of the earliest cases of visualised symbols. The majority of visual sources used here can be described as functional, each having its own history and development, such as jewels, certificates and aprons.

One of the main uses of jewels, for example, is to demarcate the rank and office of various members in a lodge and they are traditionally hung from collars or chains; commemorative jewels, such as the founders jewel, festival and charity jewels, are generally worn on the breast. The simple emblems used on jewels of rank and office usually take the form of working tools, with a particular tool representing the officer to whom it is attached. For instance, the Master's jewel is a square; the Senior Warden's a level; the Junior Warden's a plumb-rule; the Treasurer's a key; the Secretary's two crossed pens; and the Deacon's a dove and olive branch. The type of jewels mentioned so far, according to Jones (1988: 467), date back to the 1720's. The majority of jewels used in this chapter are of plate and pierced metal depicting detailed designs of Masonic symbols and emblems. Jewels of this kind date from around the 1750's and 1760's, although there is a very early example seen in a photograph from a collection by Wallace Heaton, dated 1730 (**Visual 3**).

Another important visual source used in this chapter is certificates. Haunch (1969: 171-181) establishes that it is not until the middle of the eighteenth-century that evidence is found of actual certificates in use. The first certificates to be used were issued by private lodges, but as Grand Lodge administrations increased, a need for a centralised records system and a means of identifying the growing number of Masons was recognised. The first record of the issuing of a Grand Lodge certificate was in 1755 by the 'Moderns'; the date of the first engraved Grand Lodge certificate incorporating a pictorial design was 1757. The private lodge certificate proves to be the more interesting and original, showing a variety of different designs based on a number of themes. For example, allegorical (including subjects such as the Theological and Cardinal Virtues); architectural (featuring the Two Great Pillars of

King Solomon's Temple and the Five Noble Orders); emblematic (which incorporates emblems and symbols of different degrees, the Three Virtues and various inscriptions).

The last category of visual sources to be introduced here is that of the apron. One of the earliest representations of the Freemason's apron may be seen on the engraved portrait of Antony Sayer, the first Grand Master of the premier Grand Lodge in 1717, and on the frontispiece illustration of Anderson's first *Book of Constitutions* (**Visual 2**) in 1723. According to Worts (1961: 133), the apron is worn during any ceremonial procedure in the lodge, and the particular rank of the Mason is clearly displayed on the apron by different colours and emblems. For instance, a member of an ordinary Craft lodge will wear an apron surrounded by light blue ribbon, a Grand Officer's apron will be of dark blue, known as Oxford blue and gold. There is considerable significance attached to the choice of colour used, and Jones (1988: 471) suggests that, universally, blue symbolises immortality, eternity, chastity, and fidelity; pale blue, in particular, representing prudence and goodness. In the context of Freemasonry, Jones suggests that blue symbolises universal brotherhood and friendship.

Before 1731 leather was the traditional material used for aprons, after this date, however, different materials were adopted, for example, silk, satin, velvet, linen, and chamois-leather. Before 1760 elaborately-painted or embroided aprons came into fashion and remained so until 1813 with the Union of the two Grand Lodges; many of them were adorned with symbolic designs. This practice began in the 1730's and became widespread between 1740 and 1790; Indian ink, paint and embroidery were commonly used, and the more popular designs featured symbols such as the all-seeing eye, the two pillars and the square and compasses (Worts, 1961: 134).

The main part of this chapter shall now be addressed and will comprise an examination and comparison of various literary and visual sources of eighteenth - century England. These have been collected from the Grand Lodge of England and introduced above. It has already been acknowledged that the most important source of symbolism in written form are Expositions of the ritual. It can be added that the development of both the ritual and the symbolism contained within it often run parallel. An example of this may be seen in 1730 when the ritual reaches a peak of development in the form of a comprehensive three degree system, which is matched with an increase in symbolic detail, shown in the chart in Table A. Although the progression of the ritual is not the central focus here its importance cannot be ignored, and certain relevant details should be discussed. Between the years 1696 and 1765 Masonic ritual developed from a rather basic and simplified form to a more detailed and comprehensive one, particularly in relation to pass-words, grips and signs of recognition, steps taken by a candidate in each degree ceremony, and the various customs performed at the festivities after the meeting.

Other factors which are evident in the ritual as it developed through the eighteenth-century are, for instance, the gradual introduction of moral explanations, symbolised by various working tools, such as the square and compasses; terms like 'Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth' are also included. Variations in details concerning the number and type of jewels, lights, and tools are apparent, although after 1730 these become more uniform. References to architectural terms and orders become more detailed, so also to the seven liberal arts and sciences, particularly geometry. Upto 1730 Christian elements are clearly discernible with allusions to both the Old and New Testaments, such as the Trinity, the Twelve Apostles, Noah and the Tower of Babel. It is necessary, therefore, when examining Masonic symbolism of the

eighteenth-century to recognise how it was affected by developments in the ritual, and how closely the two are linked. In a sense the ritual provides the context in which the symbols may be understood, without it they have little meaning, it is what establishes them as being unique to Freemasonry.

For the purposes of this chapter the following study of the sources has been divided into five parts according to significant periods when literary and visual symbols first appeared, and developed throughout the eighteenth-century. Before focusing on the first period it is interesting to compare the earliest symbols from both sources, recorded in Table A, which provides details of literary symbols from 1696-1760, and Table B with details of visual symbols from 1617-1798. The first authenticated record of literary symbolism is from a Scottish ritual in manuscript form entitled, *Edinburgh Register House*, and dated 1696. Regarding the symbolism of the lodge it includes the direction, which is given as 'East-West', and the original lodge, stated to have been held in Solomon's Temple. The working tools that are featured are the 'Perpend esler', 'Broad ovall' and the square and compasses. The chequered floor also appears for the first time, referred to here as the 'Square Pavement'.

The earliest visual symbolism in this study is Masonic in theme, but questionable in its source. It is in the form of a painting discovered in a house in Kulross, Scotland, depicting the Judgement of King Solomon, which is dated *circa* 1617 (**Visual 1**). If it is Masonic, then it is the earliest discovered example of 'Masonic' pillars, although there are four; seven steps; a chequered floor, and Solomon himself. The common symbol that appears in both the literary and visual sources is the chequered floor.

The first part of the examination will concentrate on the period 1700-1730. This is characterised by a predominance of literary sources which prove significant in terms of symbolic detail, and the chart shown in Table A demarcates the specific years, from 1696-1760, when particular symbols first appear. In the period in question, the direction of the lodge given as 'East-West' in 1696 is explained in 1700, as representing the position of all holy temples. This is suggestive of the idea that each lodge is symbolic of the first archetypal lodge of King Solomon and is therefore regarded as 'holy'. In the same year the 'Height of the Lodge' is given as 'to Heaven', demonstrating that the word 'lodge' may also be understood in metaphorical and allegorical terms, rather than purely in the physical sense. This is also reflected in the question of a 'Perfect Lodge' being 'the centre of a true heart', indicative of the concept of the 'temple' existing, in a spiritual sense, inside the Mason himself. This is a biblical theme reflected in the New Testament, which states, " Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor., 3:16). The actual form of the lodge is given as an 'oblong square'.

Various symbols are added in this period to represent the 'lights' and 'jewels', such as the 'Danty Tassly', astler, plum-rule, chisel, mall, hammer and trowel. The sun, moon, and blazing star are also included, indicating the speculative nature of the ritual, which gradually becomes more apparent during this period. By 1727 the 'lights' have become 'Three Great Lights', represented by three candles symbolising the sun, moon and master. Various Old Testament themes are evident in Table A, for example, the year 1700 provides the earliest recorded use of the names 'Jachin' and 'Boaz', the two pillars at the porch-way of Solomon's Temple. They are given the attributes 'Strength' and 'Beauty' in 1724 and remain a significant feature throughout the century. Biblical themes continue throughout the period, seen in references to Jacob's Ladder, Aaron's Rod, a Seven-Branched Candle-Stick, and Noah. Explicit Christian or New Testament references are discernible by the year 1710 in the form of the Trinity and twelve 'lights' symbolising the twelve Apostles.

Such overt 'christianising' of the ritual is not a common feature and by 1730 has virtually disappeared. A dove and an anchor also appear in the year 1711 but are not evident in literary form again, and neither is Aaron's Rod.

Other important features of the period in question, discernible from Table A are the introduction of colour symbolism, specifically yellow and blue, the colour of the Master's habit, given as symbolising the compasses. The symbolic value of numbers is also evident, for example, an Exposition of the year 1726 prominently features the numbers three, five, six, twelve, and thirteen. The number three appears fairly consistently throughout the period, for example, in the form of three pillars and three steps. Important architectural aspects are evident for the first time, such as the five orders of architecture, namely, Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite; various architectural terms are also included, such as 'Base', 'Perpendicular', 'Diameter,' 'Square' and 'Circumference'.

The only example of symbolism in a visual form during this period, apart from the possible earliest in 1617 mentioned above, appears in 1723 in a frontispiece from Anderson's first *Book of Constitutions* (**Visual 2**). The engraving depicts the first visual example of the compasses, orders of architecture, Masonic aprons and gloves, and Euclid's 47th Proposition, which Anderson believed to be the "Foundation of all Masonry, sacred, civil, and military" (cited in Jones, 1988: 181). The Proposition is used on the Past Master's Jewel and according to Jones, one Masonic writer has suggested that it was a symbol of Pythagoras, "because he saw a strange and striking connection between the properties of a right-angled triangle and some great important truth, probably of a theosophical character"(cited in Jones, 1988: 441).

The second period to be discussed consists of one year only, and that is 1730. This date marks a very significant year in terms of ritual development, manifested in the Exposition entitled, *Masonry Dissected*, by Samuel Pritchard. This represented a stabilisation and inspired uniformity in both form and structure of Masonic ritual and was reprinted prolifically until 1760. It embodies the earliest example of a detailed three degree system clearly speculative in nature, and also the first appearance of a number of symbols in written form. The symbols taken from the literary source for this period are recorded in Table A, which shows the three pillars featured in the previous period have become the 'Three Great Pillars', which have come to symbolise the qualities, 'Wisdom', 'Strength', and 'Beauty'. Regarding the lodge itself its 'covering' is given as 'a Clouded Canopy', symbolising the sky. The jewels have become 'Immovable' and 'Moveable' and include a 'Trasel Board' and 'Rough Ashlar', both mentioned for the first time. The 'three lights' remain the same as they were in 1727, however, 'fixed lights' have been added, represented by windows positioned in the East, South, and West.

References concerning Solomon's Temple become more detailed in the year 1730 and include aspects such as the 'Middle Chamber' and 'Winding Stairs', both of which are features of the second, or Fellow-Craft degree. The Hiramic Legend, based around the story of the building of the Temple and the leading architect Hiram Abif, murdered for refusing to reveal the 'secrets' of a Master Mason, appears for the first time in such detail, and forms a crucial part of the third degree ceremony. The 'Sprig of Acacia' is also introduced and remains an important feature of the third degree throughout the century. The year 1730 marks the significant point when God is referred to as the 'Grand Architect', and the letter G is used to symbolise the 'Supreme Being' and the science of geometry. Geometric figures become a new feature of the ritual in this year, for instance, the 'Parallel Line', and the 'Point', 'Line', 'Superficies', and 'Solid'; the last four symbolising 'Four Principles'.

The example of visual representations of symbols during this period come in the form of two jewels (**Visual 3**), which depict a detailed number of speculative themes, evident in written form from 1700. For example, the sun, moon, blazing star, chequered floor, key, and ladder. It is interesting to note that after comparing the charts in Tables A and B, the jewels also include a number of symbols which have not appeared in written form, for example, the all-seeing eye, stars, a beehive, Euclid's 47th Proposition, the chequered floor, a five-branched candlestick, crossed feathers, and pen and ink. The last two may be interpreted as emblems of office. It should be emphasised that all the symbols mentioned here appear in visual form for the first time in 1730, except the chequered floor which is depicted in the painting of *circa* 1617 (**Visual 1**).

The working tools that are featured in visual form for the first time in this year are the trowel, mallet, plumb-line, gauge and plummet, level, hammer, and the square; the compasses appeared previously in 1723 (**Visual 2**). The significance of the square and compasses becomes apparent in 1730, demonstrated in the way that they are positioned. For example, on the reverse of the first jewel in **Visual 3** the compasses are shown lying on top of the square, a clearer example may be seen in **Visual 14**. This display is used continually throughout the eighteenth-century and becomes the primary emblem of Freemasonry. The square and compasses displayed in this manner can be seen in many of the visual examples used in this chapter, however, a slight change in their positioning reveals another purpose for their use; to symbolise the three degrees. For example, in **Visual 18** the obverse side of the jewel shows both points of the compasses on top of the square, which symbolises the third degree of Master Mason. The reverse of the jewel shows the two points of the compasses lying underneath the square, symbolising the first degree of Entered Apprentice. The position in **Visuals 17, 25, 26**, displays one point on top and one point underneath, representing the second degree of Fellow-craft.

The final observation concerning the symbols visualised in the jewels is the depiction of two pillars with globes on top of each, representing the two pillars of King Solomon's Temple. This contrasts to the three pillars that appear in the ritual, symbolising the qualities Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. The jewels exhibited in **Visual 3** comprise many of the basic symbols that are repeated in visual representations throughout the century. There are no obvious Christian examples, however, as were featured in literary form before 1730.

The third period of development in symbolism is between 1737 and 1751, in which the predominant literary sources were various French Expositions of the ritual. The reason for their use here is to fill the gap between the period 1730-1760 where, in England, there is little evidence of any work of significance in terms of ritual development being printed. The fact that much of what was written in France was clearly influenced by publications in England, it may be assumed that what appeared in France during these years may indicate parallel developments in England. The basic content of the French ritual is similar to that seen in England in 1730, it is interesting to note, however, any significant differences and unusual additions made in the French examples. These are clearly recorded in Table A. For instance, there are several inclusions of working tools such as, a 'Pointed Hammer,' a 'Pointed Cube,' a 'Spade,' 'Lime' and 'Brick', which can be seen on the chart in the years between 1738-1747. Other examples of additions are the candles, or 'lights', which have appeared in the English ritual and now placed in the form of a triangle in 1737. Old Testament features, such as the Tabernacle and the Ark of Covenant are apparent, particularly, according to Table A, in the year 1744. Greater detail concerning the Pillars of Solomon's Temple is given which corresponds to that

written in 'Kings'. For instance, in 1745 the two pillars are described as 'Bronze' with two 'Chapiters' decorated with 'Lilies and Pomegranates' on top. The winding staircase in 1745 is said to ascend by 'three,' 'five,' and 'seven' steps.

Additional features in the French ritual, not evident in England by 1730, are the concept of the 'Wisdom of the East,' where an Apprentice is shown to 'travel' from the West to the East to 'seek the Light', and where a Master travels from the East to the West to 'spread the Light'. Table A also reveals that in 1744 the seven Virtues are mentioned, and in 1747 the Three Divine Virtues are symbolised by three rungs of Jacob's Ladder (the Virtues appear prominently on English Craft certificates after 1757). The French Expositions of the ritual develop the term 'Grand Architect', used in England in 1730, into the 'Grand Architect of the Universe' in 1744, and feature additional symbols such as, a 'Yoke', 'Globe', 'Crowbar', 'Scales', and 'Sceptre' in 1747. Freemasons themselves are described as 'Sons of the Widow' in the year 1745, referring to the wife of the murdered Hiram, the latter being known in the French ritual as 'Adoniram.'

The majority of visual sources of the period 1737-1750 consist of plans of the lodge and lodge-drawings that accompany the French Expositions of the ritual (**Visuals 5-7, 9-11**), and also two engravings (**Visuals 4 and 8**). In general terms the French lodge-plans feature several symbols that are not evident in England upto this point, primarily due to the fact that such detailed drawings did not appear until later in the century. This can be determined by comparing the symbols listed in Table B in the years 1744-1751 to those before it. For example, the skull and crossed-bones depicted in 1744 (**Visuals 5b, 7b, 10b, 11b**); the letter G, seen on its own in 1745 (**Visual 7a**) and within a star in 1744 and 1751 (**Visuals 5a and 11a**); nine 'lights' in the form of candles instead of the usual three appear in 1745, 1747, and 1751 (**Visuals 7b, 10b, 11b**); a sphere is shown in 1745 (**Visual 7a**); tears surrounding the coffin are evident in 1744 (**Visual 5b**), in 1745 (**Visual 7b**), 1747 (**Visual 10b**), and in 1751 (**Visual 11b**); the two pillars are associated with the names Jachin and Boaz for the first time in visual form in 1744 (**Visual 5a**); the tracing-board and a rough and pointed cubed stone also appear for the first time.

An interesting feature of one of the Exposures in 1747, not apparent in England, is two figures: one representing Truth depicted holding a mirror and the other Harpocrates, a Greek philosopher recognised among the ancient Egyptians as the god of Silence and Mysteries, and the son of the sun and moon. The presence of several Old Testament themes is also a significant feature and is more apparent in the French visual sources than in the English. For example, the three lodge-plans included in a French Exposition of 1744 feature the Tabernacle, the Ark of Covenant, Moses, Aaron, the Pillars of Enoch, Noah's Ark, the Tower of Babel, the Menorah, and the name 'Jehovah'. Although some of these are mentioned in the English ritual they are not featured so obviously in visual form. The fact that they are so clearly evident in one French Exposure, in particular, may suggest that it was deliberately printed to mislead. A final point of interest to be noted is the use of several tools as emblems, or badges of office. For instance in 1751 (**Visual 11c**) the square is representative of the Master; the level represents the Senior Warden; and the plumb-rule the Junior Warden.

The plans of the lodge and lodge-drawings displayed in several of the French Expositions show a certain uniformity in the use and display of essential symbols, and provide a basic format for the drawings that accompany the English Expositions after 1760. The French drawings also demarcate specific details of the ritual in practise, such as the positioning of various officers in a lodge, the steps taken by the

candidate in the particular ceremony and the position of lodge furniture, such as the candles.

The two English examples of visual representations of symbols during the period 1737-1751 are in the form of engravings. The first appeared in a German translation of *The Pocket Companion* and *Constitutions* in 1738 (**Visual 4**) and is important for two reasons. The first, that it portrays a predominantly operative scene, demonstrated in features such as, classical architecture, a drawing board, compasses, an apron and Euclid's 47th Proposition. The second, that it also includes speculative elements, for example, the sun, moon, and stars. It is interesting to note that the grouping of the three tools, the square, level, and plumb-rule depicted in the fore-ground of the picture also appear in the second engraving. The significance of the group is discussed below.

The second engraving was featured as a frontispiece in *The Builder's Jewel* (**Visual 8**) in 1746. The work itself was written by Batty Langley, a prominent architect of the time, but the engraving includes several symbols that are clearly recognisable as Masonic. It is a significant example of a visual source of symbolism and features several symbols which appear in England for the first time. For instance, three pillars are clearly visible (although not the usual orders, Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian), and the letters 'W', 'S', and 'B' are written at the base of each pillar, signifying 'Wisdom', 'Strength', and 'Beauty'. The sun, moon, and Master Mason, which in literary form represent the three lights in a lodge, appear in this case to be associated with each of the three pillars. A tracing-board appears for the first time attached to the middle pillar, featuring the letter G at the centre of the blazing star; the cardinal points East, South, and West; and two dots with the letters 'J' and 'B', indicating the two pillars Jachin and Boaz.

The tools depicted in the engraving have appeared in 1730, the difference here, however, is that they are shown in two groups of three. The square, compasses, and Bible comprise of one group; the square, level, and plumb-rule, the other. The first group are often depicted on the Master's altar and this combination is fairly common in visual form; it is seen depicted on a jewel of 1754 and 1760 (**Visual 13 and 18**) and on aprons in 1790, 1792, and 1795 (**Visuals 31-33**). The second group becomes a prominent feature of several visual sources in this collection and is seen in 1754 (**Visual 12**), in 1760 (**Visual 17**) and 1776 (**Visual 28**). In the last two examples the square has been replaced by the compass. The final point to be made concerning this engraving is the inclusion of geometric shapes on the first pillar. These may be described as a point, line, circle, and solid or cube. This is significant because they also appear in literary form in 1730, symbolising four principles (see chart in Table A). The geometric forms appear again, visually, on a jewel in 1768 (**Visual 23**).

The fourth period, 1752-1760 is important, primarily, because it signifies the reappearance of English Expositions after a number of years in which none of any originality or significance were published. The one that will be used predominantly as a literary source and used in Table A, which remained the most influential well into the nineteenth-century, is entitled *Three Distinct Knocks*. In terms of the symbols used in this ritual, there are few of any great significance that have not appeared previously. The predominant features of development concern the form of the ritual, for instance, words, signs, gestures and dining procedures; the ritual itself is evidently more lengthy. Also included are explanations regarding the symbolism of tools, such as the 'Twenty-Four Inch Gauge' and the 'Common Gavel,' both featured for the first time. Explanations are also given for the meaning of several numbers that are used; the number three is described as a 'sacred number.'

There are areas of symbolic development that are worth noting. For example, a variation of the 'Form of the Lodge' is present in 1754, where it is described as a 'circle'. This appears to correspond to the adoption of the Tower of Babel as the 'archetypal' lodge, as opposed to the more common use of Solomon's Temple. Details of the Virtues are also apparent, for example, 'Faith', 'Temperance', 'Prudence' and 'Charity' are named in 1760. The three pillars featured in earlier Expositions of the ritual and which usually symbolise Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty, in 1760 symbolise the 'original' three Grand Masters, namely, Solomon, Hiram and Hiram Abiff.

The visual sources of the period are varied and include several new symbolic additions. For instance, the engraving shown in **Visual 12** is interesting as it portrays in a rather unusual way the important symbolic features of a Mason's lodge. It displays many common symbols that have appeared previously, such as the two pillars, chequered floor, a Bible, Euclid's 47th Proposition, the sun and working tools, such as the square, compasses, level, and plumb-rule. The new additions featured in the engraving are the celestial and terrestrial globes, the lewis keys, the maul and chisel.

There are some interesting features on several jewels of this period, for example, in 1754 (**Visual 13**) a plate jewel shows the Arms of the Masons, a Ruler, and Pen and Ink. A plate jewel, dated *circa* 1755 (**Visual 14**) depicts visually for the first time a pentagram, also known as the Seal of Solomon (seen again in 1785 in **Visual 30**), and a Sword/Dagger. The Virtues Faith, Hope, and Charity are anthropomorphisised in a certificate design known as the 'Three Graces' in 1759 (**Visual 15**). The three orders of architecture, namely, Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian are also featured for the first time. New additions to the jewels of 1759 and 1760 (**Visuals 16-18**) are: the letter G placed in a triangle within a star; an archway indicating the Sanctum Sanctorum; three steps; crossed keys, possibly emblems of office; three rungs of a ladder, symbolising the three Virtues Faith, Hope, and Charity; and a rope entwined around a sword.

The fifth and final period of symbolic development is between 1762-1800, which produced several examples of visual sources of symbolism, although there are no significant additions in literary form. All the sources that are included depict the common symbols evident from early in the century, such as the sun, moon, stars, two pillars, an eye, chequered floor, blazing star and G, a ladder, the square, compasses and other tools. A jewel dated *circa* 1765 (**Visual 19**) portrays several additions, for example, a heart, the letter G surrounded by five rays, an angel, and two hands coming together in a grip. The year 1766 produced the first English lodge-plan in a similar style to those produced in France in the 1740's (**Visual 20**). This reveals such details as the Master's chair with the Bible, square, and compasses placed on the altar in front, and the first appearance of a cable-rope, found in written form as early as 1700 (see chart in Table A).

A certificate issued in the year 1766 (**Visual 21**) depicts the five orders of architecture for the first time in visual form, and the four Cardinal Virtues - Fortitude, Prudence, Justice, and Temperance, symbolised by four women. A Scottish gravestone of 1769 (**Visual 24**) displays several Masonic symbols, such as the square and compasses, the sun, moon, stars, level, and plumb-rule. An early tracing-board of 1773 (**Visual 27**) contains several important symbolic elements, for instance, the winding stairs, and middle chamber with the letter G in the centre. These were portrayed in the Fellow-Craft degree, in written form, in 1730. A very significant symbol is depicted on this tracing-board, which may be regarded as one of the earliest examples of the point-

111

within-a-circle placed, in this case, within Euclid's 47th Proposition. Finally, a jewel of 1778 (**Visual 29**) contains the only visual representation, apart from 1617, of Solomon himself.

The last visual sources in the collection comprise of several Masonic aprons, which include examples of symbols from the additional degrees as well as from the Craft. The presence of non-Craft symbols shows the development and diversification of Freemasonry itself which, by the end of the eighteenth-century, had become an institution comprised of a variety of degrees, each with its own themes and symbols. There are several features of Craft symbolism depicted on the aprons that are worth noting. In 1790 the Ark of Covenant is displayed (**Visual 31**), apparent in written form in a French Exposition of 1744. The four Cardinal Virtues are indicated by the letters, 'P', 'T', 'J', 'F', in 1795 (**Visual 33**), and in the same year (**Visual 34**) the letter G is featured within a pentagram. An apron in the year 1798 (**Visual 35**) features for the first time the all-seeing eye within a triangle, and the Arms of the Antients.

In conclusion, after examining a collection of literary and visual sources of Masonic symbolism from eighteenth-century England, several deductions can be made. There appears to be no clear pattern of correlation between the two types of sources. It is evident, however, that symbols are apparent in written form much earlier than in visual form. The important climax in terms of ritual and subsequent symbolic development may be seen in the years 1730 and 1760. In terms of visual symbols, which are not so clearly defined, such progression is less apparent but can be seen to a certain extent in the history of particular sources, such as the jewel, certificate, and apron.

An important detail concerning the visual sources included on Table B, which charted the visual symbols, was a record of symbols found in a particular period which had been depicted on sources from previous years. From this inclusion it is possible to note those symbols most predominantly used, visually, and which may be deemed the most popular, or important in England at the time. For example, in the first few decades of the eighteenth-century the compass, sun, moon, level and square are repeatedly evident. From 1750 onwards the letter G, the eye and chequered floor are more prolific. The symbols which appear regularly are the square, compass, Euclid's 47th proposition, the sun, moon, stars, plumb, level and trowel, two pillars and the chequered floor. These symbols are a consistent feature of visual sources throughout the eighteenth-century.

To draw attention to points of interest concerning the occurrence of Masonic symbols in both the literary and visual sources the chart in Table C groups the symbols into themes, for example Solomon's Temple, Architecture and Working Tools, and corresponds these to the years 1617-1798. The chart shows when particular symbols were first used in Freemasonry, and also which themes were most prevalent. It can be seen from Table C that the earliest appearance of Masonic symbols occurs within the theme of Solomon's Temple, Working Tools and Numbers. In *circa* 1617 symbols relating to the Temple of Solomon included four pillars, seven steps, a chequered floor, and Solomon himself; in 1696 a reference to a porch is found. The earliest working tools appear in the year 1696, namely, a 'Perpend esler', a 'Broad ovall', square and compasses. Number symbolism is apparent as early as *circa* 1617 in the form of four pillars and seven steps, and in 1696, as three lights and three jewels. The chequered floor, square and compasses and the numbers three and seven, continue to be a strong feature of Masonic symbolism throughout the eighteenth-century.

To concentrate on the themes individually, Table C shows Solomon's Temple to be a predominant theme, with particular development occurring between the years 1730 and 1760, when specific aspects of the Temple became an intrinsic part of the three degrees. One of the more ubiquitous symbols relating to Solomon's Temple, the two pillars Jachin and Boaz, appear in the early 1700's. The symbolic theme of Architecture is prominent from early in the eighteenth-century, particularly, between the years 1700 and 1720. The first architectural symbols appear in the form of three pillars, becoming more detailed in the years between 1720 and 1730, where the five orders are seen. These include various architectural features such as, 'Base', 'Perpendicular' and 'Diameter'. In 1730 the 'Three Great Pillars' are shown to symbolise the qualities Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, and between 1750 and 1760 the three orders are identified.

The Working Tools provide a predominant symbolic theme in the eighteenth-century, and from Table C appear to develop significantly in the years between 1720 and 1750; by 1770 there are no new additions. In 1726 the 'tools of a freemason' are given as the hammer and trowel; by 1730 specific tools are associated with each of the degrees. Speculative symbols are an intrinsic feature of Masonic symbolism throughout the eighteenth-century, and are some of the most frequently occurring, for example, the sun, moon, stars, all-seeing eye, letter G and blazing star. Specific development of speculative symbols, according to the table, occurs between the years 1730 and 1760, where the majority appear for the first time. The earliest example of a speculative symbol is the sun and blazing star in the early 1700's, and the moon in the 1720's. The latest occurrence of symbols within this theme is in the period 1780-1798, in the form of the all-seeing eye in a triangle.

The themes of Colours and Numbers are a significant element of Masonic Symbolism in eighteenth-century England, although the appearance of number symbolism is more frequent than that of colour; yellow and blue occur only once, between 1700 and 1720. The most important numbers, and those which are used most often, are three, five and seven, in the form of lights, jewels, pillars, steps, points and candlesticks. The number that may be described as the most predominant is three. Geometry is important, not only as a theme, but in itself, evident in the numerous references to its significance in Masonry - the 'Royal Art' - in which it is regarded as the most essential of the seven liberal arts and sciences. In this context it is found as early as the first decade of the eighteenth-century, and is also an important feature of the second degree, where it is represented by the letter G. Some of the more common geometrical figures that are found in Masonic symbolism are the circle, the triangle, the parallel line, pointed cube and Euclid's 47th Proposition; the latter is a common visual symbol.

The theme of the Virtues is not as regular a feature of Masonic symbolism as some of those mentioned above. The years in which the Virtues first appear are between 1740 and 1750, in the form of the three divine virtues Faith, Hope and Charity, symbolised by three rungs of a ladder. Between the years 1760 and 1770 the four cardinal virtues appear, which become a common feature of private lodge certificates.

The final themes that can be regarded as a significant characteristic of Masonic symbolism during the eighteenth-century are both the Old and New Testament. It is clear from the chart that neither appear after the period 1740-1750, although symbols within the theme of the Old Testament continue throughout the century in the form of Solomon's Temple. Symbolism of the New Testament does not appear to be as common a feature as that of the Old Testament, and in the years where it does occur, before 1730, usually takes the form of references to the Trinity and the Apostles.

However, Saint John and the Lodge of St. John are continually referred to in the ritual.

The intention of this chapter, therefore, has been to examine a number of visual and literary sources containing Masonic symbolism, to establish when particular symbols first appeared and how these developed, from the end of the seventeenth-century, through to the end of eighteenth-century England. The sources used for literary examples of symbolism have been Expositions of the ritual, the earliest of which date from 1696-1762. There are several aspects of Masonic ritual that may be regarded as 'symbolic', such as the movements and positioning of the candidate and various signs and gestures; the ritual itself can also be described as a symbolic act. For the purposes of this chapter, however, it has not been necessary to provide a detailed analysis of Masonic ritual. The majority of symbols chosen have been those which may be represented visually, and not a symbolic movement or word.

The sources which most closely depict the symbols that form an intrinsic part of the ritual are the lodge-plans and drawings. The other visual sources of Masonic symbolism used in this chapter, such as jewels, frontispieces and certificates portray the basic symbols of Freemasonry, for example: the square and compasses, the sun, moon, stars, chequered floor and the two pillars. The symbols which have been described as literary are essentially informative and revealing, playing a crucial role in conveying the lessons, values and meaning of the ritual. Visual symbols, as they have been shown here, also have this role but have been used extensively for decorative purposes, particularly from the beginning of the nineteenth-century onwards.

Finally, it is important to point out that many examples of English Masonic symbolism, examined in this chapter, are not particularly original or even peculiar, but comprise several universal motifs. For instance, the use of Old Testament themes such as Solomon's Temple, the two pillars, and the journey from the Middle Chamber into the Holy of Holies are also a prominent feature of Kabbalah, Alchemy, and popular literature of seventeenth-century England. Symbols such as the sun, the moon and the stars, the all-seeing eye, a ladder, and a chequered floor are certainly not exclusive to Freemasonry. It is the way in which these symbols are used in Masonic ritual and ceremony that distinguishes them from their use in a non-Masonic context. The purpose with which many of these symbols are endowed, and the interpretations that are given them, is what establishes and defines them as Masonic.

TABLE A

TABLE A
Literary Symbols (1696-1760)

1696	1700	1710/11	1723	1724
DIRECTION OF LODGE = EAST, WEST; FIRST LODGE = PORCH OF KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE; 3 LIGHTS: NORTH-EAST = MASTER MASON SOUTH-WEST = WARDEN EAST = SETTERCROFT; 3 JEWELS: PERPENDESLER, SQUARE PAVEMENT, BROAD OVALL; KEY = GREEN DIVOT & LAP OF LIVER & TONGUE & BONE BOX; OATH = GOD, ST. JOHN, SQUARE & COMPASS	JACHIN & BOAZ; DIRECTION OF LODGE = AS ALL HOLY TEMPLES; HEIGHT OF LODGE = TO HEAVEN; 3 LIGHTS: SUN, MASTER, [SQUARE]; 3 JEWELS: [SQUARE PAVEMENT], BLAZING STAR, DANTY TASSLEY; CABLE ROPE; TOWER OF BABYLON	TRINITY; 7 LIBERAL SCIENCES & GEOMETRY; NOAH; HIRAM; EUCLID; 3 PILLARS: [SQUARE], [COMPASS], BIBLE; 2 LIGHTS: SUNRISE & SETTING; MASTER'S HABIT = YELLOW & BLUE; JACOB'S LADDER; 3 RUNGS; GOLDEN DORE OF TEMPLE = SANCTUM SANCTORUM; DOVES; AARON'S ROD; MENORAH; ANCHOR; MORALS OF SQUARE & COMPASS	PILLARS OF GOOD FELLOWSHIP = TACITURNITY, CONCORD; VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT 5 ORDERS OF ARCHITECTURE: TUSCAN, DORIC, IONIC, COMPOSITE, CORINTHIAN; 4 JEWELS: [SQUARE], ASTLER, DIAMOND, COMMON SQUARE; ARCH = RAINBOW	PILLARS = STRENGTH & STABILITY OF CHURCH 3 POINTS OF A MASON: FRATERNITY, FIDELITY, TACITY (brotherly love, relief and truth); ORDERS OF ARCHITECTURE = BASE, PERPENDICULAR, DIAMETER, SQUARE, CIRCUMFERENCE; 12 LIGHTS: FATHER, SON, HOLY GHOST, [SUN], MOON [MASTER MASON], [SQUARE] RULE, PLUM, LINE, MELL, CHISEL; JACHIN = STRENGTH BOAZ = BEAUTY

1738	1740	1742	1744	1745
[FRENCH EXPOSITION] ROUGH STONE; POINTED HAMMER; SCIENCE OF ARCHITECTURE = POINT, LINE, OUTSIDE CORNER, SOLID	3 GRAND LIGHTS & GOSPE BADGE OF A MASON = WHITE APRON	[FRENCH EXPOSITION] MOSAIC PALACE; INDENTED TUFT; STAR-SPANGLED CANOPY; TRACING STONE	[FRENCH EXPOSITION] LODGE COVERING = CELESTIAL CANOPY SPANGLED WITH GOLDEN STARS; HOW MASTERS TRAVEL = EAST-WEST TO SPREAD THE LIGHT; APPRENTICES TRAVEL = WEST-EAST; STAR WITH 5 RAYS IN A CIRCLE, MAN IN THE STAR; MENTION OF 7 DEGREES EG. MAITRES ECOSSAIS; STORE OF STONES - LIVING & POLISHED; GLOBE OF EARTH; GREAT ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE; TOWER OF BABEL; 7-BRANCHED CANDLE-STICK = 7 VIRTUES; TABERNACLE; ARK OF COVENANT; LODGE = 9 MASONS	[FRENCH EXPOSITION] BRONZE PILLARS = 2 CHAPITERS DECORATED WITH LILIES & POMEGRANATES; WINDING STAIRS = 3, 5, 7; ADONIRAM'S TOMB = GOLD MEDAL TRIANGLE ENGRAVED WITH 'JEOVA'; LIME, SPADE & BRICK = FREEDOM, CONSTANCY & ZEAL; FREEMASONS = SONS OF THE WIDOW

TABLE A
Literary Symbols (1696-1760)

1725	1726	1727	1730	1737
MASTER'S POST = EAST WINDOW; WARDEN'S POST = WEST WINDOW; RIGHT PILLAR = JEHOVAH	PERFECT LODGE = CENTR OF A TRUE HEART; 12 LIGHTS = APOSTLES; LEGEND OF NOAH AND HIS RAISING; TOOLS OF A FREEMASON = HAMMER & TROWEL	5 POINTS IN THE SQUARE: [SQUARE]=MASTER UNDER GOD, LEVEL, PLUMB -RULE, HAND-RULE,GAGE; 3 JEWELS: [SQUARE PAVEMENT], DINTED ASHLAR, BROACHED DORNAL; 3 LIGHTS: SOUTH-EAST, SOUTH, SOUTH-WEST; 3 LEVELS: [SUN], SEA, [THE LEVEL]; THREE GREAT LIGHTS = [SUN], [MOON], [MASTER-MASON]; FORM OF LODGE = OBLON SQUARE	3 GREAT PILLARS = WISDOM, STRENGTH, BEAUTY; COVERING OF LODGE = CLOUDED CANOPY; FURNITURE = [MOSAIC PAVEMENT], [BLAZING STAR] INDENTED TARSEL; JEWELS = MOVEABLE & IMMOVEABLE - EG. TRASEL BOARD, ROUGH ASHLER; 3 LIGHTS =CANDLESTICKS: [SUN], [MOON], [MASTER-MASON]; FIXED LIGHTS = EAST, SOUTH, WEST WINDOWS; 4 PRINCIPLES: POINT, LINE, SUPERFICIES, SOLID; SERVE MASTER - CHALK, CHARCOAL, EARTHEN PAN; LETTER G; MIDDLE CHAMBER; WINDING STAIRS; GRAND ARCHITECT; PARALLEL LINE; HIRAMIC LEGEND; SPRIG OF ACACIA	[FRENCH EXPOSITION] FLOOR-DRAWING - CRAYON 3 LIGHTED CANDLES ARRANGED IN A TRIANGLE

1747	1750	1751/54	1760
[FRENCH EXPOSITION] BLAZING STAR = LIGHT OF NATURE; YOKE = SUBMISSION; CROSSED SWORDS = COURAGE; GLOBE, CROWBAR & HANDCART = HOW LABOUR AND GOODS ARE SHARED; PAIR OF SCALES = JUSTICE; SCEPTRE = AUTHORITY; FLOOR-DRAWING = A LION, FOX & A MONKEY; WIDOW'S CORD; [JACOB'S LADDER] = 3 RUNGS=3 DIVINE VIRTUES; POINTED CUBE; HARPOCRATES; WOMAN WITH MIRROR = TRUTH	WHAT A MASON 'SEES' IN THE LODGE = TRUTH, THE WORLD & JUSTICE	3 = A SACRED NUMBER; [LETTER G] = GLORY, GRANDEUR, GEOMETRY & GOD; GOLD SIGNET = A RING; NOACHIDAE; FORM OF THE LODGE = CIRCLE (Tower of Babylon)	VIRTUES = FAITH, CHARITY, TEMPERANCE, PRUDENCE PATIENCE; WORKING TOOLS OF THE ENTERED APPRENTICE = 24 INCH GAUGE, [SQUARE] & COMMON GAVEL; 3 = GRANDMASTERS; 5 = SENSES; 7 = LIBERAL SCIENCES; 11 = APOSTLES; CABLE TOW; 3 PILLARS = SOLOMON, HIRAM, HIRAM ABIFF

TABLE B

TABLE B
Visual Symbols (1617-1798)

1617	1723	1730 - 1738	1744	1745 - 1747	1751
[VISUAL 1]	[VISUAL 2]	[VISUALS 3&4]	[VISUALS 5&6]	[VISUALS 7-10]	[VISUAL 11]
4 PILLARS; 7 STEPS; CHEQUERED FLOOR; KING SOLOMON	CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE; COMPASSES; APRON & GLOVES; EUCLID'S 47TH PROPOSITION	2 PILLARS; GLOBES; SUN; MOON; STARS; ALL-SEEING EYE; BEE HIVE; ACACIA; KEY; TROWEL; BIBLE; MALLET; PLUMB-LINE; GAUGE & PLUMMET; ENTRANCE TO TEMPLE; 5-BRANCHED CANDLESTICK; COFFI STEPS; LADDER; BLAZING STAR; LEVEL; ARCHWAY; HAMMER; CROSSED FEATHERS; PEN & INK SQUARE. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] 47th proposition; compasses; chequered floor. **1738** [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] 47th propostion; compasses; grouping of the square, level & plumb-rule; sun; moon stars.	2 PILLARS = JACHIN & BOAZ; WINDOWS IN THE WEST, SOUTH & EAST; TRACING - BOARD; LETTER G INSIDE A STAR; ROUGH STONE; POINTED CUBE STONE; INDENTED TUFT; 3 LIGHTS=3 CANDLES; ALTAR; 'FORCE', SAGRESSE', 'BEAUTE' JEHOVA; SKULL & X-BONES; TABERNACLE ARK OF COVENANT; CHERUBIM; MOSES; AARON; PILLARS OF ENOCH; NOAH'S ARK; TOWER OF BABEL; TEARS; MENORAH; TRIANGLE; EARTHEN PAN. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] chequered floor; star; plumb-line; level; square & compasses; trowel; 7 steps.	3 DOORS TO THE TEMPLE: WEST, SOUTH & EAST; DOOR TO INNER CHAMBER; SPHERE; ALTAR & BIBLE & GAVEL; 9 LIGHTS; [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] 2 pillars = jachin&boaz 7 steps; chequered floor; hammer; square; tracing board; windows; level; plumb; rough & pointed stone; trowel; blazing star; sun; moon; compass; indented tuft; 3 lights; coffin; skull & x-bones; jehova; tears; acacia. **1746** 3 ORDERS OF ARCHITECTURE = WISDOM, STRENGTH, BEAUTY, + SUN, MOON & MASTER MASON; POINT; LINE; CIRCLE; CUBE; NOS; 3, 5, 7; CARDINAL POINTS = TRACING BOARD & STAR & LETTER G. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] square; compass; level; plumb - line. **1747** PLAN OF TEMPLE OF SOLOMON; MASTER'S CHAIR; HARPOCRATES & TRUTH. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] as above (1745)	JACHIN = PILLAR OF APPRENTICES; BOAZ = PILLAR OF FELLOWS; TOMB OF ADONIRAM; CROSSED SWORDS; EMBLEMS OF OFFICE: SQUARE = MASTER, LEVEL = SENIOR WARDEN, PLUMB-RULE = JUNIOR WARDEN. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] indented border; altar & bible; hammer; compasses; blazing star; rough & pointed cubed stones; level; square; trowel; letter G; steps;chequered floor; tracing -board; sun; moon; skull & x-bones; 9 lights; windows; tears.

TABLE B
Visual Symbols (1617-1798)

1754 - 1759	1760 - 1765	1766 - 1770	1773-1785	1790 - 1798
[VISUALS 12-16]	[VISUALS 17-19]	[VISUALS 20-26]	[VISUALS 27-30]	[VISUALS 31-35]
CELESTIAL & TERRESTIAL GLOBES; MAUL; CHISEL; ARMS OF THE MASONS; RULER; LEWIS KEYS. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] sun; square & compass; plumb-line; level; chequered floor; 2 pillars; 47th proposition; 3 lights = 3 candles; hammer; moon; stars; eye; coffin trowel; pen & ink. **1755** PENTAGRAM; SWORD/ DAGGER. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] sun; eye; moon; stars; square & compass; acacia; trowel; maul. **1759** VIRTUES: FAITH,HOPE, CHARITY; ANGEL; ORDERS: DORIC, IONI CORINTHIAN; SANCTUM SANCTORM G IN A TRIANGLE. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] group of tools = level, plumb, square & compass; 2 pillars; sun; coffin; ladder; eye; maul & stone; sword/ dagger; bible & square & compass; 47th propostion.	3 RUNGS OF LADDER; CROSSED KEYS; 2 HANDS IN A GRIP; SWORD & ROPE/ SERPENT? [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] 3 candles; sun; eye; stars; moon; trowel; level;2 pillars & globes; plumb-line & level & compass; bible; hammer; cheq. floor; square; ladder; 47th proposition; crossed feathers. **1765** 5 RAYS OF A STAR SURROUNDING THE LETTER G; ARCHWAY; HEART. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] eye; sun; moon; stars; level; square; compass 3 candles; 2 pillars; plumb-line; ladder; dagger in hand; hammer; trowel; 2 hands.	5 ORDERS OF ARCHITECTURE; 4 CARDINAL VIRTUES: FORTITUDE, PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, TEMPERANCE; LETTE G IN A CIRCLE WITHIN A TRIANGLE. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] master's chair & altar; sun; moon; square & compass; G & star; hammer; maul; level; plumb; rough stone & pointed cube; ruler; coffin; skull & x-bones; acacia; 2 pillars = J & B 3 steps; trowel; mosaic floor; indented tuft; cable tow; crossed feathers; triangle & circle & square. **1768** [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] sun; moon; ladder & 3 rungs; bible; altar; ruler level; plumb; compass; eye; square; crossed feathers; 47th proposition; coffin; 2 hands; point, line, circle & square. **1769** [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] square; compass; moon; sun; stars; ladder; plumb; 47th proposition; 2 pillars; level; eye; crossed feathers; hand & dagger. **1770** [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] eye; sun; moon; square & compass; G; level; plumb; ruler; 47th proposition; maul; trowel; x - feathers.	PLAN OF MIDDLE CHAMBER; WINDING STAIRS; POINT-WITHIN A-CIRCLE. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] square & compass; 47th proposition; cheq. floor; 2 pillars; letter G & star. **1776** HEART [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] eye; stars; sun; moon; 2 pillars; ruler; maul; globes; level; 3 rungs of ladder; trowel; plumb line; key; hammer; apron; square & compass; compass & level & plumb; crossed feathers; coffin & x- bones; 3 lights = 3 candles; sword & rope; bible; chequered floor. **1778** SOLOMON WEARING AN APRON HOLDING COMPASS OVER A GLOBE - HANDING A SCROLL TO MINERVA. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] stars; sun; moon; 2 pillars; square & compass. **1785** [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] 5 orders of architecture pentagram; 3 virtues: faith, hope & charity; square & compass & bible; 3 rungs of ladder cubed stone; plumb- line.	[SEEN PREVIOUSLY] sun; moon; stars; eye; ladder; levels; crossed feathers; cheq. floor; ark of covenant; 2 pillars; acacia; crossed keys; 47th proposition; plumb; square & compass & bible; trowel; maul. **1792** [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] sun; moon; stars; eye; 2 pillars & globes; 3 steps; square & compass & bible; trowel; plumb; level. **1795** [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] sun; moon; eye; stars; 2 pillars; coffin; 3 rungs crossed keys; sword & rope; trowel; maul; 4 virtues: 'P. T. J. F'; beehive; letter G in pentagram. **1798** ARMS OF THE ANTIENTS; ALL-SEEING EYE IN A TRIANGLE. [SEEN PREVIOUSLY] faith, hope & charity; sun; moon; stars; cheq. floor; 3 candles; plumb; level; square & compass & bible.

TABLE C

TABLE C
Literary and Visual Symbols in Themes (1617-1798)

THEMES	1617/1696	1700-1719	1720-1729	1730-1739
SOLOMON'S TEMPLE	4 PILLARS; 7 STEPS; CHEQUERED FLOOR; KING SOLOMON; PORCH	JACHIN & BOAZ; GOLDEN DORE (of the sanctum sanctorum)	JACHIN = strength BOAZ = beauty	MIDDLE CHAMBER; WINDING STAIRCASE; HIRAMIC LEGEND; ACACIA; 2 PILLARS = jachin & boaz GLOBES; ENTRANCE TO THE TEMPLE; COFFIN
ARCHITECTURE	4 PILLARS	3 PILLARS; 3 STEPS	5 ORDERS OF ARCHITECTURE: TUSCAN, DORIC, IONIC COMPOSITE, CORINTHIAN; ARCH (rainbow); ORDERS = BASE, SQUARE, PERPENDICULAR, DIAMETER, CIRCUMFERENCE	3 GREAT PILLARS = wisdom, strength, beauty; SCIENCE OF ARCHITECTURE = POINT, LINE, OUTSIDE CORNER, SOLID; ARCHWAY
WORKING TOOLS	PERPEND ESLER; BROAD OVALL; SQUARE; COMPASS	CABLE ROPE; DANTY TASSLEY	APRON & GLOVES; ASTLER; DIAMOND; COMMON SQUARE; RULE; PLUMB; LINE; MELL; CHISEL; HAMMER; TROWEL; LEVEL; PLUMB-RULE; GAGE; DINTED ASHLER; BROACHED DORNAL	INDENTED TARSEL; TRASEL BOARD; ROUGH ASHLAR; CHALK; CHARCOAL; EARTHEN PAN; ROUGH STONE; POINTED HAMMER; MALLET; PLUMMET
SPECULATIVE	KEY	SUN; BLAZING STAR	MOON; PERFECT LODGE = a true heart	ALL-SEEING EYE; BEEHIVE; STARS; CROSSED FEATHERS; PEN & INK
NUMBERS & COLOURS	3 LIGHTS; 3 JEWELS; 4 PILLARS; 7 STEPS	2 LIGHTS; 3 STEPS; YELLOW & BLUE (the Master's habit)	4 JEWELS; 3 POINTS OF A MASON; 12 LIGHTS; 5 POINTS IN THE SQUARE; 3 LEVELS; 3 GREAT LIGHTS	3 CANDLESTICKS = 3 lights; 4 PRINCIPLES; 5- BRANCHED CANDLESTICK
GEOMETRY		7 LIBERAL SCIENCES & GEOMETRY	EUCLID'S 47TH PROPOSITION; OBLONG SQUARE (form of the lodge)	LETTER G; PARALLEL LINE; CANDLES ARRANGED IN A TRIANGLE
VIRTUES		ANCHOR/HOPE		
OLD TESTAMENT		TOWER OF BABYLON; AARON'S ROD; JACOB'S LADDER; MENORAH; NOAH; HIRAM; BIBLE; DOVES	VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT; JEHOVAH = the right pillar LEGEND OF NOAH AND HIS RAISING	GRAND ARCHITECT
NEW TESTAMENT	ST. JOHN	TRINITY	FATHER; SON; HOLY GHOST; 12 LIGHTS = apostles	

119

TABLE C
Literary and Visual Symbols in Themes (1617-1798)

1740-1749	1750-1759	1760-1769	1770-1779	1780-1798
BRONZE PILLARS; 2 CHAPITERS + LILIES & POMEGRANATES; 3 DOORS TO TEMPLE - WEST, SOUTH, EAST; DOOR TO INNER CHAMBER	JACHIN = PILLAR OF APPRENTICES; BOAZ = PILLAR OF FELLOWS; TOMB OF ADONIRAM; SANCTUM SANCTORUM		SOLOMON WEARING AN APRON, HOLDING COMPASSES OVER A GLOBE, HANDING A SCROLL TO MINERVA	
	3 ORDERS = DORIC, IONIC, CORINTHIAN	3 PILLARS = SOLOMON, HIRAM, HIRAM ABIFF		
LIVING & POLISHED STONES; LIME; SPADE; BRICK; CROWBAR; HAND-CART; GAVEL; TRACING BOARD	RULER; LEWIS KEYS	24 INCH GAUGE; COMMON GAVEL; CABLE TOW		
GLOBE OF EARTH; STAR WITH 5 RAYS IN A CIRCLE- MAN IN STAR; YOKE; CROSSED SWORDS; SCALES; SCEPTRE; LETTER G IN A STAR; SKULL & CROSS BONES; TEARS; SPHERE	CELESTIAL & TERRESTIAL GLOBES; PENTAGRAM; SWORD/ DAGGER; LETTER G IN A TRIANGLE; CROSSED KEYS; SWORD & ROPE; 2 HANDS IN GRIP	5 RAYS OF A STAR SURROUNDING THE LETTER G; HEART; G IN A CIRCLE WITHIN A TRIANGLE		ALL-SEEING EYE IN A TRIANGLE
STEPS OF WINDING STAIRCASE = 3, 5, 7; 9 LIGHTS = 9 MASONS IN A LODGE	3 = SACRED NUMBER	3 GRANDMASTERS 5 SENSES 7 LIBERAL SCIENCES 11 APOSTLES		
POINTED CUBE; POINT, LINE, CIRCLE, CUBE (SOLID)	CIRCLE (form of the lodge)		POINT-WITHIN-A-CIRCLE	
7 VIRTUES; 3 RUNGS OF LADDER = 3 DIVINE VIRTUES: FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY; WOMAN WITH MIRROR = TRUTH		FAITH; TEMPERANCE; PRUDENCE; PATIENCE; CHARITY; 4 CARDINAL VIRTUES: FORTITUDE, PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, TEMPERANCE		
GREAT ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE; TABERNACLE; ARK OF COVENANT; MOSES; AARON; CHERUBIM; PILLARS OF ENOCH				

PAINTING OF THE JUDGEMENT OF SOLOMON, FIFE. REPRINTED IN BAIGENT
(1993: 155)
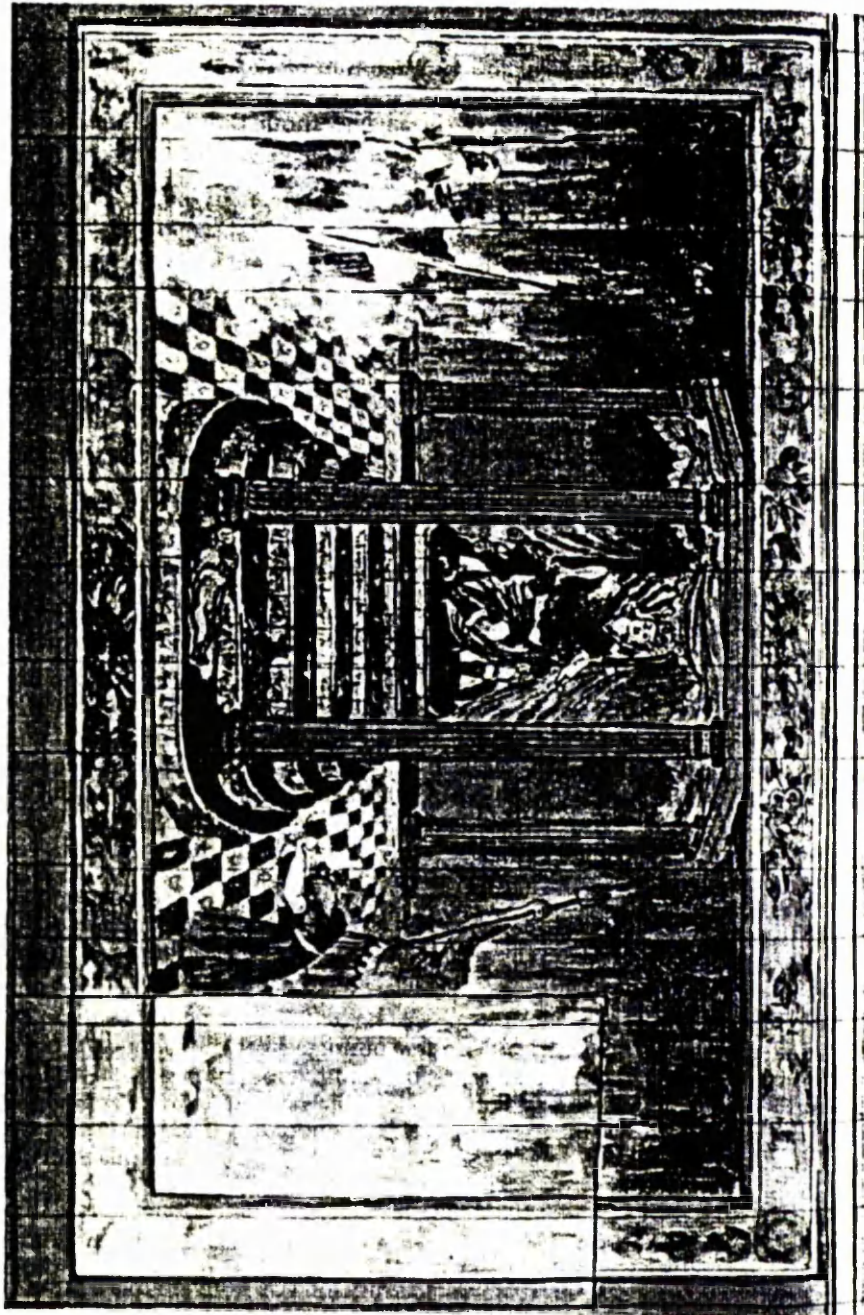
The 'Judgement of Solomon' at Culross 'Palace'. Copy painted in 1932 by John Houston, conservator for The National Trust for Scotland.

FRONTISPIECE TO THE *CONSTITUTIONS OF THE FREEMASONS* ENGRAVED
BY JOHN PINE, LONDON

Engrav'd by Iohn Pine in Aldersgate street London

VISUAL 3 - 1730

JEWELS 1 AND 4 FROM *THE MASONIC ANTIQUARIAN COLLECTION -* WALLACE HEATON
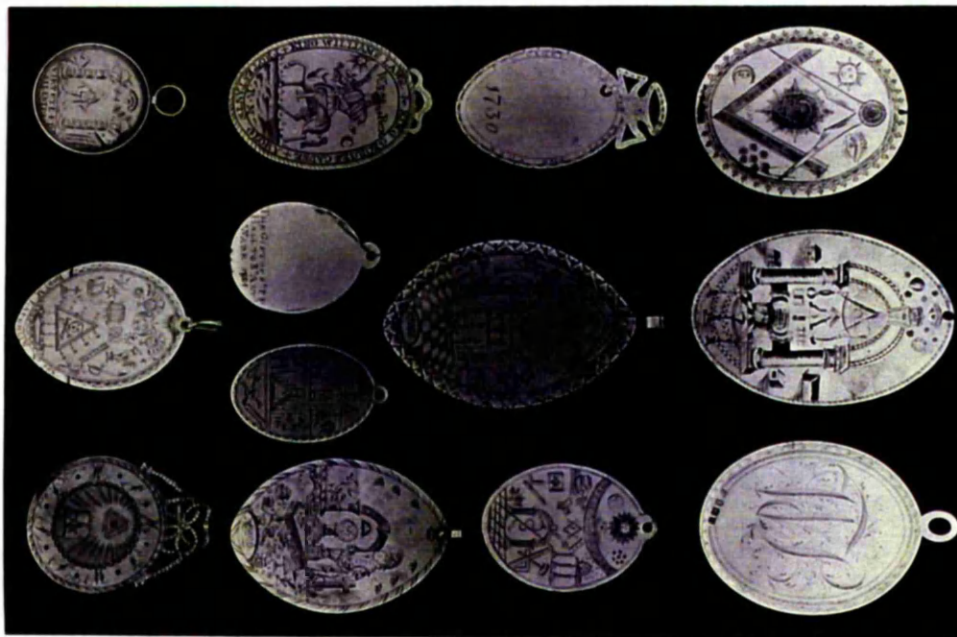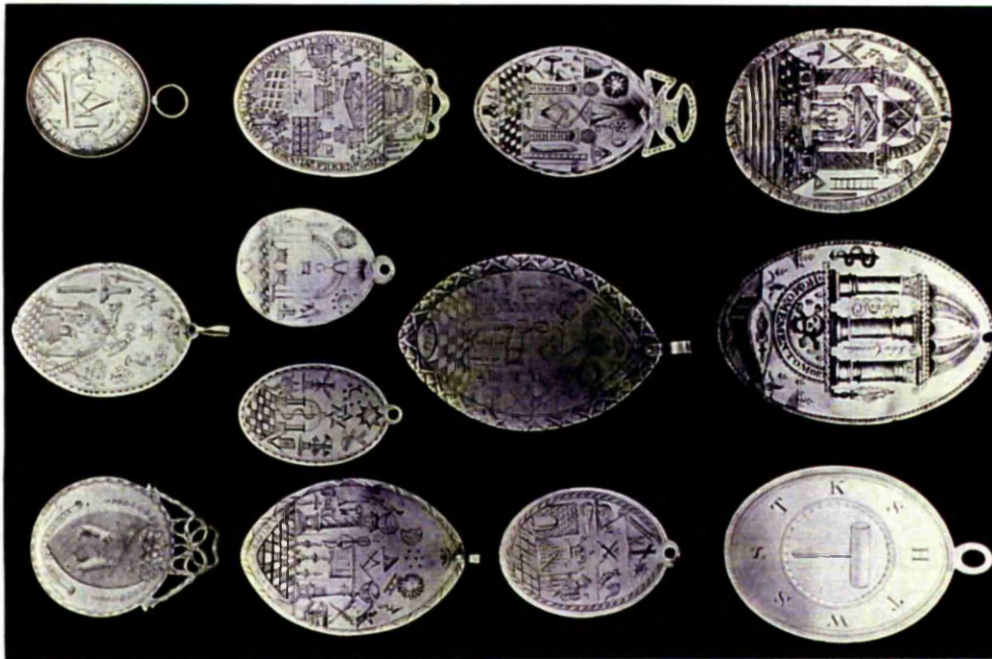
VISUAL 4 - 1738

ILLUSTRATION ENTITLED 'WORKMEN AT LABOUR' FROM *GRUNDLICHE NACHRICHT VON DEN FREY-MAURERN*, FRANKFURT - A TRANSLATION OF THE ENGLISH *POCKET COMPANION* AND THE *CONSTITUTIONS* OF 1723

FLOOR-DRAWING OF AN APPRENTICE-FELLOW'S LODGE FROM *LE CATECHISME DES FRANCS-MACONS*

INDEX TO THE PLAN OF THE APPRENTICE-FELLOW'S LODGE

1. The Pillar named Jaquin.
2. The Pillar named Boasse or Boosse.
3. The 7 steps leading to the Temple.
4. The Mosaic Pavement.
5. West Window.
6. Tracing Board for the Masters.
7. Blazing Star.
8. South Window.
9. Plumbline. [*Perpendiculaire.*]
10. East Window.
11. Level.
12. Rough Stone. [*Pierre brute.*]
13. Square.
14. Pointed Cubed Stone.
15. Indented [or 'Lacy'] Tuft. [*Houpe dentellée.*]
A. The Grand Master's Place.
B. The First Warden's Place.
C. The Second Warden's Place.
D. Altar.
E. Footstool.
F.   G.   H.   The 3 Lights.

PLAN OF THE APPRENTICE FELLOW'S LODGE

See Index on facing page.

[*Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in the original is 16·3 × 10·8 cm.*]

Plan de la Loge de l'apprenti compagnon
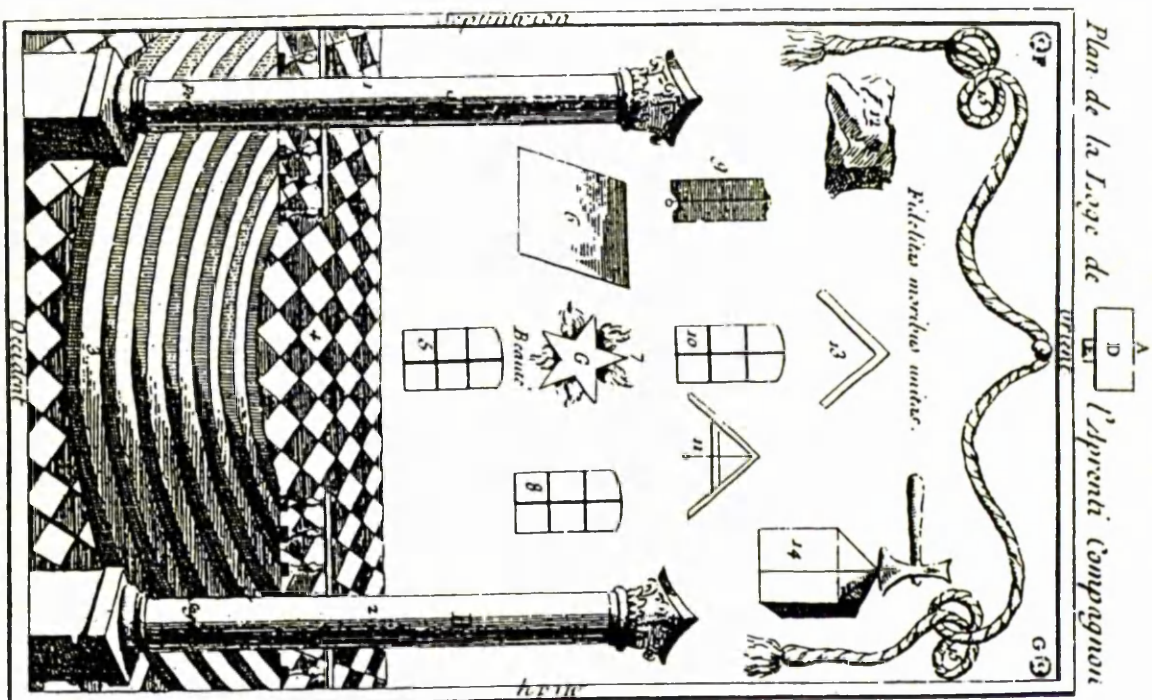
VISUAL 5 (b) - 1744

FLOOR-DRAWING OF A MASTER'S LODGE

INDEX

TO THE PLAN OF THE MASTER'S LODGE

A. The Grand Master's place.
B. Altar.
C. The Orator's place.
D. The First Warden's place.
E. The Second Warden's place.
F. G. H.   Position of the three Brothers
       with rolls of paper.
I. The Eastern Lights.
L. The Southern Lights.
M. The Western Lights.
N. The sprig of ACACIA.
O. The Compasses.
P. The Former [*Ancien*] Word of a Master.
Q. The Square.
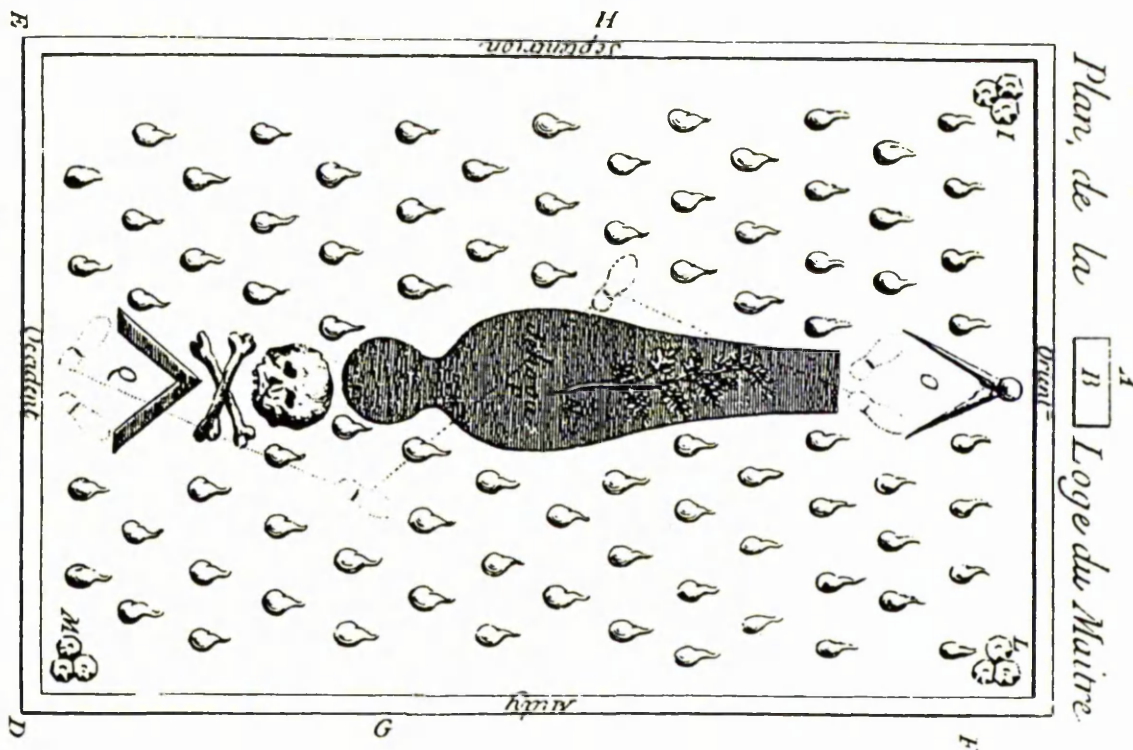
PLAN OF THE MASTER'S LODGE

See Index on facing page.
[Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in the original is 16×11 cm.]

126

MASTER MASONS LODGE -PLAN FROM *LE PARFAIT MACON*

Explanation of the Picture

1. The Tabernacle of Moses, displayed in 3 sections.
2. The Ark of the Covenant.
3. and 4. The Cherubim.
5. Table for the Oblation of Bread [Shewbread].
6. The Candlestick with 7 branches.
7. A Square.
8. The name of one of the Craftsmen who worked on the Tabernacle.
9. The name of another Craftsman.
10. Moses.
11. Aaron.
12. Compass[es].
13. A Square.
14. A Triangle.
15. The Master's Place.
16. The 1st Warden's Place.
17. The Second Warden's Place.
18. A Triangular earthen pan.
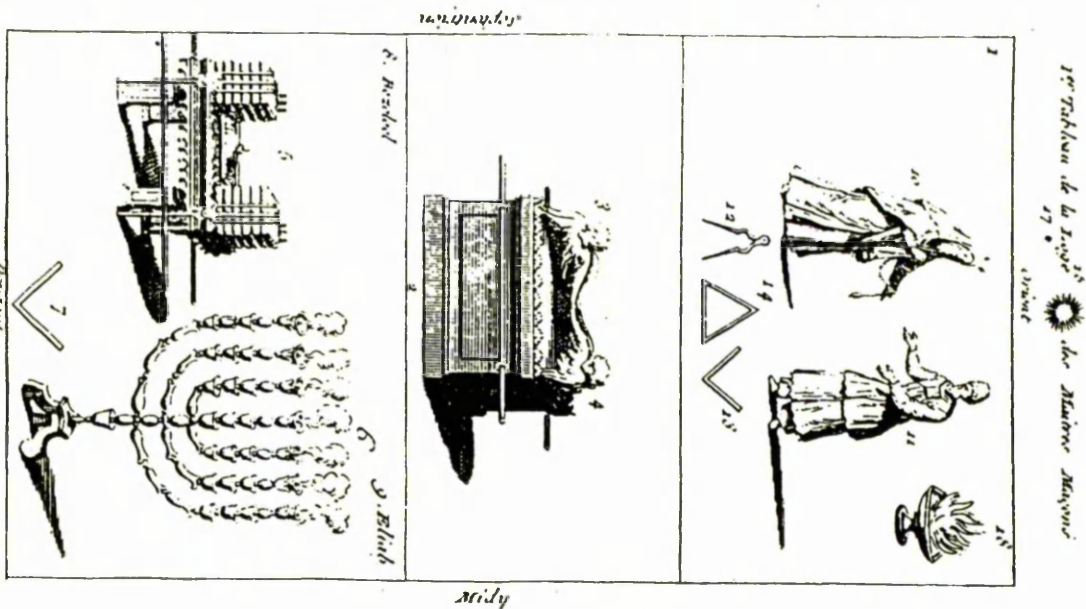
1ST PICTURE OF THE LODGE OF MASTER MASONS

[Slightly reduced: size of frame in the original is 16·2×9·3 cm.]

SECOND PLAN OF A MASTER MASON'S LODGE

Explanation of the Picture

1. The Temple of Solomon.
2. The great Portal.
3. Anterior Part of the Temple.
4. Table for the Oblation of the Temple.
5. Candlestick with 7 branches.
6. Altar.
7. and 8.   The first letters of the names of the two great Architects.
9. Sanctuary.
10. The Ark of the Covenant.
11. and 12.   The two Cherubim.
13. and 14.   The two first letters of the Words of the Masters.
15, 16. and 17.   The places where were two doors & a winding Stair built into the thickness of the Wall leading up to the 30 Chambers & the upper part of the Temple.
18. Gallery which ran around the Temple.
19. to 48.   The 30 Chambers.
49. The Master's Place.
50. Compass[es].
51. A Square.
52. A Trowel.
53. The 1st Warden's Place.
54. The Second Warden's Place.
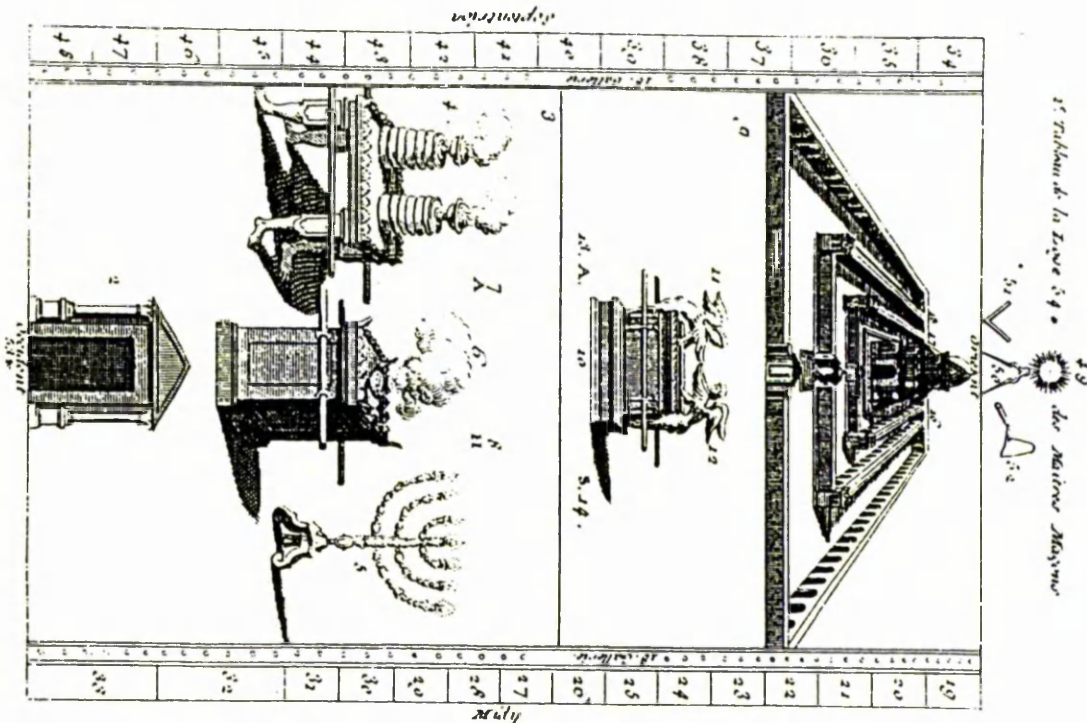
2ND PICTURE OF THE LODGE OF MASTER MASONS

[Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in the original is 15·6 × 11·6 cm.]

VISUAL 6 (c) - 1744

ALTERNATIVE LODGE-DRAWING FOR 'MASON FELLOWS'

Explanation of the Picture

1. *First Pillar of Stone erected by Enoch.*
2. *Second Pillar of Brick erected by the same.*
3. *Noah's Ark.*
4. *The Tower of Babel.*
5. *Block of Limestone.*
6. *Hammer.*
7. *Square.*
8. *The Triangular Earthen Pan.*
9. *The Master's Place.*
10. *The 1st Warden's Place.*
11. *The Second Warden's Place.*
12. *The Orator's Place.*
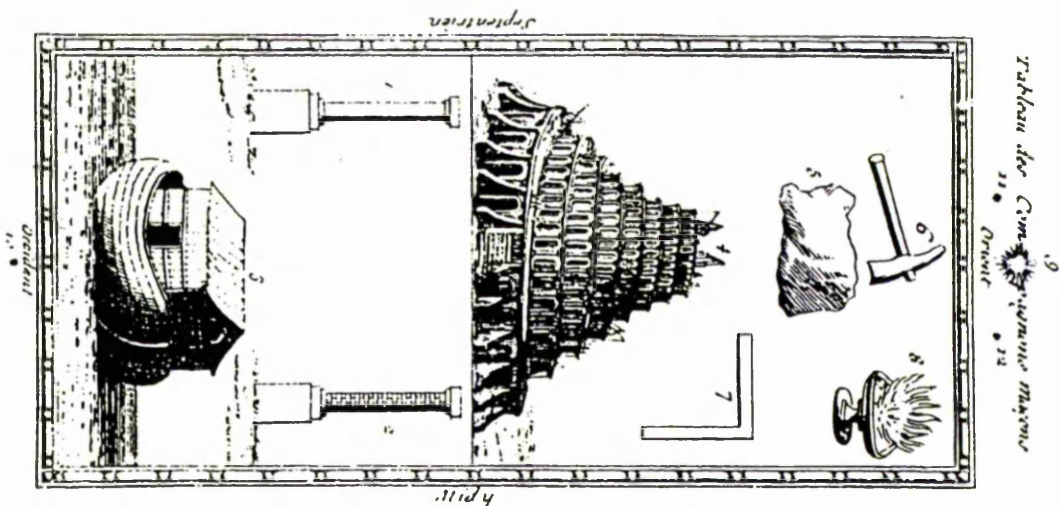
PICTURE OF [THE LODGE OF] MASON FELLOWS

VISUAL 7 (a) - 1745

FLOOR-DRAWING FROM *L'ORDRE DES FRANCS-MACONS TRAHI* - 'TRUE' PLAN OF AN APPRENTICE-FELLOW'S LODGE

TRUE PLAN OF THE LODGE FOR RECEPTION OF AN APPRENTICE-FELLOW

1. The Pillar Jakin
2. The Pillar Boaz
3. The 7 steps leading up to the Temple
4. The Mosaic Pavement
5. The West Door
6. The Hammer
7. The Square
8. The Tracing Board
9. The West Window
10. The Level
11. The perpendicular Line or The Plumb
12. The Door to the inner Chamber
13. The Cubic Stone cut to a point
14. The South Window
15. The South Door
16. The Sphere
17. The rough Stone
18. The Trowel
19. The blazing Star
20. The East Window
21. The Sun
22. The Moon
23. The Compasses
24. The Indented Tuft. (*See footnotes on pp. 72/3 and 223, above.*)
25. The East Door
26, 26, 26. The Three Lights
27. The Stool
28. The Table
29. Armchair of the Grand-Master
30. The first Warden's Place
31. The second Warden's Place
32, 32, 32. The Masters, [M.Ms.] Place
33., 33., 33. The Apprentice-Fellows' Place (excepting the last-received).
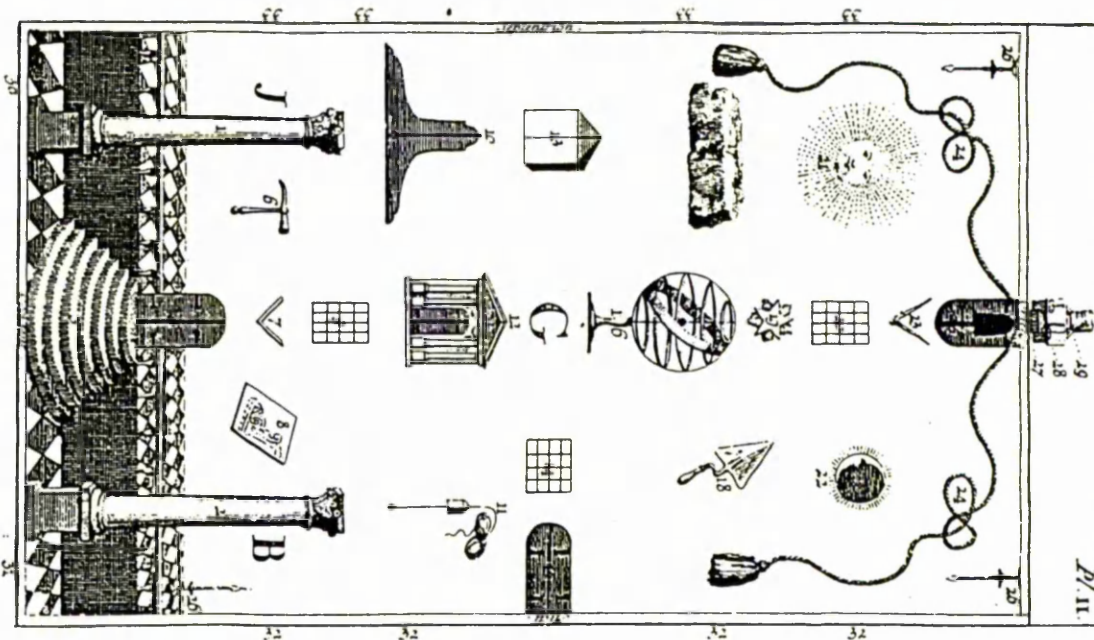
TRUE PLAN OF THE APPRENTICE-FELLOW'S LODGE

VISUAL 7 (b) - 1745

'TRUE' PLAN OF A MASTER'S LODGE

TRUE PLAN
OF THE LODGE FOR THE RECEPTION
OF A MASTER

A.   Armchair of the Grand-Master

B.   A Kind of Altar, on which there is a Bible, & a
      Gavel

C.   Compasses

D. . . E.   Coffin

F.   Bones in saltire

G.   Former Word of a Master

H.   Death's Head

I.   Square

K., K., K., K.   Tears

L.   Mountain

M.   Sprig of Acacia

N., N., N.   The 3 Brethren who hold a roll of paper

O., O., O.   The 9 Lights, placed in threes

P.   First Warden

Q.   Second Warden

R.   The Orator

S.   The Brother Visitors

T.   The Secretary

V.   The Treasurer

X.   The Candidate

N.B.   Some Free-Masons claim, that the Sun, the blazing Star,
& the Moon should be represented in the position marked by the
three small letters *a*, *b*, *c*. But although this practice is constantly
observed in Apprentices' & Fellows' Lodges, that is not so in the
Masters' Lodges.
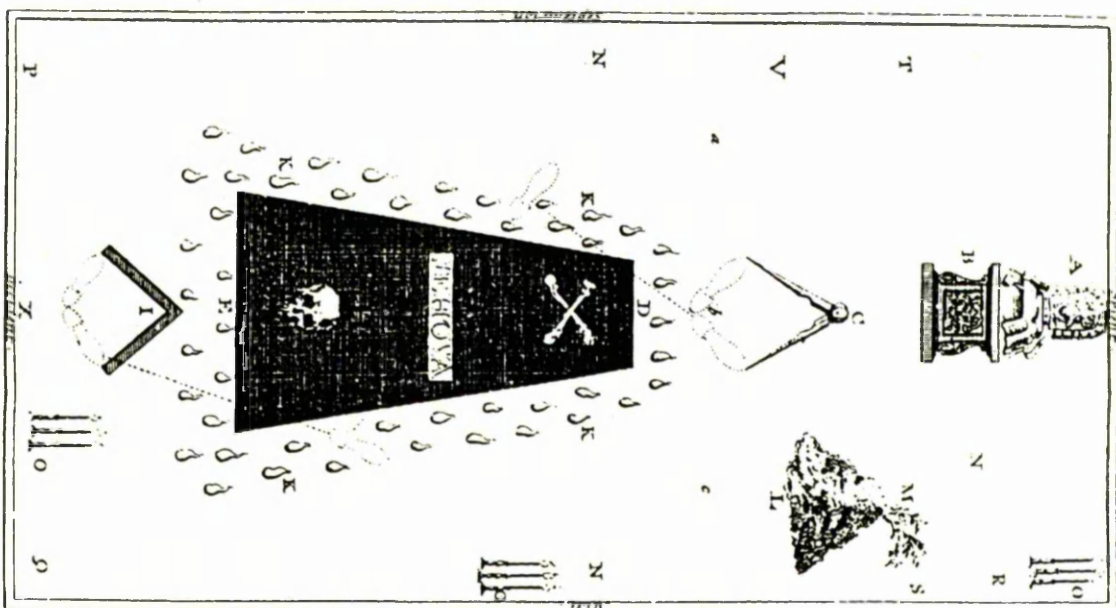
TRUE PLAN OF A MASTER'S LODGE

See Index on facing page
[Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in the original is 22·9 × 13 cm.]

FRONTISPIECE FROM *THE BUILDER'S JEWEL* - BATTY LANGLEY, LONDON
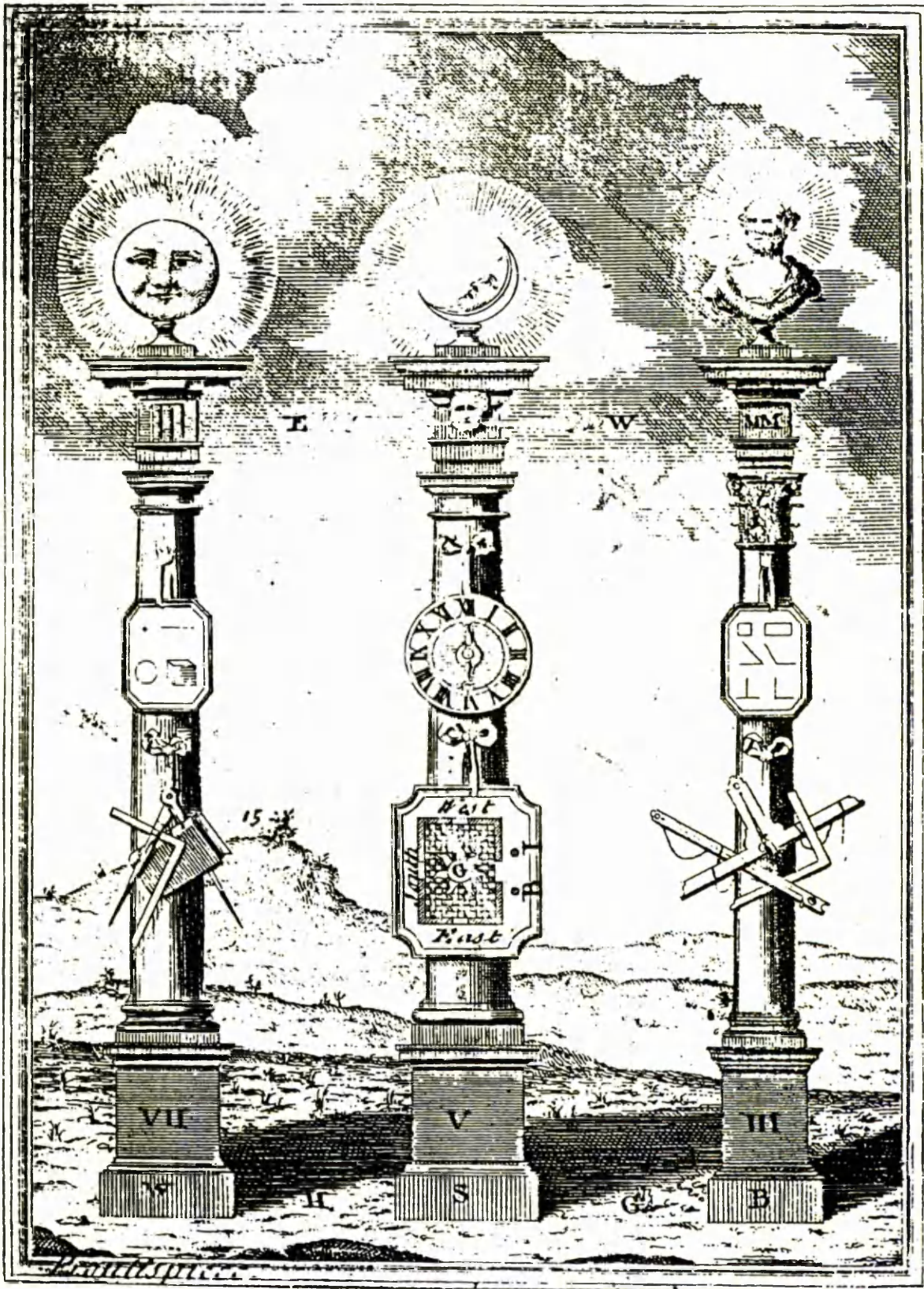
LODGE-PLAN OF THE FELLOW'S LODGE FROM *LES FRANCS-MACONS ECRASES*
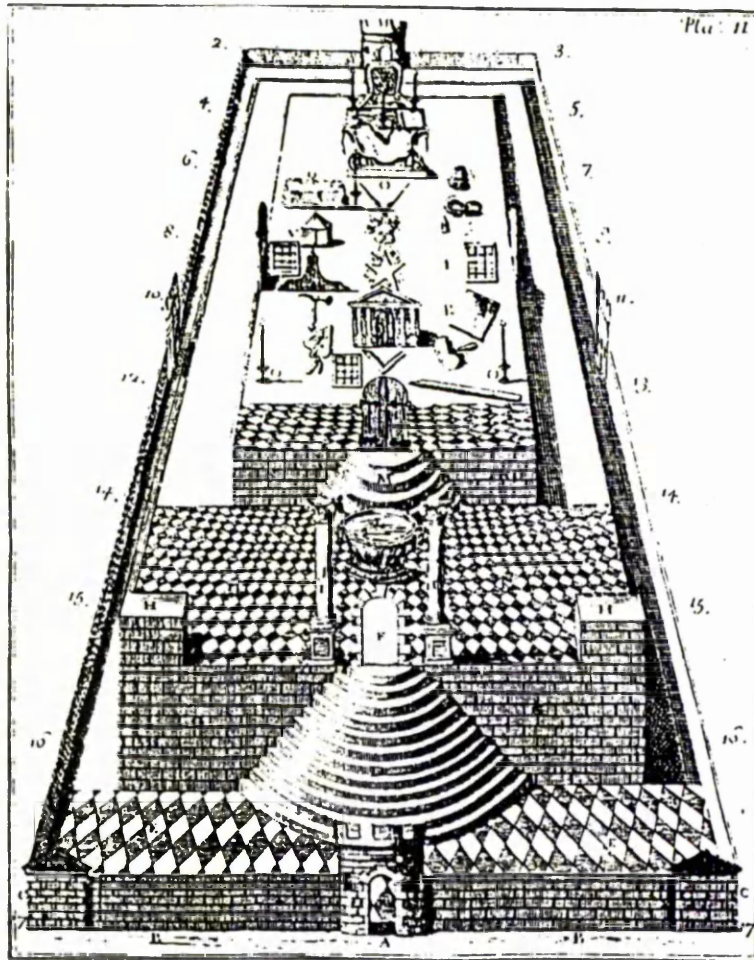
LES FRANCS-MAÇONS ECRASES (Plate II)

Plan of the Fellows' Lodge
[*Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in the original is 19·7×15 cm.*]

LODGE-PLAN OF AN APPRENTICE-FELLOW'S LODGE FROM *LA DESOLATION DES ENTREPRENEURS MODERNES*
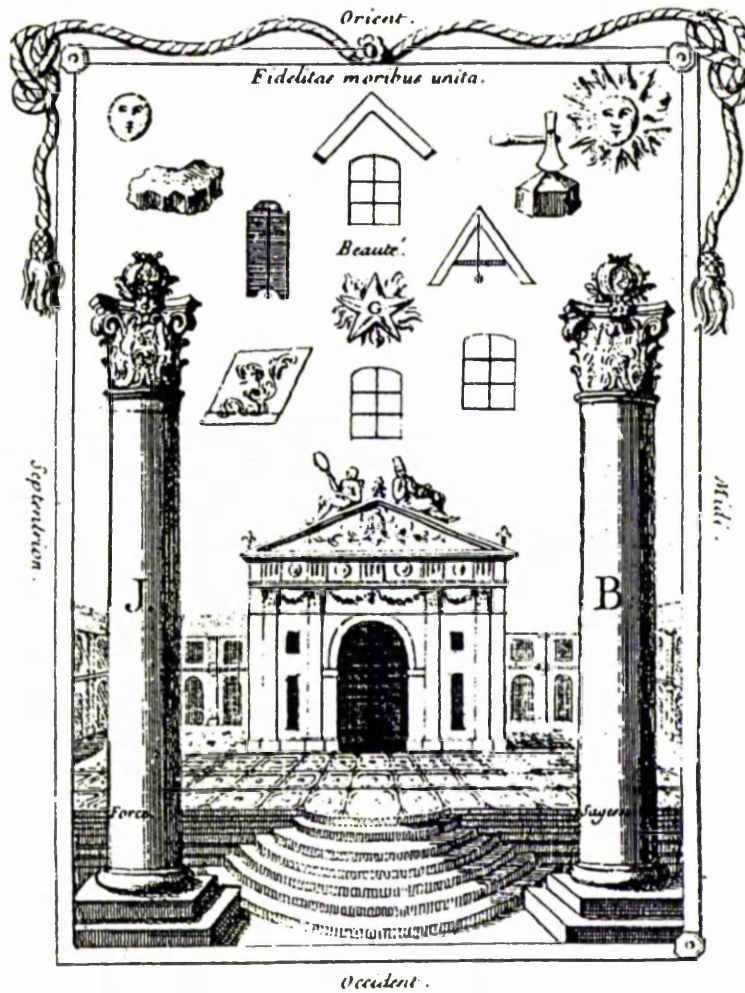
Plan of the Lodge of the Apprentice-Fellow

[Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in original is 16 × 11 cm.]

VISUAL 10 (b) - 1747

PLAN OF A MASTER'S LODGE

Orient.

(355)

Septentrion.

Midy.

Occident.
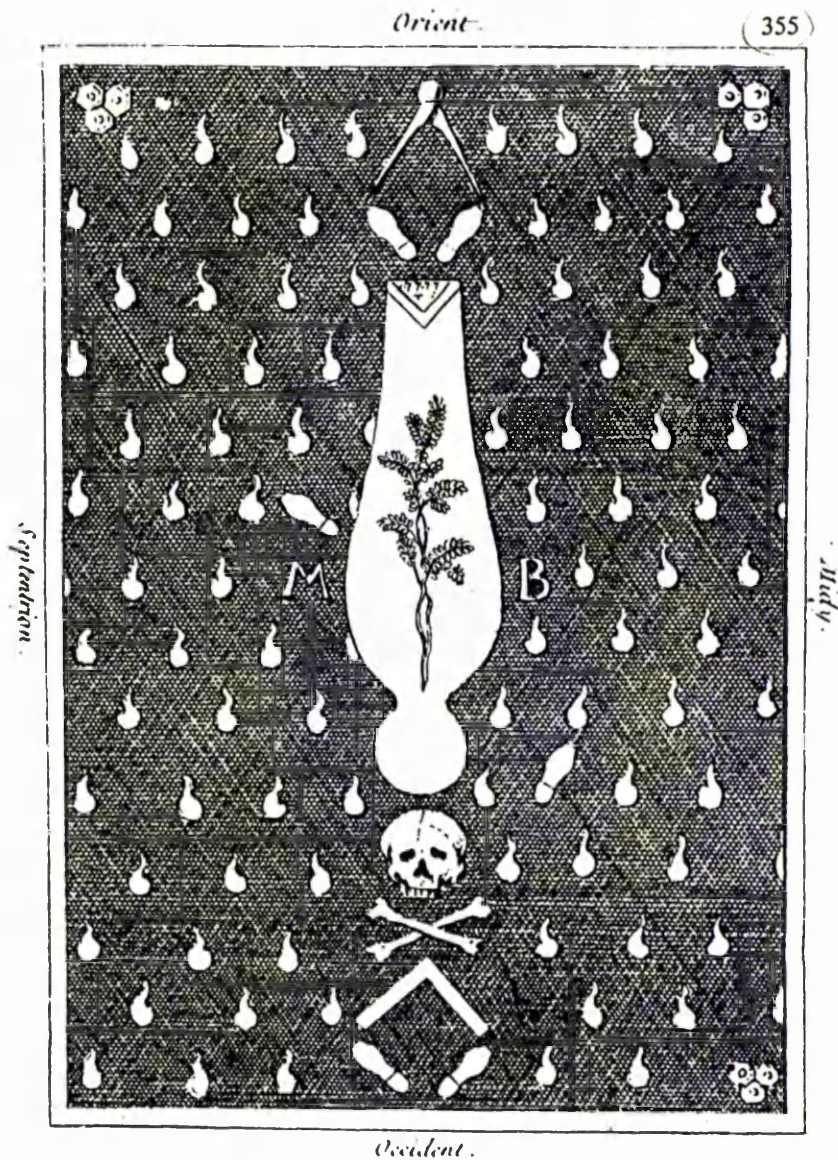
Plan of the Master's Lodge.

[Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in original 15·8 × 10·8 cm.]

VISUAL 11 (a) - 1751

LODGE-PLAN OF AN APPRENTICE-FELLOW'S LODGE FROM *LE MACON DEMASQUE*

EXPLANATION OF THE DRAWING

INDEX TO PLATE 1 OF LE MAÇON DÉMASQUÉ

1. Steps of the Temple.
2. Mosaic Pavement.
3. Pillar Booz for the Fellows.
4. Pillar JAKIN for the Apprentices.
5. Rough Stone.
6. Cubic stone with point.
7. The Square of the Worshipful.
8. Level of the first Warden.
9. Plumb [-rule] of the second Warden.
10. Tracing board for the Masters.
11. Windows of the Lodge.
12. The Sun.
13. The Moon.
14. The Candlesticks of the Lodge.
15. The indented border [*Houppe dentelée*].
16. The Blazing Star.
17. The Altar of the worshipful with his Armchair, the book of the Gospel, the Candles, the Hammer, & the Compasses.
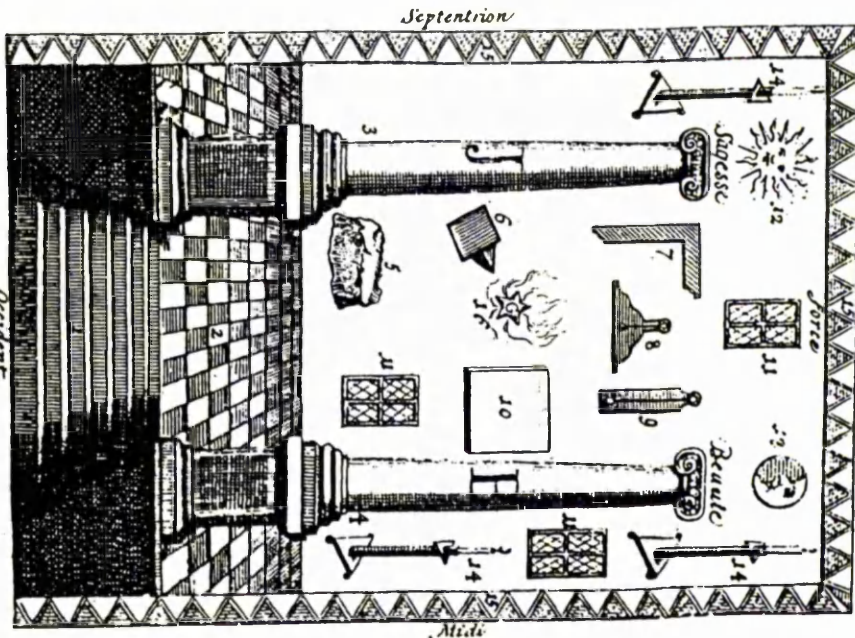
LE MAÇON DÉMASQUÉ, PLATE 1

Drawing for the Apprentice-Fellow's Lodge

[*Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in the original is 14·7 x 10·6 cm.*]

VISUAL 11 (b) - 1751

LODGE-DRAWING OF A MASTER'S LODGE

INDEX TO PLATE 2 OF LE MAÇON DÉMASQUÉ

1. The Square at which the Candidate places the feet.

2. Steps of the Candidate.

3. Compasses on which the Candidate kneels [sic].

4. Tomb of Adoniram with the former word of a Master, the death's head & the branch of acacia.

5. Tears which surround the tomb.

6. Candles of the Lodge.

7. Indented border.

8. Altar of the Worshipful.
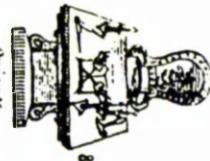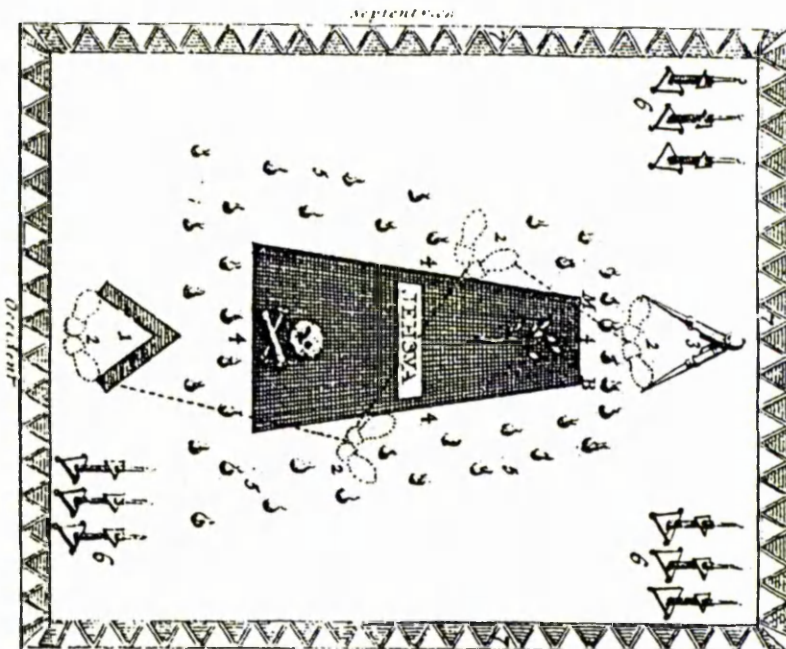
LE MAÇON DÉMASQUÉ, PLATE 2

Drawing for the Master's Lodge

[Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in the original is 13·2 × 11·1 cm.]

137

DRAWING OF VARIOUS TOOLS, JEWELS AND CIPHER
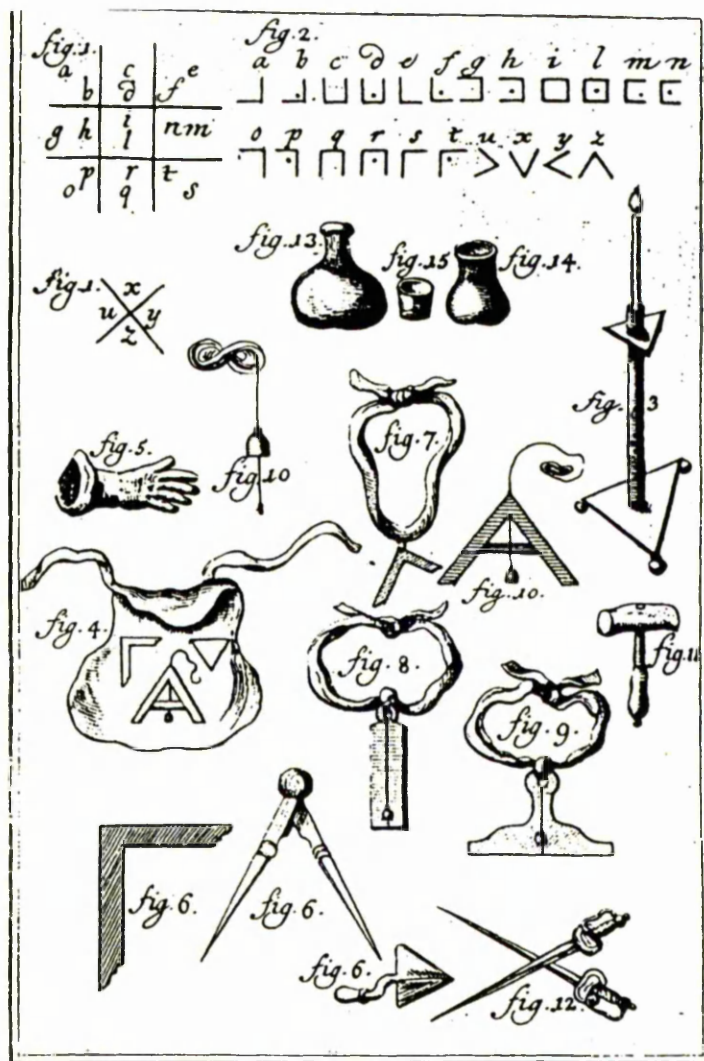
LE MAÇON DÉMASQUÉ, PLATE 3
Cipher, Jewels, Tools, Equipment etc.

[*Slightly reduced: size of outer frame in the original is 16·8 × 11 cm.*]

VISUAL 12 - 1754

LEAFLET ENTITLED *A FREEMASON, FORMED OUT OF THE MATERIALS OF HIS LODGE.* Reprinted in Lindner, 1976.

IMPRESSED PLATE JEWEL - WM. BOODGER. NO. 246

PLATE JEWEL

CERTIFICATE - EARLIEST EXAMPLE IN THE GRAND LODGE COLLECTION.
DUNDEE ARMS, WAPPING
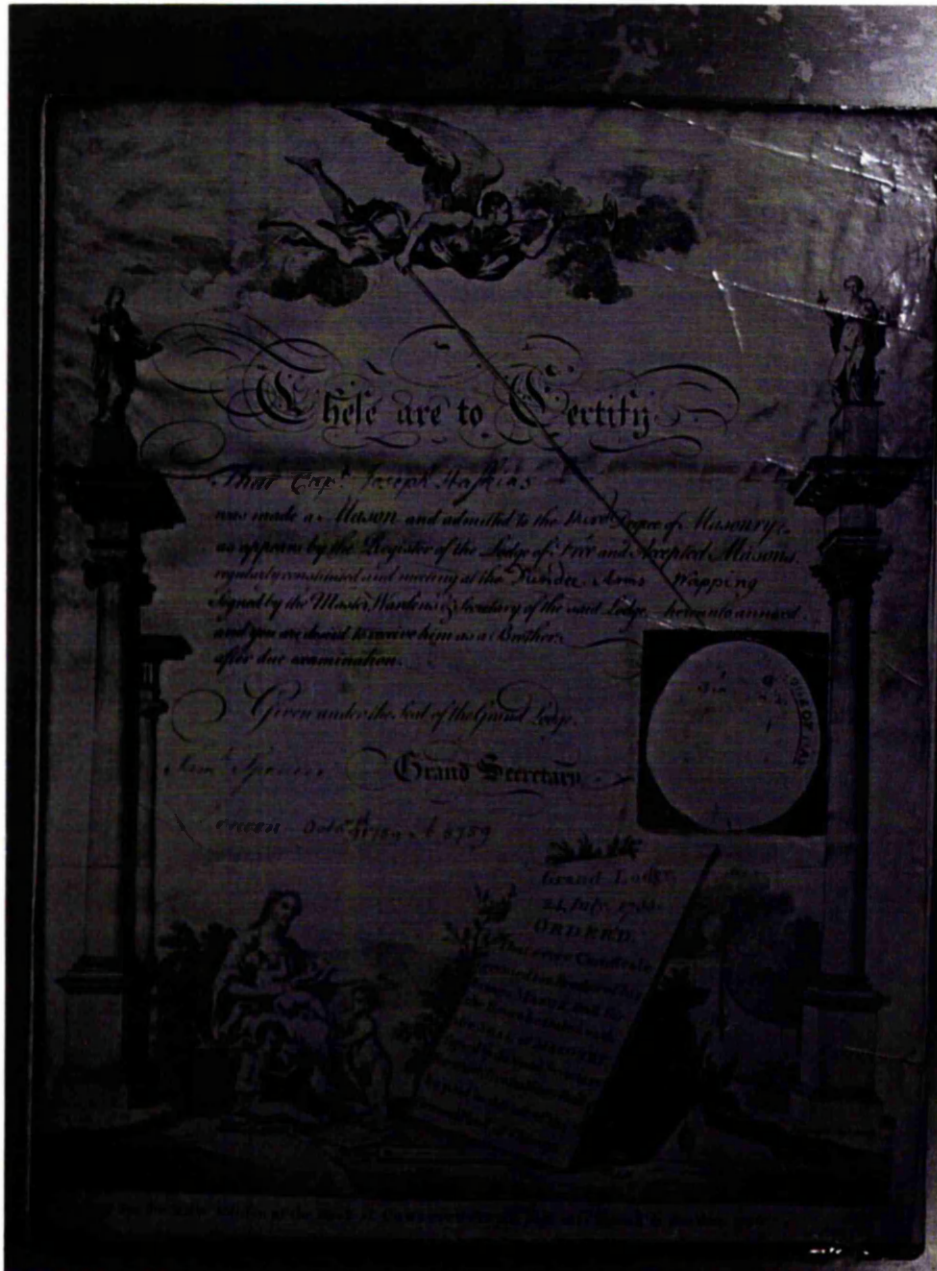
PLATE JEWEL - WILLIAM BOOTH. OCT. 21
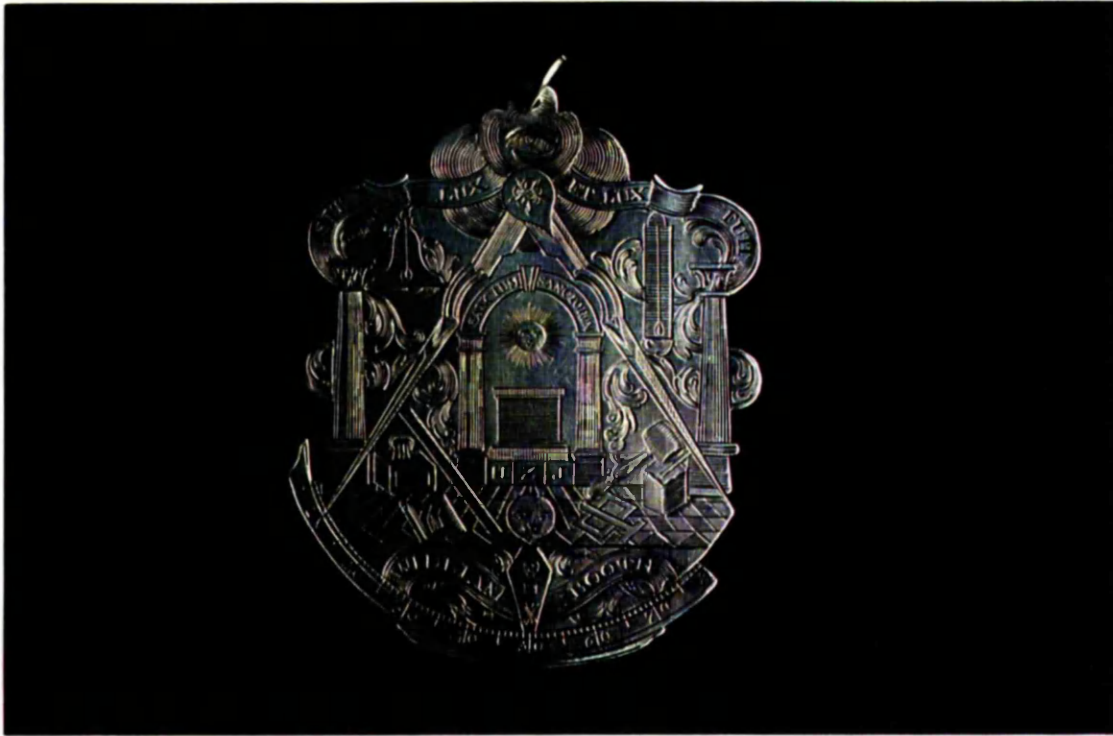
PLATE JEWEL - HENRY JOHNSON. LODGE NO. 205

PIERCED JEWEL - J. WHITE. NO. 71

VISUAL 19 - C. 1765

IMPRESSED JEWEL - W. M. GAMBL. ANTIENTS LODGE

FRONTISPIECE FROM THE ENGLISH EXPOSURE *MAHABONE*
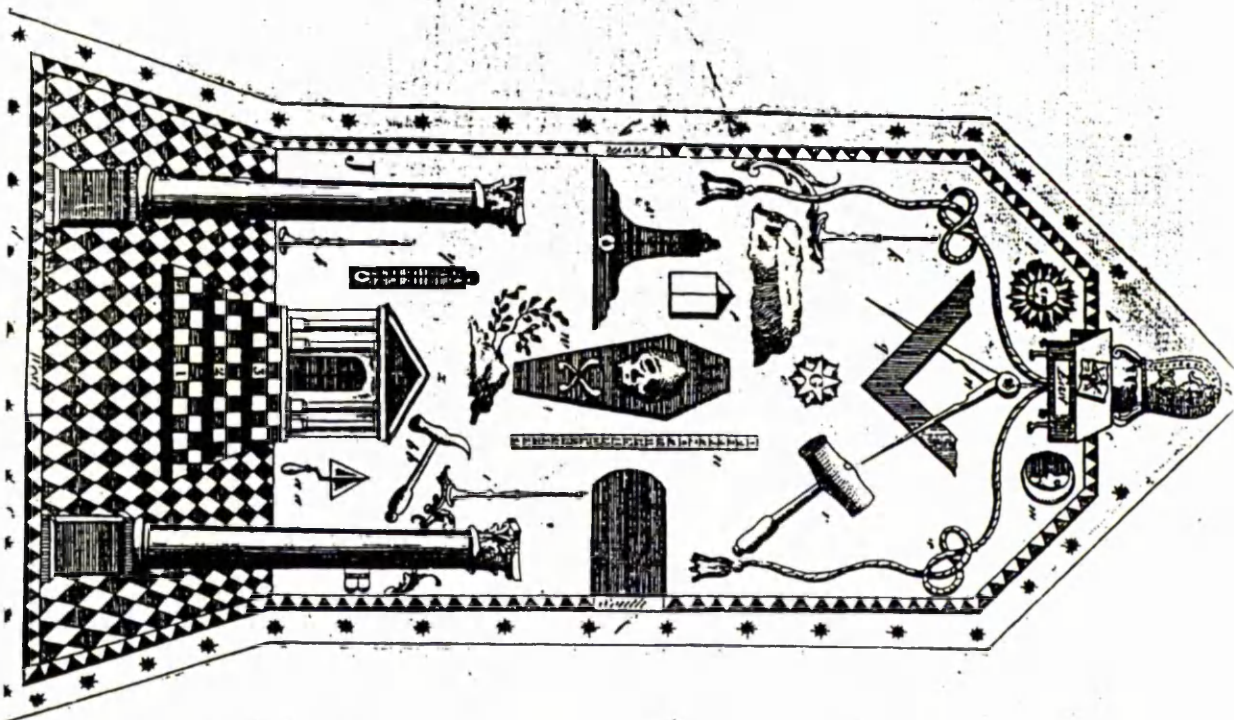
MAHABONE:

OR,

The GRAND LODGE DOOR Open'd.

Wherein is Discovered

The Whole Secrets of Free-Masonry,

Both ANCIENT and MODERN.

CONTAINING

An exact Account of all the *Ceremonies* and *Mysteries* belonging to MASONRY, from an ENTERED APPRENTICE to a PASS'D MASTER, without any Omission of the smallest Particular; as authorized and delivered in all good Lodges.

Illustrated with proper Remarks, necessary to explain the whole to the meanest Capacity, whether a Brother or not.

TO WHOM IS ADDED,

The true Method of a *Free-Mason* finding out a Brother in public Company, with what *Degree* he belongs to, without being discovered by any but the said Brother.

ALSO,

A Specimen of the *Secret Way of Writing* in MASONRY, with an Explanation of the *Characters*: And several other curious Particulars, never before made public.

EXHIBITION'D

With a beautiful Copper-Plate Frontispiece, representing the DRAWING ON THE FLOOR of a Lodge, with References explaining the whole.

To which is annex'd,

A Collection of *Masons Songs*: With *Solomon,* a grand Oratorio.

ALSO,

A compleat List of all the *English* regular Lodges in the World, according to their Seniority: With the Dates of each Constitution, and Days of Meeting.

The Whole being entirely authentic; and the grandest Performance of the Kind that has yet appeared in Print.

THE SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

By J*** G******,

A regular Brother of FREE-MASONRY, Having mounted the Steps of One, Two, and Three.

LONDON;

Printed for JOHNSON and DAVENPORT, in *Pater-noster Row*) and sold by J. GORE, in LIVERPOOL. 1766.
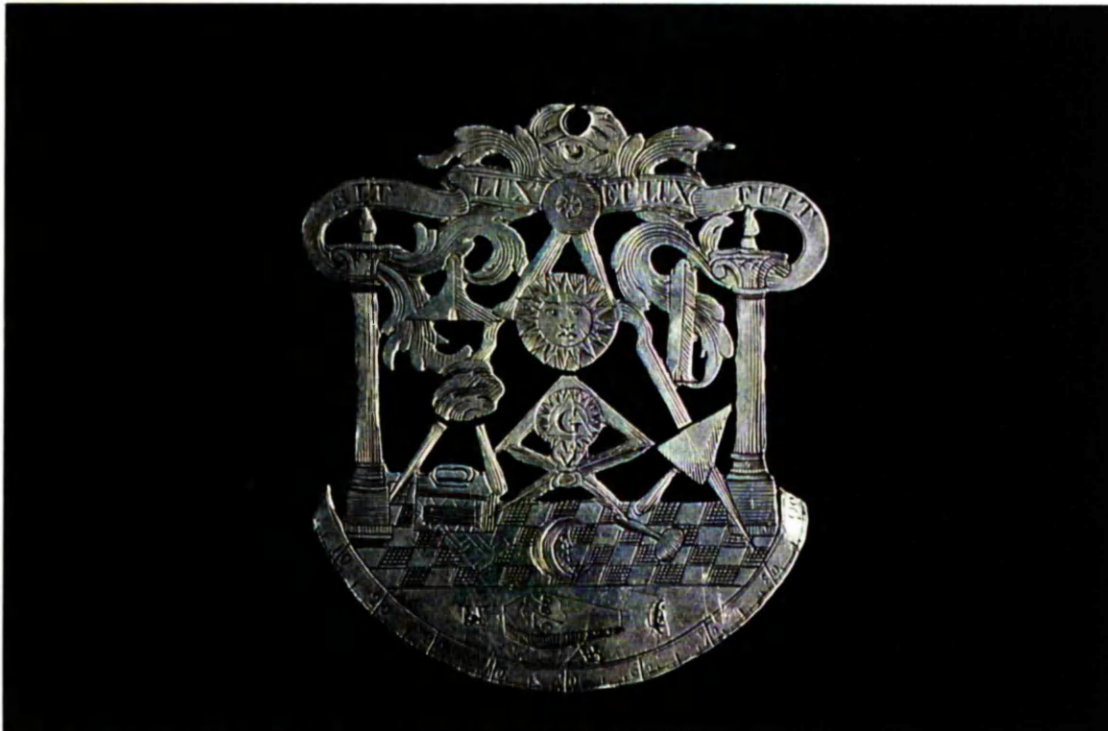
[Price Two Shillings.]

VISUAL 21 - 1766

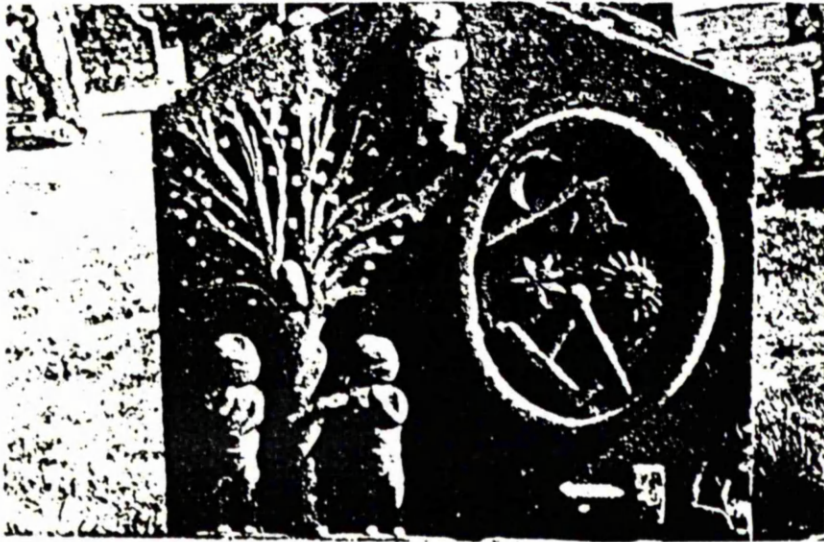## CERTIFICATE - CALEDONIAN LODGE

VISUAL 22 - 1766

PIERCED JEWEL - AB.

PIERCED JEWEL - ROBERT COWTAN, JAN. 13

CARVED TOMBSTONE IN METHVEN, PERTHSHIRE FROM *STONES - A GUIDE TO SOME REMARKABLE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GRAVESTONES*, WILLSHER & HUNTER (1978)
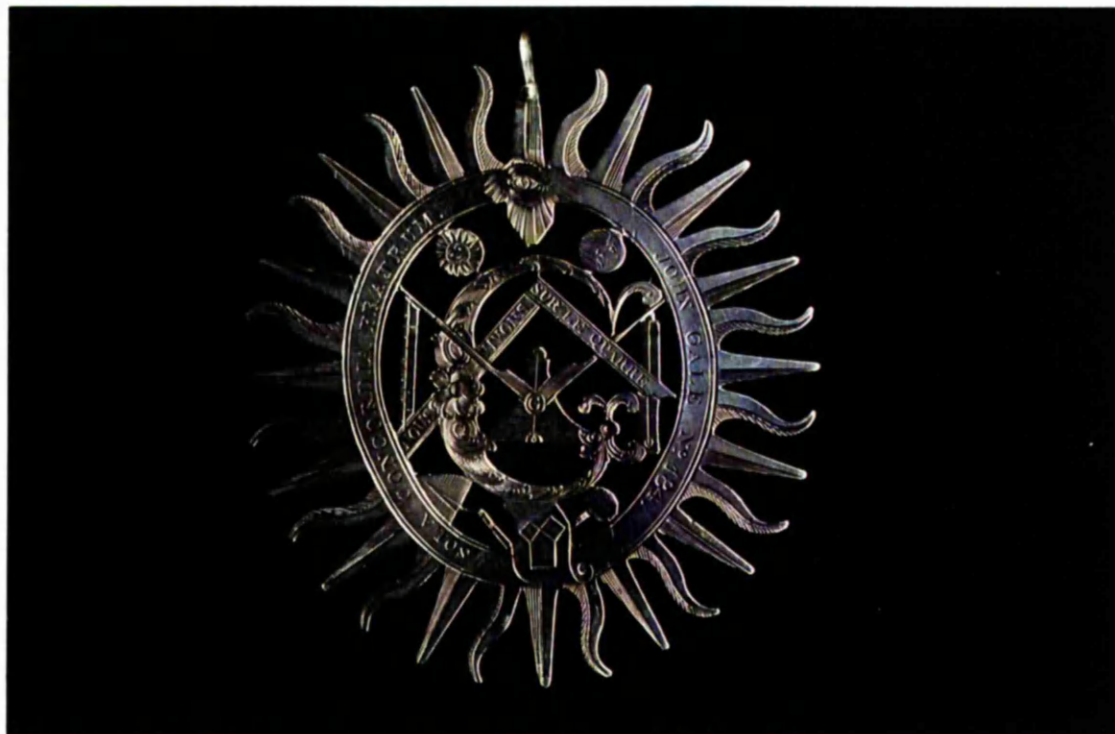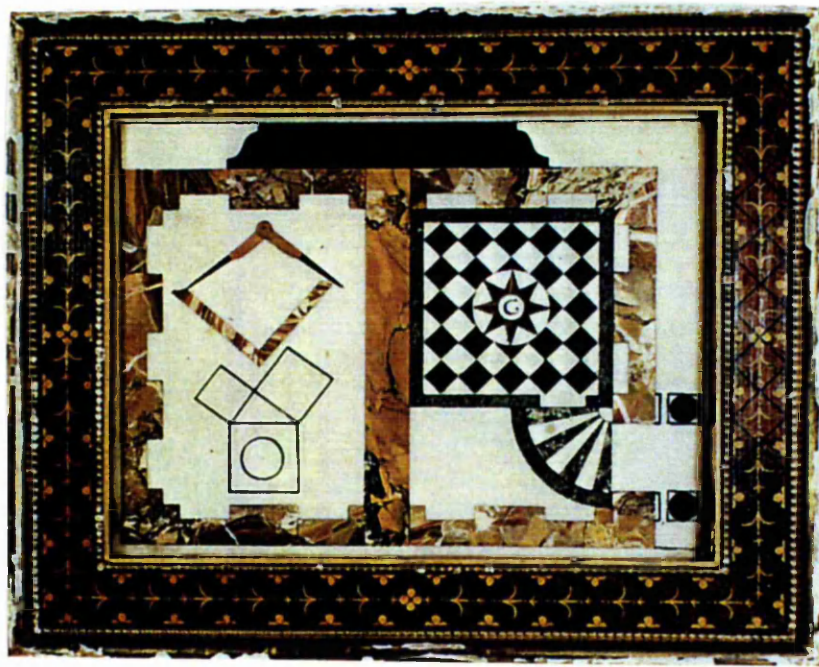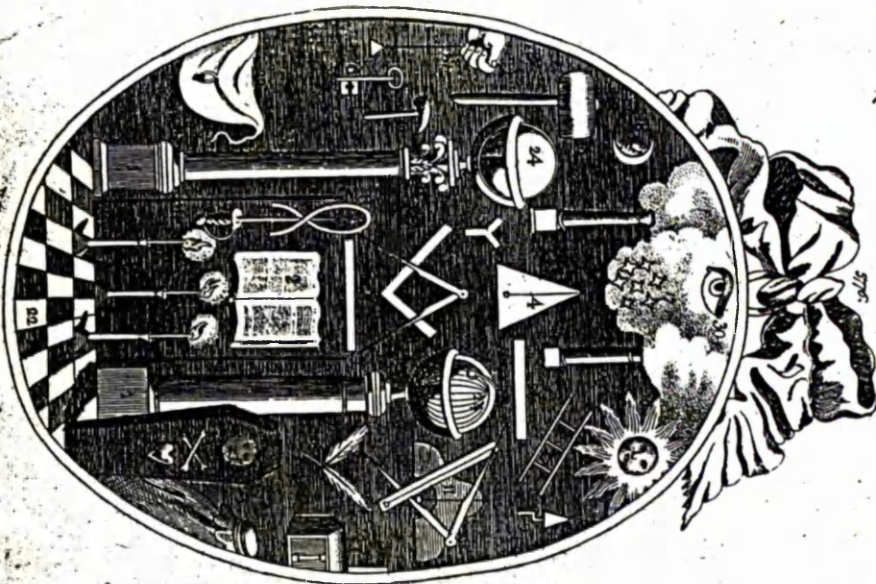
PIERCED JEWEL - JOHN GALE. LODGE NO. 184

MARBLE MASTER'S TRACING BOARD FROM ST. GEORGE'S AND
CORNERSTONE LODGE NO. 5

VISUAL 28 - 1776

FRONTISPIECE FROM THE ENGLISH EXPOSURE - THE *THREE DISTINCT KNOCKS*, 1760

VISUAL 29 - 1778

ENAMEL JEWEL - PRESENTED TO 'ADAMS'

CERTIFICATE - ST. ALBANS LODGE
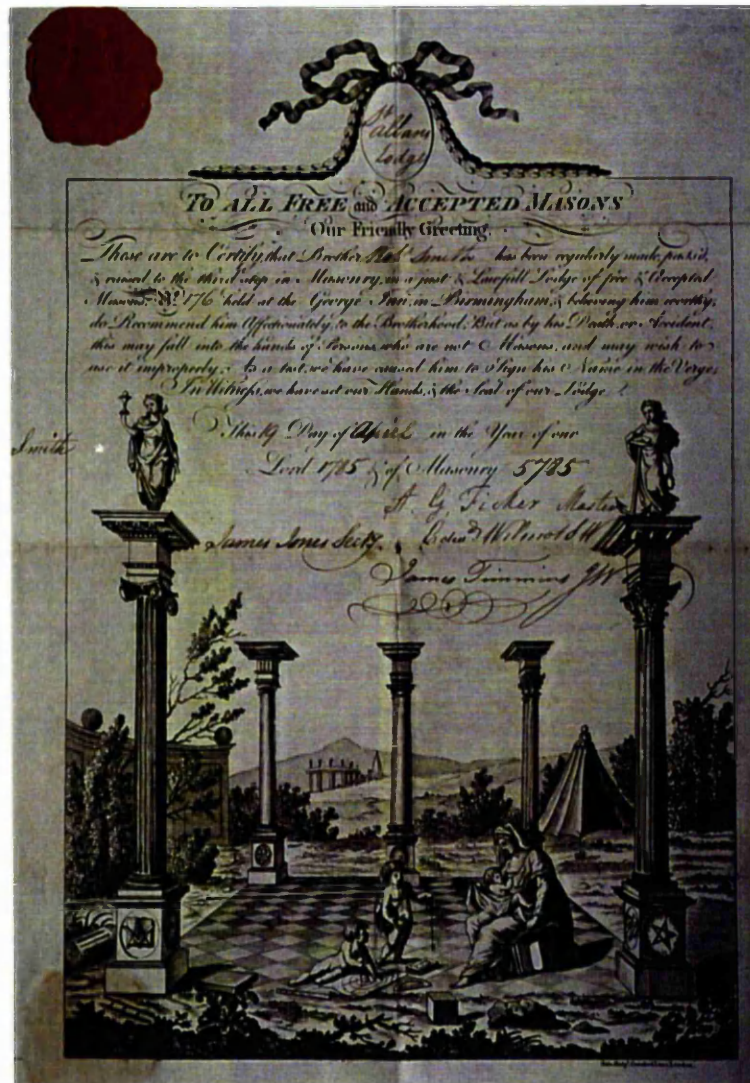
VISUAL 31 - C. 1790

APRON - LEATHER, DEPICTING SYMBOLS OF THE CRAFT, ROYAL ARCH AND OTHER DEGREES

VISUAL 32 - 1792

APRON - LEATHER, PRINTED AND HAND DRAWN IN INK
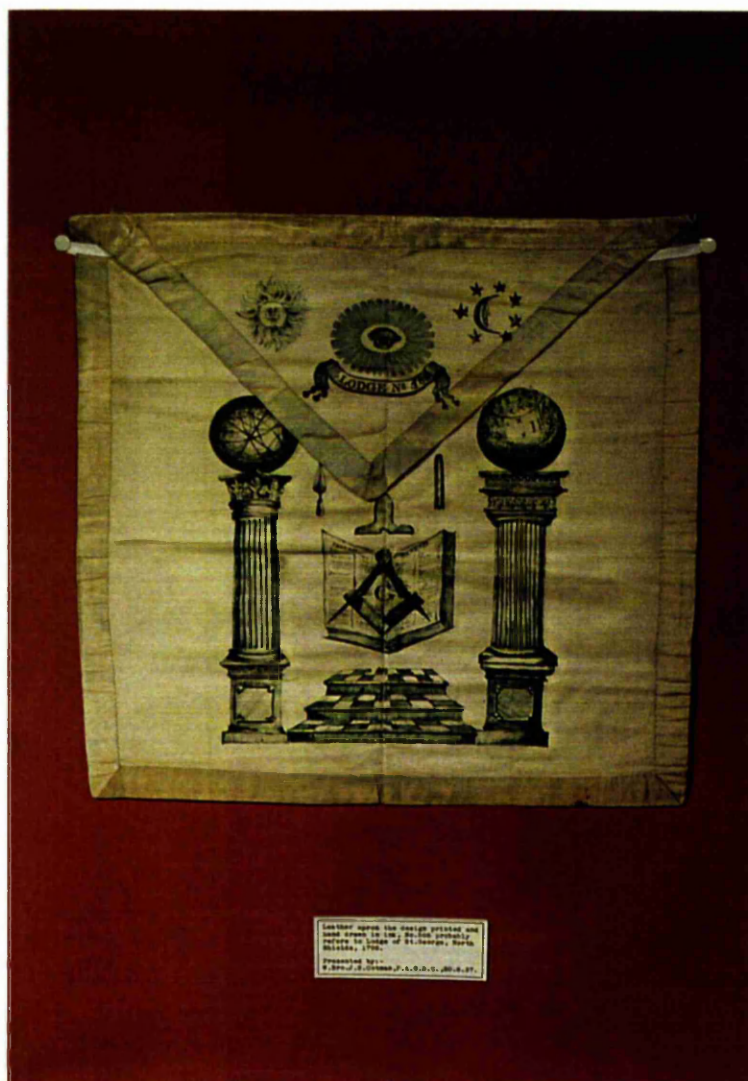
APRON - LINEN, THE INITIALS P. T. J. F. STAND FOR THE FOUR VIRTUES
PRUDENCE, TEMPERANCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE

APRON- SATIN, DEPICTING THE SYMBOLS OF THE CRAFT, ROYAL ARCH
AND OTHER DEGREES

APRON- SATIN, OF THE GRAND LODGE OF THE ANTIENTS - DESIGN FROM
THE ORIGINAL ENGRAVING BY NEWMAN

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis has been to conduct an examination and comparative analysis of the primary sources which provide the earliest examples of English Masonic symbolism. A theoretical study of the definition of the term symbol in its general sense provided a basis for a definition of 'symbol' in a more specific sense of its significance in Freemasonry. An analysis of the sources was established within a historical context, where contemporary factors which may have influenced the development of Masonic symbolism were addressed. This type of study has not been undertaken previously and provides a unique format for the examination of the appearance of the earliest Craft symbols in English Freemasonry.

The study of the meaning of symbol which formed a prelude to the work on Masonic symbolism allowed a general understanding of the term symbol, its meaning in comparison to other related terms, its precise definition, and its interpretation in particular contexts, namely, ritual, religious and natural. In this concluding part it is necessary to draw on this study to emphasise the relevance and correlation between these definitions of symbolism, and how symbol has been defined within a Masonic context and used in the course of this thesis. The sources of some of the points included below have been identified in the main part of the thesis.

It was shown that Freemasonry defines itself as a "peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols". This statement affirmed that the essential part of Masonry - the ritual - is predominantly based on moral precepts that are conveyed using allegory and symbol. Symbolism within Freemasonry can be described as a means to communicate particular moral values in terms that have historical and relevant significance to Freemasons. This is reflected in some of the symbolic themes used, for example, Solomon's Temple, Architecture, Working Tools and Geometry. The Old and New Testaments also feature as themes in Masonic symbolism, the former being an important part of the fictional history of Masonry, and the latter establishing the Christian nature of Freemasonry in its early development in the seventeenth-century. By 1730, however, all Christian elements of the ritual have been removed.

The relationship between allegory and morality was established in the first chapter, where one definition described the term allegory as "a poem, play, picture, etc. in which the apparent meaning of the characters and events is used to symbolise a deeper moral or spiritual meaning - use of such symbolism to illustrate truth or a moral". Allegory was also described as having the ability to look beyond the obvious meaning to the moral, mystical and spiritual truth. The term allegory was found to be closely allied to that of symbol, however, the general nature of a symbol was described as representative of the abstract, with a variability of interpretation and inexhaustibility of meaning; the main characteristic of allegory being to symbolise the conceptual - an idea, a truth or a moral.

Allegory has been found to be an important feature of Masonic symbolism and is the primary medium used to convey the truths and morality behind much it. It should be emphasised that the importance of allegory in Craft Masonry does not over-shadow the prominence or substance of Masonic symbols themselves. Allegory in a sense endows the effectiveness of the symbolism on a practical level of presentation and conveyance, rather than on a more emotive and meaningful level. One view in the discussion of the distinction between symbol and allegory stressed the difference in effectiveness between them. Cirlot (1962) argued that the elements of allegory are

163

'symbols', but distinguishes these from 'true symbols'. The latter indicate metaphysical and spiritual principles possessing an emotional content, while the function of the former is 'modified and inverted'; they are 'artificial creations' designating physical realities.

In regard to the correlation between the theoretical examination of the term symbol and its meaning within a Masonic context, the most relevant area discussed was that of ritual symbolism. It became clear that symbols play an important role in the functioning of ritual, where they are used as a means of communication within a social context; in many respects, symbols are the very substance of ritual. One opinion emphasised the importance of ritual in interpreting symbols, and another suggested that a natural symbol for example allows for variations in interpretative significance depending on the cultural outlook of a particular society.

A more comprehensive view of the significance of ritual symbols was presented by Turner (1967), who in ascertaining the meaning of a ritual symbol, stressed the importance of distinguishing between three levels of meaning. First, its 'exegetical' meaning, or the level of indigenous interpretation, whether by layman or ritual specialist. Second, the 'operational' meaning, how the symbol is utilised within the ritual context. Third, the 'positional' meaning, the meaning of the symbol as determined by its relationship with other symbols.

This understanding of a ritual symbol may be related to the meaning of symbol in Masonic terms. For example, its exegetical meaning may refer to the interpretation of individual symbols by Masons within a ritual setting. It has already been noted that the meaning of a number of symbols in the ritual appears to be left to the interpretation of each Mason, as there is no official guide. The operational meaning may be related to the use and purpose of the symbols, which was shown to be within a ritual context. In terms of this thesis the examination of Masonic symbolism has been conducted with an awareness of their application. It has not been concerned with an exegesis of the symbols themselves. The third meaning of ritual symbols, the 'positional' meaning, can be related to Masonic symbolism in the sense that the symbols have a greater effectiveness when viewed as a whole. The majority of Masonic symbols inter-relate, demonstrated in the three degrees which are progressive, with various symbols representing the beginning, middle and end of the ritual journey of each candidate. Masonic symbolism can only be fully understood when analysed as a whole system rather than as individual parts. It is the ritual context which ensures the uniqueness of the symbols and their meaning.

Individual symbols have been examined not only within the structure of Freemasonry, in terms of its ritual and history, but also within the intellectual environment of the period. The work of Levi-Strauss on symbolism can be drawn on here, where primary importance is placed on the structural relations and transformations of symbols internally within a given system. The study of the form and meaning of symbols has been given greater significance by his method of consideration of them within defined systems, irrespective of their relation to external factors. Masonic symbols have been considered, not only in terms of their structural relations within the defined system of Masonic ritual, but also in relation to external factors, such as the interests of the early members and the possible contemporary intellectual influences. Masonic symbolism, therefore, in this study has been examined not in the isolation of Freemasonry but within the context of society as a whole.

Chapter two examined the earliest Masonic symbols and themes found in literary sources, with a study of catechisms dated from 1696 to 1730, which indicated a clear development in the structure of the ritual and in the detail of the symbolism. The number of symbols obtained from these texts made it necessary to group them into themes based on their natural subject areas, which were: Solomon's Temple, Architecture, Working Tools, Speculative, Numbers and Colours, Geometry, Virtues, Old and New Testament. Examples from all the themes were apparent in the period between 1696 and 1730, but by 1730 a considerable amount of detail had been added. The earliest texts of *circa* 1700 revealed a simpler form of symbolism expressing a more basic system of morality, with the later catechisms becoming more elaborate and detailed. This is evident in references concerning the building of Solomon's Temple, an increase in the use of speculative elements and in the esoteric nature of some of the texts, with the addition of various principles and moral lessons.

The study also demonstrated how the questions and responses concerning various aspects of the ritual differed in many of the catechisms and this analysis was conducted using tables. This original format for collating and evaluating the sources enabled a comprehensive comparison of the presence and use of early Craft symbols in each of the texts, particularly in relation to areas such as the lodge, its furniture, jewels and lights. A number of similarities, differences and discrepancies between the texts were revealed.

Several of the texts were found to be similar in form and content. For example, the *Edinburgh Register House* MS and the *Chetwode Crawley* MS, the two earliest catechisms, had a number of similarities, evident in their responses to questions concerning the lodge, its lights and jewels. Both texts portrayed a basic form of symbolism lacking the speculative features of later texts. *The Grand Mystery of Freemason's Discover'd* and the *Institution of Freemasons* were also comparable, seen in the Christian nature of their response to the number of lights in a lodge, which they gave as 'three' symbolising the Trinity, in their response to questions on the subject of the lodge, in a reference to the place of the Master in the lodge apparent only in two other texts, in questions concerning the pillars Jachin and Boaz, and in details of the five orders of architecture.

The catechisms entitled *The Whole Institution of Masonry* and *The Whole Institutions of Freemasons Opened* also resembled each other closely, in their inclusion of a question not found in any of the other texts, and their similar explanations for the meaning of the pillars Jachin and Boaz. Two other texts that were found to bear an obvious likeness were the *Wilkinson* MS and *Masonry Dissected*. They both showed a distinct progression in symbolic detail from previous catechisms, for instance, on the question of the jewels of the lodge they distinguished between 'Moveable' and 'Immovable'. The two texts also provided explanations for the use of the jewels, which the previous texts did not. The catechisms added questions on the 'Furniture' of the lodge and the 'Form' of the lodge. They were the first to mention the qualities 'Wisdom, Beauty and Strength' in relation to the three pillars of the lodge.

It was suggested that a possible reason for some of the texts corresponding so closely was that they may have been adapted versions, or copies of an original manuscript which had been lost. It could be assumed that if there was one specific ritual that was being widely and consistently practised throughout lodges in the early eighteenth-century, the majority of the Expositions of the ritual that appeared at the time would be analogous. However, on examination of the group of sources in chapter two a considerable number of differences were found, enough to conclude

that the ritual was not uniform and that differences in practice were common. The choice of symbolic questions and responses would also have varied.

It should be noted that the beginning of the eighteenth-century was an early period in terms of development for the premier Grand Lodge of England, changes and adaptations to something as fundamental as the ritual and use of symbols would have been common, particularly with the increase in membership of men with diverse intellectual interests, and often joint memberships of societies such as the Rosicrucians and the Royal Society. As has been shown, it was not until 1730 that the ritual developed into a three degree system containing the essential features that were formed into an officially sanctioned ritual in 1815. Inconsistencies and unusual features in the earliest examples of Masonic ritual and symbolism are therefore understandable.

The fifth chapter examined the development of Masonic symbolism in England throughout the eighteenth-century using an original format to provide a comprehensive comparative analysis of two different sources: literary and visual examples of Masonic symbols. The sources comprising literary examples of symbols were those cited in chapter two, the early Expositions of Masonic ritual dating from 1696 to 1730. Various sources of visual symbols were used, predominantly, frontispieces, floor-drawings and lodge-plans, jewels and aprons. The sources were analysed to discover the exact years in which specific symbols appeared, the results were produced on two charts to allow a clear comparison. The Expositions dated 1696-1730 were found to provide the best examples of Craft symbols in literary form in England before the advent of the development of additional degrees with their own set of symbols. The sources used as examples of visual symbols become more numerous after 1730 and continued to the end of the century.

The conclusions made from such a detailed study of the development of literary and visual symbols in the eighteenth-century were significant. The results of the comparison between the sources were depicted in Table C, which grouped the symbols into themes dating from 1617-1798. This format showed when particular symbols were first used in Freemasonry and which symbolic themes were most prevalent and when. The progress of the various themes could be followed throughout the century. It was found that the earliest appearance of Masonic symbols occurred within the themes of Solomon's Temple, Working Tools and Numbers. In *circa* 1617 symbols relating to the Temple of Solomon included four pillars, seven steps, a chequered floor and Solomon himself; in 1696 a reference to a Porch is found. The earliest working tools appeared in the year 1696, namely, a 'Perpend esler', a 'Broad ovall', square and compasses.

Number symbolism was apparent as early as *circa* 1617, in the form of four pillars and seven steps, and in 1696, as three lights and three jewels. The chequered floor, square and compasses, and the numbers three and seven, continued to be a strong feature of Masonic symbolism throughout the eighteenth-century. The latest appearance of symbols that had not been seen before in any of the themes occurred in the last two decades of the eighteenth-century, under Speculative and Geometry. The particular symbols were the all-seeing eye in a triangle and the point-within-a-circle. It can be concluded that the most prolific and popular of the themes studied were Solomon's Temple, Working Tools and Speculative. They were also the themes which appeared early in the century and continued to evolve and develop through to the end.

It was discovered that the pinnacle date in the development of Masonic symbolism was 1730, which saw the first three degree system of ritual, the Hiramic legend, and symbolic details concerning architecture and geometry. There was an evident decrease in the references to the theme of the New Testament; the ritual had been cleared of any Christian overtones. From this date onwards any allusion to the 'Supreme Being' is phrased in more neutral terms with specific relevance to Freemasonry, such as the 'Grand Architect of the Universe'. Various symbols appear for the first time after 1730, predominantly in visual form, for instance, the seven Virtues, the all-seeing eye in a triangle, the point-within-a circle and the pentagram.

The analysis of the literary and visual sources revealed that symbols were apparent in written form much earlier than in visual form. This disparity in the time-frame between the appearance of particular symbols in each form was addressed in chapter five. It was evident that there had been an obvious reluctance to put any details concerning the wording of the ritual into writing, particularly any reference to the secret words and passwords. No official ritual was published until the early nineteenth-century, hence the popularity of the Expositions, or 'exposures' of the ritual. It is known that the traditional way of depicting the essential symbols and 'plans of the lodge' was through floor-drawings, erased at the end of each meeting. These were made more permanent by the use of floor-cloths and tracing-boards. Such drawings were produced with the later Expositions and many of the symbols relating to each degree were engraved on jewels worn by members of the lodge. This visualisation of Masonic symbolism proved popular, and visual representations of symbols became more elaborate, decorating certificates, aprons and various objects and artefacts. There was evidently no threat to the secrets of Freemasonry through the proliferation of the depiction of the symbols, showing that they have meaning only in the context of the ritual; the majority of the symbols and allegories are only fully understood and capable of interpretation by the initiated.

The study of the development of Masonic symbolism was set within a historical context to approach the question of why, and in what circumstances, particular symbolic themes were used in the early period of Masonic ritual. Chapter four considered the possible contemporary influences on the development of Masonic symbolism, but did not attempt to prove, explicitly, the degree of influence that specific aspects had on the use of each symbol. It was not possible to prove how much of the contemporary climate the early Masons may have absorbed, consciously or sub-consciously, and how this may have influenced their choice of symbolic themes. Any conceivable influence was suggested and noted. To this aim, the broad trends of the period of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century were identified, and the general spirit of the age which paralleled the developing Masonic symbolism was characterised.

There were several areas found to be of particular relevance to Freemasonry as a 'speculative' system, as opposed to an operative one. For example, eighteenth-century Europe was characterised by a number of compilations, encyclopaedic volumes and dictionaries of miscellaneous information, which appeared on a variety of subjects. These sources provided an insight into Kabbalah, Neo-Platonism, the various Gnostic schools and different forms of Eastern religious symbolism. The scientific investigation of the natural world from the Renaissance had integrated the Christian mode of thought with the Jewish, the Greek, and the oriental; the supposition was always that Wisdom is from the East. It was shown in chapter three that many of the early speculative Masons had an interest in esoteric material and Hermetic literature; the contemporary interest in such areas cannot be ignored. The acknowledgement of the concept of 'Wisdom from the East' is evident in Masonic

ritual in the middle of the eighteenth-century, where the apprentice is said to travel in the direction west-east to 'seek the light' and the Master, east-west to 'spread the light'.

The influence of the Bible on poets and writers of the seventeenth-century was noted in Chapter four, and poems such as Bunyan's 'Solomon's Temple' are clearly significant in relation to the considerable theme of the Temple in Masonic ritual. Another literary form, emblem books, were found to bear a similarity to the allegory accompanying several themes of Masonic symbolism. For example, the allegorical personification of abstract concepts such as Fortune, Prudence, Time, Truth, the Sins, the Virtues, or Humour. These were represented both visually and verbally as human figures, and came to form part of the techniques of literary thought and practice in the seventeenth-century. They were also features of visual symbolism depicted on Masonic certificates in the eighteenth-century.

Popular styles in architecture in the two centuries were also found to be synonymous with the architectural themes found in Masonic symbolism, such as the five orders, in particular Doric, Ionic and Corinthian. Evidence of the contemporary interest in the Temple of Solomon was also significant and included several exhibitions of models of the Temple.

An important perception that can be made from the study of the contemporary intellectual setting for the development of Masonic symbolism, is in the type of early member of Freemasonry and their interests. For example, the significance of the connection with societies such as the Rosicrucians was noted, with their mutual use of signs and symbols. The active participation in the Royal Society by many early Freemasons was pointed out, demonstrating the difference in the earlier operative, working mason and the more learned speculative Mason. An example of the latter was provided in Elias Ashmole, whose interests were varied and included alchemy. Links between alchemical symbolism and its influence on Freemasonry was also indicated, for instance, in symbols such as the compass, square, rule, perfect ashlar, pillars and five-pointed star.

After a detailed examination of the contemporary scene in areas such as literature, religion, social and intellectual movements, it was concluded that the principles, and more particularly the symbolism, of early Craft Freemasonry was consistent with the intellectual and social climate of the period in which it formed and developed. However much it is argued that speculative Masonry was a direct progression from the operative craft before it, it cannot be denied that its development was influenced by the thought, ideas, and movements prevalent in seventeenth - and eighteenth-century England.

This point leads to the conclusions drawn in chapter three on the history of Freemasonry. Acknowledgement was made of the main theories of the origins and development of English Craft Freemasonry, however, it was not the intention of this chapter to analyse the arguments or set out to prove the definitive origins of the society. The objective of the chapter was to provide a context to the work on Masonic symbolism, looking at the history of the organisation of the institution of Masonry. The chapter addressed the three essential periods in the history of English Freemasonry, and three 'types' of Mason: the 'operative', 'accepted', and 'speculative' Mason.

It is surrounding these three periods that the majority of contention on the issue of the origins are focused. The history is clear in that there was a 'before' and 'after',

that there was operative masonry and speculative Freemasonry. The grey area is the period between the two, where on one hand it is argued that speculative Freemasonry was a gradual and natural development out of its operative form; on the other hand that speculative Masonry evolved independently from the old craft. The comprehensive study of the literary and visual sources of symbolism, the contemporary thought, the operative sources such as the 'Old Charges' and some of the records of the Mason's Company of London, has shown that neither argument, at either extreme, is correct.

A number of points concerning the early development of Freemasonry, however, can be made. It was found that the emergence of speculative Masonry was dependent on a number of factors and influences. First, there can be no denying the connection between operative masons and the later Freemasons, evident in the use of and importance given to the medieval 'Old Charges' of the craft of masonry in the *Constitutions* compiled by Anderson. Here, importance is given to the Articles, Points, Rules and Regulations found in these manuscripts. The significance of geometry and the seven liberal sciences is present in both operative sources and those of the early speculatives. A mythical history of the art of masonry is a feature of several of the 'Old Charges', and is also found in the *Constitutions* and one of the Expositions. The 'history' is based largely on the Old Testament, mentioning for example, Adam, Noah, Cain, Jubal, the two pillars in which details of all sciences and crafts were placed for protection from the Flood, Abraham, Euclid and his contribution to the science of Geometry and Solomon, finishing in England with King Athelston. In the *Constitutions* Anderson brings the history up to date to the period of the early eighteenth-century.

Second, the change from operative masonry and the working masons to a more intellectual, non operative interest in masonry was marked by the membership of 'gentlemen' into the London Company of Masons, who became known as 'accepted' Masons. It is recognised that the accepted Masons were the early speculatives, an example being Elias Ashmole. It appears that the accepted Masons freely associated with the operatives and their organisations, however, speculative Freemasonry had a separate system of lodges and ritual, and its development as an 'organisation' began in 1717 in the form of the premier Grand Lodge of England. A connection between the emergence of a professional architect and the advent of speculative Freemasonry in England during the middle to late seventeenth-century was also noted. The interest shown towards the craft on a more scientific level, with the increased awareness of more classical forms of architecture, and the priority given to the re-building of London in the late seventeenth-century, may have affected and influenced the formation of non-operative lodges, which attracted like-minded men interested in the craft of building on a more philosophical level.

A third factor which may have influenced the emergence of Freemasonry was the contemporary social scene. Early eighteenth-century England, particularly London, was recognised as a great age for the formation of small assemblies and clubs for social enjoyment. The coffee-houses were characteristic, becoming most popular before the printing of daily newspapers in 1702 when they were centres for the dissemination of the news of the day. Gradually they became more selective regarding their clientele, with certain professions meeting in particular establishments. It was found that Freemasons were meeting in a number of taverns in London, and were also members of similar social clubs. All of these factors are significant when examining Freemasonry in seventeenth-century England.

It is difficult to uphold one distinct theory of the origins as there are several factors that are relevant. However, in the boundaries of this thesis it can be concluded that a smooth transition from the operative craft to speculative Freemasonry is doubtful, but the association between the two is indelible. It is clear that the interests of the accepted Masons were diverse, from alchemy, science, hermeticism, to hebraic studies and Kabbalah. They also participated in various contemporary movements such as the Royal Society and Rosicrucianism. Also, the early Freemasons obviously had an interest in masonry and architecture to be so openly associated with it. What is important is the fact that they continued the connection, even after establishing their own system, by founding the majority of their rules, regulations and history on the old manuscripts of the operatives.

The links between much of the contemporary thought, popular scientific practices, societies, movements and Masonic symbolism were also suggested. It can be affirmed that the contemporary intellectual and social scene bore too many common areas and similarities in relation to the parallel developments in Masonic symbolism, not to have had a significant influence and effect. It can be concluded, therefore, that much of the symbolism of speculative Freemasonry was an expression of the learned men who came into Freemasonry in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century, transforming its ritual and symbolism by employing their knowledge of hermetic and scientific thought.

The substantive point behind this thesis has been the study of the emergence of early Craft symbolism in England, how this developed through the eighteenth-century, and what may have affected the use of these symbols in the ritual. This has involved the detailed plotting of the evolution of symbols extracted from the earliest sources of Masonic symbolism, both literary and visual, with a comparison between them, and the external influence of the contemporary background, notably, the intellectual and cultural diversity of the period and the interests represented by a varied membership. This study has found through a detailed examination of the sources available that Masonic symbolism evolved throughout the eighteenth-century from a simple form into a comprehensive and detailed system. The growth in the use of symbols was reflected principally in the content and detail of the ritual.

From the work conducted in the thesis Masonic symbolism has been found to be: thematic - different symbols have been demarcated into themes defined from their natural groupings, for example, the tools of an operative mason such as the square, compass, and level came under the theme Working Tools, and references to the pillars Jachin and Boaz, the winding staircase and sanctum sanctorum were grouped under the theme Solomon's Temple; allegorical - the symbols were recognised as communicating various truths and morals that were conveyed allegorically; contextual - they were not analysed in isolation, but were acknowledged as being part of a system of symbolism which in essence was found to be ritualistic; contemporary - the symbols were found to be consistent with some of the main thoughts of the period, both generally and more specifically, with the interests of the early members; ritualistic - the ritual was perceived to have a cohesive effect on the symbols as a 'system', providing a structure in which they were able to inter-relate, correspond and obtain meaning.

Although Masonic symbolism was analysed and defined with reference to a general exegesis of the term symbol early in the thesis, using the definition provided by Dillistone (1986) involving a three-fold pattern of relationship, where

a word or object or thing or action or event or pattern or person or concrete particular . . . representing or suggesting or signifying or veiling or communicating or eliciting or expressing or recalling or pointing to or standing in place of or typifying or denoting or relating to corresponding to or illuminating or referring to or participating in or re-enacting or associated with . . . something greater or transcendent or ultimate: a meaning, a reality, an ideal, a value, an achievement, a belief, a community, a concept, an institution, a state of affairs

Masonic symbolism, in light of the work conducted in this study, can be defined as: a word, theme, object, action, image, number, geometric sign, tool, order, object of nature - communicating, conveying, revealing and illuminating - a meaning, value, moral, ideal, virtue or a truth.

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