

Educational Manuals for Candidates

The G15 Manuals for EAs and FCs are workbooks which were adapted from manuals developed in Australia, which were in turn, based on a European Concept Model. They are in-depth explorations of the philosophic grounding of Freemasonry, and, while designed to be worked through by a candidate and his Mentor, they can certainly be used individually by more senior Masons or in a group for Masonic Study. To receive a pdf, along with printing instructions, please send your name, lodge name and number, and status to the Chair of Masonic Education at djjcameron@golden.net, or click on the links below:

[EA Manual only](#)

[EA and FC Manuals](#)

A MM Manual is under development (check the [Grand Lodge website](#) for its arrival)

Here is an example of part of the EA Manual for you to explore:

Reference:

“THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF FREEMASONRY” by MW Bro. L. G. Catt

from MASONIC GRAND MASTERS OF AUSTRALIA by K. W. Henderson

Surely, in a world torn by strife and divided by so many feuds of race, religion and nationality, we have a right to rejoice in a fellowship, at once free, gentle and refining, which spans all distances of space and all differences of speech, and brings men together by a common impulse and inspiration in mutual respect and brotherly regard. Truly it needs no philosopher to discern that such a fraternity, the very existence of which is a fact eloquent beyond words, is an influence for good no one can measure in the present, and a prophecy for the future the meaning of which no one can reckon; and doubly so because by its very genius Freemasonry is international, and therefore ought to be responsive to the ideal world of fellowship.

These words, written in the early part of this century by the late Brother John Fort Newton of the Grand Lodge of Iowa, are as true today as they were then. Rising from the mists of antiquity to the present day, many myths, legends and facts have arisen relating to the purpose, aims, objectives and validity of Freemasonry. It is useful to look broadly at them and place them in a proper perspective.

Freemasons who desire to develop a greater understanding of Masonic history and teachings are aware of, and well served by Lodges of Research all over the world. The oldest and most eminent is the Quator Coronati Lodge No. 2076 EC, London, the Premier Lodge of Research. Its transactions, *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* (AQC), have been published annually since 1886.

Non-Freemasons who genuinely seek knowledge concerning the Order can readily obtain it from talking to a Freemason, or find almost unlimited material in any good public library.

As a commencement point in this discussion, let the myth that Freemasonry is a secret society be exploded - it is not. Freemasons proudly acknowledge their membership of the Masonic Order, its Constitutions and Rules are freely available, their transactions regularly cover the globe, and there is no secrecy about any of the aims and principles of Freemasonry. Like many societies, Freemasonry regards its internal affairs as a private matter for its members. Even so, the only matters that are really intended to be 'secret' are its traditional modes of recognition. It has been said that the only real 'secret' about Freemasonry is that it is no secret at all.

Many Freemasons have a vague idea that Freemasonry, as we know it, can be traced back to King Solomon, the ancient pyramids of Egypt, or some ancient mystery or rite. The late Brother Harry Carr, PJGD, EC, an eminent English Masonic authority, states emphatically that the first Masonic trade organisation of 'operative' Masons (when Masons earned their living with hammer and chisel) was in 1356, and this organisation started as a result of what we would now call a demarcation dispute, between mason hewers who cut the stone, and the mason layers and setters who actually built the walls. A simple code of regulations was drawn up in a document which still survives. Within twenty years the organisation became the London Masons Company, the first trade guild of Masons and one of the direct ancestors of Freemasonry today. Other guilds became established. These guilds were not lodges, but the Masons who were engaged on really big projects (such as castles, abbeys, churches) formed themselves into Lodges so that they had some form of self-government.

Information concerning the earliest lodges comes to us from a collection of documents known as 'The Old Charges' - the Regius MS. c. 1390, the Cooke MS. c. 1410, and some 130 versions of these running through to the eighteenth century, including the important Sloane MS. c. 1700 and the Graham MS. c. 1726. From these early beginnings we come to 1717 when the first Grand Lodge was founded, in England. As Freemasons are aware, from 1751 until 1813 there were two rival Grand Lodges in England - the original ('The Moderns'), and the rival ('The Antients'). In 1813 these two Grand Lodges merged to become the United Grand Lodge of England, and it is fair to say that the basic pattern of our ritual and procedures are similar to those that were approved upon that union.

We can accept the foregoing as fact by virtue of documented evidence. We may now turn briefly to the myth and legend which have affected the rituals and beliefs inherent in Freemasonry.

Masonry, the art of building, began many thousands of years ago, from the dawn of civilisation. Man has always been a builder, and wherever a civilisation has existed we find the remains and crumbling ruins of towers, temples, tombs and monuments, originally erected by the industry of human beings; and these invariably have some

mark or monument bespeaking a vivid sense of the Unseen, and the builder's awareness of his relation to it.

The Masonic art of building probably reached its greatest peak in the erection of temples and cathedrals. Ruskin, in his *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, argues that the laws of architecture are moral laws, that there are two sets of realities - the material and the spiritual - so interwoven that the practical laws are exponents of moral laws.

The discovery of the square was a great event to the primitive mystics of the Nile and very early it became an emblem of truth, justness and righteousness, which it remains to this day. So too, the cube, compasses, triangle and keystone, while the tools which fashioned these, the level, plumbline, pencil, square, chisel, mallet, gavel and 24-inch gauge, have attracted to themselves symbolisms of the laws of the Eternal.

Socrates made probably the greatest discovery ever made - that human nature is universal. It has been found that races far removed from each other by space, distance and time, but at roughly the same stage of culture, have used the same or similar symbols to express their thoughts, hopes and aspirations. The outstanding example, as ancient as it is eloquent, is the idea of the trinity and its emblem, the triangle. When the social life of man becomes the prism of faith, God is a trinity of Father, Mother, Child. Almost as old as human thought, we find the idea of trinity, and its triangle emblem everywhere - the two best known examples being Siva, Vishnu and Brahma in India corresponding to Osiris, Isis and Horus in Egypt.

Square, triangle, cross and circle are the oldest symbols of humanity and, as symbols do, point beyond themselves to an invisible truth which they seek to embody. Sometimes we find them united, the square within the circle, and within that the triangle, and at the centre the cross. These earliest of emblems indicate the highest faith and philosophy, betraying not only the unity of the human mind but its kinship with the Eternal - the fact that lies at the root of every religion.

The virtues of faith, hope and charity, embodying love in its broadest sense, and the four cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice, are enshrined in Masonic lore. The various symbols which have become associated with Freemasonry through the centuries all fortify in one way or another these desirable virtues.

At this point, let it be acknowledged that Freemasonry is not a religion - neither is it a creed or sect, nor a substitute for religion.

In this regard it is again pertinent to quote from the late Brother John Fort Newton:

All this confusion (about Freemasonry being a religion) results from a misunderstanding of what religion is. Religions are many; religion is one - perhaps we may say one thing, but that one thing includes everything - the life of God in the soul of man, which finds expression in all the forms which life and love and duty take. The church has no monopoly on religion. The soul of man is greater than all dogmas and more enduring

than all institutions. Masonry seeks to free men from a limiting conception of religion, and thus remove one of the chief causes of sectarianism. It is itself one of the forms of beauty wrought by the human soul under the inspiration of the Eternal Beauty, and as such is religious. Many fine minds have been estranged from the Church, not because they were irreligious, but because they were required to believe what it was impossible for them to believe; and, rather than sacrifice their integrity of soul, they have turned away from the last place from which a man should ever turn away. No part of the ministry of Masonry is more beautiful and wise in its appeal, not for tolerance, but for fraternity; not for uniformity, but for unity of spirit amidst variety of outlook and opinion. Instead of criticising Masonry, let us thank God for one altar where no man is asked to surrender his liberty of thought and become an indistinguishable atom in the mass of sectarian agglomeration. What a witness to the worth of the Order that it brings together men of all creeds on behalf of those truths which are greater than all sects, deeper than all doctrines - the glory and the hope of man!

The lessons of Freemasonry are based upon the Volume of the Sacred Law, whilst it is founded on the principles of the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God, and the acknowledgment of a Supreme Being. It has preserved the right of each individual soul to its own religious faith; it does not compete with any religion and holds itself aloof from all sects and creeds whilst it requires its members to tolerate, revere and respect, or at least regard with clarity, that which its fellows hold sacred.

Masonry does not divide men, it unites them, leaving every man free to think his own thought and fashion his own system of ultimate truth. All its emphasis rests upon two extremely simple and profound principles - love of God and love of man. Therefore all through the ages it has been, and is today, a meeting place of differing minds, and a prophecy of the final union of all reverent and devout souls.

Brother Reverend Neville Barker Cryer, in his outstanding paper, 'The Churches Concern with Freemasonry' came to 'conclusions' which are eminently sound, but two in particular are of note:

1...one of the essential landmarks of the Craft should constantly be the assertion that Freemasonry is not a religion;

2...one of the major difficulties would be overcome if it were constantly realised by non-Masons that not every Mason who issues in print is speaking with authority for the whole Craft, and is not quotable to that end.

VW Bro Rev Cryer has been Director General of the British and Foreign Bible Society since 1970. His service to the Anglican Church has taken him all over the world. He is a Past Master of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, Assistant Provincial Grand Master of Surrey, EC and in 1986 he was appointed as Grand Chaplain of the United Grand Lodge of England. He was Prestonian Lecturer in 1984.

While the individual Freemason has the right to hold his own opinion with regard to public affairs, neither in any lodge nor in his capacity as a Freemason may he advance his views on theological or political questions. Freemasonry does not express any opinion on the questions of foreign or domestic policies either at national or international levels.

There have been many definitions attempted or offered as to what Freemasonry is; but one which would meet with universal acceptance is to be found in the German *Handbuch* of 1900:

Masonry is the activity of closely united men who, employing symbolical forms borrowed principally from the mason's trade and from architecture, work for the welfare of mankind, striving morally to ennoble themselves and others, and thereby to bring about a universal league of mankind, which they aspire to exhibit even now on a small scale.

Fundamentally, Freemasonry is a code of living based on the highest ethical and moral standards. Among its principle aims are:

- i. to promote the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God;
- ii. to render practical aid to the less fortunate members of the community;
- iii. to develop such behaviour in daily life as will demonstrate that the teachings of the Order have a profound and beneficial affect on all who sincerely embrace its concepts;
- iv. to encourage the practice of every moral and social virtue.

Membership is open to all men of good reputation and integrity, of any race or religion, who can fill the one essential qualification that the applicant believes in a Supreme Being. He is also required to acknowledge obedience to lawful authority and the laws of the land in which he resides. A most serious responsibility rests on his sponsors that he is well fitted to become a member of the lodge he seeks to join. One of the outstanding appeals of Freemasonry lies in its exhortation that honesty, decency, integrity and virtue are the hallmarks of a dedicated Freemason.

During his period as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Queensland, Sir Leslie Orme Wilson, then Governor of Queensland, often commented that Freemasonry might not be able to make a bad man good, but that it could make a good man better.

The future of Freemasonry is very bright indeed. Since its ancestral beginnings Freemasonry, at various periods, has survived international wars, political and religious suppressions, and the victimisation of its members. While the principles and the objects of the Order have been so firmly established over the centuries, it is sensible to conclude that its future appeal will be as a beacon light drawing men of integrity, strength and goodwill within its lustrous ambit.

Freemasonry is a vast, worldwide fraternity based on spiritual faith and moral idealism. It helps a man to think through to a more satisfactory meaning of life. It is a way of life, a code of conduct, a pattern of behaviour, philosophically subscribing to the Golden Rule, in a world society which today is fractured by deceits, duplicities, tensions, torn by violence and acts of terrorism, wars of acquisition and wars based on religion in the name of God, for purposes all of which are abhorrent and repugnant to the teachings of Freemasonry.

Brother John Fort Newton might possibly have had some of these thoughts in mind when he asked the question 'When is a man a Mason?' He answered his own question at length in beautiful and noble phrases:

When he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope and courage - which is the root of every virtue. When he knows how to sympathise with men in their sorrows, yea, even in their sins - knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and keep them, and above all how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt the birds without a gun and feel the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child. When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without a response. When he finds good in every faith that helps any man to lay hold of divine things and sees majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be. When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellow man, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of a song - glad to live, but not afraid to die! Such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to all the world.

Questions:

1. Catt states that Freemasonry is not a secret society. Do you support this view? Explain.
2. Catt states that Freemasonry is not a religion, nor a substitute for a religion, and quotes Dr J.F. Newton. What does Newton consider Freemasonry to be?
3. What does Catt see as the four main aims of Freemasonry?
4. Catt is convinced "the future of Freemasonry is very bright indeed". Why does he think so? What is his evidence and the basis of this claim?
5. What do you think of Freemasonry's future? What do you think are some of the key issues Freemasonry needs to address to be successful?

Does this seem like something that would be a useful addition to your lodge's resources for candidates? If so please contact us using the links or email above.

The Committee on Masonic Education
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