

**THE MASON'S CONFESSION**  
**commonly called the**  
**THE DUNDEE MANUSCRIPT**  
**attributed to the year 1727**

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**Transcribed from the Scots Magazine**  
**for March, 1755. vol.xvii. pp 132-7.**

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**The Scots Magazine MDCCLV Volume XVII.**

Ne quid falsi dicere audent. ne quid veri non audeat.

Edinburgh; Printed by Sands, Donaldson, Murray and Cochran.

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Part for March, 1755. Pages 132 to 137:-

To the author of the Scots Magazine.

SIR.

Some time ago a Mason living at a considerable distance from me, whom I knew to have the character of a religious man, sent me a long paper, all of his own handwriting, and subscribed by of the oath word, and other secrets of his craft. . When he wrote that paper, and for a good time before, he was engaged in that oath, and for warning others to beware of the snare; and the Lodge he belonged to.

However, I have only drawn out his narrative, which I here offer you, leaving the world to judge of the matter as they please.

He informs me that the account he gives is only of what he informs me that the account he gives is which he entered; without regard to some circumstantial variations they agree in substance. And indeed an absolute uniformity among follows, the whole affair must be committed only to their memories, and share in the common fate of oral traditions.

**A mason's confession of the oath, word**  
**and other secrets of his craft.**

These are to testify, concerning that oath, word and other secrets held among the corporation

taken under the same, by sundry of them gathered together and met at D\_\_\_\_\_ about the year 1727.

**Concerning the oath**

After one comes in at the door, he that keeps the door, looses the his breeches, and requires him to deliver any metal thing he has upon him. He is made his bare elbow on the Bible with his hand lifted up; and he swears, "As I shall answer before God at the great day, and this Company, I shall heal and conceal, or not divulge and make known the secrets of the Mason-word, this Company, I shall heal and conceal, not to write them on paper, parchment, timber, stone, sand, snow, &c.) underbound, not to write them on paper, parchment, out from beneath my chowks, and my heart out from beneath my left oxter, and my body buried within the sea-mark, where it ebbs and flows twice in the twenty four hours."

Immediately after that oath, the administrator of it says, "You taken under that oath, I knew not what these secrets were which I was not to divulge, having taken under that oath, I One person in the Lodge instructed me a little about their and another person in the Lodge, whom I then chused to be my instructor till that time twelve-month, many called my intender; ---- There is a yearly imposing of that oath in admissions among the said craft as it is termed, being the 27th of December.

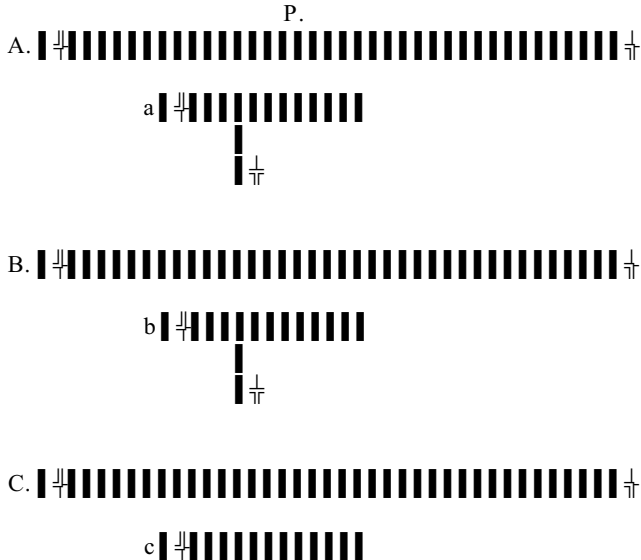
**Concerning the word.**

After the oath, a word in the scriptures was shown me, which, said one, is the mason-word. The w They say Boas is the mason-word, and Jachin a fellow-craft-word. The former is shewn to an entered apprentice a fellow-craft-word. T he has sworn the oath; and the latter is shewn to one that has been a higher degree in their lodge, after he has sworn the oath again, or declared his approbation of it.

**Concerning the other secrets**

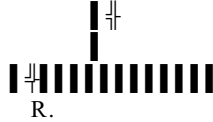
I shall next shew a cluster of different sorts of their secrets.

First, then, three chalk lines being drawn on the floor, about an equal distance, as at A.B and C: the master of t stands at P, and the fellow-crafts, with the wardens and entered apprentices, on, and the fellow-crafts, with the wardens and entered app the last entered apprentice at p.





ff



says the master, "Come forward". says the prentice "I w says the master, "Come forward". says the prentice "I wot says the mas  
you."you." you." no coming over the line with one foot, while you." no coming over the line with one foot, while he sets the other square  
shoulder, and says, "Good day, gentlemen."

Coming over the second line with one foot, while he sets the other square off at b , he lays the right hand on the left side  
and says, "God be here". Coming over the third line with one foot, while he sets the other square and says, "God be here". Coming  
right hand on the right knee and right hand on the right knee and says, "God bless all the honourable brethren  
his body when on the bare knee, so he comes over these lines setting his feet thrice in the form of a square.

question. What say you? answer. Here stand I. (with his feet in the form of a square) younger and la. Here stand I. (with his feet  
apprentice. ready to serve my master from the Monday morning to the Saturday night, in all lawful employments.

Q. Who made you a Who made you a mason? A. God Almighty, a holy will made me a mason; God Almighty, a holy will made me a mason  
prentices made me a mason. N.B. To the best of my remembrance the whole lodge present did not exceed twenty  
persons; but so I was taught to answer which I can give no reason for.

Q. Where's your master? Where's your master? A. He's He's not so far off but he may be found.      Then if the square be at hand, it  
on the stone at which they are working; and if not, the feet are set on the stone at which they are working; and if not, the feet are set in  
posture he stands in while he repeats posture he stands in while he repeats his secrets and so the square is acknowledged to be master

Q. How set you the How set you the square? A. on two irons in the wall; if two will not three will; and that makes both square and level.  
     N.B. If they ca, in two irons above and one below, it If they ca, in two irons above and one below, it makes If they ca, in two irons above  
ca, in but one. And the reason it is said set square and not to hang it is They're not to hang their master.

Q. What's a mason? A. He's a mason that's a mason born, a mason sworn and a mason by trade.

Q. Where keep you Where keep you the Where keep you the key of your lodge? A. Between my tongue and my teeth, and under a lap of  
the secrets of the secrets of my heart lies; for if I tell anything in the lodge, my tongue is to be taken out from beneath my the secrets of my  
my heart out from beneath my left oxter, and my body to be buried within my heart out from beneath my left oxter, and my body to  
within the twenty-four hours.

Q. What's the key of your lodge? A. A well hung tongue.

Q. Are you a mason? A. Yes.

Q. How shall I know that. A. By sig By signs, tokens and the By signs, tokens and the points of my entry. Master Shew me one of th  
Shew me the first and I'll shew you the second.      So the master gives him the sign., with the left hand up the side. So the master g  
P. Heal and conceal. N.B. The token or grip is by laying the ball of the thumb of The token or grip is by laying the ball of the thumb  
uppermost knuckle of the second finger from the thumb of the other's right hand.

Q. How many points are there in the word? A. Five.

Q. What are What are these five? A. The word is one, the sign is two, the grip is three, the penalty is four and heal The word is one, the  
is five.





street,street, with his right foot at his master, a left, sword point, within strokestreet, with his right foot at his master, a left, sword point, y  
feetfeet andfeet and an half of the lodge-door, there he prentice leaves him. And he goes to sort up thefeet and an half of the lodge-door,  
order; after which, he calls in the men to work.

And this is the amount of that inventer matter; or all I can remember that is material in it.

P.S. There was printed, in the year 1747 (ix.404)

A protestation and declinature from the society of Operative masons in the lodge at Torphichen, to meet at  
kirk.kirk. Dec 27, 1739: subscribed, of that dat, at Kirknewton, by James Chrystie: with a subscribed adherence, at the same  
place ofplace of the same date, by James Aikman, Andrew Purdie and and John Chrystie: and with another subscribed adherence,  
at Dalkeith, July 27, 1747, by John Miller.

InIn that paper, they renounce the mason-oath, asIn that paper, they renounce the mason-oath, as finding the same "sinful and unlawfu".  
andand thereforeand therefore not binding upon their conscience." They declare, that it is imposed andand therefore not binding upon the  
ceremoniesceremonies andceremonies and circumstances as are in themselves sinful and unwarrantable andceremonies and circumstance  
kneelingkneeling up on their bare knees, and the naked arm upon the Bible;"kneeling up on their bare knees, and the naked arm upon the Bi  
withoutwithout allowing a copy of the said oath and time duly and delwithout allowing a copy of the said oath and time duly and  
thereof,thereof, or things, sworn to therein, never being under their seriousthereof, or things, sworn to therein, never being under their ser  
seeingseeing the person swearing knows what he is swearing to;" -- That they "do look upon the dreadful wseeing the person sw  
superstition,superstition, idolatory, blasphemy and profanation of the namesuperstition, idolatory, blasphemy and profanation of the name  
to to that oath, alto to that oath, altogether to that oath, altogether unbecoming the name and professions of Christians; by the which unl  
manymany are rashlymany are rashly and inconsiderately precipitated and sliely drawnmany are rashly and inconsiderately precipitated and  
ereere ever theyere ever they can be aware of it." --- What "it isere ever they can be aware of it." --- What "it is an appending the seal of a  
uncommonuncommon imprecations, to a blank, yea to worse, to ridiculous nonsense and superstition: nonsense,uncommon imprecations,  
aggravation,aggravation, ofaggravation, of profaning the sacred scriptures, by intermixing them therewith), only fit for the amusementag  
in in a winter-evening; most of the secrets being idle in a winter-evening; most of the secrets being idle stuff or lyes, and other parts of it super  
andand idolaters." -- Moreover, they declare,and idolaters." -- Moreover, they declare, that the secrecyand idolaters." -- Moreover, the  
world in print; concerning which, (they say)  
therethere have been many lyes andthere have been many lyes and equivocations, in denying the same, though they containthere have been

I am etc.

D.B.

N.B. With With his letter, ab With his letter, above inserted, Mr. D.B. sent us the paper he mentions (132), which is dated Nov 13, 17  
anotheranother of the same handwriting and subscription, dated Febanother of the same handwriting and subscription, dated Feb 20, 1752  
sent to the mason, for explaining some things in his papers, and the mason's answers. Having compared thesent to the mason, for explaining some things in his papers, and the mason's answers. Having compared the  
narrativenarrative with these papers, we findnarrative with these papers, we find that it is faithful taken from them; so that whatever shall  
conduct,conduct, which itconduct, which it does not become usconduct, which it does not become us either to justify or condemn, the auther

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