DOROTHY ANN LIPSON

Freemasonry in Federalist Connecticut, 1789-1835

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Freemasonry in Federalist Connecticut

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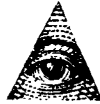
FREEMASONRY
in Federalist Connecticut



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To
F. S. R.
mother and friend

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Freemasonry in Federalist Connecticut

Introduction

By the turn of the nineteenth century the American republic, surprising the world and itself by its survival, had developed some social institutions as akin to their English models, and yet as different from them, as were its political institutions. American Freemasonry was one of them.

By 1800, forty-five lodges of Freemasons had been chartered by the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, and their number grew to seventy-five before the Antimasonic movement of the late 1820s and early 1830s decimated the fraternity. Membership in a lodge had become part of the lives of thousands of men, and the lodge a familiar facet of the social structure in dozens of towns. This study examines the role of Freemasonry in federal and antebellum Connecticut: from the organization of the lodges under a Grand Lodge in 1789 until the Antimasonic movement, triggered in 1826, began to subside around 1835. The chance survival of unusually full records for Putnam Lodge No. 46, founded in 1801 by men from five towns in northeastern Connecticut, provides the material for a case study and an unscientific—but not necessarily unrepresentative—sample population for beginning to get at questions about the composition of Masonic membership and the relationship of the lodge to its surrounding community. Since Freemasonry in Connecticut throughout the federal period was a form of dissent from the prevailing religious and cultural ethos, its presence sometimes evoked distrust or hostility among those aware of the variance. Although my intention here is to focus on the growth of the fraternity and the variety of satisfactions that membership afforded, since community response to the Masonic alternative always also included antimasonic hostility to its structure, principles, and

priorities, the changing nature of antimasonry is a pervasive component of the analysis.

Freemasonry was, and is, a secret fraternity. Secret societies are not often studied, except by anthropologists as part of exotic cultures, because they are vaguely suspect in our own. As one sociologist explained the omission, social scientists "come from intellectual communities where the overt is the good and where unabashed ritual, magic, and changelessly deep loyalties are suspiciously close to mental ill health."[1] Historians, social scientists of a sort, have never really examined Masonry, although they discuss antimasonry, or situations in which the dynamics of social change thrust Masonry into the political forefront and, therefore, into spheres of scholarly respectability. However, the social functions of Masonry were broader than the political contests in which it figured. By the 1820s, Freemasonry had spread so far and so fast in Connecticut that, if membership were really a symptom of mental ill health, it would have warned of a disease of epidemic proportion.

Of course, it should be noticed at the outset that all secret societies are intrinsically political. Since the publication of "ancient and authentic" constitutions of the Masons' guild in London in the early 1700s, the constitutions of Freemasonry

[1] Lionel Tiger, *Men in Groups* (New York, 1970), p. 161. Abner Cohen in "The Politics of Ritual Secrecy," *Man*, the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, VI, no. 3 (September 1971), 427–428, briefly and suggestively discusses why contemporary Masonry is so little studied, assigning modern values of individualism and privacy as important reasons, among other epistemological and methodological difficulties. He overcomes some of these difficulties by studying Freemasonry in another land, in Sierra Leone, Africa. For the purposes of this study, Connecticut in the federal period is "my tribe." See also J. M. Roberts, *Mythology of the Secret Societies* (New York, 1972), p. 11. Any listing of the massive sociological or anthropological work on secret societies probably ought to begin with Hutton Webster, *Primitive Secret Societies: A Study in Early Politics and Religion* (New York, 1908).

everywhere have stipulated that its members were "resolv'd against all Politicks" in their meetings.[2] Masons took this admonishment more seriously in some countries than in others as Masonry spread abroad. In America, Masons generally observed the taboo against political discussion, at least in the formal lodge meetings. However, unless a secret association is supported by, or is part of, the political authority of the state, its formation and operation are always regarded by some outsiders as politically aggressive.[3] Secrecy itself is usually perceived as hostile. It was inevitable that the existence and operation of Masonry in Connecticut became at times a political concern, but the prior questions asked here are what Freemasonry was, how it spread, the reasons men joined it, and the consequences—political antimasonry among them—of Masonic activity. In the future one would hope that other studies of other times and places will further illuminate an associational movement that commanded such wide participation and allegiance and became the prototype of most other fraternal and service organizations.

The origins of Freemasonry are associated with the history of the English guilds. In twentieth-century America no one modifies the designation of a Freemason by the word *speculative* to distinguish him from a member of the building craft; in London in the 1720s, however, some distinction was necessary between "operative" masons who carved gargoyles, provided suitably inscribed tombstones, or built stone walls, and the members of one of the clubs of "speculative" Masons, who came from all trades and occupations. After the guild had been transformed into a social fraternity, William Pres-

[2] [James Anderson], *The Constitutions of the Free Masons, Containing the History, Charges, Regulations, &c. of that Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity* (London, 1723), p. 54.

[3] Tiger, *Men in Groups*, pp. 161–167; Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Secrecy and Secret Societies," trans. Albion W. Small, *American Journal of Sociology*, XI, no. 4 (January 1906), 497–498.

ton, in *Illustrations of Masonry*, one of the most widely read eighteenth-century Masonic texts in both England and America, explained that operative masons had worked on "a proper application of the useful rules of architecture, whence result a due proportion and a just correspondence in all its parts," while speculative Masons "learn to subdue the passions, act upon the square, keep a tongue of good report, maintain secrecy, and practice charity."[4] As time increased the distance from the antique form of labor organization after which Masonry was patterned, a simpler definition came into general use: Freemasonry was "a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated with symbols."[5] Freemasons, organized into groups called lodges, learned their system of morality through the initiation rites and the rituals attending transitions between the levels of its graded structure.[6]

Even a local history of Masonry in Connecticut must begin with its English origins, because the basic rituals, myths, and symbolic content of the fraternity, formulated in London in the early eighteenth century, have remained essentially unchanged. The social engineers who constructed modern Freemasonry combined the craftguild history and rituals, the format of the London social club, some traditional wisdom, and some new techniques in scientific education to fashion a

[4] William Preston, *Illustrations of Masonry* (London, 1796), p. 9.

[5] Douglas Knoop and G. P. Jones, *Masonic History Old and New* (n.p., 1942), p. 10.

[6] See Appendix 1, p. 341. Freemasonry initially provided a tri-gradal system of instruction. Admission and advancement was accomplished by a dramatic ritual. Each step had its own program, which consisted in learning the passwords, the grip, and the oaths associated with each degree; hearing about the moral symbolism of the tools associated with each degree; and participating in the ritual of that degree. In this study we are concerned only with the three basic degrees, or with "Blue Lodge" Masonry, although many ranks beyond Master had been formulated by the end of the eighteenth century.

fraternity responsive to the anxieties that attended rapid social changes there and then. Others discovered that the institution built in London was very useful in facing some universal modern problems in many different times and places. Masonry did not plainly address some of the pressing problems of daily life, since, according to its tenets, it was not concerned with either political complexities or religious diversities. However, it did afford its members a sense of social location, order, and fraternity within the separate structure of an association dedicated to teaching a universal morality.

When Masonry had spread far enough to include colonial America, it tended to attract to membership men whose experience, occupations, or ambitions differed in some way from the usual ones in those relatively homogeneous, agricultural communities. Merchants attracted by the promise of an international cachet; colonial placemen and businessmen anxious for connections with "home"; soldiers and militiamen glad for help or social location among their comrades in arms; and any who welcomed the idea of new, secular, social experiences might find Freemasonry attractive. Lodges first started in the seaports and trading communities as commercial clubs or business references.

Although the lodges of America were nominally responsible to the Grand Lodges of Great Britain, many of them continued to meet throughout the Revolution. The explicitly apolitical lodges formed in the new American army spread the ideas of Masonic universalism among the erstwhile colonials. After the Revolution, each state established a Grand Lodge as the new legitimizing agency of a nationalized and Americanized Masonry. Connecticut formed its Grand Lodge in 1789.

During the 1780s and 1790s the fraternity recruited its membership from the more mobile elements of the population, and prominent Masons were often leaders of political and religious dissent in Connecticut. As Freemasonry grew in

popularity and spread along the inland roads to relatively remote agricultural communities it was associated with a nascent demand for change in the tone and style of the Puritan communitarian heritage, a symptom of a new and growing latitudinarianism. The activities of Putnam Lodge from 1801 to 1835 show in particular detail how the fraternity seemed to threaten the traditional church-community relationships of the Connecticut towns in the early nineteenth century. Before 1818 Congregational churches were established and supported by law. Although the growth of denominations after the Revolution augured disestablishment, the fundamental premise of some organic relationship between the churches and the state was seldom at issue.[7] The single most threatening aspect of Masonry was that some members used the association as if it were a religious denomination or, more threatening yet, an alternative to religion. All Masons, after all, participated in a program of moral instruction replete with ritual ceremonies that paralleled—and might infringe upon—traditional functions of the churches.

By 1800 the Grand Lodge of Connecticut chartered, registered, and supervised the ritual orthodoxy of forty-five lodges, and regulated their relations to one another and to the central body in the orderly fashion associated with an establishment. The lodges drew membership from a cross section of the population, but a disproportionate number were nonfarmers, in the higher income brackets, particularly active in politics and diverse in religion. They overlapped the Standing Order of Connecticut, and, because of the social context of the fraternity, can probably best be described at that time as antiestablishment.

Masonry grew and spread in Connecticut, not merely be-

[7] Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven and London, 1972), pp. 8, 381; Elwyn A. Smith, *Religious Liberty in the United States: The Development of Church-State Thought Since the Revolutionary Era* (Philadelphia, 1972), p. 225.

cause it provided an institutional platform for dissent, but because membership provided advantages and satisfactions. Minimally, Masonic membership offered the many pleasures of fraternal conviviality. The rituals and ceremonies of the lodge were sources of exotic experience, and the lectures and libraries seemed to promise a new source of special information and self-education. Masonic charity was an insurance policy for its members and their families that was more freely and routinely available in time of need than civic or Christian charity. Membership equipped the Masons with access by password to similar groups in distant places throughout much of their relevant world. Freemasonry linked its members in a far-flung network of shared values and stable standards of association on which they could rely in spite of movement and change.

In spite of the universalistic philanthropic doctrine of Masonry, its inherent elitism as a male secret society devoted to the pleasure and uses of its members alone, in a manner at variance with that of the surrounding society, led inexorably to various kinds of antimasonry. For example, insofar as it defined itself as an exclusive morality institution, the fraternity invited the antagonism of those women who had by then come to think of themselves as among the primary custodians and communicators of moral standards and social values. Yet all of the uses of Freemasonry implied some distinctiveness from the community in which it was located, and antimasonry was always mobilized when these differences were perceived as dangers. In 1826 the disappearance and presumed murder of William Morgan, who was publishing an exposé of the secrets of Masonry, mobilized antimasonry into an evangelical movement and a political party that threatened the continued existence of the fraternity in several states, including Connecticut. Although Antimasonry as a political party failed in Connecticut, as a social movement it was far more successful, destroying the fraternity in some areas of the state. The sur-

vival of Masonry, however impeded, testified to new limitations on the older religious-political consensus, and the beginnings of America's characteristic pluralistic, multidenominational balance.

By the mid-twentieth century Freemasonry claimed a membership of about twelve million brethren, or one out of every twelve adult males, and it was the prototype of most secret fraternal and service associations.[8] Waves of antimasonry crested over and over again in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, explaining much about their different social contexts. However, only the Antimasonic political party of the 1830s has received scholarly attention. Recently, scholars of the Antimasonic party, responsive to contemporary social problems, often place the movement on the far right of American political thought, at the beginning of a line that moved through Know-Nothingism to twentieth-century McCarthyism, or on the lunatic fringe of excessive reaction to problems of social change, status deprivation, or anomie.[9] They do not describe Masonry as a way of coping with the same social problems that mobilized antimasonry. That Masons and Antimasons were products of the same culture is as important as the fact that they reacted differently to the problems they shared. Antimasons took positions of unmitigated democratic egalitarianism and moralistic religious communitarianism against the ambiguous secular elitism and the moralistic latitudinarianism of Masons; but neither group was

[8] "Busy Brotherly World of Free Masonry," *Life*, October 8, 1956, pp. 104–122.

[9] Lorman Ratner, *Antimasonry: The Crusade and the Party,* American Historical Source Series (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1969), considers and summarizes recent interpretations, as does Michael F. Holt, "The Antimasonic and Know Nothing Parties," *History of U. S. Political Parties, 1789–1860 From Factions to Parties*, Ed. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (New York and London, 1973), I, 575–620. See also Seymour Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason: Right Wing Extremism in America, 1790–1970* (New York, 1970), pp. 29–46.

drawn from one class, party, region, or religion. Differences in ideology were not then, and in American society never were to be, fully defined by political affiliation. In this case, a dichotomy between Left and Right, or conservative and liberal, cannot adequately describe a context in which the more democratic of the adversaries was the less liberal. This study of the social uses of Connecticut Freemasonry in the federal period explores the complex patterns of thought, action, and interaction that account for the growth and persistence of Masonry and, incidentally, Connecticut antimasonry. The results of this study suggest that similar explorations of the social context of Masonry in the South and the Midwest would delineate some important cultural differences, helpful in explaining regional growth and balances in the social and political life of antebellum America.

There is another dimension of Freemasonry that should be only mentioned here, and then not quite forgotten. Masonry was an expression of the "play element" in American culture, which Johan Huizinga has described as a distinct and fundamental function of life in all societies. Ultimately incapable of exact definition, play is a free and voluntary activity, which Huizinga suggests, adorns life because of its "expressive value" and its "spiritual and social associations." In play people create "temporary worlds within the ordinary world, dedicated to the performance of an act apart"; play proceeds by its own regular rules, and it "promotes the formation of social groupings which tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their difference from the common world." Ideas of "magic, litany, sacrament and mystery" are all rooted in play.[10] Often in the pages that follow it may appear that these characteristics also define Masonry: a game, most seriously and solemnly played by most of its members, until or unless the social stakes of Masonic membership became

[10] Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (Boston, 1955), pp. 4–27.

too high and spoiled the fun, or other uses of the fraternity made it mundane.

The chapters of this study are organized in roughly chronological sequence in order to take the formation, spread, and domestication of Freemasonry from its English origins (Chapter I) to America in the course of the eighteenth century (Chapter II), with attention focused on Connecticut just after the Revolution (Chapter III). In Chapter IV the growth of Masonry in Connecticut between 1800 and 1826 is briefly outlined, and a more detailed study of the organization and operation of Putnam Lodge in Windham County helps describe the Masonic brethren of Connecticut in the first third of the nineteenth century. Chapters V, VI, and VII consider the Masonic alternative in relation to religion, moral education, and fraternal, social relationships. Chapter VIII deals with the confrontation of the Masons and Antimasons between 1826 and around 1835. Finally, Chapter IX recapitulates, by examining Antimasonic challenges, the place of Freemasonry in the social arrangements of Connecticut, in an attempt to account for the appeal of the fraternity, the hostility it engendered, and the curiously mixed success of the Antimasonic initiative.

I

The Invention of Freemasonry

Speculative Freemasonry, assembled or invented in England in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, spread to America a few years later without significant change. The circumstances surrounding the establishment, modification, and spread of the fraternity suggest that those who were most active in setting up modern Freemasonry consciously attempted to create a useful social institution.[1] They were heirs of a century of multiple revolutions in England, anxious to stabilize their world by adapting received traditions to the changing times. For some of the same reasons, the men who joined Masonic lodges in America in the course of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were similarly aware of its usefulness. In both places Masonic ideas about universalism, charity, education, and fraternity addressed problems

[1] The biographies of some of the founders and the pattern of the organization, modification, and spread of Masonry suggest that some of the craftsmen were making a deliberate effort to "construct a more satisfying culture" in a pattern described by Anthony Wallace as "revitalization movements." Wallace has described society as a network of communication so interrelated that if one part is subjected to the stress of rapid, fundamental change, all other parts are affected. Individuals in society will then try to alleviate the stress by inventing new methods of acting or thinking when the old ones no longer work. Wallace's model of revitalization movements as cooperative efforts to make the ideas or institutions of society fit a new social reality helps to both describe and explain the invention and uses of Freemasonry. Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist*, 58 (April 1956), 264–328.

attending economic growth and social diversification. The story of the origins of Masonry helps explain the enduring attractiveness of the association in social contexts as dissimilar as Georgian England and post-Revolutionary Connecticut.

During the seventeenth century, England had been tumbled about. The Newtonian scientific revolution had coincided with economic and political revolutions, affecting every segment of society. By the time that George I came to the throne, the desire for stability, for respite from change, had become a driving force.[2] Freemasonry was formed in and by this milieu of changing facts and anxious feelings. In 1717 a few lodges of the guild of masons met to form the Premier Grand Lodge of England. The immediate growth and spread of Masonry testified to its usefulness. Membership seemed to promise access to the new scientific learning through the "mysteries" of one of the old workers' guilds, the organizations that had traditionally governed the economic and political life of the city. The Masons seemed to offer a new social reference and new social space.

Many of the men who were most active in forming speculative Freemasonry were intimately associated with the scientific revolution. They included James Anderson, a Presbyterian clergyman and genealogist; John Desaguliers, a Church of England clergyman and scientist; and Robert Rawlinson and Martin Folkes, antiquarians who were also enamored of the new sciences.[3] These men were all members of the Royal Society, one of the principal corporate efforts to sponsor, coordinate, and disseminate the methods and ideas of the new sciences.[4] Their careers joined them in overlapping cir-

[2] Penfield Roberts, *The Quest for Security* (New York, 1947), pp. 104–139.

[3] John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, 6 vols. (London, 1812), v, 489, 57; Sir Alfred Robbins, *English Speaking Freemasonry* (London, 1930), pp. 50–74; Dudley Wright, *England's Masonic Pioneers* (London, n.d.), pp. 89–96, 77–83, 107–110, 50–54.

[4] Thomas Sprat, *The History of the Royal Society of London for the Im-*

cles of scholarly intent that spiraled back to the beginning of the seventeenth century. In the Royal Society they joined men such as Robert Hooke, who had competed with Newton in mathematical techniques; Robert Boyle, who had sponsored Hooke in the Royal Society; William Harvey, who had worked with Boyle; and Francis Bacon, who had been attended by Harvey. Bacon's ideas about a scholarly society had framed the establishment of the Royal Society.[5] These men formed a network of love and rivalry, enmity and shared curiosity, and sponsorship and achievement, in generations of genius that spanned the century. Newton, whose *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1686) epitomized the mathematical work of that century, lived long enough to welcome Anderson and Desaguliers to the fellowship of the Royal Society. Thus the great intellectual revolution of the preceding century was telescoped in the Royal Society into the work of two generations: progenitors and heirs. Among the heirs were the founders of Freemasonry.

Freemasonry provided men such as Anderson and Desaguliers with a format for combining the ideas and methods of the new sciences with more familiar patterns of behavior and belief: the new methods of scientific education with the old practices of the lodges and the workers' guilds. They compiled the stories and legends of masons into a historical drama attached to the rituals of joining the lodge and rising through the degrees of membership. The dramas of Freemasonry came to include a worldwide, history-long cast of characters in which the hero was the scientist-worker, the man of competence and achievement.[6] The ceremonies were

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proving of Natural Knowledge (London, 1722), is a contemporary history, description, and defense of the new educational ideas of the Royal Society.

[5] Oliver Lawson Dick, ed., *Aubrey's Brief Lives* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1962), pp. 8–16, 36–37, 128–133, 164–167.

[6] Jerome S. Bruner, "Myth and Identity," *Myth and Mythmaking*, ed. Henry A. Murray (New York, 1960), pp. 281–283. Bruner describes myths as providing "metaphoric identities."

based on the idea that masons as builders had been known through the ages for their special skills. Speculative Freemasons in eighteenth century London learned that they, too, could achieve superior "skill" in the same way that had led to technical competence for their predecessors: through programmatic instruction that, like technical instruction in the old guilds, rewarded different stages of achievement. Only speculative Freemasonry taught personal and social morality rather than technical skills. Organized in this way, the fraternity provided a corporate history, a social hierarchy, and a stable system of values, all sanctioned by the antiquity of the workers' guild. The invention of Freemasonry is the first part of the story of its spread to America. If we examine in brief, selective detail of the cultural and social context of Freemasonry in London in the early decades of the eighteenth century, the subsequent description of the history, tenets, and composition of the association will be more clearly silhouetted.

London in 1717

At the beginning of the eighteenth century London was suffering from some of the problems that were to characterize modernizing societies. London was the center of government, industry, trade, and social life. Urban crowding had created many social problems, and changes in manners and behavior had caused anxious questioning about the sources of social standards. London "seemed to belong to a different world and a different age from the country village and the country town."[7] Speculative Freemasonry was organized there.

As the capitol of England, London was especially sensitive to political shifts and changes, and recent dynastic history had bred a certain uneasiness. In the summer of 1714 Queen Anne, the sister of the exiled James II and the last Protestant

[7] Dorothy George, *England in Transition: Life and Work in the Eighteenth Century* (Middlesex, England, 1962), p. 35.

member of the Stuart family, died. George I, a great-grandson of James, reluctantly left his native Hanover to assume his dynastic duties and to ensure a Protestant succession for the English throne. The phrase "Queen Anne is dead" became proverbial and described a mood of loss and change.[8] Many of the visible and disquieting kinds of change were related to the expanding economy.

There were new sources of and uses for wealth, trade increased, and financial schemes bubbled. At the same time some new elements of society began to come into their own. Defoe described their origin: "Law, trade, war, navigation, improvement of stocks, loans on public funds, places of trust, and abundance of other modern advantages and private wayes of getting money, which the people of England in these last ages have been acquainted with more than formerly, have joyn'd, I do not say conspir'd, together for some yeares past to increase the wealth of the commonality. . . ."[9] Its nobility and gentry still topped England's social pyramid, but economic changes meant that "immense estates, vast, till of late, unheard of summs of money amass'd in a short time" had "rais'd" some families "to a stacion of life something difficult to describe and not less difficult to giv a name to." Defoe was clear, however, that wealth without land or title did not fit the new groups into the traditional layer of gentlefolk. Although wealth could buy land, and land and wealth could buy titles, the new possessors of nongentle wealth were still in the process of rising, or falling, to one of the traditional steps in the social ladder.[10]

[8] Christopher Hill, *The Century of Revolution: 1603–1714* (New York, 1961), p. 312.

[9] Daniel Defoe, *The Compleat English Gentleman*, ed. Karl L. Bulbring (London, 1810), p. 257. Since eighteenth- and nineteenth-century spelling was idiosyncratic, the distracting use of *sic* is omitted in the quotations.

[10] H. J. Habbakkuk, "England," *The European Nobility in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Albert Goodwin (New York, 1967), pp. 15–17.

Below those of new and extraordinary wealth, most of the richer middling ranks of the new "commonality" were from the more traditional bourgeois layer of merchants, shopkeepers, and civil servants. For them, "the decay of the guild, the spread of a free labour market, the introduction of labour-saving machinery—increased the feeling that they were being dispossessed." According to J. H. Plumb, they were "the bridge between the rich and the poor." For the base of London's social pyramid was the great mass of its population, "the hordes of labourers whose livelihood depended almost entirely on casual employment."[11] Because of the expenses of membership in Masonry, the fraternity found its members in the layers of the population above that mass base.

As London had grown more crowded, all the facilities of the city for housing, protection, and employment had been strained. Problems of social standards and social control, "crime and turbulence and hard living," were an overriding concern.[12] The two institutions that had traditionally set standards of social morality, the church and the family, no longer seemed adequate to their task. For example, although the Church of England had been reestablished in the Glorious Revolution, the religious beliefs of the people had become more heterogeneous. After a century of bloody wars, political revolution, and active persecution in the name of conformity, the church found itself, according to one critic of the establishment, in a "suicidal dilemma." Secured by the police power of the state, the church could not permit in its leaders or members any "zeal in sentiment," because zeal activated confrontations.[13] The safest course for the church was to tolerate unofficially a wide range of differences within the estab-

[11] J. H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century, 1714–1815* (Middlesex, England, 1950), pp. 15–16.

[12] Ibid., p. 14.

[13] William Howitt, *A Popular History of Priestcraft in All Ages*, 7th ed. (n.p., 1845), p. 200.

lishment, and to try to ignore the growth of difference and indifference in the surrounding society.

There were also symptoms of the breakdown of family control. Addison had Sir Roger de Coverley complain about the "revolution" in manners. The young people were using "the most coarse uncivilized words in our language, and utter themselves in such a manner as a clown would blush to hear."[14] Edward Moore, a journalist, thought the decline of public morality was due to permissive childrearing: that parents "err either in negligence or in over-fondness, and might well look to stricter discipline in first forming the hearts and manner of their children."[15] Instead of the family or the church, an increasingly popular social institution, the club, had seemed to become a source of social and moral standards, defined in terms of behavior instead of the moral absolutes that church and family had formerly guarded.[16]

The club was an important phenomenon of the social life of London. During London's chronic housing shortage, coffeehouses and taverns became centers of social life for almost every group and class. Coffeehouses grew to be unstructured clubs when they became the resorts of particular political, social, or interest groups. The club was a more formal way for the like-minded to organize their leisure time. Mr. Spectator observed, "When a set of men find themselves agreeing in any particular, though never so trivial, they establish themselves into a kind of fraternity, and meet once or twice a week, upon the account of such a fantastic resemblance."[17] It was not the importance or triviality of these associations that

[14] William Henry Hudson, *The Sir Roger de Coverley Papers from the Spectator* (Boston, 1899), p. 188.

[15] Louis C. Jones, *The Clubs of the Georgian Rakes* (New York, 1942), p. 23.

[16] James Puckle, *The Club: or, A Gray Hat for a Green Head, A Dialogue between a Father and a Son* (London, 1814), p. 97 et passim.

[17] Hudson, *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, p. xiv.

was phenomenal, but their variety. The "impious" clubs were designed to be scandalously irreligious. Some clubs, like Whytes, were devoted to gambling; others, like the Kit-Kat Club, to intellectual iconoclasm and drinking. There was some kind of association for every kind of eighteenth-century vice, and for every trivial or serious purpose.[18] During this period the guilds of London, as they lost their traditional economic function, came to be more like clubs of workers.

Since speculative Freemasonry claimed descent from the medieval workers' guild of masons, builders in brick and stone, the history of that guild requires brief consideration. Guilds, or "liveries," were associations of workers, dating from medieval times. These associations had been internally reorganized as the patterns of England's economy had changed. With the growth of towns, they had become craft associations; with the growth of a national economy, they had become companies; with the shift to an international economy in the eighteenth century, they became corporations. Their new forms, as George Unwin points out, were "never so new as not to be very really connected with the old by conscious or unconscious emulation, imitation, adaptation."[19] The history of the guilds had mirrored the economic history of the country.

The masons' guild of London was not one of London's twelve great governing liveries, nor did it have a mythic past more rich than other guilds, but it lent itself to use as the vehicle of moral education for reasons associated with the trade itself. Masons had always worked under economic conditions "peculiar to themselves."[20] The builders did not make a

[18] John Timbs, *Club Life of London*, 2 vols. (London, 1866), and Robert Allen, *The Clubs of Augustan London* (Cambridge, England, 1933), both describe the variety of club life.

[19] George Unwin, *The Guilds and Companies of London* (London, 1908), p. 4.

[20] George Unwin, *Industrial Organization in the Sixteenth and Seven-*

product that could be transported to markets, and unlike other workers they did not often aspire to become entrepreneurs. The mason was a worker whose rank and role in the craft was determined by his skill.[21] Most important for the transformation of operative to speculative Freemasonry, masons were usually drawn from a relatively wide region and then locally organized on each building site. They worked with large numbers of men from other crafts, to cooperate in the production of a single product. Their rules were therefore different from those of the settled guilds.

The master of work who assembled his labor force on each new site was faced with the problems of standardizing skills, setting work patterns, recruiting apprentices, and protecting the journeymen workers from unskilled or unfair competition.[22] Once a new community of builders had assembled, some friendly neighborhood monk or scribe usually copied one of the many historical sketches of the masons' crafts and added the general regulations of the guild and the particular rules of that building job. Some of the histories of masonry

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teenth Centuries (London, 1904), pp. 41, 64. For comparison with other guilds' form and style see Sir Ernest Pooley, *The Guilds of the City of London* (London, 1945).

[21] Douglas Knoop and G. P. Jones, *The Medieval Mason* (Manchester, England, 1933), pp. 160–174. The term *Freemason* may have come from the designation of those who worked with freestone, a generic term for any fine-grained stone that could be carved. Workers in freestone were considered the most skilled of the masons. Ibid., pp. 86–87. Others suggest that the term *Freemasonry* may have been derived from a concept of the guild as "a free association of free men." John Harvey, *The Medieval Architect* (London, 1972) p. 139.

[22] Unwin, *Industrial Organization*, pp. 64–65. It has been suggested that the Master's sign or Word was first used by these workers as credentials for their level of skills. Then, too, signs or secret words helped them to identify themselves to one another in times of crisis, since the usual advantages of municipal or parish privileges were reserved for the settled population. Douglas Knoop, *The Mason Word* (n.p., 1938), pp. 6–7.

began with Adam, some with Noah, some with Euclid, and some with Saint Alban, but they all tended to describe masonry as having an ancient and universal history and to claim that the knowledge of their craft was one of the liberal sciences.[23] The rules or "charges" of masonry were the rules about conditions and hours of work, standards of work, and the ethics of the trade.[24] For masons these rules were written in greater detail than for other crafts. More emphasis was placed on personal standards of behavior both on and off the job, and the whole might be suffused with a high moral tone. They were, in short, efforts to create patterns of shared values and standards of work that would quickly transcend the regional differences among a mobile work force. Copies of the history and these charges, sometimes called the Gothic Constitutions of masonry, later provided the inventors of speculative Freemasonry with their source material.

By the eighteenth century the lodges, like many of the other guilds of London, had become social clubs for masons and nonmasons, or "accepted masons." Combining London's propensity to "club" with an old guild form, they organized a new kind of voluntary association. Since the traditional forms of social control seemed to have become inadequate, the idea of a club designed to inculcate the ancient moral truths associated with the history and rituals of the guilds seemed to some to be an ingenious way to raise both the club and the guild to a new, higher social purpose. The Freemasons began to adapt the charges and constitutions of masonry to make them useful for orientation in a changing society, if not a new work site.

[23] Henry Wilson Coil, *Freemasonry Through Six Centuries: Transactions of the Missouri Lodge of Research*, 2 vols. (Fulton, Miss., 1967–1968), I, 31–35; Harvey, *The Medieval Architect*, pp. 189–222; Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (New York, 1957).

[24] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 30. Douglas Knoop and G. P. Jones, *Pure Ancient Masonry* (n.p., 1939), pp. 18–26.

The Establishment of Speculative Masonry

The masons, a workers' guild, which easily might have evolved into just another London club, attracted and was taken over by a group of men who were interested in history, philosophy, and science. In the history of the guild they found material that lent itself to making the club an instrument of scientific social education, of secular or universalistic moral instruction. Modern Freemasonry is the product of the struggles between the clubmen and the social architects among its founders. The particular events that formed Freemasonry suggest the blend of frivolity and serious purpose that attended its organization and has persisted in various ways ever since.

In 1716, four lodges of masons in Westminster, consisting mostly of "accepted masons"—that is, members who were not working masons—decided to "cement under a Grand Master as the Center of Union and Harmony" and form a Grand Lodge. These clubmen made contact with some "old Brothers," who knew more about the history and customs of the old guilds than the clubmen did, and assembled them at the Appletree Tavern. After they "put into the Chair the oldest Master Mason (now the Master of a Lodge), they constituted themselves a Grand Lodge pro Tempore in due Form and forthwith reviv'd the Quarterly Communication of the Officers of the Lodges (Called the Grand Lodge)." The precedent for their "revival" is hazy, but the purpose of the Grand Lodge—to "hold the annual Assembly and Feast" for Saint John the Baptist, the patron saint of masons, in proper, if not sober, style—was most attractive. The assembly chose a Grand Master from among their number until "they should have the Honour of a Noble Brothers at their Head," as was customary for the guilds.[25]

[25] The only record of this first meeting is an official memoir, a recollection added to the minutes of the Grand Lodge around 1723, but since many

From this casual beginning, a train of events led to the transformation of the guild club into a new form of secret fraternal association: speculative Freemasonry. At the next annual feast, the members elected officers from "a List of proper Candidates," none of whom were working masons. The new Grand Master, Anthony Sayre, was simply styled "Gentleman." By the following year, 1718, that departure had become a precedent, and Sayre's successor as Grand Master was George Payne, an "accepted mason" who was eager to enrich the club life of the guild by resurrecting its heritage.

The lodges of the city had been made up of working masons and "accepted masons," regardless of their skill or profession, who joined the masons because they enjoyed the peculiar ceremonial and historical character of the guild. When Payne was elected, he represented those in the group who had more than a casual interest in the history of the guild. Payne was an antiquarian by hobby and he led a strong new element within the membership that appreciated the historical, as well as convivial, aspects of masonic membership. During the year of his Mastership, "several old Copies of the Gothic Constitutions were produced and collated."[26] More important, the Reverend Dr. John Desaguliers, a man of great energy and high reputation in some of London's scientific circles, joined the masons, and his interest was crucial to the subsequent history of the fraternity.[27]

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of those who had participated were still active and did not contradict the record, it is probably accurate enough. Devoid of detail or explanations, it supplies a starting date. Coil quotes from the MSS minutes of the Grand Lodge without page ascription. Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 132.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Samuel Smiles, *The Huguenots: Their Settlements, Churches, and Industries in England and Ireland* (London, 1867), pp. 292ff., contains the most detailed information about Desaguliers's life and work. C. H. Collins Baker and Muriel I. Baker, *The Life and Circumstances of James Bridges, First Duke of Chandos, Patron of the Liberal Arts* (Oxford, 1949), describes not only the life and times of Desaguliers's patron, but something of Desaguliers's scientific work (pp. 156–161, 292–295).

Desaguliers, as a clergyman, a scientist, and an educator, was uniquely qualified to try some of the new ideas about "scientific" education on the problem of instructing men in morality, and the Gothic Constitutions of the masons' guild gave him an opportunity to do so. They tended to elide the differences between the "Geometrie" used in planning a building and the skills of the masons who did the building.[28] This kind of elision was interesting to Desaguliers, who, like the scientists of that time, moved readily from the techniques of mathematics to the idea of mathematics as a system of learning. Desaguliers had developed a method of popular instruction in all the sciences that, he said, required only "Attention and common Sense." He instructed his students in complex ideas in the same way he solved a mathematical problem: through a graded progression in which they would "go on regularly" to advance "from the easiest Truths to those more complex."[29] He may have seen echoes of his own techniques in the system of graded skills, from Apprentice to Master, described in the old constitutions. Since the constitutions also described the moral standards appropriate to each grade of skill, the idea of a graded system of moral education, of "speculative" Freemasonry, was a logical next step.

The association of Dr. Desaguliers, LL.D. and F.R.S., with the lodges was a social coup of which the members were quite aware. They elected him Grand Master at the 1719 Assembly and Feast. Even the scant records suggest a new interest in the lodges. During the year "several old Brothers that had neglected the Craft visited the Lodges, some Noblemen were made Brothers, and more new Lodges were constituted."[30] One of these old brothers was the Reverend James Anderson, who also played an important part in the development of Freemasonry. Anderson moved in the same circles as

[28] Harvey, *The Medieval Architect*, pp. 93–94, 149.

[29] J[ohn] T[heophilus] Desaguliers, *A Course of Experimental Philosophy*, 2 vols. (London, 1763), p. x.

[30] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 133.

Desaguliers. Interested in science, history, and genealogy, he was ready to put all of these interests in the service of "reviving" masonry.[31]

The association of Anderson and Desaguliers in the Grand Lodge in 1720 marked a new phase in Freemasonry. They helped rewrite the history of the guild and rework the content of masonry in the name of historical piety; but, at least initially, the older lodges of operative masons were dismayed. The records are cryptic, but suggest a revolt: "at some Private Lodges, several valuable Manuscripts concerning the Fraternity, their Lodges, Regulations, Charges, Secretes, and Usages . . . [were] burnt by some scrupulous Brothers; that those Papers might not fall into strange Hands."[32] The operative masons and their convivial friends, the accepted masons, were clubmen; the historians, scientists, and reformers who joined the lodges after the formation of the Grand Lodge were social architects, reworking the history and forms of masonry. The pattern of the next few elections suggests that the clubmen and the social architects moved toward opposite poles.[33]

It became clear that one way to unite the factions was to

[31] Anderson's father, a glass blower by trade, had been active in an Aberdeen lodge since 1670. When Anderson came to London in 1710, he may have associated with a lodge while he was studying for the ministry. He joined the lodge at the Rummer and Grapes Tavern, Channel Row, Westminster, where Desaguliers was active. His major work, a twenty-year undertaking, was *Royal Genealogies: or, The Genealogical Tables of Emperors, Kings, and Princes, from Adam to These Times*, 2nd ed. (London, 1735). Although he was a pamphleteer, a minister, and a member of the Royal Society, very few biographical facts about him survive. One contemporary source described him as a "learned but imprudent man," and another as "a little prig of a mass John," but he may have had enemies as well as friends. Wright, *England's Masonic Pioneers*, pp. 89–96; Robbins, *English Speaking Freemasonry*, p. 52; Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 143–144.

[32] Ibid., I, 193, 133.

[33] Douglas Knoop, *The Genesis of Speculative Masonry* (n.p., 1941), p. 22.

put "a Noble Brother at their Head," since noble patronage traditionally legitimized any association or activity, from church festivals to the compilation of dictionaries. Finally, by June 24, 1721, the goal was achieved and John, Duke of Montague, appeared as Grand Master.[34] Anderson's record dates the "Revival of the Prosperity of Masonry" from that time when, as one Masonic historian put it, Freemasonry "rose in one bound into notice and esteem."[35] During 1722 the number of lodges in London doubled. During that year, too, Montague appointed Anderson to "digest" the constitutions Payne had retrieved, and to compile them "in a new and better method."

In the midst of this new growth, however, the whole masonic revitalization effort was almost subverted. Urged by those whom Anderson described as "the Better Sort," or social architects among the masons, Montague agreed to continue as Grand Master for another year, but no date was set for his reinstallation or for the annual Saint John's Day feast. The clubmen among the masons seized their chance to wrest the leadership of the Grand Lodge from those who had achieved both noble sponsorship and control.[36] The story of

[34] The Duke of Montague was the son-in-law of Marlborough, a colonel in the Horse Guards and prominent in military affairs. He was also a Whig and a supporter of the Hanovarians, an impeccable reference for an organization that included migrant Masons, dissenters, and a generally heterogenous membership. According to contemporary report, quoted by Robbins, he was "very tall in stature, of a good shape and symmetry, of a grand aspect, manly, and full of dignity," the very model of a noble Grand Master. Robbins, *English Speaking Freemasonry*, p. 41.

[35] R. F. Gould, quoted in United Grand Lodge of England, *Grand Lodge: 1717–1967* (Oxford, 1967), p. 57.

[36] While the "better sort" were so occupied a "select body of Free Masons" called on one of the Secretaries of State to tell him that they were about to hold a meeting "being obliged by their Constitution," and they hoped that "the Administration would take no Umbrage at the Convention." They were told that they "need not be apprehensive of any Molestation from

the struggle between the social architects and the clubmen is told between the lines of the "Records" and in newspaper stories. The Duke of Wharton, recently initiated into masonry at the King's-Arms Taverns, appeared with other masons at a tavern prepared to celebrate the Saint John's Day feast, which the Grand Lodge had neglected to arrange or sponsor.[37] Anderson reported their highly irregular behavior: "They put in the Chair the oldest Master Mason (who was not the present Master of a Lodge, also irregular), and without the usual decent Ceremonials, the said old Mason proclaim'd aloud Philip Wharton, Duke of Wharton, Grand Master of Masons. . . ."[38] The Grand Lodge, which had worked so long and anxiously for a noble Brother for the Grand Mastership, now had one duke too many. The Duke of Montague was Grand Master of the historically minded, scientific educators and social architects, and the Duke of Wharton was Grand Master of the convivial clubmen, but there could be only one Grand Lodge.

The character of Philip, Duke of Wharton, made him a formidable adversary in any confrontations within the Grand Lodge. Wharton was politically dangerous because he was suspected as a Jacobite, and he was personally reckless.[39] Years of careful planning and organization were about to be ruined by the political taint of his association with them. Yet

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the Government" because their secrets were known to be of a "very harmless nature." Quoted from the *London Journal* of June 16, 1722, in Lewis Melville, *The Life and Writings of Philip, Duke of Wharton* (London, 1913), p. 110.

[37] Robbins, *English Speaking Freemasonry*, p. 41.

[38] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 135.

[39] Pope described him in a satire so vicious that he never published it. The final version only called him "a fool, with more wit than half mankind." One passage alluded to his role in Freemasonry:

"Though wond'ring Senates hung on all he spoke, / The Club must hail him Master of the Joke." Melville, *Life of Wharton*, p. 94. See also Grace and Philip Wharton, *The Wits and Beaux of Society* (New York, 1861), pp. 145–164. John Robert Robinson, *Philip, Duke of Wharton*, 1698–1731 (London, 1896), is one of the more complete biographies of Wharton.

he was a duke. The factions compromised at a special meeting in January 1722/1723. Wharton became Grand Master of both factions after "promising to be True and Faithful" and consenting to two watchdogs, Desaguliers as Deputy Grand Master and Anderson as Warden, to guard the promise. Montague graciously retired. At that meeting the membership also adopted Anderson's *Constitutions*, the result of the joint efforts of the new Masonic historians.[40] These *Constitutions* were to become the basis and the bible of a far-flung network of speculative Freemasonry.

The new *Constitutions* defined the Grand Lodge as a central governing body responsible for all Freemasonry within its territory, however its territory came to be defined. It was changed from a general assembly of members into an association of lodge Masters and other officers. It assumed the power to issue charters for all new lodges, and it acted as a clearing house about lodges and membership. Anderson's *Charges*, based on Payne's earlier collection of the general regulations in the old constitutions, were prescribed for all initiations. Most important of all, the *Constitutions* made it clear that the Grand Lodge now assumed that the lodges had "abandoned all intent to regulate the building trade," and adapted the

[40] Anderson's work was presented to the Grand Lodge at the 1723 meeting as *The Constitutions, History, Laws, Charges, Orders, Regulations, and Usages of the Right Worshipful Fraternity of Accepted Free Masons, collected from their General Records and their Faithful Traditions of Many Ages*. The membership, which had barely upheld Desaguliers, ambiguously confirmed Anderson. It voted that "it is not in the Power of any person or Body of Men to make any alteration, or Innovation in the Body of Masonry without the Consent first obtained of the Annual Grand Lodge." This vote, which left open to question whether or not they considered the *Constitutions* as "innovation," was interpreted and recorded by Anderson as "approv'd." First it was published in London in 1723 under the title *The Constitutions of the Free Masons, Containing the History, Charges, Regulations, &c. of that Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity*. Within a dozen years it was published by Benjamin Franklin in the distant colony of Pennsylvania, the first work guiding the establishment of Freemasonry in America. Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 135–136, 17; *Grand Lodge*, p. 60.

working tools, tenets, customs, and regulations of the operative masons to the allegorical uses of speculative Masonry.[41] After 1723 no operative mason held Grand Lodge office of any importance.

The following year, Wharton, modestly inviting his own renomination, refused to retire. However, the Earl of Dalkeith let it be known that he would accept leadership of the Grand Lodge, and that, if elected, he would appoint Desaguliers as his Deputy Grand Master. Dalkeith was elected by a vote of forty-three to forty-two.[42] However small the margin or heterogeneous the membership, the social architects among the masons had won control. A group of scientists, historians, and philosophers, attracted to the fraternity since Desaguliers had joined, began to work on the formal elaboration of rituals and ceremonies of Masonry. They called it a work of "restoration."

The election of Dalkeith and Desaguliers in 1723 was not so much a personal victory as a signal that a large proportion of the old, as well as the new, membership of Masonry was willing to be governed by the Grand Lodge. The lodges grew in number and size.[43] A contemporary pamphlet described membership as "an honour most courted of late by men of Quality," but the membership was, as this narrative of the initial struggles has tried to show, heterogeneous.[44] It included clubmen, antiquarians, and a new breed of social scientists, as well as operative masons.

From the earliest years of the Grand Lodge era, the activities of the Masons provoked attention in newspapers,

[41] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 158. *Grand Lodge*, pp. 70–77.

[42] *Grand Lodge*, p. 60.

[43] William Cowper, Clerk of Parliaments, was appointed Secretary of the Grand Lodge, and formal minutes began to be kept, as in a stable organization. *Grand Lodge*, p. 50.

[44] Douglas Knoop, G. P. Jones, and Douglas Hamer, *Early Masonic Pamphlets* (Manchester, England, 1945), p. 23, quoting Hist. MSS., Portland MSS., vii, p. 322.

pamphlets, and books.[45] Writers to the London papers and Hudibrastic poets mocked them. From time to time clergymen questioned or denounced them. However, a Masonic literature also grew, in books like Robertson's *Pocket Companion* and Anderson's revised histories. Exposés, explanations, and satire all apparently helped Masonry. The number of lodges doubled between 1723 and 1730, and then more than tripled again in the next decade.[46]

During the 1720s Masonry also began to spread abroad. Eighteenth-century Anglomania, "fed by travel and commerce," spread Masonry on the Continent.[47] Foreign visitors took Masonry home with them, and ardent Masons requested warrants for bringing the "light" of their fraternalism to benighted distant places.[48] More important, other Grand

[45] Knoop, Jones, and Hamer, *Pamphlets*, pp. 27–28; John M. Roberts, *Mythology of the Secret Societies* (New York, 1972), pp. 60–62; Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 99.

[46] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 252; *Grand Lodge*, pp. 227–273.

[47] Roberts, *Mythology of the Secret Societies*, p. 29.

[48] A list of the order in which foreign lodges are engraved on the Lists of the Grand Lodge describes part of the extent and pattern of the early diffusion of Masonry:

France—1725–1732
Spain—1728–1729
India, Bengal—1730
Philadelphia—1730
Boston—1730
Savannah—1733–1734
Hamburg—1733
Holland—1734
Portugal—1735–1736
Italy—1735
Sweden—1735
Portsmouth—1736
Switzerland—1736
West Indies—1737
New York—1738–1739
Nova Scotia—1738
Turkey—1738
Poland—1739
Russia—1740
Virginia—1741 (Grand Lodge of Scotland)
Newfoundland—1741
Austria—1742
Denmark—1743
Newport—1749
Maryland—1749
New Haven—1750

Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 246, 280–281.

Lodges were formed in Scotland and Ireland, and the Grand Lodge of York, with uniquely ancient credentials, was "revived" from about 1725 to 1730.[49] The main importance of the Grand Lodge of York was that its forms and rituals were used by still another Grand Lodge formed in London itself; that new Grand Lodge styled itself "The Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons," or the "Ancients." After the Ancients were established in 1751, the older Grand Lodge of England was called the Premier Grand Lodge, or the "Moderns." Both "Ancient" and "Modern" Masonry spread to America.

Doctrinal differences between the Ancients and the Moderns were more important in England than in America, but, since they did not figure importantly in the history of Freemasonry in Connecticut, they need not detain us. The *Ahiman Rezon*, written by one of the leaders of the Ancients, became the standard source for Ancient Masonry in America in the same way that Anderson's *Constitutions* provided the basic forms for the Moderns. That work, more than Anderson's, was "colored by distinctively Christian thought, imagery and phraseology."[50] On the other hand the most significant contribution of the Ancients to American Masonry was the *Illustration of Masonry*, written by William Preston, a promi-

[49] For example, the English style of Masonry spread to Scotland and combined with a more active operative and "accepted" Masonry, and a Grand Lodge was formed there in 1736. The Grand Lodge of Ireland was formed in 1730. Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 213, 207.

[50] It was edited by William Smith and published under the title, *Ahiman Rezon Abridged and Digested: . . . A Sermon Preached at Christ Church, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1783), in the American edition cited here. In his work Lawrence Dermott leaned heavily on Anderson in compiling the history and charges, but he also used Irish Masonic sources and York Rite Masons as his references. Dermott was active in the Ancients from 1752 until 1791, but the events of the first few years assured its success. *Grand Lodge*, p. 95.

nent Masonic lecturer.[51] In America Ancients and Moderns alike imported, read, and plagiarized Preston. The widespread use of his work—and local variations—tended to blur the English distinctions. About the same time a Modern, Wellins Calcott, published his popular *Candid Disquisitions on Masonry*. The subscription list of the 1772 edition included the names of twenty-four American Masons from Connecticut alone.[52] Preston and Calcott, Anderson and Dermott all circulated widely in America, and the lodges, Ancient and Modern, more nearly formed one Masonic system than their English ancestors.

The Masonic System

The basic system of Masonry, the "Blue Lodge," contained three degrees of membership: a new member was "initiated" to become an entered Apprentice, "passed" to become Fellow Craftsman, and "raised" to the Master's degree—the third and highest degree offered in basic Masonry.[53] Each degree represented a level of instruction in which the initiate or member learned the moral symbolism of the Mason's tools associated with that level, and the appropriate passwords, signs, and grips. This knowledge was transmitted through the

[51] William Preston, *Illustrations of Masonry* (London, 1796). First published in 1788, the *Illustrations* quoted here are from the 2nd edition. There were twelve English and several American editions before the end of the century. Coil, *Freemasonry*, II, 36.

[52] Wellins Calcott, *A Candid Disquisition of the Principles and Practices of the most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, Together with Some Strictures on the Origin, Nature and Design of that Institution* (London and Boston, 1772), pp. xii–xiii. The members were all from Hiram Lodge in New Haven or St. John's Lodge in Stratford.

[53] The higher degrees of Masonry were conferred in other groups, described as chapters, councils or consistories. The differences between the Moderns and Ancients found their main expression in American Masonry in the systems of higher degrees. See Appendix I, p. 341.

dramatic ritual enactment of the myth (or legend) of each level. The history of the development of one of the myths, the myth of the third degree can be used as an example of the rest, to help explain the relationship between history, legend, and ritual in the Masonic system. Through such blends and splices, ideas about universalism, the relationship of status and learning, and fraternal responsibilities became the framework of the Masonic educational program.

The legend of the third degree is the story of Hiram of Tyre. Like most Masonic myths, it is based on Biblical reference to which other materials are added. In its final form, the legend tells that Hiram, the master builder of the First Temple in Jerusalem, was murdered because he would not disclose the Master's Word (password) to some workers who were not yet qualified to receive it. The workers stealthily removed his body and buried it. King Solomon soon missed Hiram and organized the masons into search parties. It was necessary to find him because he alone had the Master's Word. It was also decided that if the Word was lost because he had died, the first word that was uttered when his body was found would become the Master's Word. One group did find him, tried to raise him, failed, and finally succeeded only by using a special grip. This grip came into the Masonic ritual as the Master's grip, or the "five points of fellowship." The word that was uttered when they found him became the Master's Word, that is the password for the third degree.[54] This legend was not so much invented as assisted in its evolution.

The meager base of the legend comes from the story of Hiram in the Bible. In 1 Chronicles 2:13–14, Hiram is described as a skillful man, "endued with understanding," and skilled in many crafts. In the first edition of the *Constitutions*, he was described in greater detail as "the most accomplish'd Mason upon Earth," and the "chief Master-Mason" in the

[54] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 190.

building of Solomon's Temple.[55] A nineteenth-century Masonic historian ascribed this expansion of Hiram's role and the details of his story to "certain idle tales taken out of the Jewish *Targum*," published in London in 1715 and presumably read by the Masonic "compilers."[56] This myth, assembled from various sources, combined with a password and a grip to form the basis of the ritual of the Master's degree.

The earliest mention of hand grips and special passwords related to the Hiramic legend appears in a Masonic manuscript dated 1696. In the manuscript the "points of fellowship," a form of grip or embrace, was mentioned as an identifying response made by one Mason to another when they were asked for "ye word." The five points were described as "foot to foot, knee to knee, heart to heart, hand to hand, and ear to ear."[57] No myth explained that symbolism. In another manuscript dated 1726, after the formation of the Grand Lodge, the grip and a special word are described and associated with the story of Noah. Noah's sons, according to that version, feared that the true secrets of masonry had died with him. They disinterred him, but could find no clue to the secret, but they had agreed beforehand that if they did not find what they sought, they would use the first thing they did find as the secret. They tried to raise the body, but it had decomposed, and a finger came away. They finally succeeded in raising it by setting foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, cheek to cheek, and hand to hand. According to the manuscript: "One said there is yet marrow in this bone and the second said but it is a dry bone and the third said it stinketh. So they agreed for to give it a name as it is known to this day." Because the word *marrow* was used in Scotland and in northern England as late as the nineteenth century to mean a working companion, one Masonic scholar suggests that the

[55] [Anderson], *Constitutions*, p. 11. [56] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 189.
[57] Knoop, *The Mason Word*, pp. 7, 21.

legend may imply that the real word was never lost. However, he goes on, it was "resurrected." The words of the legend, "marrow in this bone," may have been intended as a mnemonic aid to recall the fact that the Master's Word has been given as "Marlebon," "Machaben," or "Machbina" at various times.[58] Thus, the story of Hiram, the password, and the grip were part of Masonic legends in different forms long before they were incorporated into the ritual (the "work") of the third degree. In the late 1730s the story of death and resurrection was attached to the story of Hiram and combined with the grip and the Word to become the ritual of "raising" a Master Mason. The candidate, in the dramatic enactment of the myth, played the part of Hiram.

The Hiramic legend is surely a curious myth for the epitome of education in morality. To what superior quality could Freemasonry pretend when its central legend described the substitution of a casual word for the real one? Were they celebrating fraud? If the total symbolism of Masonry, the ritual, catechisms, lectures, and history are considered, the message of that myth becomes a different one. The themes in much of Masonry work are concerned with merit as the measure of men, with education, and with the joys and benefits of fraternal association. The story in context becomes the story of useful adjustment because the substitute word did the work of the real word; of efficiency in cooperative action because they did find and raise Hiram; of the futility of trying to get something without having earned it because Hiram's murderers were foiled in getting the Master's Word.[59] It proved apt enough for England on the verge of industrialization and, later, as appropriate to the Protestant ethic in America.

[58] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 190.

[59] Bruner, "Myth and Identity," pp. 281–286. For a description of the ceremonies see James Dewar, "Masonic Ceremony," in *On the Margin of the Visible: Sociology, the Esoteric and the Occult*, ed. Edward A.Tiryakian (New York, 1974). pp. 79–109.

Most of the basic principles of Masonry were similarly portable. Three problems that were products of England's century-long history of change and dislocation had provided part of the orientation of Masonic idea. These were the problems created, first, by the diversity of religion; second, by the social needs of new classes; and, third, by the economic hardships attending an increased physical and social mobility. Men such as Desaguliers, Anderson, and Payne, drawn from the new scientific elite that linked craftsmen and an educated bourgeoisie to the educated gentry and nobility, were the sponsors of the Masonic response to these problems. They compiled and revised the rules, ritual, and context of Masonic membership to afford one range of responses. In general terms, the responses favored diversity in religion, achieved status (as contrasted with ascribed status) in social arrangements, and fraternal responsibility. Masonry proved to be portable because the problems it addressed were some of the puzzles of modernizing societies everywhere, and the Masonic responses were susceptible to a variety of interpretations.

The first problem on which Freemasonry worked was how a society with an established church could accommodate both a growing religious diversity and the rationalistic universalism that had attended the growth of the new sciences. The Masonic response was to provide a secret (arcane) pseudoreligion by developing an elaborate mythology and system of rituals for teaching moral values that Masons claimed were universal. The leaders were not unaware of the parallels of Masonry and religion.[60] Churches, however, required uniformity over a wide range of beliefs and values, from the immediate to the ultimate, while Masonry only re-

[60] As Preston said, rituals "are little more than visionary delusions; but their effects are sometimes important." They "impress awe and reverence on the mind, and engage attention, by external attractions, to solemn rites." Preston, *Illustrations*, p. 32.

quired fidelity to a generally accepted system of moral values related to daily life. As Calcott reminded his English and American readers, in the implicit anticlericalism that pervaded Freemasonic literature, the church's interpretation of history was one of "enmity and cruelty." Masonry, on the other hand, was a system of morality based on the will of God and "discoverable to us by the light of reason without the assistance of revelation."[61] According to the *Constitutions*, a Mason was obliged "to obey the Moral Law," or the "Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is to be *good Men and true*, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish'd."[62] Masonry was designed to encompass all religions, or as the Ancients put it, to be "the universal religion or the religion of nature 'as' the Cement which unites men of the most different Principles into one Sacred Band."[63] This religious universalism had different social implications in the social context of London and, for example, Hartford, but in both places there were groups to whom it appealed.

Masonry expressed another kind of universalism, which was not religious but humanistic. Anderson reminded Masons that their history was worldwide: "we are also of all Nations, Tongues, Kindreds, and Languages." They were above politics or nationality because their experience had proved that politics "had never yet conduc'd to the Welfare of the Lodge, nor ever will." Just as it was expedient to avoid political dis-

[61] Calcott, *Candid Disquisition*, p. 4; *Grand Lodge*, p. 212.

[62] [Anderson], *Constitutions*, p. 50.

[63] Calcott, *Candid Disquisition*, p. 37. The Ancients did not accept the same universalism as the Moderns; it was a major point of difference in the eighteenth century. They included a specific enjoinder to believe "in the Eternal God," and they prohibited membership to the "irreligious," defined as "the unhappy libertine, the deist, or the stupid atheist." *Ahiman Rezon*, pp. 14–15.

cussion, it was expedient to be a good citizen, "a peaceable subject to the Civil Powers." A Mason who rebelled against the state was an "unhappy man" and not a sinner or criminal unless he had committed specifically criminal acts: "They cannot expel him from the Lodge, and his Relation to it remains indefeasible."[64] Preston pointed out: "Where the interests of one country interfere with those of another, nature dictates an adherence to the welfare of our own immediate connexions; but such interference apart, the true Mason is a citizen of the world. . . ."[65] Nationalism was fragile, or sentimental, or utilitarian, and religion a matter of "particular Opinion," but Masonry was universal and could encompass them all. The idea of a global fraternity, a secular catholicity, was as attractive to men in the center of a growing empire as it was comforting to men who were troubled by the pace of social change or the fragility of political institutions in a new nation.

The second question to which Freemasonry addressed itself was that of the social needs of the new "community." Moral education was defined as the work of Masonry, and new members were advanced to higher status through achievements in this work. In the eighteenth century the idea of work as a source of status, instead of a calling, was maturing as part of the secularization of the older ideal. If work had a positive value, then good work, or successful work, or achievement had to be recognized. New ideas about educability were attached to the ideas of work and achievement. In England the idea of personal success as a symbol of morality or as a source of status contrasted with the reality of the social structure based on ascribed social roles, or unearned status, within a hereditary hierarchy. Freemasonry set up a social hierarchy of its own, for achieved status, and with rules for the coexistence of the two systems.

[64] [Anderson], *Constitutions*, p. 50. [65] Preston, *Illustrations*, p. 6.

In the highly stratified society of London at the beginning of the eighteenth century the inclusiveness of the criteria for admission to Masonry was an attractive feature. As Calcott put it, "one chaine unites all nature" and so each lodge ought to be an example of "the universal harmony and affection among the species of every rank and denomination."[66] According to the *Constitutions*, Masons were recruited from "good and true men, free-born, and of mature and discreet Age, . . . of good Report." Once admitted to any lodge, "all Preferment among Masons is grounded upon real Worth and personal Merit only."[67] The test of the egalitarianism of their rules for admission was, of course, their definition of "real Worth." The eighteenth-century Masons were not blind to social realities, nor, they claimed, were they levelers. They not only courted, they hunted, noble patronage; but they also made some provision for their quarry. The *Constitutions* provided that "though all Masons are as Brethren upon the same Level, yet Masonry takes no Honour from a Man that he had before; nay rather it adds to his Honour, especially if he had deserv'd well of the Brotherhood, who must give Honour to whom it is due." Elsewhere in the *Constitutions*, a quick route to office was provided beside the usual ladder for "someone nobly born, or a Gentleman of the best Fashion or some eminent Scholar."[68] The Masonic definition of "Merit" was therefore ambiguous, but it was related to achievement and to proficiency in learning the lessons of Masonic morality. The contrast of these ideas to the theory and practice in the surrounding society threw the inclusive features of Freemasonry into bold relief.

Various kinds of achievement were directly rewarded by the system. Wellins Calcott extolled the harmony in the arrangement: "the man of shining abilities, and those unblessed with such ornaments, are here equally admitted, all may

[66] Calcott, *Candid Disquisition*, p. 2.
[67] [Anderson], *Constitutions*, p. 51. [68] Ibid., p. 52.

here perform their parts. . . . The greatest admit of social familiarity; the inferior is elevated and instructed, constantly maintaining by these means a beneficent equality."[69] Although the fraternity tended to emphasize the brotherhood of masons and kings, it was not equality they were extolling. Their goal was a Masonic meritocracy. Yet the idea of a ladder of education, removed from the general social structure, with superior achievement as one (even if not the only) criterion of status, was a new social principle.

The educational promises of Masonry were also attractive to a socially mobile population. At its lowest pitch, Masonic teaching could simply inculcate conformity in some areas of behavior. Freemasonry's system of morality based upon the idea of a universally shared apprehension of good and evil was defined by behavior. The members were minutely instructed: "You are to act as becomes a moral and wise man." Until the morality and wisdom were achieved, it was well to be instructed in detail. They were warned against such things as "continuing together too late, or too long from Home," told to avoid "Gluttony and Drunkenness," and to behave well "behind a Brother's Back as well as before his Face."[70] Skill in Masonry was first of all conformity with well-established norms, although it was also more than that.

William Preston's lectures, developed in the late eighteenth century, were very widely used and influenced the content of all ensuing systems of Masonic education. He worked out three lectures, one for each degree, subdivided into lessons. The lessons were largely definitions, in poetic terms, of ideas such as brotherly love, truth, and charity. For example, in the second lecture, Preston explained that Masonry included almost every branch of "polite learning," and "comprehended a regular system of science." In different lessons, he defined some of the "orders" of architecture, defined the

[69] Calcott, *Candid Disquisition*, p. 36.

[70] [Anderson], *Constitutions*, p. 55.

"human faculties," and discussed geometry. However, geometry was described as an allegory of social order and harmony. "The contemplation of this science in a moral and comprehensive view, fills the mind with rapture." In the last lecture, in twelve lessons, "every circumstance that respects government and system, ancient lore and deep research, curious invention and ingenious discovery, is accurately traced." Thus the total system compiled by Preston was both "diffusive" and allegorical.[71]

When Preston's *Illustrations* were published in the latter part of the eighteenth century, it was very clear that the lectures and attendant learning, the educational rituals of Masonry, were all concerned with allegories about morality. Thus, geometry was the study of the "moral advantage of Geometry" in its "symmetry, beauty and order"—not a form of mathematics.[72] By defining its work as moral education, Masonic knowledge had been set apart from technical, scientific, or academic learning. Yet the language and the content of Masonry were taught according to the methods of experimental philosophy: step by step, with demonstrations, and by lessons that went from simple to complex statements about the meaning of symbols and rituals as allegories of social virtues. In this way Masonry came to provide a uniquely open membership and a social hierarchy in which the path to status and honor was relatively unobstructed by conventional tests.

[71] Preston, *Illustrations*, pp. 56, 72, 83. In working out their separate hierarchy Masonic historians claimed descent from an ancient elite of knowledge in technical fields, and thus there was the problem of whether technical instruction should be offered. Speculative Masons, at first, wondered whether geometry should be taught to the members. Edward Oakley, in an early Masonic lecture, suggested that "instruments and Books" be provided by each lodge for the serious study of mathematics. In the end, substantive learning was not included in the lessons of Masonry; although the promise of it may have inspired some to renewed efforts at self-education, its nominalism satisfied others. Knoop, Jones, and Hamer, *Pamphlets*, p. 213.

[72] Preston, *Illustrations*, pp. 72–73.

Finally, Freemasonry, as the doctrine of a voluntary association whose members were bound by duties of brotherly aid, seemed to be at least a partial solution to some of the modern problems multiplied by economic changes. As Dr. Robert Plot had reported on Masons in the seventeenth century, "If any man appear though altogether unknown that can shew any of these signes to a Fellow of the Society . . . he is obliged presently to come to him . . . tho' from the top of a Steeple."[73] Such automatic obligation was different from the help afforded by towns or parishes with a stable population. Freemasons, Preston wrote, could claim relationships "through the circle of private connexions to the grand system of universal benevolence which no limits can circumscribe." "The distant Chinese, the wild Arab, and the American savage, will embrace a brother Briton" if he was also a Mason.[74] Universal benevolence, a worldwide network of mutual responsibility, was clearly useful in a growing empire.

The fraternal responsibilities of Masonic membership could, it seemed, be useful in a variety of ways. In 1727 Edward Oakley warned against admitting men who would join "out of Pride and Ambition to claim the Title of Brother to Persons of Distinction."[75] In a series of newspaper letters between a father in the country and his son at the Inns of Court in London, the son admitted that Freemasonry was expensive for a student, but justified his membership on the grounds of social advantage: "[W]ho would grudge 20 Guineas to be introduced into the best of Company?" Masonry, he said, afforded "no small Advantage to a Man who would rise in the World."[76] Changes in the definition of Masonic benefits from fun to advantage were part of the evolution of speculative Freemasonry.

The Masonic idea of charity as one of the advantages of the

[73] Knoop, Jones, and Hamer, *Pamphlets*, p. 32.

[74] Preston, *Illustrations*, pp. 4–5, 8.

[75] Knoop, Jones, and Hamer, *Pamphlets*, p. 213. [76] Ibid., p. 167.

fraternity was different from other concepts of benevolence because it was based on contributory, cooperative, and mutual aid. Masonic charity benefited its members wherever they were, and it was self-sustaining. Planned and routinized aid was available on general humanitarian grounds. As Preston said: "Men, in whatever situation they are placed, are still, in a great measure the same. They are exposed to similar dangers and misfortunes. They have not the wisdom to foresee or power to present, the evils incident to human nature. They hover, as it were, in a perpetual suspense between hope and fear, sickness and health, plenty and want."[77] The Masons sometimes seemed only a short distance from translating "human nature" into economic forces, and general benevolence into social responsibility.

During the century that saw the invention and spread of speculative Freemasonry, none of the ideas elaborated by the fraternity were generally adopted by English society. The Church of England remained established, and dissent from it entailed disabilities. Society and government were still ruled by birth, wealth, and connection. The social and economic needs of the emerging classes were only dimly seen. Freemasonry, however, grew and flourished because of the variety of satisfactions that membership afforded. At the end of the century, during the English reaction to the destruction of traditional social institutions by French revolutionaries, Lord Moira addressed the king on behalf of the "many thousands" of Masons to claim the right of the fraternity to continue, even though other private associations were suspended. "We fraternize for the purpose of social intercourse, of mutual assistance, of charity to the distressed, and goodwill to all," he pointed out. Such an association deserved to continue, even in times of acute social tensions, because of

[77] Preston, *Illustrations*, pp. 20–21.

its high moral purpose and its social usefulness.[78] Freemasonry had provided a source of social reference, help, learning, and status of a sort in a manner directly responsive to some of the social problems that attended that modernizing society.

With the establishment of the Premier Grand Lodge, the form and content of English Freemasonry had been changed and set, and lodges multiplied in England and spread abroad. English colonials along the eastern seaboard of North America set up American lodges under the auspices of Britain's Grand Lodges, and, when the colonies separated from England, the Grand Lodges of America separated from the Grand Lodges of England in a "fraternal" fashion.[79] American Freemasonry went its separate way, its members carrying the English myths of ancient elites of learning and great feats of architecture across an unpeopled, unbuilt country.

[78] The Combination Acts of 1799 were designed to suppress clubs of working men. Moira's plea for the exception of Masonry suggests that the guild lodges still contained workers; however, the membership had broadened by the transition from operative to speculative Masonry. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 158; Preston, *Illustrations*, p. 357.

[79] Robbins, *English Speaking Freemasonry*, p. 68.

II

The Americanization of Freemasonry

Different social conditions before and after the Revolution governed the appeal of Masonry in America. In 1733, about a decade after the social architects of Masonry had gained control of the Premier Grand Lodge in London, Henry Price became "Provincial Grand Master of the Craft in New England," and lodges were soon organized in the colonies.[1] Initially the pattern of Masonic lodges followed English trade routes and military deployments. In most places Masonry was part of a colonial culture, and one of its main attractions was the special ties it afforded with the fraternity at "home."[2] Membership in an exotic English fraternity appealed mostly to merchants, colonial officials, seamen, soldiers, and that small fraction of the population that had some opportunity to look beyond a struggle for existence. In the first section of this chapter some details about the establishment of St.

[1] In 1736 a Grand Master was appointed for South Carolina and New York, and Robert Tomlinson succeeded Price in 1736. In 1743 Thomas Oxnard of Boston was appointed Provincial Grand Master "in North America" and served in that office until his death in 1754. Henry Leonard Stillson, ed., *History of the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons and Concordant Orders* (Boston, 1910), pp. 219, 225. See also J. Hugo Tatsch, *Freemasonry in the Thirteen Colonies* (New York, 1929).

[2] Michael Kammen, *People of Paradox: An Inquiry Concerning the Origins of American Civilization* (New York, 1973), p. 185: Clinton Rossiter, *Seedtime of the Republic* (New York, 1953), pp. 5, 43.

John's Lodge No. 4 in Hartford provide an example of colonial Masonry. During the Revolution the advantages of Masonic membership in creating subcommunities in the army lines led to the establishment of lodges in almost every army camp: the activities of the American Union Lodge of the Connecticut Line, described in the second section, show how the supranationalism of the fraternity hedged against the fortunes of war for its members, and how, in the course of the Revolution, the fraternity was Americanized.

Freemasonry was Americanized by the Revolution, but not nationalized. Each state in the new United States achieved Masonic hegemony within its territory by forming its own Grand Lodge. Twelve of the seventeen lodges then in existence in Connecticut formed a Grand Lodge in 1789 that, as the third section describes, fulfilled the same functions of ordering and regulating membership that had been reserved to English authority through colonial deputations before the Revolution.[3] In post-Revolutionary Connecticut, Masonic ideas about religious universalism and its separate, secret, sociable fraternalism were a form of dissent from the prevailing religious and political ethos. In this sense the spread of Masonry across the state was an index of social diversification in Connecticut between 1733 and 1790. The last section of this chapter, an account of the formation of Moriah Lodge No. 15 in Canterbury, begins the story of the Masonic alternative in Federalist Connecticut.

Provincial Masonry

Masonic historians have followed one of several theories about the antiquity of American Masonry by identifying early shadowy figures who might have been members of the frater-

[3] Joseph K. Wheeler, ed., *The Centennial: One Hundredth Anniversary of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Connecticut* (Hartford, 1890), p. 94.

nity as far back as the Vikings in Vinland.[4] Clearly, individual Masons did come to America around the time of the establishment of the Premier Grand Lodge in London, but all Masons were "Masons-at-Large," members who gathered in casual assemblies, until Provincial Grand Lodges were officially established to form and sanction the units of the fraternity.[5] The appointment of Henry Price in 1733, and the establishment of St. John's Lodge in Boston as a Grand Lodge, thus formally date the beginnings of Masonry in the American colonies.

From the beginning, American Masons were eager to have regularly constituted lodges. They wanted the rituals to be uniform, and the relationship of each lodge with a Grand Lodge to be formally acknowledged. The experience of a lodge that had been meeting at the Tun Tavern in Philadelphia since 1730 showed the urgency of the need. The colonial lodges required "the sanction of some authority derived from home," the legitimizing supervision of a Provincial Grand Lodge, to strengthen "the interests of Masonry."[6] As Benja-

[4] Melvin Johnson, *The Beginnings of Freemasonry in America* (New York, 1924), pp. 43-73; Tatsch, *Freemasonry in the Colonies*, pp. 3-9.

[5] Jeremy Belcher, born in Boston in 1681, was one of the colonial merchants who joined a lodge as an accepted mason on one of his business trips to England in the early years of the eighteenth century, before the Grand Lodge era. Later governor of Massachusetts from 1730 to 1741, Belcher officially received the greetings of the first lodge to be formally established in Massachusetts from his son, among its other officers, but the honor of being the first Mason in colonial America is usually accorded the father. Tatsch, *Freemasonry in the Colonies*, p. 27; Johnson, *The Beginnings of Freemasonry*, p. 25.

[6] Henry Wilson Coil, *Freemasonry Through Six Centuries: Transactions of the Missouri Lodge of Research*, 2 vols. (Fulton, Miss., 1967–1968), I, 265, quoting from a personal letter to Henry Price from B. Franklin, Philadelphia, November 28, 1734. In 1730 Daniel Cox had been appointed Provincial Grand Master of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, but there is no record of his ever having been active in this role during the brief period he was in the colonies during his appointment. Cox

min Franklin told Price, "the craft is like to come into disesteem among us unless the true Brethren are countenanced and distinguished by some such special authority."[7]

In the first decades after the establishment of colonial Grand Lodges, Masonry in the colonies grew very slowly.[8] In the 1750s and 1760s, however, the pace accelerated. By 1751 a new Grand Lodge of Ancients in Boston, St. Andrew's Lodge, challenged the sole jurisdiction of St. John's Grand Lodge. In that challenge may lie one clue to the survival of Freemasonry in America during the Revolutionary period. The men who challenged the Massachusetts Grand Lodge seemed to have a different social and political orientation than the members of St. John's. Therefore Masonry before the Revolution began to encompass a somewhat greater cross sec-

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had come to America with Lord Cornbury in 1702 and had served in the capacity of Grand Master until his death in 1739. Yet Franklin does not mention him in his Masonic connection, and it must be assumed that the appointment of Price dates the first active colonial Grand Mastership in any of the colonies. Tatsch, *Freemasonry in the Colonies*, pp. 48–50; Stillson, *History of the Masons*, pp. 448–449. He invited Price to judiciously misread his authority so that it would empower him to recognize Franklin as Grand Master. Franklin pointed out that "some authority derived from home" was necessary to strengthen "the interests of Masonry in this Province." Price did not act on this suggestion, and Franklin's fear was soon realized. In 1737 some acquaintances of Franklin formed a mock lodge in which they fraudulently initiated a young applicant. The young man died as a result of the cruel hazing they administered as their version of the Masonic ritual. Although Franklin and the Masons were exonerated from any connection with the murder, a wave of antimasonic feeling closed Philadelphia Lodge for a decade. Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 264, 274–275; Clifford P. McCalla, *Early Newspaper Accounts of Freemasonry in Pennsylvania, England, Ireland, and Scotland, from 1730–1750 by Dr. Benjamin Franklin* (Philadelphia, 1886), pp. 48–54.

[7] Coil, *Freemasonry*, I, 265, quoting from an official letter to the Worshipful Grand Master from B. Franklin, Philadelphia, November 28, 1734. See also Stillson, *History of the Masons*, pp. 222–225.

[8] Tatsch, *Freemasonry in the Colonies*, pp. 30, 31, 63, 75, 145, 169.

tion of the colonial population than the founding Anglophiles.[9]

St. John's Lodge of Moderns included men such as Grand Masters Andrew Belcher, Robert Tomlinson, Thomas Oxnard, Jeremiah Gridley, and John Rowe, men who tended to be affiliated with the colonial officialdom, or the Anglican Church, or the colonial elites.[10] St. Andrew's Lodge included men such as John Hancock, Paul Revere, and Joseph Warren, who were important in local colonial affairs and might divide their time at the Green Dragon Tavern between meetings of the lodge and of the Sons of Liberty.[11] According to one Masonic historian, at the time of the Revolution "the colonies' friends were found in greatest numbers in the lodges under the 'Ancients' . . . while a large percentage of the Royalists or Tories were to be found the adherents of the old Grand Lodge or 'Moderns.' "[12] Whatever the basis for their separateness, both Ancient and Modern colonial Grand Lodges in Boston were empowered to charter lodges, and Masonry was spread in the colonies under both auspices, according to the individual connections of the sponsoring Masons.[13]

[9] Coil, *Freemasonry*, II, 51, 78, 50. See Bernard Faÿ, *Revolution and Freemasonry* (Boston, 1935), for one of the most biased and most entertaining studies on Masonry. Dr. Joseph Warren, one of the leaders of St. Andrew's, applied for the jurisdictional privilege of a Grand Lodge that would regulate the activities of military lodges then stationed in Boston: the Twelfth Foot (Ancient), the Twenty-ninth Foot (Irish), and the Sixty-fourth Foot (Scottish) regimental lodges.

[10] Rowe during the siege of Boston was "under suspicion" of Toryism. Stillson, *History of the Masons*, p. 247.

[11] Faÿ, *Revolution and Freemasonry*, pp. 239–240.

[12] Stillson, *History of the Masons*, p. 226. The doctrinal differences in the rituals of the Ancients and Moderns did not seem to be the issue that divided the Grand Lodges of Boston. In a lodge chartered by the St. John's Grand Lodge of Portland, Maine, for example, the Masons resolved to alternate between the systems so as to include all the brethren in the area. Ibid., p. 228.

[13] Tatsch, *Freemasonry in the Colonies*, pp. 24–25, gives an example of

Masonry came to Connecticut in 1750 when Thomas Oxnard, Provincial Grand Master of the St. John's Grand Lodge of Boston, issued a charter for New Haven to David Wooster, one of the heroes of the siege of Louisbourg. Four years later another lodge was chartered as St. John's Lodge in Middletown, and in another eight years, in 1762, the New York Grand Lodge chartered one in Fairfield.[14] A fourth lodge was established in Hartford in 1762. In the pre-Revolutionary period, only nine lodges formed in Connecticut, most of them under the auspices of the Premier Grand Lodge of England.[15]

During the war very few of the Connecticut lodges seem to have functioned without interruption, but all of the lodges, except one in Guilford, resumed operation when soldier Masons returned from war.[15a] Why some lodges survived and some suspended operation is a matter of local history, but a closer look at one of the colonial lodges in Connecticut, St.

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a Modern lodge becoming an Ancient lodge in the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

[14] Ibid., pp. 176–179. Wallingford and Guilford in 1769 and 1771 by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. The Provincial Grand Lodge of New York chartered other lodges in Norwalk in 1765, Greenwich in 1764, and Stratford in 1776.

[15] Stillson, *History of the Masons*, p. 252; E. G. Storer, comp., *The Records of Freemasonry in the State of Connecticut, with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England, and the Entire Proceedings of the Grand Lodge, from its First Organization, A.L., 5789* (New Haven, 1859), pp. 52, 54, 55, 208, 401.

[15a] The lodge in Middletown stopped functioning in 1772 for "certain reasons" that may have included a high percentage of Tory members, according to James R. Case, "Keeping it all in Perspective," *Indiana Freemason* (December, 1974), pp. 6–10. St. John's Lodge in Norwalk also was known to include Tories, and Union Lodge suspended operation when the Master moved to Nova Scotia with the British. *Two Hundredth Anniversary, St. John's Lodge No. 6, F. & A.M., Norwalk, Connecticut, 1765–1965* (n.d., n.p.), p. 12; *Two Hundredth Anniversary, Union Lodge No. 12, A.F. & A.M., Stamford, Connecticut* (n.d., n.p.), p.10.

John's Lodge No. 4, helps explain both the attractions and the limits of pre-Revolutionary Masonry.

The history of St. John's Lodge of Hartford typified the transformation of a colonial institution into an American one. Because of the strong correlation between Masonic membership and Anglophilia, St. John's probably had more Tories proportionately among its members, as the Revolution approached, than did the population of Hartford County as a whole.[16] Although a vague aura of Toryism shrouded the fraternity, St. John's Lodge members also took the idea of the supranational, universal character of their fraternity seriously. Eventually Masonic universalism made the fraternity available to them as Americans, or as Connecticut men, rather than as English colonials.

The impetus for forming a Masonic lodge in Hartford came in the spring of 1761 when all Masons in the area assembled for the magnificent funeral of Nathan Payson, late second colonel of the First Regiment of Provincials and a comrade in arms of Israel Putnam. This event was different enough from the austere funeral rites of Connecticut Congregationalism in its military and Masonic panoply for the *New England Summary* of New London to publish a description of it. The funeral had attracted "the greatest concours of People that has ever been known on such an occasion."[17] Impressed at the number of Masons-at-Large who could be assembled at Hartford, some of them decided to apply for a lodge charter.

By 1763 St. John's Lodge of Hartford began to meet in the Black Horse Tavern, operated by the family of Samuel Flagg, one of the charter members.[18] As a group the charter mem-

[16] Ibid., pp. 404, 402, 405, has brief histories of New London, Waterbury, and Guilford.

[17] "St. John's Lodge No. 4," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, March 1950, pp. 1, 6.

[18] William C. Murray, *St. John's Lodge No. 4: 1762 to 1962* (Hartford, 1962), p. 5.

bers were remarkably homogeneous in economic interests but remarkably heterogeneous in religion for colonial Connecticut. Most of the founders of St. John's Lodge No. 4 had commercial interests. Almost all of the charter members were involved in activities or businesses that depended upon their relationship with a larger community than Hartford. Many of them were not associated with the Congregational Church. Many of them were geographically mobile, and most of them were relatively new residents of Hartford.[19] All of these men shared one negative characteristic: they were not typical Connecticut yeomen.

Within a few months after their first meeting, St. John's Lodge reported to the Grand Lodge the adoption of a constitution, an active program, and a membership roster that had

[19] John Townley, whose name headed the list, was an Englishman, an Episcopalian, and a merchant. (Both his sources of trade and his loyalties were still English in 1777 when the General Assembly granted him "liberty" to go to occupied New York by a flag of truce.) Thomas Payson had come to Hartford from Boston, and was associated with Eleazer and Ralph Pomeroy in the lucrative work of "provisioning the Connecticut troops" in the French and Indian War. Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical Files, St. John's Lodge No. 4, letter from George Dinkleberger, Sr., to Winthrop Buck, August 18, 1941. Dr. William Jepson had established himself as an apothecary in Hartford and depended on a partner in Massachusetts for importing his special stock in trade. Samuel Orcott, George Caldwell, James Ellery, and Thomas Hopkins have all been identified as men who engaged in the West Indies trade. Murray, *St. John's Lodge*, pp. 6–7. Jonathan Wadsworth and James Church were first made Masons in the Middletown Lodge in 1758, and it must be assumed that their business made them regular visitors to that busy trading center. Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical File, St. John's Lodge No. 4, letter from Winthrop Buck to George Dinkleberger, Sr., August 11, 1942. Finally Abraham Beach, a nephew of David Wooster, joined the Masons after his graduation from Yale and before going into business in Hartford with his stepfather, a merchant. Beach had also joined the Middletown Lodge because he was studying there for the ministry with Abraham Jarvis, a lay reader of the Church of England. "Abraham Beach, Middletown, Grand Chaplain, New York," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, April 1954, p. 17.

doubled. They met about once a month, and Israel Putnam, a military comrade of David Wooster, was often among the visitors.[20] As the growing revolutionary ardor in Hartford County pushed individuals and groups to define their political allegiance, the Masons of St. John's Lodge apparently numbered many budding Revolutionaries as well as Loyalists.

In the years preceding the Revolution, the Hartford Masons began to build an American identity—or at least a non-English one. For example, in 1766 they took the occasion of the death of William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland and Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, to prepare and present an "Eulogium." The lodge was probably the only group in Hartford, caught up as it was in the Stamp Act crisis (in which Israel Putnam was one of the leaders of the "Eastern Radicals"), to use the death of the distant aristocrat as a ceremonial occasion. The time to clarify its corporate relationship to England seemed to be at hand.

Abraham Beach read the eulogium at the next lodge meeting. The Duke of Cumberland, Beach reminded his brethren, had become a Mason because he had been "fully sensible of the great advantages accruing to Mankind from its Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty." Cumberland may have been their patron, but they owed their very existence to the "Smiles and Protection of that Supreme Architect of the Universe, who first formed and from time immemorial has preserved this Society in Order, Harmony & Proportion." The craft would, despite the loss of their noble leader, continue to observe the "glorious Principle of Universal Benevolence" that formed the basis of the association.[21] Thus Beach put the lodge and the meaning of membership into a context of universal fraternity, independent of English noble sponsorship or the Premier Grand Lodge. Emphasis on the universalistic rather

[20] "St. John's Lodge No. 4," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, March 1950, p. 1, Murray, *St. John's Lodge*, pp. 16–17.

[21] Murray, *St. John's Lodge*, p. 17.

than the English roots of Masonry helped move the fraternity from a colonial to an independent political frame.

Just before the Revolution the associations and the nonimportation movements crippled trade and pauperized and polarized some of the merchants. In 1769, before the repeal of the Townshend Acts, St. John's Lodge suspended activity, probably because its members, largely men with commercial interests, were both financially insecure and politically divided. However, the basis for an independent post-Revolutionary continuation had already been established.

Once the Revolution had started, many Hartford men joined or reactivated membership in a lodge that formed the Connecticut Line of the American army: American Union Lodge. St. John's Lodge itself began to meet sporadically between 1779 and 1782. By 1783 the old members and the new ones were meeting regularly. Masonic supranationalism and the activities of lodges in the Revolutionary army camps had helped to build the bridge from a colonial to an Americanized Freemasonry.

The American Union Lodge

During the Revolution the unprecedented growth of new lodges in Connecticut helped disengage colonial Masonry from its English origins. St. John's Provincial Grand Lodge in Boston chartered a new lodge in Danbury, near the camp of the Connecticut Line at Redding. The Masons of Danbury thought they might be of service to "the many brethren of the army, lying near this place and frequently passing through." The Massachusetts Grand Lodge, the name assumed by the St. Andrew's Grand Lodge of Ancients, chartered lodges in Colchester, Litchfield, and Derby in 1781, in Salisbury in 1783, in Norwich in 1785, and in Farmington in 1787.[22] Thus the number of lodges in Connecticut almost doubled in

[22] Storer, *Records*, pp. 49–56, 201–208, 401–406.

the course of the Revolution, mostly under the auspices of the Ancients who had been associated with the provincial patriots. The organization of American Union Lodge, however, was the most important single institutional vehicle for the Americanization of Masonry.

With the outbreak of hostilities between England and her colonies, both St. Andrew's Grand Lodge and St. John's Grand Lodge of Boston had suspended regular activities. Nevertheless, at the very beginning of the Revolution, two separate and unrelated actions, one by each of the Grand Lodges, foreshadowed the survival of the fraternity. First, St. Andrew's Lodge, although formally suspended, met immediately after the Battle of Bunker Hill to disinter the body of Grand Master Joseph Warren, killed in battle, for the proper Masonic funeral of a hero-Brother.[23] This public Masonic ritual—while it did not raise Hiram—served to prevent an automatic ascription of Toryism to Masonry.

Through the American Union Lodge, one of the ten army lodges chartered during the Revolution, Freemasonry in Connecticut found a new purpose and an enlarged constituency.[24] In 1776, during the long winter siege of Boston, when Washington tried to assemble and organize his first Continental army, a group of Masons among the officers, mostly Connecticut men, decided to form a Masonic unit for their new American army like the ones that many of them had joined while serving with the British troops.[25] They carried the logic

[23] Johnson, *Beginnings of Freemasonry*, p. 307.

[24] Storer, *Records*, p. 15.

[25] The Grand Lodge of Ireland had chartered an army as early as 1732, and all the Grand Lodges of Great Britain had responded to similar requests from army units. Tatsch, *Freemasonry in the Colonies*, p. 202. The St. John's Provincial Grand Lodge had followed suit by issuing a charter to the colonial units on garrison duty at Louisbourg in 1758, and lodges were chartered at Crown Point and Lake George during the French and Indian War. Storer, *Records*, p. 8. Leaders of Connecticut Masonry such as Israel Putnam joined lodges when Connecticut military levies had been assigned

of the Hartford Lodge during the Stamp Act crisis one step forward. If Masonry was universal, as all the constitutions and charges reminded them it was, the political fact of hostilities or even independence from England should not inhibit its growth. Therefore, ten men, including Col. Joel Clark, Col. Samuel Holden Parsons, Jonathan Heart, and Samuel Wyllys, all of Connecticut, obtained a charter from St. John's Grand Lodge, even though it had suspended regular operations, to form the American Union Lodge, empowered to operate "wherever your Body shall remove on the Continent of America."[26] Before they could organize themselves, the British army evacuated Boston, and Washington immediately marched his men to Brooklyn Heights to lay siege to New York. During one of the skirmishes of the siege Joel Clark, the Master-designate, was killed. The men of the Connecticut Line, preoccupied with simple survival, postponed the formation of the lodge.[27] Events in other sectors of the war, however, kept the idea of Masonic fraternalism alive.

In 1776 several leaders of prewar Masonry moved into con-

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to English army units. James R. Case, *David Wooster: Father of Freemasonry in Connecticut* (n.p. 1970), p. 3. "Freemasons at Bunker Hill," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, June 1960, p. 11. As early as July of 1775 the Provincial Grand Lodge of New York had chartered St. John's Regimental Lodge for a New York group. St. Andrew's Grand Lodge had chartered a "traveling Lodge" in 1779 whose officers included most of the Grand Officers of that Grand Lodge. The Pennsylvania Grand Lodge even chartered a lodge in the Seventeenth Regiment of the Foot in 1779 when the city was occupied by the British, and the "Tory members of the Pennsylvania Craft were in control." After the British had left the city, the Grand Lodge, in an excess of patriotic concern, chartered one lodge for the Pennsylvania Artillery, two on the Pennsylvania Line, and one each for the lines of North Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey. Tatsch, *Freemasonry in the Colonies*, pp. 203, 211, 212, 214–222.

[26] Storer, *Records*, pp. 15–16.

[27] James R. Case, "Historic Camp at Redding, 175 Years Ago, Active Spot for Military Lodge 'Workings,' " *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1954, p. 5.

spicuous positions of Revolutionary leadership. David Wooster, the founder of Masonry in Connecticut and a member of the Connecticut Committee of Safety before the outbreak of war, became major general of the Connecticut militia. Israel Putnam was one of the brigadiers. In the Continental army Wooster was bypassed in favor of Putnam, and their titles were reversed. Wooster joined the Quebec expedition where he served with a brother Mason, Brig. Gen. Richard Montgomery.[28] When Montgomery was killed at the assault on Montreal, a second prominent Mason became nationally famous, martyred like Warren in the cause of Revolution.

Wooster's own career in the Canadian campaign, marred by disagreements with his fellow officers and inadequate support from the poorly organized Continental army, led to his being relieved of his command. In 1777 Wooster returned to Connecticut to take command of the militia, and when the British raided Danbury, he headed the hastily assembled defensive forces. Shot down near Ridgefield, he died on May 2, 1777, the third Masonic martyr.[29] A few months later the soldiers of the Connecticut Line, under Putnam's command, went into winter quarters in Redding, a short distance from the place where Wooster had died. During that winter a group of officers exercised their charter rights to organize a lodge. From their first Masonic celebration, they solemnly rehearsed a new honor roll in their toasts: "the memory of Warren, Montgomery, and Wooster."[30] The events of the Revolution had provided the fraternity with an American history of its own, which included a roster of Masonic heroes.

As soon as two brigades of the Connecticut Line had built their winter huts in Redding and settled down to the winter's

[28] Case, *Wooster*, p. 5. See also "Life and Times of David Wooster," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1949, pp. 1, 15.

[29] James R. Case, "Last Days of General David Wooster," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, April 1952, p. 6.

[30] Storer, *Records*, p. 25.

inactivity, the American Union Lodge began to meet frequently. Samuel Holden Parsons, now brigadier general, was elected as Master "to fill the chair in the room of the Worshipful Joel Clark, Esq., deceased," and William Judd of Farmington, later one of the founders of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, was Secretary.[31] Dozens of men who were later active in the spread of Masonry in Connecticut were first initiated into its "mysteries" during the winter of 1777. In the first three months after its organization American Union Lodge met sixteen times, initiating, passing, and raising to Mastership the men in the Redding Camp who wished to join in the work of the lodge. The lodge formed a new framework for the friendly association of men from every part of the state.

The Masons seemed determined to become a conspicuous part of camp life. Although no Masonic saint's day was at hand, the members decided to have a celebration almost as soon as the lodge was organized. They invited the ladies of the houses in which they lodged, the wives of any of the Masons who could come to camp on that day, "the Honorable Brother Putnam," and "the Brethren of Ancient Society who are not members of this lodge." At the appointed time, the Masons, with musical accompaniment, went in a gay processional to a nearby house to hear "a few sentiments on Friendship" from one of the more eloquent of their brethren. After dining, they sang songs and drank toasts in honor of their pantheon of American Revolutionary heroes.[32] So public a

[31] Ibid., p. 20. For example, Thomas Grosvenor, one of the founders of Putnam Lodge in Pomfret, was initiated at the first meeting at Redding. Henry Champion, secretary of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut from 1790 to 1821; John Mix, treasurer of the Grand Lodge from 1791 to 1819; Samuel Wyllys, who served in several offices during the formation of the Grand Lodge; Moses Cleaveland and his friend Albigence Waldo, who were both active in the formation of lodges in Eastern Connecticut, were all initiated or met together there. Case, "Historic Camp," p. 5.

[32] Storer, *Records*, pp. 24–25.

celebration within the army camp suggested that Masonry was countenanced by the officers as part of the camp life of Revolutionary Americans.

The American Union Lodge continued to meet in the field. On June 24, 1779, while the English troops held New York, the Masons of the Connecticut Line at Nelson's Point celebrated the festival of Saint John the Baptist. Jonathan Heart led a procession to the Red House at West Point where they were "joined by his Excellency General Washington and family." In this powerful Brother the Masons of Connecticut must have seen a possible "noble" patron for an Americanized Masonry, for one of their first moves when winter camp had been made at Morristown was to call on Washington again.

A petition from Masons to all the Provincial Grand Masters "in several lines of the Army of the United States" was read to Washington, calling for a central leadership for Masonry in America. Some supervisory power was needed for "checking the present irregularities" of the lodges. Americans had been initiated into Masonry under various auspices, and it was necessary to erase "the distinction between ancient and modern" and to develop a uniform American institution. The future of American Masonry, they thought, might be safeguarded by the nomination or appointment as Grand Master for all of America: some person "whose abilities and rank in life shall answer the importance of that conspicuous and elevated station."[33] The petition obviously was an appeal to Washington to assume the leadership of Masonry and to form an American Grand Lodge out of the assorted colonial and military lodges, just as he had formed an American army out of an assortment of irregulars and militias.[34] No response is recorded.

[33] Ibid., pp. 31, 37, 38.

[34] Charles H. Callahan, *Washington, the Man and the Mason* (Washington, D.C., 1913), pp. 267–268.

There was one more effort to nationalize Masonry before the end of the war years. In 1780, a "Convention Lodge" assembled delegates from the lodges of the military lines of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, and representatives from the staff, the corps of the St. John's Regimental Lodge. The convention, in an address to all Grand Masters, suggested that an American Grand Lodge be established to "preside over and govern all other Lodges."[35] No response to that proposal survives either. The idea of a national Grand Lodge was proposed and passed on, assented to or rejected by individual lodges from the time of the Revolution until well into the nineteenth century, but it never carried. Instead the states formed Grand Lodges to establish and regulate the Masonic institution within their borders.[36] Any question of whether Freemasonry could continue as an American institution had been answered affirmatively during the Revolution; but its organization, given the size and looseness of the new federation, remained regional.

The Revolution had Americanized colonial Freemasonry. The experiences of Masons in army lodges such as the American Union Lodge helped the process. Of the more than five hundred members or visitors to American Union Lodge and Washington Military Lodge, five became Grand Masters of state Grand Lodges after the war, about sixty became Masters of local lodges, and one or more of them are associated with lodges in every state in the Union after the Revolution.[37]

[35] Storer, *Records*, pp. 24–25.

[36] Ibid., p. 30. For example, in 1801 the Connecticut Grand Lodge voted a resolution concurring with opinions "against the formation of a superintending Grand Lodge," but the matter was raised from time to time in the following years. In 1822 they voted to send delegates to Washington to consider a constitution for a "General Grand Lodge of the U.S." Ibid. p. 327.

[37] Case, "Keeping it all in Perspective," p. 10.

The fraternity had provided a new frame for social organization in the heterogeneous communities of camp life, and a steady reference point when many familiar institutions no longer seemed appropriate. Then, like the Church of England, similarly derived from an English authority, American Freemasons assumed the power of establishing and regulating their own constituencies.

The Connecticut Grand Lodge

Around the time of the formation of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut in 1789 the old order was being challenged by the emergence of new men, new ideas, and new values. The men who waited restlessly in the wings for offices of power and prestige in the towns and in the state were, like those still in power, veterans of the Revolution, but there were sometimes fundamental differences in attitude between those who had begun their active political lives before the Revolution and those who came of age during it. Although, of course, such diversions are not necessarily generational, a prewar and a postwar frame of reference emerged, expressed in different attitudes toward the Sons of Cincinnati, or western land speculation, or church establishment. Broadly speaking, these different frames of reference were ideological and cultural more than specifically political. For want of better terms, the differences that appeared in Connecticut after the Revolution can be assigned to either an orthodox or a latitudinarian frame of reference, or spirit, or temper.[38]

[38] Although orthodoxy tended to be Federalist and latitudinarianism Republican, party names do not describe the different frames of reference. Purcell in *Connecticut in Transition: 1775–1818* (Middletown, Conn., 1963), points out that some dissent to the Standing Order was orthodox. Herbert Morais in *Deism in Eighteenth Century America* (New York, 1934), p. 203, found that deism had influenced Republicans and Federalists alike.

Freemasonry's separate, sociable, nonrestrictive fraternalism was latitudinarian.

The orthodox and latitudinarian frames of reference can be roughly defined by several sets of antithetical values. The orthodox frame of reference, traditional in Connecticut, was usually Calvinist, shaped by the belief that the universe had been designed by God for His glory, and man's relation to it could be comprehended only through divine assistance. Man was essentially sinful, and redemption was an act of grace. From this fundamental premise ideas about acquiescence to orderly limitations and the need for internal and external constraints often followed.[39] The latitudinarians owed much to Enlightenment ideas and believed in an ordered universe, comprehensible to man and designed for his happiness. Man was essentially educable, they thought, and from this they usually derived a pattern of values that emphasized individualism, personal freedom, voluntarism, and personal happiness.[40] When the Grand Lodge was established in Connecticut it represented an orderly alternative to the traditional patterns of values. Its members regarded the fraternity as a constructive response to the changing times, but they represented a countervailing viewpoint in a society still dominated by ideas antithetical to universalism, to Masonically defined morality, and to a separate, secret, sociable fraternalism. The Masonic establishment was one clear measure of the different frames of reference within Connecticut society, which, in time, came to be partly institutionalized in churches, partly in political associations, as well as in Masonic membership itself.

The religious and geographic universalism of Freemasonry was inherently antithetical to Connecticut Congrega-

[39] Daniel Boorstin, *The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson* (Boston, 1948), pp. 111–116.

[40] David Fischer, *The Revolution of American Conservatism* (New York, 1965), pp. 7–17.

tionalism. Freemasonry supposedly encompassed all religions, but colonial and federal Connecticut had established Congregationalism. The total area of each town of Connecticut was organized in one or more church societies, which included not only the church members but all of the inhabitants of a specific geographic area. While each church decided questions of religious doctrine, the society, a geographically specified population, administered and supported the church. Since the political and financial structure of the state was also organized with reference to these geographic church societies, any religious question might have political aspects, and vice versa. The association of church and state leadership was so consistent and close that they were "familiarly and collectively called the 'Standing order.' "[41] However appropriate this social order had been for a religiously homogeneous, static, agricultural society, the system was strained by the economic, political, and religious tensions that followed the Revolution and multiplied during the first few years of the life of the new nation.[42] An organization that, by its universalism, claimed to transcend, or worse, to include the churches, without reference to the interrelationships of church and political society, was disquieting.

[41] Vernon Stauffer defines the relationship and describes the degree of oversight of the churches of Connecticut by the General Assembly as "unusual even for Puritan New England" in *New England and the Bavarian Illuminati* (New York, 1919), p. 48.

[42] Christopher Collier in "Steady Habits Considered and Reconsidered," *Connecticut Review*, v, no. 2 (April 1972), 28, defines the "steady habits" that supposedly characterized this social order as "a stable hierarchical but harmonious society preserved through the interlocking institutions of church and civil government in which homogeneity is the accepted ideal of all members." Collier describes and assesses the historiography of whether, when, or to what extent Connecticut conformed to the ideal. He also points out that "the Federal and Early National years actually saw the very concept of steady habits become a dominating political issue." Ibid., p. 34.

Then, too, Masonry's separate hierarchy of social achievement had different implications in a Connecticut community than when it had been appended to the more orderly European pyramids. The class structure of society in Connecticut was relatively fluid and based on a rough consensus that each community was divided into two main classes: the "better sort" and all others. The better sort could be recognized by their wealth, or life style, or occupations, or possibly genealogies, but their position of esteem in the community was complexly determined.[43] The fortunes of each new generation influenced individual assignment to one of the two broad groupings, even though some had the initial advantages of property, education, or family connections. The idea of a separate hierarchy of status and esteem determined by other indices threatened established and accepted methods of class ascription.

In Connecticut important positions of public power and trust often came to men of the better sort after they had served

[43] Michael Zuckerman in *Peaceable Kingdom: New England Towns in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1970), pp. 189 et passim, and Fischer in *The Revolution of American Conservatism*, p. xix, take somewhat different views on the extent to which the society of Revolutionary America was elitist. Fischer's transplantation of Bagehot's concept of a deferential society would seem to require some pruning for use in Connecticut. Jackson Turner Main's study, *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America* (Princeton, 1965), pp. 219–220, 229–234, discusses the role of esteem in social class ascription and its high correlation to wealth. William F. Willingham, "Deference Democracy and Town Government in Windham Connecticut, 1755–1786," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 30 (July 1973), 401–422, shows little correlation between property and officeholding in the middle range of offices, but that a social elite dominated the important offices. Comparable findings appear in Bruce Stark, "Lebanon, Connecticut: A Study of Society and Politics in the Eighteenth Century" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut, 1970). See also Ronald P. Formisano, "Deferential-Participant Politics: The Early Republic's Political Culture, 1789–1840," *American Political Science Review*, 68 (June 1974), 473–487.

an apprenticeship in lower offices and demonstrated their competence. No party labels identified programs of political preference, and no regular, formal, power groups vied for the votes of the electorate, even though particular issues would mobilize opposition to individual incumbents, or action with reference to particular events.[44] Even when a specific issue divided the communities, the men entrusted with office were

[44] There are differences among historians concerning when a party system emerged. Norman Stamps in "Political Parties in Connecticut, 1789–1819" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1950) traces the roots of party organization to the Middletown Convention in 1783. Christopher Collier in *Roger Sherman's Connecticut: Yankee Politics and the American Revolution* (Middletown, Conn., 1971), p. 201, adds psychological differences to the economic base that produced nationalists and provincials, or Republicans and Federalists in the opposing factions until the 1790s. Bonnie B. Collier in "Connecticut's Standing Order and its Political Opposition, 1783–1800" (M.A. thesis, University of Connecticut, 1971), documents the beginning of organized opposition in the early federal period. See also Edmund B. Thomas, "The Land of Steady Habits: Connecticut's First Party System, 1789–1820" (Ph.D. dissertation, Clark University, 1972); Van Beck Hall in *Politics Without Parties: Massachusetts, 1780–1791* (Pittsburgh, 1972), pp. 349–350; and Alan W. Brownsword, "Connecticut's Political Alignment, 1817–1828" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1962). James M. Banner, Jr., in *To the Hartford Convention: The Federalists and the Origins of Party Politics in Massachusetts, 1789–1815* (New York, 1970), pp. 72–83, shows that party philosophy emerged clearly enough "to have created and recruited men of different character" by the early years of the nineteenth century in Massachusetts. On the other hand, Richard Hofstadter in *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780–1840* (Berkeley, 1969), pp. 4, 75, 212, looking at the country as a whole and defining party as "responsible, effective, constitutional opposition," places the organization of the party system at a still later time. Richard Buel, Jr., *Securing the Revolution: Ideology in American Politics, 1789–1815* (Ithaca and London, 1972), emphasizes the interplay of ideological continuities and public opinion. This brief list by no means exhausts the range of ideas—or nuances—about the role of party in political life around the turn of the nineteenth century. Whatever the origins, no stable party system in the modern sense existed in Connecticut until after 1830.

usually trusted to do the "right" thing. Men claimed they stood, but did not run, for office on the platform of their worth and ability to decide each political problem on its merits. Although a relatively large percentage of the male adults of the state were qualified to vote, only a relatively small proportion of them exercised that prerogative.[45] On the whole, the citizens of Connecticut acquiesced in the leadership of the politically active elements of the population. Thus social and political status, partly measured by something intangible, such as public esteem, were related. That complex relationship, too, was threatened by the separate private structure of achievement and esteem within the lodges of Freemasons. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, the myth of homogeneity persisted in the midst of growing diversity. A growing number sought to express their latitudinarian frame of reference, and one way was Masonry.

Masonry itself was reorganized after the Revolution. Revolution had meant that the thirteen states were forced to undertake the tasks of redefining and rebuilding institutions that should be compatible with their new identity as a nation. State constitutions were rewritten, churches reformed, and national government attempted. This process of redefinition and reorganization had a parallel history in the growth of Masonry and the establishment of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

In 1783 Hiram Lodge in New Haven took the initiative toward legitimizing the parentless lodges of Connecticut by advertising in the *Connecticut Journal* of March 6, 1783. A general invitation was issued to all lodges in the state to send delegates to a meeting of "general concern and great importance."[46] Representatives of thirteen lodges assembled in New Haven on the eighteenth of March. Their central prob-

[45] Purcell, *Connecticut in Transition*, p. 103.

[46] James R. Case, *Historical Sketch of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, Organized July 8, 1789* (n.p., 1965).

lem was how to organize Masonry in Connecticut as a legitimate part of a universal association rather than a subsidiary of the English Grand Lodge. The establishment of a national Grand Lodge in America seemed the most appropriate course to some of the delegates. They may have reasoned that, if the thirteen states had been able to submerge their differences to the extent of forming a confederation, it was possible for all the varieties of Masonry to do the same.

In the meantime the delegates of the New Haven convention set up the skeleton of a state organization, although they did not at that time go so far as to establish a Grand Lodge for the state. They examined one another's credentials and appointed a committee to "consider a General Plan for the benefit of Masonry and propose such regulations as may be useful to the Brethren of this state."[47] They also recommended general meetings annually and a standing committee for problems of admission, discipline, and communication. Twelve lodges accepted these recommendations by again sending delegates to New Haven in April to draft the bylaws, set up a general supervisory committee, and arranged visitations to all the lodges "in order that there may be a similarity in the mode of working among the Brethren." The minor differences in ritual between Ancients and Moderns were to be harmonized and Americanized.[48] Finally, in January of 1784, the delegates elected Pierpont Edwards as the first Grand Master of the state, but they were still so tentative in their move toward autonomy that they gave him the surprising alternative man-

[47] Comfort Sage of Middletown was elected as moderator, and Pierpont Edwards of New Haven as the clerk. The lodges were directed to have their representatives assemble again in April, bringing their bylaws and charters with them, so that general regulations could be made "as nearly similar as the local situations and circumstances of the different lodges will admit." Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical File, Minutes of St. John's Lodge No. 4, Hartford, 1783–1789, April 1783.

[48] Ibid., May 1783.

date to find out how "to obtain a grand warrant from the Grand Lodge of England" or from an American Grand Lodge, if established.[49] There the organizational machinery of Connecticut Masonry rested for almost five years, a microcosm of the larger political debate about the proper spheres of state and national power in American society as a whole.

In 1789, the year after Connecticut voted its assent to a new form of national government, St. Paul's Lodge in Litchfield revived "the question of establishing a Grand Lodge in the State." Twenty-two men representing thirteen lodges met in Hartford on the eighth of July to organize. Pierpont Edwards, Ephraim Kirby, and William Judd, all later leaders of Connecticut Republicanism, were on the Committee that wrote a constitution. With wry humor, they echoed the preamble of the new federal Constitution: "We, the members of the several Lodges in the State of Connecticut, to establish order and uniformity, to promote love and charity among Masons, and render more general and extensive the principles of benevolence and philanthropy do ordain and establish this Constitution, for the Grand Lodge in this State."[50] In October of 1789, the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, with Pierpont Edwards as Grand Master and William Judd as his deputy, met in its first regular session.

The twenty-two men who organized the Grand Lodge were the young men of the Revolution, a decade older. Most of

[49] Case, *Grand Lodge*. The September meeting may not have taken place. During that month a convention was held in Middletown to protest commutation pay for veteran officers, and since several of the leading Masons were also active there, the organizational meeting for Masonry may have been deferred. The differences between those who would have been content to assume the authority of a Grand Lodge and those who were looking for a national organization as the source of legitimacy evidently made for a stalemate in Masonic organization. There were no precedents elsewhere that would help in the establishment of a Grand Lodge. Case, "Keeping it all in Perspective," pp. 6–7.

[50] Storer, *Records*, pp. 60–61.

them had met at the winter encampments of the Connecticut Line and spent time together in the American Union Lodge. Most of them were politically active in their communities, and some were state leaders or officeholders. Most were speculators in western lands, and in other financial ventures. They ranged in age from twenty-nine to fifty-one, with a mean age of thirty-eight. Seven were lawyers, one an innkeeper, one a merchant, one a doctor, and five others were farmers as well as very active officeholders.[51] Several names appear over and over again in the early records: Pierpont Edwards, William Judd, Ephraim Kirby, Ralph Pomeroy, Samuel Wyllys, Henry Champion, and John Mix, all prominent citizens as well as prominent Masons.[52]

The new Masonic leadership, as a whole, was distinguished by their combination of social or political prominence with some form of marginality. For example, several of them were opposed to the church establishment of Connecticut. Among their number were political leaders who were incipient Jeffersonians, as well as Federalists. Many of them were connected by marriage or kinship with one another and to the leading families of Connecticut, but they were not necessarily the most famous or most important members of those families, at least at the time they helped form the Grand Lodge. Several of them were the less distinguished sons of famous men, who may have found in Masonry a small theater

[51] Case, *Grand Lodge*.

[52] Brief biographies of these men are in James R. Case, "Elective Officers, 1783–1853," reprint from *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut*, 1967, pp. 3–7. More detailed biographies of them have appeared in articles in the *Connecticut Square and Compass* including "Grand Secretary Mix Signs Many Charters," January 1955, pp. 5, 17; "First Senior Grand Warden Ralph Pomeroy, Hartford," November 1954, p. 7; "Sam'l Wyllys' Name Adopted by Lodge," May 1951, p. 13; "Notable Career, Ephriam Kirby," January 1954, pp. 7, 14; "Honorable Pierpont Edwards," April 1961, pp. 5, 13; "William Judd, Leader, Fight for Toleration," December 1954, p. 17.

of achievement and dignity that did not invite comparison with their fathers. On the whole, they were men who played important roles in the affairs of their town and state, but who, through choice or chance, were not wholly orthodox members of the establishment.

Once formed, the Grand Lodge fulfilled the same functions as the Grand Lodge of England. It was the source of legitimacy for all the lodges in the state. Its structure was both democratic and oligarchic, composed of Masters and Wardens of the constituent lodges, or their proxies, each with a single vote. Each lodge, under penalty of fines or, ultimately, expulsion, sent representatives to every session.[53]

William Judd, in a circular letter to all the lodges in 1791, explained why every lodge should affiliate. Only a Grand Lodge, he pointed out, could "establish a regular mode of working" or a "uniformity with regard to initiation, passing, and raising" as a way of guarding the "principles of benevolence and philanthropy—the grand basis of our institution."[54] The Grand Lodge set the fees for membership and arranged to receive part of each membership fee for its own operation and use. In this way it soon built up enough of a treasury to equip itself for its ceremonies, and then to provide a charity fund.

The Grand Lodge acted as a clearing house for information about the membership and officers in each lodge, and it acted as an appellate court. It recalled the charters of each lodge, obtained from a variety of colonial sources, and issued new ones to "all the regularly constituted Lodges in the State." The Grand Lodge also granted the first request for a new lodge to a group of Masons from around Canterbury in Windham County, and "Moriah" took its place on the Grand Lodge roster as the fifteenth lodge in the state. By the time

[53] Storer, *Records*, p. 70.

[54] "Eureka! A 1791 Letter Found," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, November 1963, p. 9.

the process of recalling the old charters and issuing new ones had been completed, the number of lodges in the state had more than doubled, so that the first roster, published in 1796, numbered thirty-seven lodges "agreeable to the dates of their respective charters."[55] Thereafter no lodge organized in the state was a legitimate part of the universal fraternity until it had been brought under the supervising control of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

Post-Revolutionary Masonry: Moriah Lodge No. 15

The social functions of the post-Revolutionary lodges were very different from the colonial lodges of the coastal towns, oriented to England as "home" and the trade that loosely tied them to it. The experiences of the Revolutionary period had changed many of the ideas and aspirations of its veterans. The history of the establishment of the Moriah Lodge in Windham County illustrates the quality of some of those changes in the years immediately following the Revolution.

Like St. John's Lodge of Hartford, Moriah Lodge started with a funeral. Gen. Israel Putnam, Windham County's popular Revolutionary hero, died, and on May 19, 1790, military and Masonic rites were accorded him.[56] A large congregation assembled for the final tribute to their Brother and comrade in arms including Gen. Samuel McClellan of Woodstock, Moses Cleaveland of Canterbury, Ebenezer Gray of Windham, and many others from Putnam's command and American Union Lodge. Dr. Albigence Waldo, Putnam's friend and physician, gave the eulogy on behalf of the Masons. "Putnam rests from his labors," he said, and described the life of heroism and humor that had already made Putnam a legend.[57] The funeral

[55] Storer, *Records*, pp. 63, 65, 67–68.

[56] "Absorbing History of Old Lodge," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1950, p. 10.

[57] American Antiquarian Society, Waldo Family MSS, Folder 1769–1860, Eulogy for General Israel Putnam by Albigence Waldo.

must have been an occasion for reaffirming old friendships because a few months later, on October 19, 1790, fifteen men including Putnam's son, Daniel, and his friend, Dr. Waldo, obtained a charter to establish a lodge in Canterbury for the Masons of Windham County.

Moriah Lodge was established in a town far from the centers of trade, and its organization was directly responsive to the social needs generated by the Revolutionary past and the ambiguous future of its founders. When some of the veterans of the Revolution returned to their farms and villages in Windham County, their memories of camp life during the heightened tensions of war were often nostalgic. With the mind's capacity to block memories of death and discomfort, they remembered fondly the color, ceremony, conviviality, and shared high purpose of those times. Through Masonry they tried to create a style of life that recaptured, however remotely, their comradeship during their past adventures.

Although many of the founders of Moriah Lodge had met or known one another at the American Union Lodge under Putnam's command, and several at least are known to have taken part in Putnam's funeral, they were connected in other ways as well. For example, Ebenezer Gray, William Judd's classmate and Putnam's lieutenant, had affiliated with the lodge at Redding and served as Senior Deacon.[58] Moses Cleaveland, whose father had fought with Putnam in the French and Indian War and helped Putnam to organize the Windham Sons of Liberty before the Revolution, joined the lodge at West Point. Their fraternal relationships reinforced and redefined a wide Connecticut cousinship.[59]

The very establishment of a Masonic lodge was symptomatic of the new attitudes that the orthodox characterized as

[58] "Ebenezer Gray, First Master of Moriah Lodge," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1954, p. 14.

[59] Harold D. Carpenter, "General Cleveland of Moriah Lodge," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, October 1952, p. 8.

a "looseness of manners and morals" and contrasted sharply with the "ancient Puritanical strictness."[60] The evaluation may have been accurate, if not just. The wartime experiences of Moriah's charter members had changed their world views and their expectations. The returning veterans found that their interests had suffered because of their absence. The normal course of their lives had been interrupted for as much as ten years by the pre-Revolutionary ferment and then the war. Those who had begun to build professional careers—for example, lawyers such as Gray, Grosvenor, and Cleaveland—were forced to begin again on old foundations. It is no wonder that Albigence Waldo, returned home to Pomfret in 1781 because of ill health, wrote to a friend: "I cannot but lament my absence from so many tried Friends and Companions, and often wish myself in the noise and bustle of a Camp—but above all, in that only place of earthly bliss where Masonic friendship flows, and peace and virtue blaze in dignified lustre. . . ." He had heard that American Union Lodge was flourishing—pleasurable news. He wanted all the information he could get that was "new and public."[61] In Pomfret his family had almost starved during the war, and routine responsibilities contrasted dismally to "the noise and bustle" of camp.[62] However sad the occasion, the colorful ritual and the pageant of Putnam's funeral had recalled a treasured past and provided the impetus for establishing a lodge in the area.

Once established, Moriah Lodge provided a focus for convivial fraternity. The ceremonial Masonic celebration of Saint John's Day in June was a popular event "exceeded only by the

[60] Ellen D. Larned, *History of Windham County*, 2 vols. (Worcester, Mass., 1874, 1880), II, 221.

[61] AAS, Waldo Family MSS, Folder 1769–1860, Albigence Waldo to Dr. Simpson, August 9, 1782.

[62] "Army Surgeon Waldo Gifted Character," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1953, p. 14.

Fourth of July and General Training Day." The Masonic brethren assembled in full regalia and marched alone or with other lodges through the streets of Canterbury or some nearby town, their banners flying and bands playing. After prayers and orations at the church, they proceeded to a dinner that, in its exclusive mystery and gaiety, was a new kind of activity for Windham County. The "Infidelity and Universalism" that had "come in with the Revolution" provided the explanation for some of the strange new associations.[63] Yet the Masons were not necessarily universalists or infidels. They were obviously men for whom the patterns of community life in such small towns no longer provided sufficient satisfaction or variety or recreation, and none of their new needs were positively defined in any Puritan lexicon.

However, Masonry was, from the beginning, more than a form of recreation. Its multiple usefulness would have appealed to any Yankee. One of the more practical aspects of Masonry was its idea about fraternal responsibility. In the economic dislocations of the closing years of the Revolution Waldo had written to his friend, "the times are harder than the prudish Virgin's heart." Although, he continued in a Biblical vein, at the prospect of peace "the old Men dream dreams and the Young men see Visions," the years immediately after the war had in fact been confusing and precarious.[64] The towns of Windham had voted the soldiers a bounty and provisions for their families while they were away, but the officers, and those rich enough to extend credit or supplies to the army, were victims of the degenerating and unstable currency. The question of commutation pay for the officers vexed people at a time when inflation made almost everybody a debtor.[65] Stories circulated about the problems

[63] Larned, *Windham County*, II, 321.

[64] AAS, Waldo Family MSS, Folder 1769–1860, Albigence Waldo to Dr. Simpson, August 9, 1782.

[65] Collier, *Roger Sherman*, p. 210.

of officers, "men who sacrificed all for their country during the Revolution" but for whom no provisions had been made.[66] Although membership fees were expensive, the lodge promised a wide association of fraternal concern. For the Revolutionary veterans, if their convivial pleasure also encouraged charity and benevolence, the fees must have seemed as well spent as insurance premiums.

The members of Moriah Lodge could also point out that their lodges had the serious purpose of inculcating standards of morality. Of course the churches had always been responsible for education in the standards of personal and social morality, sharing its responsibility with the coercive power of the state and the supervisory force of the family. For example, the town meeting at Ashford instructed its representatives to the General Assembly in 1783 to urge "laws for the promotion of virtue and good manners and the suppression of vice," and any other laws they could think of that tended "to promote a general reformation of manners."[67] The joint responsibility of church and state tended to both lump together personal and social virtues. Yet the churches were apparently ineffective in stemming the "decline" of their standards of behavior after the Revolution. The returning veterans seemed to be reluctant to return to prior patterns of religious conformity. Masons such as Waldo remembered the "peace and virtue" of the camp lodge as more congenial than the watch and ward of the town church. The Revolution itself "may have rendered authoritarian religion . . . distasteful to many who had participated in the political and social upheaval."[68] The establishment of Moriah, a new kind of social institution, can

[66] Ebenezer Gray, Moriah's first Master, whose health, it was reported, had been broken by seven years of service, received some commutation pay that depreciated immediately to ten cents on the dollar. Larned, *Windham County*, II, 208–209.

[67] Ibid., p. 211.

[68] Charles Roy Keller, *The Second Great Awakening in Connecticut* (New Haven, 1942), p. 28.

symbolize the process of a redefinition of the relationship of social and personal morality that Connecticut was experiencing.

It should not be assumed that, because the Masons of Moriah established an agency that might overlap the jurisdiction of the church in some respect, they were either irreligious or secular moral reformers. Most of them claimed a consonance between local religion and Masonry. Moses Cleaveland and Israel Putnam, both founders of Moriah Lodge, joined the churches in their towns when they returned from the war.[69] There is, however, some reason for believing that Masons sometimes differed in their views about religious experience from their fellow members in the gathered churches of Congregational New England. For example, Albigence Waldo once wrote out "a couple of reasons for my signing the enclosed agreement" (the church covenant):

> First I have examined it with carefulness, find it to be founded on that great Christian scale which Unites Mankind in the finely polished golden chain of Equality and Brotherly love, and cannot in my heart make any material objections to the modes and principles which it is designed to inculcate.
>
> If this reason is not sufficient, the second may peaceably be admitted.
>
> Second my only Brother has signed it after due consideration and I wish to worship and get to Heaven with my Brother.[70]

His statement cannot be interpreted as an expression of the experience of a saving faith.[71] It is couched in Masonic imagery, and it suggests a latitudinarian frame of reference

[69] Larned, *Windham County*, II, 254; Charles R. Underhill, Jr., *Moses Cleveland (1754–1806), P.M. Moriah Lodge, A.F. & A.M.* (Printed for the author, n.p., n.d.), p. 7.

[70] AAS, Waldo Family MSS, Folder 1769–1860, notebook.

[71] For comparison, see the description of the confession of faith of Puri-

and a grudging conformity with the only religious institutional association available to him in that small community.

For the veterans of the Revolution, Masonry not only supplemented the activities of church and state in its educational program for a virtuous citizenry, it also offered its members a special kind of immunity from some of the dislocations and uncertainties of an increasingly mobile population. When Waldo officiated at the induction of his nephew and pupil into Moriah Lodge, he emphasized the special advantages of Masonic universalism. "You are now entered into fellowship . . . with many of the great and good of this Imperial Republic [and] of all civilized nations upon the Earth." Membership in the fraternity, Jones was told, carried responsibilities as well as privileges: "As a brother will never deceive you:—so, you are not upon any occation, to entice him into the snares of error or deceit—." Wherever he went, and "in all the walks of life," Masonry could be his guide. It would, Waldo told his nephew, "encompass you like a circle—its divine precepts regulate your footsteps."[72] The churches were guardians of a particular orthodoxy, a particular flock, and eternal salvation, but Masonry provided its members global protection in a hostile world.

The very existence of Moriah Lodge, like the other lodges established in post-Revolutionary Connecticut, was an expression of dissent from Connecticut's cultural traditions. Before the Grand Lodge era in Connecticut, dissent had been limited because the social and political ideals of the Revolutionary generation, simplified to slogans by the needs of war, had been broadly shared. Freemasonry began to spread over the state as part of a process of change and differentiation that followed the war. As a fraternity designed for secular, frater-

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tans in Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1963), pp. 65–73.

[72] AAS, Waldo Family MSS, Folder 1769–1860, notebook.

nal, and social pleasure, it provided an alternative to the orthodox view of life as a solemn preparation for eternity. Its universalism implicitly criticized church establishment. By the time the Constitution framed a new federal government, religious and political dissent in Connecticut began to ally and organize, and Masonry was one measure of such change.

Even though Masonry was an agent of change, its effective appeal as an alternative to Connecticut's traditional orthodoxy lay partly in the continuities it provided. Masonry was derivative and part of a colonial culture, and it survived political separation from England in part because it was English. The fraternity afforded ex-colonials an admirable means of preserving the "Anglo-conformity" that came to be "the most prevalent ideology of assimilation goals in America throughout the nation's history."[73] The new nation had not planned to be a heterogeneous state, remarkable in the world for its cultural diversity. The jealous preservation of Anglo-Saxon patterns of culture, American-style, soon became a social value of the highest order, although it sometimes took on an ominous xenophobic tinge. The Masonic myth of universality, in the context of its English institutional history, admirably suited the post-Revolutionary limits of American Anglo-conformity. At first, however, Freemasonry in Connecticut, because of its structure and content, was primarily part of the broad current of antiestablishment thought that began to gather force and momentum in the 1790s.

[73] Milton M. Gordon, "Assimilation in America: Theory and Reality," *Daedalus*, 90, no. 2 (Spring 1961), 265–267.

III

Masonry and the Standing Order of Connecticut

In Connecticut in the 1790s Freemasonry stood at the intersection of two kinds of social anxiety. The fraternity came to be linked to an anticlerical latitudinarianism and to Jeffersonianism. Connecticut was then witnessing, many thought, a great degeneration of moral standards, accompanied by the rapid growth of a variety of denominations. American Enlightenment thought had seeped through the barriers of orthodoxy in a pervasive deism, unthinkingly incorporated into religious and political thought, unconsciously changing the values and mind set of the Revolutionary generation.[1] Yet no matter what their differences, the orthodox Calvinists, the sectarians, the deists, and the unchurched all agreed that education in social morality was essential to a self-governing state. Whether Masonry as a morality institution aided or subverted that civic essential became an issue.

At first Freemasonry was not overtly challenged by the Standing Order, even though such a fraternity was alien to Connecticut's traditional social forms. In 1796, when the Grand Lodge published its first list, thirty-seven lodges were inscribed. By 1800 representatives of forty-four different

[1] Charles R. Keller, *The Second Great Awakening in Connecticut* (New Haven, 1942), p. 24; Herbert Morais, *Deism in Eighteenth Century America* (New York, 1934). Henry F. May, *The Enlightenment in America* (New York, 1976) and Donald H. Meyer, *Democratic Enlightenment* (New York, 1976) came to hand too late to be reflected in the text.

lodges found their way along Connecticut's indifferent roads twice a year to attend Grand Lodge meetings.[2] Then, in the context of the anxieties generated by the changing patterns of American social values, and the political tensions generated by France's revolution, Freemasonry became an object of intense concern. During the 1790s, which were a period of particularly rapid Masonic growth, the ingredients of the conflict between the clergy and the Masons about the nature of the religious establishment and the relationship of religious belief to social behavior, simmered sometimes boiled.

Politics, Religion, and Masonry

Freemasonry had spread rapidly in Connecticut in the 1790s as part of the same process of social diversification that, in the early years of the next century, led to the formal disestablishment of the Congregational churches and the growth of political parties. Whatever the distance between rhetoric and action, Masonry overlapped, or competed with, the church in civil social function because the fraternity described itself as inculcating universal moral standards.[3] Moreover the fraternity welcomed the unchurched as well as members of all denominations in an association that purported to derive ideas about morality from concepts about the essential nature and needs of man. For example, Masonic latitudinarianism of principle and style, in sharp contrast with received traditions in Connecticut, seemed to claim social pleasure as a civic virtue. The coincidence of leadership among the Jeffersonians and the Masons also compounded the

[2] E. G. Storer, *The Records of Freemasonry in the State of Connecticut, with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England, and the Entire Proceedings of the Grand Lodge, from its First Organization, A.L., 5789* (New Haven, 1859), pp. 79–80, 122–124.

[3] Wilson Carey McWilliams, *The Idea of Fraternity in America* (Berkeley, 1973), pp. 130–132.

fears of Connecticut's solidly Federalist Standing Order. Therefore, when the Standing Order learned that Masonic lodges in Europe had housed anticlerical conspiracies, their fears about the evil nature of the fraternity were substantiated. Since all religious considerations had latent political implications in Connecticut, it was not long before the parareligious aspects of Masonry drew the lodges into the political vortex.

Orthodox attitudes about Masonry in Connecticut throughout the 1790s were related to a growing fear of the implications of French infidelity and political excesses for the future of American democracy. During the early years of the decade, almost all Americans were sympathetic with the efforts of their former Revolutionary ally to throw off royal tyranny and to establish a sister republic. The execution of Louis XVI in January of 1793, and the growth of Jacobin extremism, tempered the enthusiasm of many sympathizers. France's declaration of war on Britain, Spain, and Holland in February of 1793 sobered others. The French Revolution began to put Americans into opposing political camps.

When Citizen Genet arrived in America in the spring as the ambassador plenipotentiary of a new sister republic, he was met with wild popular acclaim—dampened by the news that Washington had resolved the diplomatic and commercial dilemma of the fragile new republic by declaring its neutrality.[4] Genet responded in part by setting up pro-French po-

[4] The foreign relations of America had domestic political implications because France, Spain, and Britain were still continental neighbors of the United States. Affairs in Europe might at any time have repercussions in America. Because of France's historic alliance with the United States, Washington's declaration of neutrality was seen as an implicit statement about America's domestic political and economic goals. The positions taken on international affairs were, for this reason, emotionally heightened. For example, wild popular acclaim accompanied Genet as he made his progress from Atlanta, where he had landed, to the Capitol. He made the mistake of considering it as massive popular support, and an invitation to

litical clubs at the same time that new, indigenous Republican-Democratic societies were being established to oppose Washington's policy. In that time of heightened partisanship, the French and American clubs sometimes were confused.[5] Both of them were secret societies and both were pro-French; and both were objects of suspicion. Inevitably some of that suspicion focused on Masonry as another widespread secret society.

When reports arrived from France about the establishment of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, Robespierre's Cult of the Supreme Being, and the excesses that attended the rejection of religious establishment, the orthodox clergy of Connecticut began to group atheism, deism, and even latitudinarianism with "French infidelity." Adding to their fears, Washington, in an address before Congress, traced a "causal connection" between the Republican-Democratic societies and the Whiskey Rebellion.[6] Those who concurred with his condemnation of self-created societies believed that the societies were both politically and religiously evil.

By the time the Jay Treaty became an issue, the clash of opposing views provided "the most powerful stimulus to party division."[7] National and international politics contributed to

organize pro-French sympathy whatever the public position of the Government. See Eugene Perry Link, *Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790-1800* (New York, 1942), and John C. Miller, *Crisis in Freedom: The Alien and Sedition Acts* (Boston, 1951), pp. 13–15, and Charles D. Hazen, *Contemporary American Opinion of the French Revolution* (Baltimore, 1897), pp. 188–209.

[5] Harry Ammon, *The Genet Mission* (New York, 1973), pp. viii, 106–107; Richard Buel, Jr., *Securing the Revolution: Ideology in American Politics, 1789–1815* (Ithaca and London, 1972), pp. 97–105.

[6] Vernon, Stauffer, *New England and the Bavarian Illuminati* (New York, 1918), pp. 108–109; Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780–1840* (Berkeley, 1969), pp. 92–100.

[7] Joseph Charles, *The Origins of the American Party System* (New York, 1961), p. 122.

local polarization into parties. For example, Jedidiah Morse, Jr., a native of Windham County who will figure more than once in our narrative, became a leader of the religious opposition to French ideas, drawn into the debate by "the clamor against the Treaty." Those who objected were "chiefly Jacobins," he said, but "the more competent judges among us think it as good a one as we could reasonably expect." He had no high opinion of the opponents of the treaty: "No doubt they would wish to overturn our government; for having nothing to lose, they have some chance to be gainers in the general scramble," he explained to his father in Woodstock. Morse, like many other Americans, did not yet consider party organization as responsible, constitutional opposition.

Like most Federalists, Morse thought that any opposition to constituted and elected authority was dangerous. "We depend much on the stability and good sense of the yeomanry of the country," he wrote to his father from Massachusetts, and on their willingness "to confide in their rulers." "Connecticut is considered the best governed state in the Union," he concluded, because of "the stability of the yeomanry."[8] Implicit in Morse's idea of political stability was the belief that religious orthodoxy fostered and ensured it. As one of the leaders of Calvinist orthodoxy in New England, Morse's ideas reverberated in his native state, but there were equally vigorous watchmen in Connecticut itself.

Timothy Dwight, appointed to the presidency of Yale in 1795, was, ex officio, a champion of the Connecticut establishment. His election was considered a triumph for the "New Light," or the more pietistic and evangelical elements in the church.[9] He saw as his first task the eradication of the Enlightenment ideas and latitudinarian spirit so pervasive at

[8] Yale University Library, Manuscripts and Archives, Morse Family, MSS, letter from Jedidiah Morse, Jr., to J. Morse, Sr., August 12, 1795.

[9] Keller, *Second Great Awakening*, p. 35; William Gribbon, "The Legacy of Timothy Dwight: A Reappraisal," *Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin*, 37, no. 2 (April 1972), 33–41.

Yale. As Connecticut's foremost tactician in that task, he opposed deism everywhere, in any form, including in the secret societies. Dwight spoke for and to the General Association of Congregational Churches, already concerned about "the deistical controversy" and "the danger to which youth are at the present time exposed."[10]

While the growth of religious diversity and latitudinarianism alarmed the Connecticut establishment, a great debate about the use of funds accruing to the state from the sale of western lands brought to public view a virile anticlericalism. Opposition was mounted to a proposal that educational funds for the state be secured by giving the money received from the sale of western lands to the clergy either for their own support or the support of education. The hot dispute about clerical control over the funds ensued because, some said, such control increased the risk of clerical tyranny. The dispute itself showed that education for morality was no longer unquestionably the province of the clergy alone. What kinds of responsibility resided in the church, or in the state, or neither, were not new questions in Connecticut, but the forum for the debate made the answer important. Many of the questioners—the anticlerical faction in the School Fund debates—were Jeffersonians. Many of them were also Masons. The association of Masonry with deism, universalism, anticlericalism, and, finally, Jeffersonian-Republicanism corresponded to a new political reality: the overlapping affiliations of different kinds of dissent to Connecticut's Standing Order.[11]

The clergy had always considered themselves as important

[10] *Records of the General Association of Connecticut, 1738–1799* (Hartford, 1888), p. 156. See also Keller, *Second Great Awakening*, pp. 13–15, for an excellent example of religious-political life in Connecticut in the 1790s.

[11] Morais, *Deism in Eighteenth Century America*, p. 145; McWilliams, *Idea of Fraternity*, p. 205. See also Gustav Adolf Koch, *Republican Religion* (New York, 1933).

mentors in the political life of Connecticut. They had come to equate Christian piety with civil liberties, and by the 1770s the clergy had led their congregations into the Revolution as if to a holy war.[12] For example, when the news of the Intolerable Acts reached Windham County in 1774, the members of the General Association of the churches, meeting at the Reverend Dr. Welch's home in Mansfield, drafted "A Letter of Condolence to the Ministers of Boston." "We consider you as suffering in the common cause of America," they said, "in the cause of Civil Liberty, which, if taken away, we fear would evidence the ruin of Religious Liberty also." The Connecticut clergy promised that they would help "in every way suitable to our Character and Station." They saw the war as punishment for their decline from "that purity and Strictness both of Doctrine and Manners which characterized our ancestors."[13] However, as it turned out, even winning the war did not lead to a resurgence of religion. Instead, diversity increased, and the "purity and Strictness" of Congregational orthodox doctrine encompassed less and less of the whole community.

By 1793 a bill before the legislature providing for the sale of the Western Reserve focused the expression of Connecticut's diversity.[14] It was proposed that the funds raised by

[12] Alice M. Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution* (Durham, N.C., 1928); Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Boston, 1966), pp. 367–384.

[13] *Records of the General Association*, pp. 89–90. The growth of religious diversity intensified demands that church and state in Connecticut be disassociated. In 1783 the laws of Connecticut had been revised and republished, and the Saybrook Platform was not mentioned. This nonact was the first step in dissociation of the state from the internal problems of church government, but the positive formal relationship of the church to the state was unchanged.

[14] Henry Barnard, *History of the School Fund in Connecticut* (Hartford, 1928), gives the full legislative history. See also Edmund B. Thomas, Jr., "Politics in the Land of Steady Habits: Connecticut's First Political Party System, 1789–1820" (Ph.D. dissertation, Clark University, 1972), pp. 54–58.

the sale were to go to civil authorities of the towns; each town would then appropriate money to its church societies, either for the support of the clergy or for the schools, as each should decide. The bill was defeated, but a resolution passed providing that the proceeds from the sale of lands should go into the permanent fund, and the proceeds of the fund go to the civil authorities of the town for either the support of the clergy of *all* denominations or the support of schools, at local option. The vote was eighty-three to seventy.[15] The fascination of the figures lies in the fact that seventy men, presumably all members of the Standing Order by virtue of their place in the state legislature, voted against even the contingent possibility of clerical control of state funds. The public debate in the press in the winter of 1793–1794, and in the May session of the legislature following passage of the resolution, elaborated their opposition. Irate sectarians came to the steps of the capital in angry demonstrations.[16] More than foreign affairs or national domestic policy, this resolution helped to define party divisions within the state, and did so in terms of opposing attitudes toward church establishment.[17]

The minority so vigorously opposing the resolution, did so for a variety of reasons. Some said they doubted the right of the state to the western lands. Some thought it was a poor time to sell the land. Some thought that there were more pressing needs for the money if the land was sold. Some thought that establishing a separate fund for the money, without allowing its use to be reconsidered from time to time, was shortsighted or foolish.[18] The one note that underlay the

[15] Barnard, *School Fund*, pp. 13–14.

[16] Maria Louise Greene, *The Development of Religious Liberty in Connecticut* (Boston and New York, 1905), pp. 387–389. The resolution was repealed but another vote the following year established the School Fund.

[17] William A. Robinson, *Jeffersonian Democracy in New England* (New Haven, 1916), p. 12.

[18] Barnard, *School Fund*, pp. 34, 30, 47, 41, provides examples of such arguments.

others, and sounded again and again in the debate, was their objection to establishing a fund that might be at the service of the ecclesiastical societies alone.

William Judd of Farmington, recently installed as Grand Master of Masonry in the state, spoke to financial independence for the clergy. "I revere the clergy of this state, and as freely pay my money for their support as I do for my daily bread," he said, "but I am unwilling the churches and people in this state should be subjected to ecclesiastical tyranny." Luther Payne, an officer of Moriah Lodge and a representative of Windham, also warned against clerical despotism. "The clergy are a discerning set of gentlemen," Payne said, "and look well for themselves as respects property and influence." The history of Connecticut, he thought, had taught its citizens to "hold fast those privileges which with so much difficulty we have wrested from ecclesiastical tyranny and despotism."[19] Moses Cleaveland, another prominent Mason, advocated delay. The resolution was deficient, he said, because it proposed to distribute the money to all churches according to their numbers on the town tax list even though the churches of many denominations were not bound by town lines. However, like Payne, his primary objection was that the resolution tended to "establish a separate order of men," contrary to "the real principles of republicanism."[20] According to Cleaveland, history had proved that Connecticut's Congregational churches were potential "enemies" to the state if their clergy were both financially secure and politically organized.[21]

In May of 1795 the passage of a bill providing for the establishment of school districts, separate from the ecclesiastical societies and supported by a School Fund from the sale of the western lands, settled the controversy. It marked a major defeat for the Standing Order. The sale was made in one large

[19] Ibid., pp. 47, 44. [20] Ibid., p. 30. [21] Ibid.

lot to a group of thirty-five men. Most of them were men whose restless energy had already brought them to prominence in the affairs of the state as well as in other kinds of expansive and enterprising speculation. Most of them were Masons.[22]

The passage of the School Fund Bill had both long-term and immediate consequences for Masonry. In the long run, the fund contributed to a *decline* in public education, even though Connecticut's compulsory grammar schools and other educational provisions had made the system "the example for other states, and the admiration of the Union." The automatic allocation of state funds encouraged thrifty town governments to limit their support of the schools, and the quality of public grammar school education increasingly lagged behind its reputation.[23] Private academies at the secondary school level tended to restrict access to further education at the same time that rising educational aspirations led to the growth of a variety of popular educational facilities such as lyceums or lodges. The immediate consequence of the School Fund Bill was to give many Masonic leaders a financial stake in western expansion as an indirect result of their sponsorship of a bill that secularized education, and focused and articulated a widely shared hostility to church establishment. Even if all Masons were not necessarily anticlerical, or antiestablishment, they all had to be willing to associate themselves, at

[22] Bernard Steiner, "History of Education in Connecticut," *Bureau of Education Circular of Information*, no. 2, 1893 (Washington, D.C., 1893), pp. 35–36.

[23] More than half of the purchasers of the western lands were Masons, including men such as Pierpont Edwards, Henry Champion, William Judd, Ephraim Kirby, and Moses Cleaveland. Barnard, *School Fund*, p. 67; Gaspare J. Saladino, "The Economic Revolution in Late Eighteenth Century Connecticut" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1964), pp. 98–106, comments on the new ways in which the post-Revolutionary generation, "looking for opportunity," began to try to combine new routes to economic power with political activity.

least in their character as Freemasons, with a Masonic leadership that was.

The Growth of the Grand Lodge

During the 1790s Masonry began to spread over the state. Lodges sprang up in the smaller and more remote communities, along the new roads that patterned an increasingly complex network of communication. Sufficient numbers of men could be gathered in villages like Turkey Hills, Lebanon, or Harwinton, to form new lodges. During this rapid expansion the Grand Lodge directed its energies to establishing its authority over the component lodges, ensuring uniformity in the rules and rituals of the lodges and guarding the reputation of the fraternity.

Until the advantages of their association with the Grand Lodge became clear, some of the lodges of the state were not eager to affiliate. The establishment of the Grand Lodge, however, made membership the price of legitimacy. The Grand Lodge accredited new lodges (for a set fee) by numbering and inscribing them on its rolls, and by providing for committees to examine the Master-elect "with regard to his knowledge in the Masonic Art." It settled disputes over territorial jurisdiction and membership. It provided each lodge with printed copies of the constitution, ordinances, and bylaws of the Grand Lodge, and certificates of membership, "printed on parchment." At Grand Lodge sessions throughout the decade, fines were levied for "neglect" in the required attendance at the Grand Lodge or in "making returns" (reporting on new members, officers, and activities within the lodge). Penalties were also frequently remitted when the representative of a lodge could make it appear that its delinquency "was not occasioned by negligence or inattention." By the spring meeting of 1800 all of the forty-four lodges in the state were represented at the Grand Lodge, associated in a system of reciprocal duties and services. Through its system

of registration and certification, the Grand Lodge had become the only reference in the state for Masonic legitimacy.[24]

Since the effectiveness of Masonic universalism depended on members being able to participate in the work of the lodges wherever they found themselves, one of the purposes of the Grand Lodge had been to provide "order and uniformity." The problem was still of great concern in 1795, when the Grand Lodge resolved to request the Grand Master, William Judd, "to make a visit, either by himself, or with some suitable person or persons . . . to the several Lodges in this State . . . for the purpose of establishing a uniformity in working." As Grand Master, Judd crisscrossed the state, visiting lodges and meeting Masons—a golden opportunity for a leader of the scattered Jeffersonian minority. Judd found that there were many "different modes of working," and so, in 1796 the Grand Lodge voted that a group of Masonic leaders, including, besides Judd, Ephraim Kirby, Stephen Titus Hosmer, Moses Cleaveland, and the Reverend Ashbel Baldwin, meet with the Masters of the lodges, who were "enjoined to attend personally" to receive "instruction in the work."[25] A conscious selection of disaffected civic and social leaders, marginal to the Standing Order, would not have produced a very different list.

Uniformity in ritual became even more important as the

[24] Storer, *Records*, pp. 107, 111, 120–124, 74, 77, 93, 69, 116. The "Regulations for the Government of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut" provided that it was the duty of Masters and Wardens of all the lodges of the state "to give their punctual attendance at the meetings." In 1794 the members of the lodge emphasized by imposing fines of eight dollars that it was the "indispensable duty of every Lodge under the jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge to attend each half-yearly communication" unless an adequate explanation for absence was provided. The Grand Lodge enforced its regulations by the supervision and certification provided that no new charters be granted except on the application of "at least five known and accepted Master Masons," and the approval of "some regularly constituted Lodge in the vicinity of the petitioners."

[25] Ibid., pp. 61, 74, 82, 73.

growth of Freemasonry invited imitation and infiltration. In 1795 the Grand Lodge found that lodge territory was usually so large that there were "dangers of admitting members on slight or partial acquaintance whose characters will not bear the test of close scrutiny." The Grand Lodge urged care and vigilance. They also urged the lodges to beware of imitators and impostors. In May, 1797, the Grand Lodge, assembled in Hartford, appointed a special committee to study "the general state of Masonry within this jurisdiction" and to report "what ought, in their opinion, to be further done for the health and prosperity of the various Masonic Arts."[26] They had established their hegemony and were ready to consolidate their gains.

The next action of the Grand Lodge was unprecedented. By a "unanimous resolution" the members requested their Grand Master, William Judd, to appoint a Chaplain for the Grand Lodge to offer a sermon at their next Grand Lodge meeting, the first Grand Lodge meeting to have a public ceremonial aspect. Grand Master William Judd forthwith appointed the Reverend Ashbel Baldwin as the Grand Chaplain of the Connecticut Grand Lodge.[27] Baldwin's appointment may have been a defensive gesture as President Dwight of Yale began a systematic effort to remedy the perceived moral delin-

[26] Ibid., p. 87.

[27] The "Regulations of the Grand Lodge" had provided for the election of major officers, and the appointment by the Grand Master of such associates as Grand Marshal, Grand Sword Bearer, Grand Pursuivant, and Grand Tyler; but they had not provided for the Grand Chaplain. Ibid. Ashbel Baldwin was one of the founders of the lodge in which Ephriam Kirby was active, St. Paul's of Litchfield. Like so many of his fellow Grand Lodge officers, he had found his way to the American Union Lodge when the Connecticut Line was in Morristown. Baldwin was one of the first group to be ordained in the Episcopal Church of Connecticut when Bishop Seabury returned from his quest for proper consecration of his new dignity. Ibid., p. 76; James R. Case, *Episcopal Clergy in Early Connecticut Masonry* (n.p., 1962), pp. 6, 8.

quency of his students. In September of 1797 he delivered two discourses to the graduating class in which he grouped all varieties of latitudinarianism under the generic term "*infidelity*."[28] As if to underline the fact that it was deism, latitudinarianism, or irreligion that was attacked, and not other denominations, he took the occasion to award Abraham Jarvis, bishop of Connecticut, an honorary doctorate.[29] When the Grand Lodge assembled in New Haven on October 18, 1797, Baldwin's appointment seemed designed to announce that Freemasonry had religious sanction, even if the religion was not that of the Standing Order.

When the Masons appeared in public for the first time, their procession did not lack a certain pomp. Eighty Masters and representatives from thirty-six of the thirty-nine lodges established by that date gathered near the Green. The Masters wore white aprons, trimmed in white, and the "jewels" (Masonic insignia) of their office, while the Grand Lodge officers were distinguished by jewels "gilt with gold, pendant to a collar of white ribbon." Led by their Grand Marshal, Moses Cleaveland, and attended by a Grand Sword Bearer guarding the Masonic symbol of an open Bible, they marched to the Brick Meeting House to hear their "Reverend Brother" Baldwin preach. He chose as his text Matthew 5:16, "Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."[30] Baldwin told his congregation that the "light" to which the text referred was "love to God, and to our neighbor." It was

[28] Timothy Dwight, *The Nature, and Danger of Infidel Philosophy, exhibited in two Discourses . . . in Yale College, September 9th, 1797* (New Haven, 1798); Ralph Henry Gabriel, *Religion and Learning at Yale: The Church of Christ in the College and University, 1757–1957* (New Haven, 1958), pp. 65–77.

[29] Case, *Episcopal Clergy*, p. 6.

[30] Storer, *Records*, pp. 99, 67, 91. Baldwin's "Discourse" is printed in Storer's *Records*, pp. 95–102.

an appropriate text for a Masonic group, because "to cultivate all the precepts of religion (comprised in a supreme love to God and subordinate love to our neighbors) is the professed design of the fraternity here assembled." He wished to reconcile the idea of "light" and the secrecy of Masonry, which had been criticized as associated with evil. The lodge was organized according to its own regulations, he pointed out, and the "private regulations of any society may be such as not to be prejudicial to those who are without, yet particularly beneficial to its own members." None but an uncharitable temper, he thought, would consider that something was evil merely because it was secret.[31]

Baldwin also thought it was necessary to deal with the frequent criticism that Masonic lodges included "vicious and immoral members," because, he said with admirable candor, "there had been much occasion for this objection." The fact that some members were immoral did not mean that they were unchristian, "for many immoral persons are professors of Christianity"; it meant only that they were human. It was necessary to "make a proper distinction between principles and the conduct of persons professing these principles, and to remember that all are very apt to fall short of their profession."[32] Masonic principles were both moral and Christian. For example, the "great object" of their institution was charity. He suggested that a permanent charity fund be established by the lodges, and that the care and administration of that fund be their chief occupation. Then, he thought, every meeting of every lodge "will lead another step towards perfection . . . by extending the radius of the heart to comprehend by a larger sweep so many more of the sons and daughters of affliction."[33]

One main theme of Baldwin's discourse was the dubious public regard of Masons. Members were always to remember that the "eye of God and man are continually upon you."

[31] Storer, *Records*, p. 97. [32] Ibid., p. 98. [33] Ibid., p. 101.

They had to be capable of bearing such scrutiny by guarding their membership. "That a man be worthy of entering the *sacred inclosure*, and of being numbered with the sons of *emblematical science*, it is necessary that he be like the wife of Caesar, not only free from crimes, but free from suspicion." The assembled Masons found his admonitions so "well adapted" to their needs that they ordered his sermon to be printed, and distributed to all the lodges in the state.[34]

In a regular session after the Reverend Mr. Baldwin's sermon, the Grand Lodge immediately began to work on his recommendations. The members first resolved that only a Master Mason was to propose a candidate. They also recommended that the vote on admission be unanimous. With lodges multiplying so rapidly, they ruled that petitions for new ones must always be "continued" until Grand Lodge officers had an opportunity "to obtain the best information respecting the character and local situation of the petitioners."[35] All of these regulations were designed to protect the quality of Masonic membership.

Between the October, 1797, meeting in New Haven and the May, 1798, meeting in Hartford, several events in Connecticut must have made the Masons anxious about their future as an association. First, Dwight's *Discourses*, when they were published, carried a postscript of special interest. Dwight said that a book by a famous Scottish scientist, John Robison, had come to his attention just after his sermons had been sent to press: *Proofs of a Conspiracy Against all Religions and Governments of Europe, carried on in the Secret Meetings of the Free Masons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies*. "In this work the reader sees the dangers of Infidel Philosophy set in the strongest light possible," Dwight said.[36] Secret societies, Dwight suggested, might be politically as well as religiously subversive. Then, as if to confirm Dwight's

[34] Ibid., p. 91.
[35] Ibid., p. 92.
[36] Dwight, *Nature, and Danger of Infidel Philosophy*, p. 95.

warning, the names of three "Jacobins," two known Jeffersonian-Republicans and a suspected one, appeared on the nomination lists for Congress. Although both parties "professed a horror of electioneering," the appearance of those names was related to a "secret caucus" reportedly held at Bull's Tavern in Hartford by the Republicans.[37]

Gideon Granger, one of the Republican names in nomination, denied that there had been any such secret meetings. The only secret caucus he knew about, he said, was one held by Federalists in Litchfield.[38] At the next vote on the nominations, part of Connecticut's two-stage system of elections, the people turned out in unusually large numbers. The writer in the *Connecticut Courant* who had hoped that Connecticut would be spared "the disgrace of electing to Congress any but the purest Federalists" had voiced the sentiments of the electorate. The voting returns provided a list of "pure" candidates, and the state ran "no risk of being misrepresented in Congress for the next two years."[39] Connecticut Federalists once again had reason to be satisfied with the stability of their yeomanry.

After the May elections of 1798 the Grand Lodge met at Hartford. In spite of their new caution, five lodges had been chartered since the last meeting; thus eighty-eight men from forty-three lodges assembled. Only nineteen of them were new delegates to the Grand Lodge, but only four of the original members of the 1789 organizing session remained: Ephraim Kirby, William Judd, Samuel Wyllys, and Nathan Preston. When that meeting elected officers for the following year, some names long associated with Masonry were dropped, and new ones were added.[40] The new men were not

[37] Robinson, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, pp. 17, 19.

[38] Norman Stamps, "Political Parties in Connecticut, 1789–1819" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1950), p. 81.

[39] Robinson, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, p. 19, citing the *Connecticut Courant*, April 21, 1798, and September 3, 1798.

[40] Storer, *Records*, pp. 103–105.

so clearly political dissenters as the militant anti-Federalists or pro-Jeffersonians whom they displaced. Ephraim Kirby and William Judd, leaders of the Jeffersonian minority, were not reelected to their Grand Lodge offices. Samuel Wyllys, recently appointed to the post of treasurer of the state, almost hereditary in his family, prudently retired from active office. In their places, Stephen Titus Hosmer and David Daggett, both young Federalist leaders, though moderates and marginal to the core of that political group, were elected as Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master. Henry Champion, the Grand Treasurer, and John Mix, the Grand Secretary, whatever their politics, remained in office and maintained the continuity of Grand Lodge affairs.[41]

If the Masons of Connecticut, either swayed by the same political winds that had blown the names of Jeffersonians from the nomination lists for Congress or simply moving to protect their organization, voted into visible leadership some moderate Federalists in the hope of minimizing suspicions of their political orthodoxy, they mistook the nature of Connecticut politics. The Standing Order still prevailed, and it was increasingly clear that Masons were often neither politically nor religiously orthodox. Their appointment of the new bishop of Connecticut as their Chaplain only suggested that they might be generally Christian in their orientation. They could not deny their latitudinarianism. The enemy of Connecticut orthodoxy in politics and religion was not only political dissent, but the new latitudinarian spirit, avowedly institutionalized in Masonry.

The Illuminati and the Masons

The pulpits and presses of Connecticut voiced the anxiety in Connecticut generated by political crises. The clergy at the General Assembly of Presbyterian Churches of the United States, meeting in Philadelphia in 1798, were filled with

[41] See Appendix II, pp. 342–43.

forebodings.[42] "The watchmen at Zion's walls" sounded a general alarm: "formidable innovations and convulsions in Europe threaten destruction to morals and religion" and "our own country is threatened with similar calamities."[43] The representatives of Congregational Connecticut reported these warnings to their own General Association. At about the same time another warning came to Connecticut in a different way. In Charlestown, Massachusetts, the Reverend Jedidiah Morse, Jr., the son of the deacon of Woodstock's First Church, had found some new and threatening information.[44] On the fast day urged by President Adams on the politically

[42] *Records of the General Association*, p. 127. The General Association of Congregational Churches in Connecticut had considered a scheme of union with the Presbyterians, but in 1792 they had decided simply to exchange delegates and correspondence on a regular basis.

[43] Stauffer, *Illuminati*, pp. 99–100, citing the *Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States*, May 17, 1798, pp. 11ff.

[44] Jedidiah Morse, Jr., had studied theology with Jonathan Edwards the Younger, a brother of Pierpont Edwards, Grand Master of Connecticut, after his graduation from Yale. He tended to associate himself with the New Light theology, but he was more interested in purposeful crusading than theological niceties. One sympathetic contemporary described as a fault that "by steady contemplation of an object, he would sometimes gain an exaggerated estimate of its importance. . . ." William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit: or Commemorative Notices of Distinguished American Clergymen of Various Denominations*, 9 vols. (New York, 1857–1869), II, 251. After early making a name for himself as a geographer, he was called to the pulpit at Charlestown, Massachusetts. His moderate Calvinism was "contrary to the growing latitudinarian atmosphere of the Boston area, so that practically every move he made precipitated opposition." James K. Morse, *Jedidiah Morse: A Champion of New England Orthodoxy* (New York, 1939), pp. 49–50. From his first battle with the forces of French infidelity, he moved increasingly toward an evangelical orthodoxy, and saw each battle as a preliminary skirmish of Armageddon. He was the prototype of an antimason. For examples of the millennialism that characterized much antimasonry, see Yale University Library, Archives, Morse family, MSS, J. Morse, Jr., to J. Morse, Sr., July 18, 1795 and October 11, 1803.

beleaguered country, Morse delivered a sermon based on the contents of the book that had been cited by Timothy Dwight: John Robison's *Proofs of a Conspiracy Against all Religions and Governments*. Morse's sermon was an "ordinary, 'political sermon,' " except for the one new element of Illuminism.[45]

Robison had described a secret society in Germany, the Illuminated Masons, or Illuminati, which had been formed to overthrow the government and the church. The Illuminati, said Robison, had spread their influence through Masonic lodges, and had been a secret influence in the French Revolution. Morse's sermon suggested that the problems of America might be traced to a single source: the Illuminati of America. It was important to identify the Illuminati, having established their presence and their danger, but Morse was vague about their location. The source of Illuminism suggested that members of Genet's clubs, or Democratic-Republican clubs, and even Masons, might be the infiltrators. Morse was not clear.

When Morse prepared his sermon for publication, he added copious footnotes that tried to distinguish good Masons from bad. Such distinctions were prudent since some of the most prominent members of his congregation were Masons. Although he tried to explain that the Masons of New England "have ever shown themselves firm and decided supporters of civil and religious order," he had a delicate line to walk in dividing Masons and Illuminati.[46] If anyone had looked at Robison's book, the source of Morse's warning, they would have found that he, too, tried to distinguish between English (good) and Continental (bad) Masons. He had, he said, observed their doctrines "gradually diffusing and mixing with

[45] Stauffer, *Illuminati*, p. 238. J. M. Roberts, *Mythology of the Secret Societies* (New York, 1972), pp. 118, 217.

[46] Jedidiah Morse, Jr., *A Sermon Delivered at the New North Church in Boston, in the Morning and in the Afternoon at Charlestown, May 9, 1798, being the Day recommended by John Adams, President of the United States, for Solemn Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer* (Boston, 1798), pp. 21–22.

all the different systems of Free-Masonry, till, at last AN ASSOCIATION HAS BEEN FORMED for the express purpose of ROOTING OUT ALL THE RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS, AND OVERTURNING ALL THE EXISTING GOVERNMENTS OF EUROPE."[47] Whatever the differences between European and American Freemasonry, or Illuminism and nonillumined Freemasonry, Morse's arguments implied that Masonic membership was at least inadvisable.

Morse published his pamphlet in an edition of 1,300 copies. Four hundred of them were immediately bought by "several gentlemen in Boston" and given away to the clergy, but its impact was delayed.[48] The pamphlet came out at about the same time that the public presses first carried the details of the XYZ affair, shocking both Federalists and Jeffersonians.[49] Since political infamy and religious infidelity were considered aspects of the same problem, Morse soon found help in sounding his alarm to a wider and more responsive audience.

Robison's warnings were corroborated when the *Memoirs of Jacobinism*, simultaneously and independently published by Abbé Barreul, a French émigré to England, reached American bookstores. Barreul also revealed how secret societies, antisocial and antireligious in their goals, had worked through Masonic groups to cause the French Revolution. "As the plague flies on the wings of the wind, so do their triumphant legions infect America," he warned.[50] More important for the Masons of Connecticut, Timothy Dwight, who was the most "persistently haunted by the fear that the forces of irreligion were in league to work general ruin to the institutions of society," fully agreed with Morse.[51] Theodore Dwight, his brother, was a prominent publisher in Hartford and was glad

[47] Ibid., p. 22.

[48] William Sprague, *The Life of Jedidiah Morse* (New York, 1874), p. 233.

[49] Stauffer, *Illuminati*, p. 239.

[50] Ibid., p. 226.

[51] William T. Hastings, *Phi Beta Kappa as a Secret Society with its Relation to Freemasonry and Antimasonry* (Washington, D.C., 1965), p. 4.

to use some of Morse's material for his Fourth of July oration in 1798. Thus the warnings of Robison, Barreul, and Morse were spread throughout Connecticut.[52] Of course, Morse's apprehensions were not universally shared. The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, for example, addressed a complaint to President Adams in June of 1798, saying, "Illiberal attacks of a foreign enthusiast, aided by the unfounded prejudices of his followers, are tending to embarrass the public mind with respect to the real views of our society."[53] Adams's response was perfunctory, and Morse went doggedly on with his mission.

Morse readied for publication the new set of warnings for his Thanksgiving Day sermon and added still more to his pamphlet. "I shall have a pretty long Appendix to prove the existence and extent of the French influence in this country since 1777," he promised his father in Woodstock.[54] When it was published, Deacon Morse reacted strongly to his son's information about the dangers of Illuminism. He wrote: "It had unfolded many things that I little thought of before; and I believe but few have the means to know the eminent danger the United States have been in; and not yet out of Danger; of the political intrigues, of the French nation." Deacon Morse was able to hear his son's work put to good use immediately: "Rev. Lyman entertained us with two excellent sermons . . .," he reported, "and I believe the appendix was of some help in some of his observations."[55] All through the fall and winter of 1798–1799, the idea of a secret conspiracy against all American institutions was "extensively promoted by clerical agency," in ways implicitly condemning Masonry.[56]

[52] Theodore Dwight, *An Oration, Spoken at Hartford, in the State of Connecticut, on the Anniversary of American Independence* (Hartford, 1798).

[53] Stauffer, *Illuminati*, p. 325.

[54] Yale University Library, Archives, Morse Family, MSS, J. Morse, Jr., to J. Morse, Sr., December, 1798.

[55] Ibid., J. Morse, Sr., to J. Morse, Jr., March 23, 1799.

[56] Stauffer, *Illuminati*, p. 276.

On the first anniversary of his Fast Day oration, Morse finally attempted to produce some concrete evidence about the identity of French subversives. His friend Oliver Wolcott, Jr., secretary of the treasury of the United States, and, ironically, later the Grand Master of Connecticut, found the specific kind of information that Morse had requested. He provided Morse with a document from Wisdom Lodge in Portland, Virginia, and Morse deduced from internal evidence that there were seventeen French Masonic-style lodges, part of the "Grand Orient" of France, all bound together by the terrible motto "Havoc and Spoil and Ruin are our Gain."[57] Morse had located his Illuminati, and they were Masons.

In Connecticut there was no concerted public reaction to Morse's discovery, but when one prominent Mason, Samuel Huntington, found an opportunity to undermine the credibility of Morse's evidence, he promptly did so. Huntington, the nephew and heir of the late governor of Connecticut, was also Secretary of Somerset Lodge, and a Republican.[58] After Huntington had visited Morse in Charlestown, a letter to Morse from Christopher D. Ebeling of Hamburg, in which he reported Robison's personal grudges against Masonry, appeared in the *American Mercury* and was copied in other papers in the state. The source of the text of Ebeling's letter appears to have been Huntington. Ebeling's doubts about Robison's reliability (or Huntington's version of them) seemed to undermine the very foundation of Morse's warning.

Morse made every effort to retrieve his reputation and authority. He denied that the letter that had been printed was Ebeling's, and provided affidavits to prove it. (He did not say

[57] Ibid., pp. 298–300. See also Connecticut Historical Society, Wolcott MSS, Box 8, no. 31 and no. 32.

[58] "Major Huntington Notable in Eastern Connecticut," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1955, p. 14. "Huntington, Grand Master," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, April 1953, p. 11.

whether the contents of his own letter were similar to the published one.) His father wrote him that the Reverend Mr. Lyman "was anxious for fear your Character might some how suffer," but, after seeing the affidavits, was satisfied "that you stand on safe ground in that respect." Lyman had repeatedly sent copies of Morse's affidavits to the Norwich editor for publication, "inasmuch as he published the pretended letter of Mr. Ebeling," but Morse's explanation never got the same publicity as Huntington's accusations.[59]

Then, too, Morse's attention was soon diverted by the same problem of latitudinarianism or irreligion in a larger context. In October he suspected, and by December he was convinced, that Jefferson and Burr were probably elected as president and vice-president. He wrote: "Neither of them are believers in the Christian Religion, and neither are accustomed to attend public worship. For a Christian people to be governed by their own choice by professed infidels is indeed shocking."[60] The election of Jefferson temporarily shifted Morse's concern about Masonry to other more immediate dangers to the state.

On the whole, whether Morse's warning was heard as an attack upon infidelity, or secret societies, or Republicanism, or Masonry, depended upon the audience. John Jay had measured praise for Morse's efforts from the point of view of the national politics of 1799: "The facts which you have given to the public relative to the conduct of France in our Revolution, as well as your strictures on the design and intrigues of the Iluminees, have, to a certain extent, been useful—they have made proper impressions on many sedate and candid men, but I suspect they have detached very few of the disci-

[59] Yale University Library, Archives, Morse Family, MSS, J. Morse, Sr., to J. Morse, Jr., November 30, 1799.

[60] Ibid., J. Morse, Jr., to J. Morse, Sr., December 22, 1800; Charles F. O'Brien, "The Religious Issue in the Presidential Campaign of 1800," *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, CVII, no. 1 (January 1971), 82–93.

plined adherents of the party."[61] Indeed, Morse had found his most sympathetic audience in Connecticut, the epicentrum of massive shifts within Calvinism. However, the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, unlike the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, made no public statements when leaders of Connecticut's Standing Order assailed Masonry. The essential character of Freemasonry was latitudinarian, and its membership consisted of men who accepted that fact, regardless of their own religious or political affiliation. Masonry could make no further compromise with the "Connecticut Way." Nevertheless, aware that the threat of Illuminism implicated them, Masons responded indirectly by the caution with which the new administration of the Grand Lodge chartered lodges. In the five-year period after the election of Hosmer and Daggett, only three new lodges were formed, compared to the thirty chartered in the years between the formation of the Grand Lodge in 1789 and 1798.[62] This decline in the rate of growth of Masonry cannot be interpreted as a dramatic decrease in its popularity because over a dozen groups of Masons applied for charters during that period, presumably because the growth of membership seemed to warrant other lodges. However, local antimasonry, buttressed by a few of the clergy, openly challenged the Masonic alternative.

The Minister and the Masons

The stirring indictments of Illuminism by Dwight and Morse soon found their way to the remote churches and towns in Connecticut through the Connecticut clergy's efficient network of communication. The Reverend Samuel Nott of

[61] Sprague, *Jedidiah Morse*, p. 238, quoting from a letter dated April 1799; E. J. Hobsbawn, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movements in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York, 1965) briefly considers the relationship of European Masonry and revolutionary groups, pp. 162–167.

[62] Storer, *Records*, pp. 121, 127.

Franklin, on the border of Windham County, was one of the clergy who used the weapons fashioned by Dwight and Morse to combat the forces of Masonic irreligion that beset his own church.[63] His efforts were local and lonely, but his ideas, attitudes, and actions help explain the limitations of orthodox clerical leadership in the face of the increasing secularization and latitudinarianism epitomized by Masonry.

Dr. Nott became concerned with Masonry when he noticed an increasing interest in the fraternity in his town. In 1798, one of the members of his own church joined a lodge, and he began to think about "its influence on the Church and Society in a religious point of view." After about "one quarter of the active male members of the Church" had joined the Masons, he became convinced that "its influence upon religion was *pernicious*." The troubled minister wrote a note to each of the men involved, inviting them to discuss it. Only two of the five men appeared at the appointed time, and one of them agreed to give up his Masonic membership after hearing the minister's views. Dr. Nott, perplexed about how to reach and convince the others, tried "to get at their consciences by preaching without saying a word that would appear as though I had anything personal in view." His sermons seemed to have no effect.[64] Interest in Freemasonry continued to increase and became "a general topic in almost every circle."[65] Dr. Nott expressed his concern about Freemasonry in informal groups, but the members in his society who went to some pains to allay his fears failed to persuade him that Masonry was innocuous.

Dr. Nott finally hit upon the idea of writing to those three ministers in Windham County who were rumored to be Masons. In a letter dated January 31, 1799, he set forth his reasons for considering Masonry to be harmful to Christianity. He concluded with a leading question: Was it "consistent

[63] Congregational House, Hartford, MSS, "Autobiography of the Rev. Samuel Nott, D.D.," pp. 170–222.

[64] Ibid., pp. 170–171.

[65] Ibid., p. 181.

with the disinterested religion of the Bible for the possessors of Christianity to become Masons . . . especially when they are informed that it will be grievous to their Christian brothers?" He did not wish to draw them into "difficulties with the Masons," but only to say "what faithfulness to Christ and brotherly love to me will require you to do."[66] In short, Nott asked them to choose between Christian and Masonic fraternity.

In a long and detailed letter Dr. Nott set out his objections under ten headings. Most of his objections centered in the secrecy of Masonry. He freely quoted Robison and Barreul as his sources of information. He outlined the way in which Masonry alienated church members from one another and from the community, and separated members of the same family. He thought secrecy protected corrupt sentiments from the restraining control of publicity. Apart from the evil effects of secrecy, two other arguments were prominent. First, Masonry encouraged a wrong style of life. If Masonic membership was merely a form of social amusement, it was "unbecoming" for church members "to join with them in their merry songs, mirth, and hilarity." Church members' time was used "to *watch*, to *pray* and to be *sober* and to let their light so shine around them *that others may see their good works and glorify God.*" Second, Masons had the reputation of being "experimental Christians," or believers in natural religion. Therefore, church members "who know the evil of sin, and that sinners can be saved only by the blood of Christ, ought not to countenance their notion of religion by meeting with them." It was the duty of church members to "labour to let their fellow sinners know the great superiority of the religion of Christ over the religion of nature."[67]

Having stated his objections to the fraternity, Dr. Nott begged a reply. Two of his correspondents denied or dismissed their association with Masonry, but the only active Mason

[66] Ibid., p. 187.

[67] Ibid., pp. 185–186.

among them, the Reverend Enoch Pond of Ashford, did not respond. Dr. Nott was dismayed. "Masonic fever at this time among my people was at a high point," he recalled, because his antimasonic attitude had been publicized in a Norwich newspaper. Although Dr. Nott had made known his "strictures upon Masonry" only to those whom he had tried to dissuade from membership, fearing that the "Masons would have moved against me in a moment if they thought they could gain anything by doing it," his ideas "were held up fully to public view not only in the town but in the vicinity."[68] A careless incident as the minister had gone about his business had led to the public labeling.

The incident that had led to his notoriety, Dr. Nott said, was misconstrued by Masons. Dr. Nott and a friend crossed a Masonic funeral procession on their way from Norwich, but the Masons complained that they had "spurred their horses through the ranks," causing the solemnities to be interrupted. The Masons believed Dr. Nott's behavior showed deliberate disrespect. The three Masonic members of Dr. Nott's congregation sent a letter describing the incident to the *Norwich Packet*, and then, Dr. Nott lamented, "*they withdrew their communion without changing a word with me to reclaim me*!"[69] Dr. Nott immediately wrote to the newspaper to explain that he and his friend had not meant to interrupt the procession: the lay of the land had blocked their view of the whole cortege, and no hostile intent had guided their action. The Masons, apparently, were not convinced, and another appeal to the Reverend Enoch Pond to harmonize the dispute went unanswered. Dr. Nott was left to deal, unassisted, with his own private proof of the disruptive force of Masonry.

Dr. Nott continued to try to both persuade Masons of their errors and to reconcile the Masons who had withdrawn from his church. He maintained a "friendly intercourse with the Brethren as though nothing had happened." After a year,

[68] Ibid., pp. 187, 206. [69] Ibid., p. 189.

time enough so that his action would not seem to be "governed by personal resentment," Dr. Nott assembled the Masons at his house, "realizing that the honour of religion required that some thing should be done." Then he dramatically unveiled a model of the hill, the road, the stone walls that had bordered it, and "two long rows of brass tacks" to represent the Masonic procession. With the model as proof, Dr. Nott demonstrated that he could not have known he was interrupting the funeral procession. The offending Brothers were "mortified," and Dr. Nott was then able to persuade them to return to their "duty." At about the same time Eastern Star Lodge was established in the neighboring town of Lebanon to accommodate the increasing number of Masons in the area.[70]

Dr. Nott's experience with the Masons illustrates the changing role of the clergy in the Standing Order. Accusations of clerical tyranny had made some of them most circumspect about taking stands on matters outside the strict province of their own church. From the beginning, Dr. Nott had emphasized that he was opposed to Masonry because of its influence upon the religious life of its members, and he had tried to keep his disapproval a private affair between himself and Masonic church members. He posed it as a problem in church government and discipline, for saints who "ought to find a 'thus sayeth the Lord' to direct them" in every action.[71] He had appealed to Enoch Pond's prior allegiance to a Christian fraternity, but Pond's silence had been mute testimony of a growing diversity within the clerical establishment itself.

Dr. Nott had not been able to engage his church members in a dialogue. He himself had taken full advantage of the communication network that could put the works of Robison,

[70] Ibid., pp. 216, 222; Storer, *Records*, p. 134.

[71] Congregational House, Hartford, MSS, "Autobiography of the Rev. Samuel Nott, D.D.," p. 185.

Barreul, and Dwight into his hands soon after they were published, and the logic of his theological arguments in letters and sermons was unanswerable. They were also unanswered. Members of Dr. Nott's church had clearly withdrawn large new areas of their lives from pastoral guidance.[72] They had marked out a private sphere of social life that they refused to subordinate to their membership in the church or congregation. Dr. Nott's arguments did not lead his hearers either to change their activities or to explain them. Nor did Dr. Nott, in spite of his well-documented, closely reasoned, theologically consistent arguments, settle the issue by proving to his parishioners that they were wrong about Masonry. He had to prove that they were wrong about his intentions to disrupt their Masonic funeral in a disrespectful fashion. His experience is similar to that of Jedidiah Morse, Jr., whose last battle against Masonry was fought to prove that the real letter he had received discrediting John Robison had not been published. Both of their grand briefs against Masonry had dwindled to petty legalisms.

Experiences such as those of Morse and Nott provided some of the motive power behind the "radical realignment of thinking" of the churches at the end of the century.[73] W. David Lewis has suggested that such confrontations legitimized the complexities of "the long and sometimes pain-

[72] His church represented a small fraction of the population, though presumably the evils of Masonry threatened the whole community. By 1800 the best estimate of church membership in Windham County has put it at 16 percent of the total population, and most of the members were women. Richard Purcell, *Connecticut in Transition, 1775–1818* (Middletown, Conn., 1963), p. 32. The town of Franklin contained 1,210 souls in the year 1800, and about twenty adult male members of the church. "Population of Towns," *State of Connecticut Register and Manual, 1970*, p. 589. His experience and the population facts could have suggested that orthodox theological arguments would have limited appeal even if his goal had been oriented to save the community as well as the church members.

[73] Perry Miller, *Nature's Nation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. 108. See also James M. Banner, Jr., *To the Hartford Convention: The Federalists and*

ful process of adjustment that took place as church and state were separated in a democratic society."[74] That process of adjustment had already begun in Connecticut and the relationship of the clergy to their churches and to their communities changed in various complicated ways. Some of the orthodox clergy modified their ideas about their responsibility to the political state long before the state had disassociated itself from church support. They concentrated their efforts on their own theological subcommunities, and even there they were circumspect.[75] Like Dr. Nott, most of them came to realize that some of the traditional political concerns of Connecticut Congregationalism were anachronistic and potentially alienating.

For most Masons the death of Washington in December of 1799 marked the end of the era of political and religious antimasonry, associating them with the Illuminati and

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the Origins of Party Politics in Massachusetts, 1789–1815 (New York, 1970), pp. 152–167, for a masterful discussion of the changing role of the clergy in Federalist Massachusetts. Banner suggests that some of them became more, rather than less, political in order to overcome their displacement from the centers of power in the state. In Connecticut the clergy was less directly political, working increasingly through lay organizations.

[74] W. David Lewis, "The Reformer as Conservative: Protestant Counter-Subversion in the Early Republic," in *The Development of An American Culture*, ed. Stanley E. Cobden and Lorman Ratner (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1972), p. 68; Sidney E. Mead, "The Rise of the Evangelical Conception of the Ministry in America: 1607–1850," in *The Ministry in Historical Perspective*, eds. H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams (New York, 1956), pp. 217–218.

[75] In 1808 the Reverend Brother Walter King of Somerset Lodge apologized to the fraternity for his interference in lodge ceremony. Dr. King said he was "sensible that it is my duty as a clergyman to cultivate harmony with all men, especially in the parish to which I belong," and he was aware that he had "no right to interfere" in their ceremonies. His attitude did not comport with those of the Puritan shepherd of the gathered churches. Charles William Carter, "Origin and History of Somerset Lodge," *Centennial History of Somerset Lodge No. 34, F. & A.M. of Norwich, Connecticut* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 18–20.

Jacobinism. "Masonry's uncontested claim to the right to be first among those who mourned at his burial" was, it has been said, "a very substantial part of the demurrer which Freemasonry offered at the bar of public judgement."[76] They recalled that Washington himself had appeared publicly in Masonic apron and sash in 1793, and, as Grand Master *pro tem* of a Virginia lodge, had led the solemn and elaborate ceremonials with which the cornerstone of the new capitol building was laid. After he had unintentionally sparked the tinder of antimasonry by his address to Congress in 1795, and Barreul's and Robison's books had added fuel to that fire, Washington had not disavowed Masonry. Thus in Windham County, as elsewhere in Connecticut, the Masons assembled in full regalia and, with a military escort and a band to play the dirges, marched to the meeting house in Canterbury to hear an eulogy spoken by Moses Cleaveland.[77] Masonic claims to a special corporate bereavement solemnly and publicly advertised that the Father of their country had been their Masonic Brother, as they labored to establish their own social respectability through the apotheosis of Washington.

[76] Stauffer, *Illuminati*, p. 344. Washington had not made a public statement about Masonry and Illuminism, but he knew that every statement he made was bound to be publicized. In response to an inquiry, Washington wrote in 1798, "I did not believe that the Lodges of Freemasons in this country, had, as societies, endeavored to propagate the diabolical tenets" of either Illuminism or Jacobinism. Charles H. Callahan, *Washington, the Man and the Mason* (Washington, D.C., 1913), p. 278. The Masons assured his statement, ambiguous as it was, wide circulation.

[77] James R. Case, "Washington's Travels Through Connecticut: Masonic Bodies Taking his Name," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, June 1952, pp. 15, 20. Cleaveland ordered the brethren to wear Masonic badges of mourning for six months. Ibid., p. 20. Lodges across the state were similarly visible in their mourning, ordering the lodge to be draped or their aprons fringed or trimmed in black. *Two Hundredth Anniversary, Union Lodge No. 5, A.F. & A.M.* (n.p., n.d.); Ansel E. Beckwith, *The Temple Souvenir* (Norwich, Conn., 1894); John H. Barlow, *History of King Hiram Lodge No. 12, Free and Accepted Masons, from its Organization, January 3, 1783, to the Close of 1885* (Birmingham, Conn., 1886).

IV

The Structure of Masonic Dissent

Since all aspects of social life in Connecticut around the turn of the nineteenth century were influenced by the established church polity, and since the doctrines, format, and purposes of Freemasonry were parareligious, the increasing popularity of the fraternity around the turn of the nineteenth century was a matter of both religious and political concern. Between 1789 and 1835 fourteen hundred men representing seventy-five lodges attended meetings of the Grand Lodge in Hartford or New Haven.[1] Almost half of them were active in the Grand Lodge, in the sense that they attended several meetings over a period of three or more years. About a hundred members held appointed or elected offices, and many names recur in a long-term elite. When all the members of the Grand Lodge assembled for a meeting, the whole area of the state was represented as it could be in no other organization, with the exceptions of the General Assembly, the General Association of Congregational Churches, or the state militia. By virtue of its large and stable organization, Freemasonry was an establishment, but by virtue of its tenets and style, so opposite to those of the Standing Order, it was a counterestablishment.

[1] Compiled from attendance records of the Grand Lodge. E. G. Storer, *The Records of Freemasonry in the State of Connecticut, with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England, and the Entire Proceedings of the Grand Lodge, from its First Organization, A.L., 5789* (New Haven, 1859), pp. 62–440.

The establishment of the Grand Lodge in 1789 marked the emergence of the Masonic alternative.

If we focus broadly on the relationship of the Grand Lodge to other institutions in the surrounding society, and then more closely at the structure of one lodge in its community, Putnam Lodge in Pomfret, the way Freemasonry functioned as an alternative to, or a variation of, the Connecticut Way becomes clear. Looking at this social institution in context also helps explain why Masonry became more complexly intolerable in some parts of Connecticut society than it had been when it labored under the charges of political heresy in the 1790s.

Masonic Politics and Masonic Religion

Insofar as the activities of the Grand Lodge provide clues to the structure of Masonry, most evidence after 1800 suggests that membership usually signaled a political position on the margins of the Standing Order, rather than completely outside of it. Some of the Masonic leaders had access to, or drove, the usual vehicles of political power, but, even though they ranked themselves in a widespread and hierarchical organization, there is very little evidence that they tried to wield organized political power as Masons.[2] The activities of the Grand Lodge with reference to political and religious issues tell us something about how such a fraternity was used.

After the election of Stephen Titus Hosmer as Grand Master in 1798, the Grand Lodge entered a period of much slower growth, under a leadership less closely identified than previously with the most militant of the Republican political minority in Federalist Connecticut. Hosmer, the son of a Revolutionary patriot, was a popular and prominent lawyer in Middletown, and a Federalist. He held the office of Grand Master for eighteen years, until his election as judge of the

[2] See Appendix II, pp. 342–43.

Superior Court in 1814. Much of that time his Deputy Grand Master was David Daggett of New Haven, who was also a member of the moderate Federalist group in Connecticut. Daggett had started his political career in association with men such as Pierpont Edwards and William Judd, the nucleus of the Jeffersonian party in Connecticut, but by the turn of the century he was firmly allied with the Federalists.[3] Thus the new leadership of the Grand Lodge was not completely outside of the dominant political structure of the state, and their respectable prominence prevented the Standing Order from labeling the fraternity as Jacobin or Jeffersonian. The Grand Lodge cautiously chartered only eleven new lodges between 1798 and 1818, and devoted itself to perfecting its administration of the Masonic network.[4]

In 1818 Oliver Wolcott, Jr., elected governor of Connecticut as a Tolerationist, or the leader of those groups in Connecticut who favored a written constitution abolishing the historic relationship between the church and state, also graciously accepted his election as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons. His leadership, and the outcome of the 1818 election, seemed to put Masonry above political reproach for the time being even while it once again clearly as-

[3] See Appendix II, pp. 342–43. Bonnie B. Collier, "Connecticut's Standing Order and its Political Opposition, 1783–1800" (M.A. thesis, University of Connecticut, 1971), discusses the "stelligeri" of which they were all members. See also, for an interesting confrontation of Masonic brethren, [David Daggett], *Mr. Daggett's Argument before the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, October, 1804, in the Case of certain Justices . . .* (New Haven, 1804), and William Judd, *Address to the People of the State of Connecticut, on the Subject of the Removal of Himself and Four Other Justices from Office, by the General Assembly of Said State, at their late October Session, for Declaring and Publishing Their Opinion that the People of This State are at Present without a Constitution of Civil Government . . .* (New Haven, 1804).

[4] Storer, *Records*, pp. 105–432.

sociated the fraternity with the idea of disestablishment.[5] Lyman Law and Ralph Ingersoll followed Wolcott in the Grand Mastership, alternating that office between two of the "parties" in the state, groups that took various names to identify the shifting coalitions. The Grand Lodge was not thereafter consistently identified with any faction or party. Because of the political diversity of its visible leadership, membership in the fraternity became increasingly attractive and acceptable, even though the distance between the Masonic and the religious establishments remained constant. After Wolcott's election, the number of lodges grew rapidly, from fifty-five in 1818 to seventy-four in 1826. As many new lodges were chartered in the eight years after 1818 as had been chartered in the twenty-five years before.[6]

Between 1800 and 1826 (that is, during the Hosmer period of slow growth and the more rapid expansion that followed Wolcott's accession) the Grand Lodge consolidated its leadership. It devoted time and attention to adjudicating differences between the lodges about jurisdiction, acting as a court of appeals on disputes within a lodge, maintaining correspondence with the fraternity in other sections of the country, and dispensing charity upon appeals from either lodges or individual Masons.[7] In 1821 the Grand Lodge secured a char-

[5] Ellsworth S. Grant, "From Governor to Governor in Three Generations," *Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin*, 39, no. 3 (July 1974), 65–77.

[6] Storer, *Records*, pp. 297, 409.

[7] Since the ordinances that had been adopted in 1789 provided that the member lodges contribute three dollars from the fees received for each person initiated into the fraternity, and fees and penalties provided other income, the funds of the Grand Lodge had grown apace with the great increase in membership. In addition to cash amounts, surplus funds had been invested in the Hartford Bank. The shares of the bank stock, however, had to be held by individuals. To receive and dispense these funds in a regular way required a more businesslike operation. Ibid., pp. 63, 315.

ter of incorporation from the General Assembly so that it was "capable in law of suing and being sued, pleading and being impleaded, defending and being defended." It could also "hold, use, manage and convey property" as long as its annual income did not exceed three thousand dollars. In 1823 a new constitution and bylaws incorporated all the changes in practice and administration that had grown up over the years. The fees for not attending or complying with Grand Lodge regulations increased, but the fees for admitting new members decreased.[8] By 1826 the Grand Lodge of Connecticut was a well-organized, stable form of business association, a seemingly unassailable neighbor of the establishment.

However, many people in Connecticut were heirs of New England ideals concerning the organic unity of church and state. If they thought institutionalized religion was fundamental to civil society and the only reliable source of social morality, the growth of Masonry seemed to threaten the foundations of the social order. For according to Masonic authority, the principles of Freemasonry were universal, uniting in "one indissolvable bond of affection, men of the most opposite tenets, of the most distant countries, and the most contradictory opinion."[9] Validated by timelessness and universality, Masonry claimed to provide its members with useful instruction for their performance of "the duties of society."[10] Like churches composed of regenerate individuals, lodges composed of instructed members offered equally good building blocks for a harmonious society. Yet in affirming the feasibility of secular, or "natural," or suprareligious sources for social morality, Masonry was viewed with a deep and abiding suspicion by some members of orthodox communities.

The role of Freemasonry in Connecticut communities was

[8] Ibid., pp. 322, 340–343.

[9] James Milner, "Masonic Grand Visitation Address, 5809," *Freemasons Magazine and General Miscellany* (April 1811), p. 7.

[10] "Eulogium of Masonry," Ibid., p. 5.

influenced more by religious changes in the surrounding society than by political changes. In Connecticut, as in other sections of the country, the tenor of religious life was changing and sometimes intensifying. Denominations multiplied and the tendency of some of them was toward more experiential religion and closer religious communities. In the early nineteenth century, during the so-called Second Great Awakening, variously altered kinds of religious thought, loosely associated with New Light and then with New Divinity theology, came to predominate in the churches of Congregational Connecticut.[11] These religious currents contributed to a new "prevailing" spirit in American religious culture: "Theologically it was reformed in its foundations, Puritan in its outlook, fervently experimental in its faith, and tending, despite strong countervailing pressures, toward Americanism, perfectionism, and activism. Equally basic, almost equally religious, was its belief in the millennial potential of the United States as the bearer, and protector, of these values."[12] The Calvinist churches, the Congregationalists and Presbyterians who set the religious tone of life in Connecticut's communities, were among the primary custodians of that spirit.

Even in Connecticut many churches were not evangelical, Puritanical, or millennial, but were "countervailing" religions that did not share the prevailing beliefs in some, or in many, respects. Among the countervailing denominations were the Episcopal Church, the Society of Friends, Unitar-

[11] John Bodo, *The Protestant Clergy and Public Issues 1812–1848* (Princeton, 1954), pp. 3, 12 et passim; Wilson C. McWilliams, *The Idea of Fraternity in America* (Berkeley, 1973), pp. 130, 169; Elwyn Smith, *Religious Liberty in the United States: The Development of Church-State Thought Since the Revolutionary Era* (Philadelphia, 1972), p. 71; Charles Roy Keller, *The Second Great Awakening in Connecticut* (New Haven, 1942), pp. 28–35. See also George Nye Boardman, *A History of New England Theology* (New York, 1899).

[12] Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven and London, 1972), p. 471.

ians, Universalists, some Methodists, and non-Protestant or non-Christian groups. Some of those churches were influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment and were more concerned to show the consonance of religion and reason. Like secular Enlightenment philosophies, "reasonable" Christianity, inside and outside of church organizations, provided the religious foundation for beliefs about the educability of man, and his ability to construct, improve, and abide by orderly social and political systems without the aid of organized and established religion.[13]

Members of the prevailing and countervailing denominations differed in their attitude about the relationship of the church and the state, but men of every shade of opinion about religion and democratic government were united in the conviction that the stability of America's great experiment depended upon the moral education of its people. Many who shared in the prevailing spirit of the times thought that morality and church membership or association were almost synonymous, in the absence of an established church. Some among them would have taken their line of reasoning one step further, and declared that Reformed Christianity was indispensable as a basis for trust and restraint in the operation of government, and especially representative government. Others thought that since each religious denomination was organized around a particular theology relating to individual salvation, in multidenominational communities social morality was the sum of these individual commitments and beliefs.[14] Thus when a social reformer such as Lewis Tappan

[13] Ibid., pp. 515–632.

[14] Keller, *Second Great Awakening*, p. 36; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, "Prelude to Abolitionism: Sabbatarian Politics and the Rise of the Second Party System," *Journal of American History*, LVIII (September 1971), 316–341; David Brion Davis, ed., *The Fear of Conspiracy* (Ithaca and London, 1971), p. xx; Barbara Akin, "The Standing Order" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1970), p. 164 et passim.

said that "infidelity sets loose all the base patterns of our nature," the other side of his coin was that "Christianity is the conservator of all that is dear in civil liberty and human happiness."[15] For men such as Tappan only the fact that many of the denominations were somehow part of a Reformed Christian consensus made the sum of individual religious beliefs produce a consistent morality.

In contrast the Masons claimed that they instructed their membership in a universal morality that neither comprised the denominations nor competed with them, but existed apart from particular religions. At every meeting of the lodges the charges of their *constitutions* were read as part of the ceremony. The first charge was "Concerning God and Religions":

> A Mason is oblig'd by his Tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understand the Art, he will never be a stupid *Atheist*, nor an irreligious *Libertine*.But though in ancient Times Masons were charg'd in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be *good Men and true*, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish'd; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance.[16]

Preston, and all other Masonic writers after him, enlarged upon this charge by pointing out that since all religions taught

[15] David H. Fischer, *The Revolution of American Conservatism* (New York, 1965), p. 49, quoting Tappan Papers, Library of Congress, letter from Lewis Tappan to Benjamin Tappan, December 12, 1829.

[16] [James Anderson], *The Constitutions of the Free Masons, Containing the History, Charges, Regulations, &c. of that Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity* (London, 1723), p. 50.

morality, and since instruction in morality was the "grand object" of the fraternity, Masons could unite on universal principles whatever their "private speculative opinion."[17] In theory their universalism was not limited by Christianity, let alone by particular Connecticut denominations. Their ideas implied that covenanted churches were local idiosyncrasies, while Masonic morality was an attribute of humanity, superior to particular revelation.

Of course, Masons did share in the consensus about the need for morality for any stable government. According to Walter Colton, a teacher of moral philosophy in Middletown who addressed a new lodge in 1826, "Morality—a deep sense of moral accountability, is indispensable to every social or civil compact." Yet Masons did not then go on to associate morality with religion. Masonry itself was a source of moral instruction. Colton clarified the distinction: "Piety is not indispensable to the Masonic character; but unexceptionable morality is absolutely indispensable."[18] Freemasonry, in short, claimed to fulfill, without reference to church membership, an important function traditionally associated with religious beliefs. Members could use Masonry itself as their reference for social morality.

Masonry also was used as a surrogate religion. As Ralph Ross has pointed out, although in Western civilization sacred ideas have tended to be secularized, sometimes, when some find they cannot accept the beliefs of the available churches, "they make something secular into a religion."[19] This transformation was easy in the case of Masonry because the structure of the fraternity was similar to that of a religion. Like a

[17] William Preston, *Illustrations of Masonry* (London, 1796), pp. 9, 6.

[18] Walter Colton, *Masonic Obligations* (Middletown, Conn., 1826), pp. 8, 10–11.

[19] Ralph Ross, *Symbols and Civilization: Science, Morals, Religion, Art* (New York, 1962), p. 197; William Anthony Clebsch, *From Sacred to Profane: The Role of Religion in American History* (New York, 1968).

religion, Masonry transmitted esoteric knowledge through rituals, myths, and symbolism. Sociological literature describes the use of ritual as one of the oldest social forms, and one that is a powerful method of eliciting psychic responses in groups.[20] The Masons in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, like the twentieth-century social psychologists, often pointed to the similarity between baptism in a church and initiation in a lodge.[21] The office of baptism, one said, was to acknowledge that "all men are conceived and born in sin," so none may "enter into the kingdom of God except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost." The process of initiation was similar because, "like a man born in sin," the initiate was brought "out of darkness into light" by the ceremony.[22] The use of symbolism has also been described as the universal means of overcoming barriers in the communication of abstract ideas, such as religious ideas, while providing a focus and unifying agent for sharing experience.[23] Freemasonry used symbols in initiating its members and communicating its content and in the dramatic reenactment of myths about journeys, ordeals, death and resurrec-

[20] Noel P. Gist, "Secret Societies: A Cultural Study of Fraternalism in the United States," *The University of Missouri Series*, XV (October 1940), 70, 81. See also George C. Homans, "Anxiety and Ritual: The Theories of Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown," *American Anthropologist*, XLIII (April–May, 1941), 164–172.

[21] George H. Richards, *An Oration Delivered before Union Lodge No. 31, December, 1817* (New York, 1819), p. 13.

[22] Daniel Burhans, *The Masonic and Spiritual Temple, Illustrated in a Discourse in Litchfield, December 27, 1815, at the Installation of Darius Chapter* (New Haven, 1816), p. 13; Ross, *Symbols and Civilization*, pp. 182–186. See also Bruno Bettelheim, *Symbolic Wounds: Puberty Rites and the Envious Male* (Glencoe, Ill. 1954).

[23] Gist, "Secret Societies," p. 12. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane; the Nature of Religion: The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism, and Ritual Within Life and Culture* (New York, 1961), is an interesting treatment of the general subject of the nature of religious experience.

tion, very like those of religions. The experience of Masonry was clearly the functional equivalent of church membership in its fellowship of symbols and rituals, for as Jerome Bruner has pointed out, "it is in ritual—especially in ritual as symbolic—that much of the social function of religion can be found."[24]

The language of Masonry conformed in some respects to the language of two currents within the mainstream of religious thought in old and New England: typology and deism. By the end of the eighteenth century typology, the allegorical interpretation of Scripture, had found its way into the language of all of those churches that had not been based upon ideas about the literal interpretation of the Bible.[25] It had been imported from England during the first generation of settlement. Its most famous and familiar expositor on both sides of the Atlantic was John Bunyan. In one of his popular books, *Solomon's Temple*, Bunyan showed that the temple was a "type," that is, an allegory for the house of God, and that "all of its utensils were types." Solomon was a "type of Christ as Builder of God's Church" and his workmen were "types of our Gospel-ministers." Every aspect of the structure of the temple was an allegory for eternal truth.[26] The organization of the myths and rituals of Masonry around the story of the building

[24] Jerome S. Bruner, "Myth and Identity," *Myth and Mythmaking*, ed. Henry A. Murray (New York, 1960), p. 279. The ritual of Hiram's death, a rite of the third degree, was designed to teach Masons that "all death is figurative." Arthur Robert Waite, *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry . . . and of Cognate Instituted Mysteries*, 2 vols., rev. ed. (New York, 1970), I, 74–75.

[25] Mason Ira Lowance, Jr., "Images and Shadows of Divine Things: Puritan Typology in New England from 1660 to 1750" (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 1967); Richard Reinitz, "Symbolism and Freedom: The Use of Biblical Typology as an Argument for Religious Toleration in Seventeenth Century England and America" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rochester, 1967).

[26] John Bunyan, *Solomon's Temple Spiritualized: or, Gospel-Light Fetched out of the Temple at Jerusalem, to Let Us Move Easily into the Glory of New-Testament Truths*, 11th ed. (London, n.d.), pp. iv, iv–viii, 14–16.

of Solomon's Temple, and the use of architectural features and builders' tools in the symbolic language of the fraternity, presented the Masonic initiates with recognizable, even familiar, ideas.

Typology had spread in the New World along with a persistent antitheocratic emphasis that had coexisted from the beginning with Calvinist literal, theocratic ideas. According to what they believed to be a literal interpretation of the Bible, the covenanted churches of New England were the heirs of ancient Israel, governed by the same sacred law, pursuing the same sacred mission. In the typological tradition Roger Williams, for one, had preached that the events of the Old Testament were allegories or types of the New Testament. The Old Testament portrayed only a spiritual land and a spiritual people, and so it followed that the church could only be a spiritual experience, not a specific physical place.[27] Since the church did not exist in a specific place, it was universal. When Masonic writers explained that Freemasonry traced its origins to the groups of workmen who had built Solomon's Temple, that its rituals contained important symbolic truths, and that their work as Masons was an allegory for their real mission—the achievement of the "celestial lodge"—the structure and style of the fraternity would have been instantly recognizable to those whose religious ideas had been formed in the tradition of men such as Bunyan and Williams. The implications of a typical, rather than a literal, interpretation of the Bible would have been readily understood, and the experience of Masonic membership intrinsically related to religious experience.

A second philosophical current, loosely described as the "attitude" of deism, was fundamental to Masonry, as well as important in American religious tradition.[28] The similarity

[27] Perry Miller, *Roger Williams: His Contribution to the American Tradition* (New York, 1962), pp. 33–38.

[28] Frederick L. Nussbaum, *The Triumph of Science and Reason, 1660–1685*, The Rise of Modern Europe (New York, 1965), p. 186.

between deism and Freemasonry is so pervasive that it is difficult to distinguish them. Deism had grown out of the assumption that, in the language of the accommodation to science that eventually found its way into so many religions, God was "a first cause, a great mathematician architect who created the world and had given it its basic constitution."[29] An apprehension of the nature of God was universally available to reason through the study of His world. If the world was rationally constructed, it followed that the behavior of men should also be capable of rational organization. Deists believed that since rationality was a universal attribute, the perception of monotheism must have once been the essence of all religion. The growth of particular theologies had corrupted universal religion, but the knowledge of its existence may have been preserved by secret religious elites and might be restored. The myths of origin, the organization, and the tenets of Masonry fit neatly into the deistic pattern of belief.

The fact that some Masons could and did use Masonry as a religious surrogate did not preclude other Masons from Christian denominational membership. They claimed Masonry need not be incompatible with religion. On the contrary, the Bible was a conspicuous part of the equipment of a lodge and was used in all the rituals. The Bible provided the basis for the central myth of the ritual. Although Preston carefully noted that it was proper to use in lodge ceremonials any sacred writing "understood to contain the word of God," he also said that when an initiate was urged to study "the moral law as contained in the sacred code" it was the Bible that was referred to in Christian countries. The Bible was "the Great Light" of Masonry.[30] Then too, lodge orators, and later clergymen, worked out a variety of explanations of the relation-

[29] Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, pp. 366-368; Daniel Boorstin, *The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson* (Boston, 1948).

[30] Preston, *Illustrations*, pp. 110, 46.

ship between religious and Masonic morality that would positively associate Masonry with Christianity.

Some orators tried to show Masonry as an agency for morality that depended on Christianity and assisted it. Masonry, as a "handmaiden" of religion, was guided by Christianity for its own proper operation. The Connecticut clergy who associated themselves with Masonry always made this point. For example, in 1812 Dr. John Kewley, the rector of Christ's Church in Middletown, warned the Masons who had assembled to institute a new lodge that "true Christians will not refuse his esteem" to an organization devoted to inculcating moral standards if that organization did not claim that "its own native energies are sufficient to enable them to carry these principles into action." Morality, he reminded them, could only be found in the divine inspiration of Christianity; and then Masonry might "prove a useful auxiliary in promoting the interests of true religion." However, church members must eschew the organization if it attempted to "obscure, eclipse, or usurp the place of that divine institution." Christian Masons must always remember that the fraternity was a "human institution," and therefore of a "secondary nature."[31] Kewley's analysis of the relationship between Masonry and religion was probably the most common one for the clergy of the countervailing denominations. It permitted church members to join Masonic lodges with good conscience, while attaching the tether of a superior religious commitment to those who found their way into the lodges.

In contrast to most clergy, other Masonic spokesmen might relate the church to the lodge by subsuming religion under the universals of Masonry. For example, Simon Davis, Jr., a popular Saint John's Day orator in Putnam Lodge, pointed out that Masons were forbidden "to adopt any particular theologi-

[31] John Kewley, *Masonry on Christian Principles* (Hartford, 1812), pp. 3, 13, 8.

cal breed" in their activities. They relied on "the immutable foundations of natural religion, charity, and universal benevolence." Indeed, the universality of Masonry included Christianity: "Masons have been among the first to acknowledge the superior lights of Divine Revelation, above the light of nature, and the Holy Bible is the first Great Light forever on our alters. Yet the universality of our order, forbids us to exclude those who acknowledge the fainter light of nature. It would be in direct contravention of the fundamental Doctrines of this institution."[32]

Thus the purpose of Davis's fine distinctions was to welcome church members to Freemasonry on the ground that there was no incompatibility between Christianity and Masonry and, having done so, to invite the unchurched on the ground that there was no incompatibility between Masonry and deism.

In spite of its pseudoreligious structure and its parareligious uses, the churches and the clergy hesitated to challenge Masonry during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Churches were organized around particular theologies, and Masonry always proclaimed itself to be unconcerned with particular religious ideas. Then, too, each church contained a congregation or society that coexisted with the members, and the delicacy of their relationship made churches reluctant to engage in controversies. The churches of Connecticut were just beginning to appreciate the power of unified, interdenominational social efforts. To the extent that nontheological social and moral issues could be considered as religious issues, these matters fell into the domain of Christianity in general, related to the growth of a "civil religion," and representing the minimum accommodation of the churches to the

[32] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "An Oration delivered at Woodstock before Moriah and Putnam Lodges at the Celebration of St. John the Baptist Day, June 24, 1810, by Samuel Davis, Jr."

religious diversity in the surrounding society.[33] In the early years of the century the churches of Connecticut did not openly challenge Masonry as another denomination, but toleration of Masonic religion awaited a future period of much greater institutional catholicity, and a more stable multidenominational balance.

The Grand Lodge and the Connecticut Clergy

The relationship between the Grand Lodge, the standard-setting agency of Masonry, and the Connecticut clergy changed in the course of the early nineteenth century. Theoretically transformed by the constitution of 1818, the clergy had actually accepted a contractual relationship with their churches, including personal, financial, and theological articles, long before disestablishment.[34] Nevertheless, after disestablishment, the clergy tended to reflect more directly than before the religious ideas of the communities they served because of their financial dependence and institutional competition. Since Masonic membership might be considered an endorsement of the principles of the fraternity, it is significant that few Congregational clergymen joined the lodges in the early Grand Lodge era.

During the post-Revolutionary period the orthodox clergy of Connecticut had not joined the fraternity because they

[33] Wyatt-Brown, "Prelude to Abolitionism," p. 318. See also Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," *Daedalus* (Winter 1967), p. 12. John A. Wilson, "Historical Study of Marginal Religious Movements," in *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*, ed. Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone (Princeton, 1974), pp. 609–611.

[34] Akin, "The Standing Order," pp. 19–20; David D. Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1972), says that contracts were "commonplace in the last half of the seventeenth century as a mobile, job-oriented group of ministers replaced the stable, congregation-oriented ministry of the first generation," p. 190.

could not concur in the principles or practices of Masonic supradenominationalism. By Masonic tradition applicants were not recruited, but clergymen were sought in some parts of Connecticut or by some members of the lodges, in the same way that noble sponsorship had been sought in England. Since membership in Masonry was expensive, the fees for the clergy were usually waived. For example, in a resolution that masterfully combined generosity and fastidiousness, the lodge at Granby voted in 1820 "to receive all Clergymen to this Lodge, *if found worthy*, free of expense."[35] St. John's Lodge of Hartford noted at the end of one list of initiates: "One of these a clergyman, and one a missionary—fees remitted." Apparently, remission of fees was customary, and, in the new constitution of the Grand Lodge in 1835, the waiver was written into the bylaws.[36] If clergymen did not join the lodges, it was because they did not wish to do so, rather than because they could not afford to, or were discouraged by exclusionary practices.

Although every public ceremony in Connecticut was traditionally sanctioned by the presence of clergy, from a session of the General Assembly to a meeting of the militia, the constitution of the Grand Lodge had not initially made any provisions for any official role for the clergy, even "if found worthy." As we saw in Chapter III, the Grand Lodge, in planning its first public ceremonial, had appointed the Reverend Ashbel Baldwin as chaplain.[37] The following year, with no other precedent that Baldwin's *ad hoc* appointment, Stephen Titus Hosmer, as the new Grand Master, appointed "the

[35] James Case has estimated that 138 clergymen joined lodges before 1830, and about a third of these were Episcopalian. James R. Case, "Episcopal Clergy in Early Connecticut Masonry," reprint from Grand Lodge of Connecticut, *Proceedings of 1962*, p. 12.

[36] Simsbury [Granby], St. Mark's Lodge No. 36, MSS, *Minutes*, II, July 26, 1820.

[37] Storer, *Records*, pp. 329, 391.

Right Rev. and W. Bishop Jarvis" of the Episcopal Church as Grand Chaplain.[38] There is no record that Jarvis attended any meetings of the Grand Lodge, and the new office lapsed, the brethren content for the time being to dispense with the religious approval of an officiating clergyman.

At the local lodge level if a clergyman did attend the lodge he was likely to be associated then, or later, with one of the countervailing denominations.[39] For example, the arch-enemies of Calvinism, the Universalists, found their way to Masonry early in the Grand Lodge era. Although the Universalist Church was not formally organized until 1821, those who were anti-Calvinist in their theology, believed in the universal benevolence of God and universal salvation, and opposed the "Priest-craft" of the Calvinist churches, began to congregate in a subcommunity in the late eighteenth century, whether or not they yet identified themselves as Universalists. United in their "aversion to written, fixed creeds and opposition to emotional, revivalistic religion," they professed an enlightened Christianity, "undertaking to reconcile Scripture with reason and observation."[40] Apparently finding in the fraternity an experience reasonably like the church or reassuringly different from it, Hosea Ballou and Elnathan Winchester, two of the founders of Universalism in America, are among the first clergymen associated with Connecticut Masonry.

On one occasion in 1795, at the celebration of the Festival of Saint John the Baptist in Norwich, with Grand Master Eliphalet Bulkley in attendance, the lodge invited Elnathan Winchester to share the platform with Connecticut's first Episcopal bishop, Samuel Seabury. At that time Winchester was a well-known writer and itinerant preacher whose book,

[38] See above, pp. 92–93.

[39] Storer, *Records*, p. 107.

[40] Donald Watt, *From Heresy Toward Truth: The Story of Universalism in Greater Hartford and Connecticut, 1821–1971* (Hartford, 1971), p. 5.

The Universal Restoration, had been published in Litchfield the previous year. In his discourse Winchester said, "Unity amongst brethren, by the excellent example thereby given to society, is productive of amazing advantages to the community in general." Any method of promoting fraternity was "of use to the public welfare."[41] His sermon was a summary of the attitude of those clergy who found a civic and social merit in Masonry.

In the Grand Lodge no mention is made of religious services at their meetings or of the appointment of a Grand Chaplain between 1798 and 1815, the first and last meetings at which Stephen Titus Hosmer was elected as Grand Master. However, in May of 1815 Hosmer appointed the Reverend Roger Searle of the Episcopal Church as Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge, and Searle opened and closed the session with "very solemn and impressive prayer," thus instituting a new form of Grand Lodge ceremonial.[42] Solomon Cowles, Hosmer's successor, turned the innovation into a precedent by reappointing Searle. Then, in 1817, when Searle left for Ohio, Cowles appointed an Episcopal colleague, the Reverend Menzies Raynor. When Oliver Wolcott, Jr., became Grand Master in May of 1818, he reappointed Raynor, and Raynor continued in office until 1825.[43] This series of ap-

[41] Elhanan Winchester, *A Discourse Delivered before the Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, Convened at Norwich for the Celebration of the Festival of S. John the Baptist* . . . (Norwich, Conn., 1795), p. 10; Hosea Ballou, "On Brotherly Love," in *Five Sermons by Rev. Walter Ferris, to which is Subjoined a Festival Sermon by Brother Hosea Ballou* (Randolph, Ver., 1807).

[42] Storer, *Records*, pp. 265, 278.

[43] Ibid., pp. 283, 370. Menzies Raynor had been ordained as a Methodist minister, then as a minister in the Episcopal Church, and finally had been converted to Universalism. During his tenure as Grand Chaplain, he was minister of Christ Church (Episcopal) in Huntington. His religious odyssey had moved him further away from the prevailing religious orthodoxy in Connecticut—and Masonry seems to have been a one-way street. Watt, *From Heresy Toward Truth*, p. 46.

pointments suggests that the Masons wanted to demonstrate that the fraternity commanded religious support but that the only available sponsorship, or their preferred sponsorship, came from countervailing denominations.

By 1825, when the new constitution and bylaws of the Grand Lodge formally provided for an office of Grand Chaplain, theological shifts in Connecticut orthodoxy allowed them to appoint the Reverend Charles A. Boardman of New Preston. Thus, seven years after disestablishment, the first Congregational minister became a Grand Chaplain.[44] Soon after his appointment Boardman preached a sermon to the lodge in Washington from Galatians 6:10: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men." Boardman told the brethren that, as Freemasons, they belonged to an institution that had a special responsibility for "doing good," even though "all men are bound to do good as they have opportunity." The "principles and privileges" of Masonry provided moral and not religious imperatives: "An individual may believe and embrace all its principles, and enjoy all its privileges, and yet possess none of the gospel. And the truth is, Masonry was never designed to be (in the evangelical sense of the terms) a religious institution. Its design was, not to provide a cure for the depravity of man—that is God's work; but to restrain and control it by the principles of sound morality, carried into operation by the influence of new and peculiar obligations, in a system of practical, experimental instruction." If properly practiced, Masonry might produce good effects, even on such "members as do not feel the sanctifying power of the gospel." It could produce socially useful effects, like benevolence, compassion, and the "restraint of evil propensities."[45] Thus Boardman represented the new activists among the Congregational clergy. At one

[44] Storer, *Records*, p. 372.

[45] Charles A. Boardman, *The Opportunities and Obligations of Masons to Do Good* (New Haven, 1824), pp. 5, 19, 23.

with their colleagues on the essential sinfulness of man, they took on the burden of supporting and leading secular or interdenominational voluntary associations as agencies of social control.

During most of the first quarter of the nineteenth century the orthodox Congregational clergy treated Masonry with the same distancing that they generally accorded to countervailing religions. By the end of the period some Congregational clergymen came to view Masonry as another voluntary association with a limited but legitimate purpose. Although the trend toward increasing accommodation of Masonry by the religious orthodox soon intersected the rise of a new, popular, evangelical Antimasonic movement in 1826, composed in large part of those who had remained most faithful to an older, more theocratic orthodoxy, the history of Masonry in Connecticut describes the growth of a counterestablishment and the development of a latitudinarian alternative to the orthodox communitarianism of the Connecticut towns. The nature of the Masonic alternative can further be defined by looking at those who formed or participated in it. The history of Putnam Lodge No. 46 in Windham County, for example, provides us with specific details about the structure of the Masonic dissent from its surrounding culture.

The Organization and Membership of Putnam Lodge

Putnam Lodge in Pomfret, like all other Masonic lodges since Wooster brought the first charter of Masonry to Connecticut, encompassed a specific geographic area. The formation of the lodge was part of the process of geographic subdivision that produced seventy-five lodge areas in the state by 1828. Moriah Lodge in Canterbury had been the first lodge in Windham County, initially including the entire county. Eastern Star Lodge of Lebanon was formed in 1798, because the in-

creased number of Masons in the area warranted another lodge, however plagued Dr. Nott had been by the fraternity. Putnam Lodge was the third division of the county, organized to house the Masons in six towns of the northeastern section.

The organizational history of Putnam Lodge began on March 28, 1801, in response to a petition from Moriah Lodge. Moriah Lodge complained to the Grand Lodge that its territory was "so extensive as to render it highly inconvenient for the individuals, as well as injurious to the general interests of Masonry." A charter was issued for a new lodge, "to be known and designated by the name of 'Putnam Lodge,' No. 46," located in Pomfret. Lemuel Grosvenor became its first Master, Evan Malbone the first Senior Warden, and Thomas Hubbard the Junior Warden. By the next meeting of the Grand Lodge, Putnam Lodge had been instituted and John McClellan, Woodstock's representative to the General Assembly, was in attendance as a proxy Master to represent it.[46] A brief selective review of the history of northeastern Windham County, and some details about the men who joined the lodge, help explain why such communities nurtured the Masonic dissent.

The dense woods in some parts of northeastern Connecticut, the rocky soil in others, and the rapid winding streams throughout had acted as barriers to the first generations of settlers. Much of its history revolved around the one central problem of land ownership. Controversies about land predated the settlement of the towns and continued as a constant source of anxiety and a potentially radicalizing suspicion of distant political power. The first large parcel of land in Windham was put on the market in 1689 through James Fitch, the treasurer of New London County, acting as the legal guardian of the Indian owner-claimants. He found buyers in Roxbury, Massachusetts, where, as the townspeople pointed out, it had

[46] Storer, *Records*, pp. 125, 134.

"pleased God to increase the inhabitants thereof in their posterity" so that the local lands were no longer sufficient for their needs. The whole town of Roxbury concerned itself with the colonial enterprise of settling New Roxbury, as Woodstock was first called. The "goers" and "planters" were given financial aid, tax exemptions, and material and moral encouragement. Thirty families, including forty adult men, set up a rudimentary form of government even before they left for the new area in 1686. By 1690 the settlers had established a church, hired a minister, and organized as an independent township under Massachusetts law.[47] No other township in Windham was so carefully and completely "planted."[48] In other places the settlers came in small groups or as individuals. In time, a leapfrog pattern of purchase and settlement took the sons of newly settled areas into the surrounding land. Family names were scattered in a regional kinship network, which later contributed to the pattern of kinship ties in lodge membership.

Because of title problems during the settlement, an aura of uncertainty hung over many land transactions. Jurisdiction over some of the territory was contested by Massachusetts,

[47] The historical summary in this section is based largely on Ellen D. Larned, *History of Windham County*, 2 vols. (Worcester, 1874, 1880), an exhaustive study from which all later histories of that area are derived. I, 18, 30; II, 220–221. See also Allen B. Lincoln, ed., *A Modern History of Windham, Connecticut: A Windham County Treasure Book*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1920), p. 58.

[48] Woodstock provided the base and manpower for the explorations and settlement of much of the northern part of Windham County. As settlers there bought land from whoever claimed authority to sell it, some land was sold in large blocks. John Blackwell of England bought the equivalent of a whole township, but his plans for colonizing it as an independent unit never quite worked. Solomon Stoddard was awarded a two-mile square of land in execution of a judgment on a debt, but he had no thought to settle on it himself. Some sections, such as Killingly, were "good enough to give away, or pay to creditors," and other sections were often awarded for civil or military service to the state. Larned, *Windham County*, I, 184, 154, 160.

Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Generations of settlers grew up on land where authorities as distant as London, or as near as Boston, Providence, or Hartford, could have undone the years and labors of settlement. Some titles were not settled until well into the eighteenth century, and legal controversies translated into the lives of the settlers contributed to long-term animosities and personal mistrust.[49] For historic reasons the inhabitants of this area were both respectful and suspicious of distant power. In such an area the Masonic promise of a wide and powerful network of fraternal confidence would have been especially attractive.

The social limitations of these townships also contributed to the appeal of Masonry. In areas where settlement had been sporadic, many forms of social organization were deferred until a large enough population gathered and the problem of basic subsistence was solved. That a community be sufficiently organized to form a church and hire, or "settle," a minister was the prerequisite for township status. The community had to commit itself to supporting one of their number in a life style entirely different from anyone else's.[50] It sometimes took the inhabitants of an area a full generation to organize themselves. Thus, once the minister was settled, the townspeople took both a respectful and a proprietary attitude

[49] Michael Kammen, *People of Paradox: An Inquiry Concerning the Origins of American Civilization* (New York, 1973), pp. 42–44. For example, Samuel Adams, an early settler in Canterbury, complained to the general court of Connecticut that he had "bought first of Major Fitch; then of Captain Mason and Owaneco; third of Captain John Mason, so as to avoid all trouble, and lastly of Captain Bushnell; and in addition to this, was harassed by suits with the Tracey's." Larned, *Windham County*, I, 144; See also Clarence Winthrop Bowen, *The Boundary Disputes of Connecticut* (Boston, 1882); Roland Mather Hooker, *Boundaries of Connecticut*, Tercentenary Commission (New Haven, 1933).

[50] Ola Winslow, *Meeting House Hill, 1630–1783* (New York, 1952), pp. 209–227. See also Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd*, for the changing role of the ministry in the seventeenth century.

toward him. Consciousness of the instrumental value of religious institutions lingered. Problems such as the location of the church, the size of it, and the amount of the minister's salary were sometimes as important as theological questions. Yet the temporary achievement of sufficient religious harmony to gather a church did not hinder the growth of a variety of religious beliefs. These covenanted communities often split as soon as there was a population base large enough to accommodate more than one church, and sometimes even before. The fact of church establishment did not in practice much hinder the religious individualism later expressed in anticlericalism—or Masonry.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, new definitions of religious community tended to divide the churches further. The new ideas, loosely attached to a resurgence in religious fervor called the Great Awakening, split many church congregations between those who favored a birthright membership and those who denied the validity of an established church and wished for purer, *gathered* churches that could more closely supervise a covenanted membership of saints.[51] The unique economic and educational position of the traditional clergy in these communities probably contributed to a "populist" spirit in the movement. In some places anticlerical emotions ran high. The theological consensus achieved by isolated families when they came together to organize into townships was not necessarily permanent, and the new evangelical Calvinism flourished in Windham County. When Putnam Lodge was founded in 1801, the idea of an organization able to encompass a range of religious beliefs had its own appeal in communities where specific Calvinist convictions were restricting church membership to like-minded subcommunities.

[51] Larned, *Windham County*, I, 151, 113, 43, 145. During the Great Awakening, Larned says, "Parties were formed in every community, waging deadly war against each other." Ibid., I, p. 395.

By 1800 the physical growth of the towns in northeastern Windham County permitted greater social complexity than had been possible in the century of settlement. They ranged in size from about twelve hundred to twenty-five hundred people (Table 1, Appendix IV). Roads, though they were little better than lanes, connected the towns with one another and with the more distant centers of business and government. The land had passed through several generations, from those who had first "spyed it out" to those who had subdivided it into small farms. A small fraction of the population, especially in areas in and around Pomfret, had accumulated enough capital to make their dairying into a commercial enterprise, and a few in each town had amassed considerably more wealth in land than their neighbors. Some occupational specialization was possible even in these relatively homogeneous farming communities. Then, after the turn of the century, a new kind of enterprise, manufacturing, began to produce various and continuous social and economic changes within the area.[52] These increasingly stratified communities could now accommodate more social institutions to house the indigenous variety of interests and ideas. Masonry was one such institution.

Between 1801 and 1835, 304 men from the town just south

[52] Two-thirds of Connecticut's population lived in towns of similar size at that time. Such communities were typically about forty miles square, much of the population living in village clusters of a dozen to a hundred houses. Percy Wells Bidwell, "Rural Economy in New England at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century," *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, XX (April 1916), 251. Gaspare Saladino's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, "The Economic Revolution in Late Eighteenth Century Connecticut" (Wisconsin, 1964), contains a thorough account of economic changes in this period. Aaron Putnam, *Pomfret in 1800* (Hartford, 1961), provides a contemporary description of one of the communities. See Richard D. Brown, "The Emergence of Urban Society in Rural Massachusetts, 1760–1820," *Journal of American History*, 61 (June 1974), 29–51, for a paradigm of preindustrial urbanization.

of the Massachusetts border and west of Rhode Island traveled those country roads to join and attend Putnam Lodge. They came from the towns of Pomfret, Woodstock, Killingly, Ashford, Thompson, and Brooklyn, with a few from the border farms on the Ashford Union Line. Membership was unevenly distributed among the towns. Woodstock, with 102 members, and Pomfret, with 59, contributed the largest numbers both absolutely and in proportion to their population. Ashford, Killingly, and Thompson contributed between 37 and 44 members each, while only 12 came from Brooklyn.[53] Demographic changes in the area during the period under consideration may have contributed to the appeal of Masonry. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century Connecticut was one of the states exhibiting the lowest rate of growth in the United States. Its relative rank among the states, by population, plummeted from the eighth place in 1790, with 1.06 percent of the country's population, to the twentieth place in 1840, with 1.82 percent of the total. While the population of the country increased by 334 percent, Connecticut increased by 30 percent and Windham County decreased by 4 percent (Table 2, Appendix IV). Under a federal Constitution whose legislative representation was based on numbers, and within a new national economy where the distant powers of government could affect many areas of local life, from tax rates to transportation patterns, membership in so far-flung a fraternity as Masonry would have a special appeal.

Changes in the population of Windham County may have

[53] Two hundred and ninety-eight of the members have been located through lodge censuses, town records of vital statistics, genealogies, and local histories, so that they can be assigned to one of the seven towns from which the membership was drawn. Those who moved about within the area were assigned to the town in which they appeared to have lived while they were Masons. References to this body of materials, hereafter, will be to "Biographical File." See Appendix III, pp. 344–349.

affected the growth of Masonry for other reasons. Emigration was the most continuous cause of population shifts, and the major single reason for the declining population.[54] Around the time of the Revolution, third-generation crowding, described by Ellsworth Grant in his study of the town of Kent, had fostered the first wave of the exodus and large-scale emigration continued into the nineteenth century.[55] A wide network of family communication reached from the Western Reserve and upstate New York into the towns of the Putnam Lodge area.[56] Masonry was spread through such colonization because the Masonic population itself was a mobile one. One hundred and twenty-nine of the 298 Masons on whom there is some biographical detail either moved into or out of the Putnam Lodge area, or moved around among the towns within the area, during their lifetimes.[57] Masonic membership was clearly valuable in providing a fixed point of social reference for a physically mobile population. In the absence of other local studies one may speculate that the changelessness of Masonry was appealing under conditions of rapid social change, whether the instability was due to growth or decline.

The relative wealth of the Freemasons is an important characteristic of membership and probably important in the communities' perception of the fraternity. The imperfect in-

[54] J.D.B. DeBow, *A Statistical View of the United States, Being a Compendium of the Seventh Census, to which are added the Results of Every Previous Census* (Washington, D.C., 1854), Table XCIV and Table XCV, p. 97. During this period, towns were subdivided and the boundaries of the county itself changed; however, nothing except massive emigration can account for this slow rate of growth in Windham County.

[55] Charles S. Grant, *Democracy in the Connecticut Frontier Town of Kent* (New York, 1972), p. 102; Putnam, *Pomfret*, p. 20.

[56] Lois Kimball Mathews Rosenberry, *Migrations from Connecticut Prior to 1800*, The Centenary Commission of the State of Connecticut, LIV (New Haven, 1934), 24–30. See also Rosenberry's *The Expansion of New England* (Boston, 1909).

[57] Biographical File. See Appendix III, pp. 344–345.

dices of the Grand Lists show that these towns underwent a great deal of change in relation to the state, to the county, and to one another.[58] In 1800 the per capita wealth of four of the six towns in the Putnam Lodge area was higher than the per capita wealth of the state or the county. By the end of the 1830s, three of the six towns were lower in average wealth than the county and four were lower than the state. Brooklyn and Pomfret, the two smallest towns in population, were the least affected by the industries that came to the area, and had the highest per capita wealth. Those two towns also seemed less affected by Antimasonry than their neighbors at the end of this period. Killingly, the most densely populated town because of the growth of factories within its borders, had the lowest per capita wealth and was one of the towns where violent Antimasonic sentiments were voiced (Table 3, Appendix IV). This scanty evidence does not substantiate any relationship between rapid economic change and anxiety about Masonry, of course, but neither does it preclude it.

Any attempt to locate the Masons according to wealth is not very far removed from guessing, but some records of taxes on lands and buildings do survive.[59] Since these communities

[58] A major tax revision was enacted in 1819, and a supplementary act the following year made additional reductions. Further slight changes were made every few years until the end of the period here under consideration. Taking all of these changes into consideration, however, there still remains an appreciable decline, unaccounted for by them. See Henry F. Waldrat, "The Financial History of Connecticut from 1789–1861," *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, XVII (New Haven, 1912), 62–66.

[59] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, Archives, "By-Laws of Putnam No. 46," comp. by E. E. Fressell. The Biographical File of the total Masonic population permits an estimate of the lodge population even though there was no census of the lodge around that time. According to the Biographical File, there were about 125 in the area at this time, and 100 of them have been located on the tax lists of the tax collector for the new federal tax on land, houses and slaves, passed on July 22, 1813. Connecticut State Library, Windham County MSS, The Taintor Collection of Tax Lists.

were still predominantly agricultural in spite of the scattered beginnings of industry, tax lists based on lands and buildings are probably a more informative index of wealth than in later times, when the opportunities for other kinds of investment had multiplied. The Masons located on these tax lists came from *all* wealth segments of the population in every town except Brooklyn, where the handful of Masons were only from the wealthiest segments. In all the towns on which Putnam Lodge drew, however, most Masons were located in the groups with the highest assessed wealth (Tables 4 and 5, Appendix IV). At least part of the reason for this association of wealth and membership must have lain in the cost of membership, which deserves a separate consideration.

Masonic membership was expensive. According to the bylaws of Putnam Lodge, four dollars was charged for a membership application or petition. If the candidate was accepted, the charge was applied toward the ten dollar initiation fee for the first degree of Masonry. The second degree cost four dollars and the third degree, three dollars.[60] Each meeting of the lodge required a trip. For those who lived far away, meetings might require the expense of overnight lodging, even though meeting times were set at the full of the moon to facilitate nighttime travel. Each lodge night and each festival, as well as committee meetings, entailed the expenses of food and drink. Even though promissory notes were the usual tender, a day of reckoning had to come. Given these

[60] Bidwell, "Rural Economy in New England," p. 352. The area had come to specialize in the one product that at that time had enough value proportionate to the costs of transportation to make it a valuable commodity in Connecticut's export trade to the West Indies: cheese. Once the roads had been developed to the point where transportation to river ports and depots was possible, the dairy farmer could participate in the production of this cash crop. Ibid., p. 338. The first four-wheeled horse-drawn wagon was not brought into the area until 1809. The roads to these inland areas were not usable for the transport of large, heavy loads until about 1818. Larned, *Windham County*, II, 412.

costs of membership, the fact that Masons came from every category of wealth in these communities is more significant than the fact that a larger proportion of them came from the higher wealth groups.

Occupational diversification in the early nineteenth century also helps to locate the Masons in their communities. Commercial agriculture developed along with a change in access to markets, which was then the single most important factor affecting agricultural productivity. The post-Revolution boom in road building permitted some farmers to convert their wealth in the form of lands into commercial wealth. Around 1812 Timothy Dwight, the indefatigable traveler, found the farmers of the area "more generally wealthy than those of any other part of Connecticut."[61] However, commercial farming had also been stimulated by concentration of population near industries, providing new, nearer markets. In 1830 another traveler reported that "the inhabitants of this county are more extensively engaged in the manufacturing business than in any other county in the State." Killingly was the center of the industry, "*the greatest cotton manufacturing town* in the State," with its 24,438 spindles in seven factories and a proportionate number of looms.[62] In general economic changes fostered occupational diversification and helped provide the social context for Masonic growth.

[61] Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England*, 4 vols. (New Haven, 1821), II, 139.

[62] John Warner Barber, *Connecticut Historical Collections, Containing a General Collection of Interesting Facts, Traditions, Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, etc., Relating to the History and Antiquities of Every Town in Connecticut with Geographical Descriptions* (New Haven, 1838), pp. 413, 432. A combination of technological and political events helped the growth of industry. First of all, in 1806, the Connecticut and Rhode Island Turnpike Company built a road from Hartford that went through Brooklyn and Killingly directly to the important business center of Providence. In Providence the cotton industry had been started by Samuel Slater and others with Rhode Island capital, and the new industries almost immedi-

The applications for membership to Putnam Lodge contain occupational information, and other biographical sources help to locate the Masons in the economic structure of the towns. In general it should be noted that the ratio of farmers to total population decreased during this period in all of the towns except Pomfret. Even so, the men who joined Putnam Lodge between 1801 and 1835 appear to have been engaged in nonagricultural occupations to a greater extent than the general working population. Occupational information for the town of Woodstock is most complete, and a tally shows that a little more than one-half of the 102 Masons—a fraction far lower than would hold for the general population—were engaged primarily or solely in farming. Nineteen of them were artisans, or engaged in some form of manufacture: the applications contain entries that range from "mule spinner" to manufacturer. Twenty-six others were entrepreneurs or professionals, such as taverners, storekeepers, doctors, and lawyers. When Masons and non-Masons were compared on the basis of the 1822 census of the lodge and occupational information in the 1820 federal census, it was clear that Masons were engaged in commerce and the professions in disproportionately large numbers, although some were to be found in all the occupational categories (Tables 6 and 7, Appendix IV).

Another important feature of Masons' identity was that the fraternity attracted young men to its ranks. According to in-

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ately began to move along Providence Road. In 1807 Slater's son-in-law, Ozias Wilkinson, and the Rhodes brothers, all of Providence, established a mill at Pomfret Falls. One of Wilkinson's five sons, Smith Wilkinson, who was later one of the leaders of Antimasonry in the area, came to take charge of this factory. At first only about nine children were employed in the carding operation and about four men worked about the machinery or moved the carded fibers or thread or cloth to market, but the impact of industry in the area was greater than these numbers indicate. Larned, *Windham County*, II, 400–401. The mills also produced small new subcommunities within the towns. Ibid., II, 547.

formation on the birthdays and dates of initiation of 207 members, or roughly four-fifths of the lodge, 80 percent of the members were under thirty years of age at the time of their initiation (Table 8, Appendix IV). The age at which men sought admission to the fraternity decreased slightly toward the end of this period, and the rate of application increased slightly even though the number of lodges in the state was growing more rapidly than before 1818. Before 1818 about 114 men had joined the fraternity, or an average of about six a year. Seventy-three men, an average of nine a year, joined the lodge between 1819 and 1826. The single largest number of initiates, an unprecedented twenty-two, joined in 1826, the year that ended with a multistate surge of Antimasonry affecting Connecticut among other places. The youth of the fraternity's membership and its pattern of growth may have caused those who saw Masonry as an evil to fear it as a rapidly growing one.

The rate and pattern of Masonic growth in the communities had political implications. Because it was a fraternity, at once secret and public, attracting men in their most politically vigorous years, the role of Masons in the political life of their communities is important in spite of their doctrinal disclaimers. In general Masons are best described by the high level of their participation in political life rather than their affiliation with a particular group or party. Party affiliation at that time was, of course, difficult to determine. Throughout this period voters seem to have gone to the polls in the greatest number when local issues mobilized opposing points of view. Party issues of national politics were not always lively local issue. The towns of Windham County were probably similar to the town of Kent at a slightly earlier period, where we know that roughly 60 percent of the adult male population may have been qualified to vote, and about 30 percent did.[63] Even if party issues did not frequently

[63] Grant, *Democracy in Kent*, p. 111.

mobilize the electorate, problems of town management brought many citizens into political life for short periods of time. According to the town records of Woodstock, for example, 455 different men held office in the town between 1801 and 1835.[64] If few voted, many were elected. Masons were disproportionately active in the political life of all of these towns, and biographical information links one or more of them with *all* the factions or parties at the state or national level.

Masons were not only more politically active, but they were particularly prominent in the most important political positions. They were elected more frequently than non-Masons as representatives to the General Assembly or as agents of the towns, offices more important before the growth of national party politics. The towns gave the General Assembly their primary allegiance as their benefactor and protector. For example, when the leaders of Brooklyn protested the Embargo, they explained that they did so because they had "full confidence in the wisdom, virtue, and patriotism of our State Legislature" to protect them "against either foreign or domes-

[64] In this count, town leadership was defined by the offices of selectmen, town meeting moderator, and agent or special representative of the town. This was a modification of Grant's definition, but it is based on his assessment of the importance of these offices. Grant, *Democracy in Kent*, pp. 146, 150. Three hundred eighteen of these men held office only for a year or two, probably routinely or as part of their duty of town citizenship. A smaller group, sixty-one men, held office for six or more years without ever being elected to one of the leadership offices. These men might be called the political activists, as distinct from the political leaders. When their numbers are added to the number of political leaders, the sum is a politically active population of 137 men. More detailed recent studies confirm, with variations, this widespread officeholding. William F. Willingham, "Deference Democracy and Town Government in Windham, Connecticut, 1755–1786," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 30 (July 1973), 401–422; Bruce Daniels, "Deference and Rotation of Selectmen's Offices in 18th-Century Connecticut," *Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin*, 37, no. 3 (January 1974), 92–96.

tic usurpation."[65] With the building of turnpikes, bridges, and industries after 1800, the towns were brought into frequent contact with the General Assembly, and they often appointed special agents to accompany their regular representatives and speak for the matters of special concern to the town. According to Grant, the towns had always selected as their representatives, as qualified to engage in the corporate endeavor of general government, those who would best fit in the network of governing families.[66] It might be expected that in these small farming communities where occupational diversification was only beginning, there would have been few men who had the time, interest and money to undertake the task, and who were held in high enough regard for their neighbors to entrust them with it. However, many were given, and took, the opportunity to participate in state government in some one of the fifty-three sessions of the General Assembly between 1801 and 1835.

Between 1801 and 1835 Woodstock elected thirty-seven different men; Killingly, thirty-three; and Pomfret, twenty-four, in the 106 different electoral opportunities presented by their two-man representation at each session of the assembly. The reason that the towns seemed to be represented by a very few men is that, though half of the total number served only once or twice, most of the others were reelected for three to ten terms. One man in Woodstock and two in Pomfret served more than ten terms. Nine of Woodstock's thirty-seven repre-

[65] Brooklyn, Connecticut, Town Clerk MSS, "Doings of the Town," II, February 6, 1809.

[66] Grant, *Democracy in Kent*, p. 127; Willingham, "Deference Democracy in Windham," pp. 413–414, finds that an elite group dominate the upper offices. Bruce Daniels, "Large Town Officeholding in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut: The Growth of Oligarchy," *Journal of American Studies*, IX no. 1 (April 1975), 1–12, finds that selectmen and deputy officeholders grew more oligarchical.

sentatives, and six out of Pomfret's twenty-four men, were Masons.[67] If these towns were typical, Connecticut's political aristocracy of long-term officeholders, such as the town's representatives, were the survivors of a process of elective experimentation. While Masons made up a disproportionately large fraction of the total officeholders, their number was too small to have dominated political activity, either in the towns or in the legislature.

The voters in these towns were aware of the importance of political offices and conscious of their control of them. The suggestion that they were manipulated through Masonic officeholding would clearly have been a highly volatile issue. Although it is not possible to gauge the exact extent of their participation, when the number of political leaders who were Masons is compared with the percentage of Masons in the adult male population, it appears that the level of their political activity was atypically high. In Woodstock, where the Masonic population was greatest, it is unlikely that Masons ever accounted for more than 10 percent of the adult population, but they held roughly 28 percent of the town leadership offices. In Killingly, they probably represented as little as 3 to 4 percent of the adult males, but about 7.4 percent of the leading offices (Table 9, Appendix 10). In the other towns (except Brooklyn and Union), they ranged between these two figures. Masons were more than twice as frequently found in town leadership offices as was proportionate to their numbers

[67] Woodstock, Connecticut, Town Clerk, MSS, Town Records II–III. The towns of Pomfret, Killingly and Woodstock ranged in size from two to three thousand in total population, with around two hundred fifty to three hundred ratable polls per year on the Grand Lists. Nevertheless, each of these towns found between fifty-eight and seventy-three men who assumed positions of town leadership during this thirty-five year period. If those who served the town as representatives are added to the list, the political leadership figure is even larger: sixty-five to eighty-one men served in leading offices in each of these towns.

in the adult male population, and an even higher percentage of Masons served the towns as its representative.

However fragmentary the records, a mosaic of the membership of Putnam Lodge can be put together. The Masons in these communities were a diverse group, contrasting with the general adult male population in several dimensions. They come from all income levels, but a higher proportion of them came from the groups with a higher taxable wealth. They came from all occupational groups, but a higher proportion of Masons than of the adult male population were engaged in commerce, manufacturing, or the professions. Masons tended to be highly mobile, moving around within the area as well as into and out of it. Most important, men joined Masonry during their young adulthood when they were likely to be more politically active. Coming from all political groups, they were community leaders, filling the important political offices more often than their percentage of the adult male population would indicate. In his study of Kent, Grant found that the town's aristocracy was based on ability. He suggested that able, energetic men, by virtue of those qualities, tended to be both richer and more politically active.[68] According to this analysis of Masonic membership in Putnam Lodge, men who were more energetic, richer, and politically active were also more likely to be Masons because of that same circular and reinforcing process in which no single, objective, measurable fact is sufficient explanation of class, or political status, or Masonic membership.

Although no single scale can surely mark off Masons against non-Masons, during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, an analysis of the membership of Putnam Lodge shows that the fraternity constructed a widespread, popular network of communication and association that represented a

[68] Grant, *Democracy in Kent*, pp. 53–54.

cross section of the population. The ideas inherent in the fraternity, joined and led as it was by many of the ablest men in the Connecticut communities, controlled the character of its membership. We must then turn to specific issues in the interaction of Putnam Lodge with the rest of the community to further explain the dynamics of the Masonic dissent—the choice of the Masonic alternative.

V

The Dynamics of Masonic Dissent: Putnam Lodge

When Putnam Lodge was established, various currents of Enlightenment thought influenced social as well as religious life and had moved from the cities to the towns of Connecticut. In Pomfret, for example, a church controversy about the ordination of a new minister epitomized the social changes prerequisite to the local establishment of Masonry. Opposition to the ordination of Oliver Dodge in the First Church of Pomfret led to a pamphlet war between Zephaniah Swift, Dodge's champion, and the Reverend Benjamin Welch, the spokesman of religious orthodoxy. Masonry soon institutionalized the pattern of values that Swift described and Welch resisted. The Dodge controversy provided the social and cultural context of the Masonic dissent.

After the Revolution, the aging Reverend Aaron Putnam, minister of the First Church of Pomfret in 1757, began to suffer from an occupational disease of the ministry: his voice failed.[1] Even though someone read his sermons for him, his effectiveness as a pastor was diminished. A mute minister presented a problem because there were many new kinds of stresses in church and social life. Some of the families of

[1] Daniel Hunt, *History of Pomfret: A Discourse Delivered on the Day of Annual Thanksgiving in the First Church in Pomfret, November 19th, 1840* (Hartford, 1841), p. 26.

Pomfret in the post-Revolutionary generation "had begun to affect a superior style of living."[2] People talked of a dancing assembly and a social library, although both seemed worse than frivolous to others in the community.[3] Educational opportunities and life experiences had become more varied, and attitudes toward many common problems of town life uncomfortably diverse. As the minister's health failed, it became clear that some of the members of the church wanted a new minister, but others wanted a minister of another kind.

Oliver Dodge was called to Pomfret in 1791, and the character, methods, and style of his ministry brought the differences in the community to the point of confrontation. He had an "agreeable manner," and he was "lively and popular." Although he claimed to be willing to accept Connecticut's Saybrook Platform, Dodge had been educated at Harvard in conformity with the Cambridge Platform, and some feared for his doctrinal orthodoxy.[4] By the time an ordaining council had assembled, there were grounds for doubt about his personal character, and the council was asked to consider charges of a "disregard of truth, neglect of duty, irreverent application of

[2] Ellen D. Larned, *History of Windham County*, 2 vols. (Worcester, Mass., 1874, 1880), II, 131.

[3] Ibid., II, 132.

[4] The Cambridge Platform codified New England Congregationalism at a meeting in 1646 that adopted the Westminster Confession, which provided for appelate councils. In 1708, at the request of the General Court, the leading ministers in Connecticut met at Saybrook and framed a platform providing for county associations of ministers and for a General Association of representatives of the county associations. The associations also accepted the Westminster Confession, but they met for the purpose of consultation and church discipline, in a "semi-presbyterian" system designed to aid the uniformity of doctrine in Connecticut's churches. Forrest Morgan, ed., *Connecticut as a Colony and as a State; or, One of the Original Thirteen*, 3 vols. (Hartford, 1904), I, 479–482; Paul E. Lauer, *Church and State in New England*, John Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, X (Baltimore, 1892), 93–192.

Scripture and unbecoming levity."[5] The ordination council was turned into a court and heard the evidence.

The council found Dodge guilty of "a culpable disregard" for truth, impiety in applying "particular passages of scripture to silly carnal purposes" and a taste for "amusement & disippation" that precluded adequate scholarship. They declined to ordain him.[6] Dodge meekly heard their findings, accepted their advice, and apologized as a repentant sinner.[7] To most in the Society of the First Church (the geographic church was administered as a Society and included both members and attendants), Dodge's public repentance was a vindication of their trust in his inherent goodness, and they voted to renew their invitation. However, Dr. Putnam, realizing that only a minority supported his judgment that Dodge was unfit for the ministry, nullified the vote of the Society. By that act he immediately transformed the controversy into a question of civil liberties and clerical despotism.[8]

[5] Ellen D. Larned, *Historic Gleanings in Windham County, Connecticut* (Providence, R. I., 1899), p. 208.

[6] Connecticut Congregational House, MSS, "Records of the Ordinations, Dismissions, Deaths &c of the Pastors of Congregational Churches in Windham County," I, 91.

[7] Dr. Joseph Huntington, a member of the council, caused great consternation by suggesting that Dodge's apology be accepted. Dr. Huntington himself was far from orthodox, but this was not known until after his death, when a manuscript entitled "Calvinism Improved" was found among his papers. Its modified universalism shocked his associates. William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit: or Commemorative Notices of Distinguished American Clergymen of Various Denominations*, 9 vols. (New York, 1857–1869), I, 604. His son, Samuel, a prominent Mason, figured in the attempt to discredit the indictment of secret societies by Dr. Jedidiah Morse, Jr. See above, p. 102.

[8] David D. Hall points out that from the time of settlement the balance of power in church government was contested between the minister and church members. *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1972), pp. 212–214, 273. See also Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee: Charac-*

Dodge supporters indignantly withdrew from the First Church of Pomfret and formed the Catholic Reform Church. Taking the Scriptures and their covenant as "our sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice," the thirty-three heads of families unanimously called the Reverend Oliver Dodge to their pulpit.[9] Dr. Putnam, with only eleven members left in his church, asked the help of the council of the Association, whose judgments helped precipitate the crisis. The council decided that publicity was Dr. Putnam's best defense and they published the charges and their findings, their "Result," in the *Windham Herald*.[10] The publication of the Result did, indeed, focus the attention of the whole county on their quarrel, but it also called forth the efforts of Zephaniah Swift, one of the most distinguished lawyers in Windham County, as Dodge's champion.

Swift wrote letters to the *Windham Herald* and then published a pamphlet describing two major issues in the Dodge controversy: one a question of civil liberties and the other a question of the quality of religious life in Connecticut. First, Swift said, the publication of the Result had infringed upon the civil liberties of the parties in the dispute. It "contained criminal charges which were false and scandalous against a man whom they could neither try or punish," and thus the consociation was "guilty of unwarrantable, unchristian, illegal and immoral conduct." They had acquitted Dodge in the Result but condemned him by its publication, an act both libelous and immoral.

Moreover, Dr. Putnam's refusal to permit the church Society's vote on the appointment of Dodge to carry was an act of clerical despotism. Putnam's action represented "the triumph

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ter and the Social Order in Connecticut, 1690–1765 (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 154–155.

[9] Connecticut State Library, Pomfret MSS, Records of the Catholic Church of Pomfret, January 8, 1793.

[10] Larned, *Windham County*, II, 227.

of illiberality over liberality." It was, Swift said, astonishing in theory and unthinkable in practice that a minister should be empowered to control the church. Men in Connecticut, he claimed, had been taught to vote according to their consciences, "regardless of the influence of intriguing and designing men" whoever they were.[11] The minister's veto infringed upon the civil liberties of church members.

Swift's second and most important point was that fundamental changes in the traditional ethos of Connecticut life had been ignored by the clergy. Connecticut, he said, had moved into an "enlightened period," and the religious leadership should have kept pace. Progress was a matter of style as much as theology. "It is no disgrace," he argued, "for a minister to be an agreeable man, and a sociable companion; to act, think, and speak like other good men; to unite with them in passing away some portion of their time in innocent scenes of mirth, festivity, and amusement." In its "uncorrupted" state and stripped of man-made "absurdities and inconsistencies," Christianity was not only consistent with the dictates of reason, but also produced a "serenity of mind and cheerfulness of temper," compatible with "the enjoyment of all the rational pleasures and innocent amusements." The country had entered a new era of happiness, virtue, and prosperity, and bigotry, superstition, and hypocrisy were "retiring before the beams of liberal sentiment."[12] The clergy must recognize that brotherly love and toleration were more important than differences of doctrine. Swift's arguments were candid in their deism and direct in confronting Calvinism as a style of life as well as a religion.

Dodge supporters soon helped widen the breach in community values that Swift's arguments described. A member of the Reverend Eliphalet Lyman's church at Woodstock sug-

[11] Zephaniah Swift, *The Correspondent. Containing, the Publications of the Windham Herald, Relatwe to the Result of the Ecclesiastical Council, . . . Respecting the Rev. Oliver Dodge* (Windham, 1793), pp. 35, 23, v.

[12] Ibid., pp. 118–120, 122, 134, 146.

gested that Dodge preach at one of the Thursday meetings. Lyman temporized, and he was disconcerted to hear the announcement of a visit from Doge without his invitation. When Dodge appeared, a representative of the minister and the committee of the church prepared to read a remonstrance from the Reverend Mr. Lyman. Dodge, however, called for a hymn, which precluded all announcements, and then launched into his sermon as soon as the hymn was finished. Lyman himself had to be summoned to his church to read the remonstrance.[13]

On the following Saturday, Justice of the Peace Thomas Grosvenor, one of Lyman's most prominent parishioners and soon to become one of the founders of Putnam Lodge, summoned the minister to appear in court on charges of disrupting a church meeting. John McClellan, the general's son, and later a frequent representative of Putnam Lodge at the Grand Lodge meetings, acted as Dodge's defender. In what was surely one of the strangest trials in Connecticut's history, the minister was accused of "rude and indecent" behavior in his own church in "wilfully" interrupting and disturbing a minister "attending the public worship of GOD."[14] Lyman was found guilty and fined $1.10 and the court costs.

As the news of these confrontations spread, opposing opinions about the conduct of Lyman and Dodge grew heated. Jedidiah Morse, Jr., of Charlestown, Massachusetts, worried that it did not have a "good appearance" when prominent members of his father's congregation stayed away from communion.[15] Dr. Moses C. Welch, on behalf of the county As-

[13] Eliphalet Lyman, *Two Discourses Preached at Woodstock—the first on November 10th, 1793—the second on the 1st of December following . . . to which is subjoined an Appendix giving an Account of some Late Extraordinary Transactions in that Place* (Norwich, Conn., 1794), pp. 59–60.

[14] Ibid., p. 57.

[15] Yale University Library, Manuscripts and Archives, Morse Family MSS, letter from J. Morse, Jr., to J. Morse, Sr., February 20, 1794, and July 18, 1794.

sociation of Congregational Churches, was called upon to publish a pamphlet in defense of Lyman, the churches, the Association, and Calvinist orthodoxy, which also served as a reply to Zephaniah Swift.[16] In general, Welch accused Swift of having traveled so far into "the wild field of modern catholicism, as to verge far toward downright infidelity." Swift had not related any of the ideas of universal love to the atonement of Christ or the doctrines of depravity and regeneration, and so his deistic or universalistic views about man and society were hopelessly inadequate.[17]

In immediate reply, Swift denounced the political nature of the church's positions and the pessimism of Calvinism, "that deep cloud of Hopkinonianism which darkens all your soul." He advised Welch to open his heart "to the mild and cheerful beams of candor, liberality, and brotherly love."[18] Both Swift and Welch ran out of epithets and arguments before they had agreed or compromised in their divergent views; yet they both remained firm Federalists in politics, thus demonstrating how wide the difference in basic attitudes could be among men who accepted the same political label.[19]

Dodge did not serve Swift's cause as the model of an enlightened minister for very long. Although he continued to be convivial and popular, and joined Moriah Lodge to become the "Brother" as well as the shepherd of some of his flock, his

[16] Moses C. Welch, *A Reply to the Correspondent . . . Together with some Strictures on the Appendix* (Norwich, Conn., 1794). Welch, who had studied law before he had turned to theology, was considered an ecclesiastical lawyer because of his background and the best match for Zephaniah Swift. Sprague, *Annals of the Pulpit*, II, 239.

[17] Welch, *A Reply*, pp. 51, 54.

[18] Zephaniah Swift, *A Second Address, to the Reverend Moses C. Welch, containing an Answer to his Letter to the Correspondent* (Windham, 1796), p. 42.

[19] Moses C. Welch, *The Addressor Addressed; or a letter to the Correspondent; . . . humbly dedicated to the honorable Zephaniah Swift, Esq.* (Norwich, Conn., 1796), pp. 9–10.

drinking increased and his discretion decreased.[20] On July 4, 1799, the church voted him guilty of charges of drunkenness and blasphemy, and excluded him from the "rites & privileges of the church till by his reformation and amendment of life he shall be again restored."[21] The lodge of Freemasons simply expelled him.[22] A committee was sent to the First Church to see "on what grounds the two churches may join," and the conflict within the community was submerged, although it was not resolved.[23]

The tone of life in Pomfret was irrevocably changed. When the fraternalism within the church, and between the church and the surrounding community, had broken down, differences too wide or deep to bridge had been exposed. Traditionally one response to such differences had been to form another church. However, the split in Pomfret's church had been caused by changing ideas about the style of a ministry and the tone of religious and social life rather than by theological differences. Many of Dodge's well-intentioned supporters, proponents of an "enlightened" ministry, soon became founders of Putnam Lodge. A new form of association, a Masonic fraternity, rather than another church, housed some of those differences that were more—or less—than purely religious.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when denominational growth had changed the homogeneous structure of New England society, Freemasonry, a subcommunity similar to a church, provided a quasi-religious haven for its members that did not rule out denominational membership.

[20] Larned, *Gleanings*, p. 214.

[21] Connecticut State Library, Pomfret MSS, "Records of the Catholic Reform Church," July 4, 1799.

[22] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical File, *Expulsions, suspensions, and Rejections returned to the Grand Lodge, 1798*.

[23] Connecticut Congregational House, MSS, "Records of Ordinations, Dismissions, Deaths &c. of the Pastors of Congregational Churches in Windham County," II, 103.

The uneasy perception of this fact by the surrounding religious community can be inferred from the relationship of the settled clergy with the lodges in their area, as well as from direct juxtapositions of church and lodge, as in Masonic funerals and when church mission groups were formed. This relationship is explored here in detail for the Putnam Lodge area.

Putnam Lodge and the Clergy

The early records of Putnam Lodge might suggest that the religious community welcomed the fraternity, but their hospitality was, in fact, limited. On Friday, October 2, 1801, some thirty charter members and their guests assembled to install Putnam Lodge's first officers and to hear an oration by the "Reverend Brother" Andrew Judson of Eastford Society in Ashford, and a sermon by the "Reverend Brother" Enoch Pond of Ashford's First Congregational Church.[24] Judson and Pond, however, were associated with the lodge for a very short time. Between 1801 and 1835, only one clergyman, a man of doubtful orthodoxy and short residence in the area, was initiated into the lodge. Later, one other clergyman, a newcomer who had joined the institution elsewhere, publicly supported the Masons in the face of hostility in his own church community, but he was dismissed. Between 1800 and 1835 there were about sixty-five clergymen in the churches of these towns, but only those four associated themselves with Masonry.

In spite of the appearance of Pond and Judson at the installation of the lodge, the attitude of the clergy toward the Putnam Lodge was less than enthusiastic. The Reverend Dr. Jedidiah Morse's correspondence and visits with his father,

[24] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, A. E. Frissell, "A History of Putnam Lodge No. 46, A.F. and A.M., within the Jurisdiction of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Connecticut, in Chronological Order, 1801–1901," p. 25.

Deacon Morse, and his mentor, the Reverend Eliphalet Lyman, gave Woodstock ample opportunity to know the basis of his antimasonic fears. The Reverend Samuel Nott's appeals to the Reverend Enoch Pond and his efforts to reclaim his parishioners from Masonry must also have been well known.[25] An undated letter to the Reverend Josiah Whitney, the minister of Brooklyn's Congregational church, shows that Masons themselves were aware of clerical antagonism. The Masons were concerned that Whitney seemed "oppressed with doubts, respecting the Morality and benevolence of the Masonic institution" when he gave his sermon at their Saint John's Day festival. They therefore sent him a sermon "by Dr. Seabury on the same occasion." They thought that "the sentiments of one, so respectable in his character, as a *Man* and a Christian will have a happy influence in removing from his mind any injurious suspicions, which unfortunately for them he seemed to entertain."[26] It is impossible to estimate the amount of Christian fortitude with which Dr. Whitney, the Congregational minister, accepted this referral to the Episcopal bishop of Connecticut for standards in evaluating Masonry. The letter itself seems to have been preserved as a model for defensive Masonic response to hostile local clergy, and it seems fair to assume that Putnam Lodge was established in spite of latent disapproval by the surrounding religious communities.

Three of the four Mason clergymen in the Putnam Lodge area came from the town of Ashford, where a steady process of fission had divided the town into different churches, with even more religious parties than there were churches.[27]

[25] See above, pp. 105–108.

[26] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, letter to the Rev. Mr. Whitney, n.d. A copy of this statement is among Albigence Waldo's papers, American Antiquarian Society, Waldo Family MSS, 1769–1860 Folder.

[27] Richard M. Bayles, ed., *History of Windham County* (New York, 1889), pp. 90, 1010–1020.

Enoch Pond was settled in the First Church in Ashford in 1789 not long after it had been voted that "this church did not believe that the minister of a church has power from Christ to negative the votes of his church, and we mean not to be subjected to any such power in a minister."[28] In previous years, the church had dismissed one minister for his "Arminian" tendencies and refused to support another whose views were less than congenial. Voluntary clerical support and a strong sense of the independent polity of a covenanted church existed in this community long before Pond was settled there. Pond, who had studied with one of the most famous New Divinity theologians, Nathaniel Emmons, was heir to the New Light theology, which "sought to establish their churches on strict principles of regenerate membership and on sharply defined . . . standards of doctrinal orthodoxy."[29] Luckily for a small church in a splintering community, Pond was an energetic evangelist, remembered for his pacific influence, his fluency, urbanity, and sociability, and his skills as an educator.[30] Perhaps evangelist Pond joined the Masons simply to extend the sphere of influence in a manner appropriate to his talents, skills, and calling.

Two successive ministers of the Eastford Church in Ashford also became Masons. The Eastford Society had splintered from the First Congregational Church in 1779 and chose one of their small number, Andrew Judson, as pastor. Judson died in 1805, and, in the absence of details about his life, a single clue links him to a variant Calvinism: one of his sons was named Zwinglius, a name associated in Calvinist history with ideas about justification by faith alone, about

[28] Thomas Dutton, *Historical Discourse Delivered at the Congregational Church at Ashford, Conn., January, 1864* (Hartford, 1864), pp. 19, 15.

[29] Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New York, 1972), p. 404.

[30] Sprague, *Annals of the Pulpit*, II, 370; Dutton, *Historical Discourse*, pp. 18–19.

simplification of ritual, and about active exhortation, education, and vernacular preaching as a clerical style.[31] An independent frame of reference may have propelled Judson toward Masonry.

Sometime after Judson died, Hollis Sampson was ordained in the Eastford Church. Sampson had been the deacon in the Methodist Episcopal church, formed from the Methodist class in Ashford around the turn of the century. Contemporaries described him as "shrewd, witty and eloquent."[32] His small group of communicants may have thought that his evangelical style would revive their church, or they may have hoped through him to attract the Methodist class back to their fold. However, Sampson's theological views and his personal conduct, especially one scandal investigated by Putnam Lodge, made his ministry a topic of widespread gossip.[33] When he was dismissed, he chose as the text for his final sermon, "For with me it is a very small thing that I be judged according to man's judgment." He thereupon departed for Vermont where he joined a Universalist church, substantiating any local orthodox fears about the relationship of Masonry with religious heterodoxy.[34]

The fourth minister in the area with Masonic ties was Ralph Crampton, who served as the minister to the Woodstock Hill congregation from 1827 to 1830. Crampton was dismissed from his church in 1830 when he refused to disavow his Masonic membership. The lodge rallied to Crampton's support by helping him relocate, and he soon left on a missionary tour to New York.

[31] Connecticut Congregational House, MSS, "Records of Ordinations, Dismissions, Deaths &c, of the Pastors of Congregational Churches in Windham County," I, 288, 289, 343.

[32] Larned, *Windham County*, II, 458.

[33] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Report of Committee on Ezak Preston, December 26, 1811.

[34] Larned, *Windham County*, II, 458. Connecticut Congregational House, MSS, "Records of Ordinations, Dismissions . . . ," p. 343.

There were, of course, many ministers who were more casually associated with Masonry through their Saint John's Day sermons. These clergymen ran the theological gamut in the Putnam Lodge area, from the moderate Old Calvinists such as Elisha Atkins of Killingly to, at a later date, Samuel May, the minister of the newly formed Unitarian church in Brooklyn.[35] Their services, like those of the Reverend Dr. Kewley of Christ's Church in Middletown, were "engaged" for the occasion. Like him, they used the opportunity to preach that religion, and not Masonry, was the only source of virtue and "everlasting happiness."[36]

For example, when "Priest" Elisha Atkins of Killingly delivered the Saint John's Day sermon in 1820, he chose as his text: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The lesson of the text was not unqualified praise of the brethren whom he was addressing: it was the instructive thought that *all* men were brethren. He recognized that Masonry was an ancient association and that its objects were virtue, humanity, and benevolence, but, he told the Masons, since all men were brethren, they must not confine their benevolence to their membership. Above all, he warned (in language that reminds us of the warnings given eight years before by John Kewley), they must not confuse their fraternity with a church: "However united, however charitable, however useful in a temporal point of view may be your institution; yet you are not insensible, that it can never be made a foundation for the hopes of everlasting life."[37] Although it was asserted "that the Masonic constitution is built

[35] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Vernon Wetherall, "Excerpts from the Records."

[36] John Kewley, *Masonry in Christian Principles* (Hartford, 1812), pp. 12–13.

[37] Elisha Atkins, *A Sermon, Delivered in Killingly (Conn.) June 27th, 1820: at the Celebration of St. John the Baptist, Before the Brethren of the Putnam Lodge* (Providence, 1821), pp. 3, 13.

on the doctrines of the Christian religion," he hoped, with gentle caution, that Masonry would prosper "so far as this is true," but his awareness of dangers in the religious presentations of Masonic doctrine was as clear as his limited endorsement of their secular objectives.

Of the four ministers who were associated with Putnam Lodge in the first thirty-five years, two of them, Pond and Judson, were notably independent in their views and passed from the scene during the first years of the life of the lodge. Sampson, the leader of a small but acrimonious congregation, was theologically anti-Calvinist and personally unstable, and left the area in some disgrace. Crampton was dismissed by his congregation, a local martyr to Masonry. Their biographies suggest that the orthodox clergy in the Putnam Lodge area maintained their distance from the lodge, and the members of their churches and congregations who became Freemasons were fully cognizant of their views through Saint John's Day sermons, if in no other way. Masonic membership was clearly used by a few of the clergy as a form of dissent to Congregational orthodoxy, at the same time that it was generally used by Masons as dissent to the Standing Order. Part of the reason for clerical distance from the fraternity may have been related to the fact that Masonry sometimes impinged upon the traditional role of the clergy. Masonic funerals were one case in point.

Putnam Lodge and "Celestial" Lodges

The Masonic funeral, a pseudoreligious function of the fraternity, brought into public display the dissonance between Masonic belief and practice and the prevailing religious ethos. A few years before the founding of Putnam Lodge, in 1797, the people in northeastern Connecticut had been instructed in the meaning of Masonry by the colorful Masonic ceremonies at the funeral of Gen. George Larned,

one of the first citizens of Thompson. Larned's funeral was replete with military and Masonic honors, and the new young minister of Thompson's First Congregational Church, Daniel Dow, preached the funeral sermon.[38] Dow, recently and rigorously examined by the church and the Association at his ordination, fully subscribed to the orthodox Calvinist doctrine of limited salvation.[39] Since Larned had never formally owned the church covenant, even though he had generously supported the church, the elaborateness of his funeral symbolically contradicted the tentative hopes of the church's band of "visible saints." Dow would have had little reason to hope that the great man, so grandly and pompously attended in a final rite, was anything but damned for eternity.

The way in which Puritan Calvinist ideas about limited and predestined salvation generated anxiety has often been analyzed.[40] With salvation a great lottery, conflicting hopes and fears about death were incapable of earthly resolution.[41] In graphic symbolism of that tension the tombstones in New England's graveyards were emblazoned with horrific skulls flanked by wings, emblems of physical death and spiritual resurrection "simultaneous in its visual perception."[42] Because of the intensity of these hopes and fears, the act of dying "was

[38] Larned, *Windham County*, II, 352–353. Dow's oration on that occasion may have been the one reported by Miss Larned to describe his unblinking Calvinism. Larned reported that when one of the wealthiest and most generous of his congregation died without having joined the church, Dow chose as his text "A wise man's eyes are in his head, but a fool walketh in darkness." Ibid., II, 443. George Larned was her grandfather and the father of one of Putnam Lodge's most prominent members.

[39] Bayles, *History of Windham County*, p. 667.

[40] Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1963).

[41] David E. Stannard, "Death and Dying in Puritan New England," *The American Historical Review*, 78, no. 5 (December 1973), 1313 et passim.

[42] Deckran and Ann Tashjian, *Memorials for Children of Change: The Art of Early New England Stonecarving* (Middletown, Conn., 1973), pp. 62, 53.

a profoundly religious matter" for the Puritan orthodox, requiring the ministrations and testimony of the clergy.[43] On the other hand, once a person had died, and salvation or damnation was a *fait accompli*, secular agencies took over all customs and ceremonials, except for a sermon on the meeting day following the funeral. The towns often provided the cemetery, a hearse, and a pall, and, in the case of the poor, a coffin and the charges of a gravedigger.[44] Funeral customs such as memorial rings, gloves, scarves, or elaborate tombstones, or the procession, were all rooted in English tradition. They could engender a ceremoniousness, which answered the needs of a "dislocated people to be memorialized," but they were often frowned upon by the clergy.[45] The more Puritan the community, the simpler the funeral ceremonial.

The reason that Masonic funeral services posed a problem for most members of the religious community was that ceremonies of death symbolically depict attitudes about the meaning of life, and hopes and fears about immortality. Definitions of the meaning of life and death are the stuff of religion, the bases of denominational differences. David Stannard has speculated that the "anxiety-riddled tension between death and dying that so beset devout Puritans" in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century did not persist into the nineteenth century.[46] Other recent studies show how a changing world view and religious ethos acted upon their ideas and attitudes.[47] These changes came partially and unevenly to

[43] Stannard, "Death and Dying," p. 1305.

[44] Town Clerk, Brooklyn, "Doings of the Town," II, November 1810, 173–177.

[45] Tashjian, *Children of Change*, pp. 23–25.

[46] Stannard, "Death and Dying," p. 1329.

[47] James K. Morse, *Jedidiah Morse: A Champion of New England Orthodoxy* (New York, 1939), pp. 121–149. See also fn. 7 above. Ann Douglas, "Heaven Our Home: Consolation Literature in the Northern United States, 1830–1880," *Death in America*, ed. David E. Stannard (Philadel-

any community in the early decades of the century, framed by the old theological defenses of and a new theological defensiveness about limited salvation. In some parts of New England, and in Putnam Lodge itself, a continuing debate about limitarian ideas sometimes still flared into controversy. The content of the Masonic funeral ceremony and the pattern of its use in the community make it clear that Masonry and Calvinist churches provided two different kinds of experience in an event that involved the most fundamental religious ideas and attitudes.

The forms and ceremonials for a Masonic funeral, first published by William Preston, were, with some amendments, copied in American monitors and handbooks. Thomas Smith Webb's *Freemasons' Monitor* and Preston's *Illustrations* probably guided Putnam Lodge.[48] Both of these manuals of the "ancient customs" emphasized that only a Master Mason was entitled to the ceremony, and only "by his own special request." Indeed, "the whole ceremony must be under the direction of the master of the lodge" to which the deceased belonged.[49] At the appointed time and place, a regular lodge meeting was opened with the usual rituals; and during that meeting the funeral took place according to specific directions. Within the format of the meeting, the directions

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phia, 1975); Lewis O. Saum, "Death in the Popular Mind of Pre–Civil War America," *Death in America*, ed. David E. Stannard (Philadelphia, 1975); Stanley French, "The Cemetary as Cultural Institution: The Establishment of Mount Auburn and the Rural Cemetary Movement," *Death in America*, ed. David E. Stannard (Philadelphia, 1975).

[48] Thomas Smith Webb, *Freemasons Monitor: or Illustrations of Masonry: in Two Parts*, 2nd rev. ed. (Salem, Mass., 1816), pp. 117–125, and William Preston, *Illustrations of Masonry* (London, 1796), pp. 119–128. The Grand Lodge of Rhode Island printed and distributed five hundred copies of the service, closely following Webb, and other Grand Lodges probably did so, too. *The Masonic Burial Office of the Grand Lodge of the State of Rhode Island* (Providence, R. I., 1799).

[49] Webb, *Monitor*, pp. 117–118.

provided for responsive readings, prayers, processionals, and graveside ceremonies, and even a diagram for the placement of the body of the departed Mason. The provisions were so detailed that nothing need have been left for local option or ambiguous precedents.

A vivid contemporary account of a Masonic funeral, written by a traveler in another part of the country in 1792, best describes the color and the pomp of the ceremonies.[50] The Masons were "furnished with tools according to their different degrees," and colorfully dressed in "leather aprons, skillfully embroidered with red, blue or green ribbons around the edge, and bearing the design of a square and compass in the center." At the beginning of the ceremonies the Masons gathered around the coffin, each bearing some Masonic symbol:

> On each side of the coffin stood a Mason holding a well turned column of walnut wood in his hand and at the foot another with a measuring lathe about ten feet long. Others stood in different places holding wooden hammers. . . . Two of them stood with long, round, beautifully carved wands in their hands, to which a blue ribbon was fastened at the top. Two others held finely carved candlesticks, two and a half feet long, containing white wax candles, at least two inches in diameter. All of these arrangements having been completed, the clergyman, who was also a Mason, offered up a prayer. . . . A very mournful dirge was then sung, and the order of the procession called out. Hereupon the coffin was closed and every Mason broke off a little branch of the greens which lay upon it and stuck it in his coat.

[50] "John Heckewelder's Journey to the Wabash in 1792," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XI (1887), 473–475. C. C. Hunt in "Masonic Burial," *Grand Lodge Bulletin*, Grand Lodge of Iowa, 27 (September 1926), 231–233, says that the origins of the service are unknown, but Preston's forms were "commonly used."

The Masons then proceeded to the graveyard, carrying their emblems or "walking hand in hand, two by two," with the clergyman preceding, and the Master following, the coffin. At the gravesite, after the clergyman "pronounced several passages from the Scripture applicable to the servants of God,"[51] the Masons threw their green twigs in the grave, and they then returned in ceremonial order to the house at which they had first assembled. The Masonic funeral could be an impressive occasion in which the role of the clergyman was as ritualized as that of the corpse.

What the Masons said, or did not say, on these occasions was as important as what they did and the way they did it. The content of the service was designed to be consistent with the principles of the fraternity. It could not be identified with any specific denomination, or even necessarily with Christianity. The Master said, "May the Lord bless us and prosper us and may all our intentions be crowned with success," but the deity to which they referred was the "Grand Architect," or the "Supreme Grand Master," who reigned in "a celestial lodge."[52] In general, the Masons confined their aphorisms about the meaning of death to unexceptionable observations about its inevitability. From this followed their references to the "folly of earthly achievement," like "pride of wealth or charms of beauty." Masons recognized human frailty: "Perfection on earth has never been attained; the wisest as well as the best of men have erred." Death was a warning to live life well, but no unpleasant threats were voiced. However sinful the Mason they mourned, "charity incline[s] us to throw a veil over his foibles," and to offer "the praise his virtues may have claimed." Masons, as distinct from Calvinists, could hope for a "general resurrection," and the "joys which have been promised for the righteous since the beginning of the world."[53] By implication, all Masons would be "transported

[51] "John Heckewelder's Journey," pp. 474–475.

[52] Webb, *Monitor*, p. 122. [53] Ibid., p. 121.

to the lodge above." In Walter Janes's Masonic ode heaven was where lodge members would be

> *United* ne'er to part, but still to spend,
> A jubilee of rapture,—without end.[54]

All of this language suggested attitudes that were only vaguely consistent with Christianity and clearly inconsistent with orthodox Calvinism.

The ceremonial elaborateness and the comforting content of the Masonic funeral service contrasted sharply with the ominous austerity of Puritanism.[55] For Calvinists the memory of "natural grace," or civil or social or personal virtue, afforded little comfort to the survivors. Only evidence of an experience of saving grace could offer hope of salvation, and the minister's role in interpreting this evidence was important.[56] It was his clear duty to supervise the dying and to testify at the funeral to the hopes and fears of the survivors. "Let me gain your ear, and gain your determination, and gain your heart before it is too late," pleaded Dr. Welch to a Masonic congregation. "If you croud out the concerns of eternity, and

[54] Walter Janes, *A Masonic Poem, Delivered at Mansfield, (Conn.) before Trinity Chapter of Royal Arch Masons and Eastern Star and Uriel Lodges; on the Anniversary Festival of St. John the Evangelist. To Which is Added a Eulogy pronounced at the Grave of Brother Austin Stowell of Pomfret (Conn.), February 22d. A.L. 5814. Together with an Address Delivered June 30th A.L. 1819 at the Interment of Brother Steven Lewis, of Ashford (Conn.)*, (Brookfield Conn., 1819), pp. 17, 14.

[55] That there were definite ideas about appropriate funeral style is preserved in a local legend. When Muddy Brook Church in Woodstock was without a minister, the neighboring Reverend Mr. Underwood, a "social and jovial" man, was invited to officiate at all weddings, and "Priest" Lyman, who was "as solemn as judgement," was called for the funerals. Margaret McClellan, *Winds of Change* (Putnam, Conn., 1950), p. 21.

[56] A prominent minister in this period, Lyman Beecher, could not comfort his daughter at the death of her fiancé, since he had not had experience of saving grace, even though he was studying for the ministry. This story is retold in the introduction of a book by her sister. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Oldtown Folks*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), pp. 17–19.

cast them to the back ground, till your feet stumble upon the dark mountains," he warned, "you will be surprised, inexpressibly surprised."[57] Orthodox anxieties about death, based on "their belief in their own utter and unalterable depravity, in the omnipotence and justness of God, and in the unspeakable terrors of hell" flourished in the Putnam Lodge area.[58] The Masonic rites, by ignoring the theological sources of these tensions between hope and fear, resolved them in favor of hope.

The chronicle of the use of Masonic funeral ceremonial by Putnam Lodge members provides some evidence that a generalized antimasonic sentiment preceded any Antimasonic movement, because it shows a continuous history of limitations on Masonic functions. During the first decade of the existence of the lodge, no Masonic funerals were held; during the second decade, the use of the ceremonial seems to have been encouraged by the lodge, and several Masonic funerals were held. However, during the 1820s, both before and after the Antimasonic movement, the use of the ceremony was either tacitly rejected or actively opposed. The records of Putnam Lodge demonstrate this progression.

During the first decade after the establishment of the lodge, only the deaths of Andrew Judson and John W. Chandler were mentioned in the minutes of the lodge, and neither of them had apparently requested or received a Masonic funeral.[59] The first Masonic funeral organized by Putnam Lodge was held for Daniel Taft in 1810. When Taft died, the Masons were summoned in proper style, but only nine members attended.[60] As Masons, they seemed to have taken an active

[57] Moses C. Welch, *A Sermon Preached at Ashford, Eastford Society, at the Funeral of Mr. John Work Judson* (Norwich, Conn., 1811), p. 26.

[58] Stannard, "Death and Dying," p. 1327.

[59] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Minutes, I, February 1805; February 1808.

[60] Ibid., Minutes, I, May 15, 1810.

but subsidiary role, and not the position of full command and ceremonial supervision described by Preston and Webb.

When John W. Judson, the son of the Reverend Andrew Judson, died an untimely death just after his election as the Worshipful Master, members of the lodge went in procession to the church "where Divine Service was attended," and then to the place of interment where "the Funeral Ceremonies were performed." A eulogy was read "at the request of the members of Putnam Lodge," but the message of the day for the community had been given in the church by the Reverend Dr. Welch, a colleague of Judson's father.[61] Life, he said in his sermon, was a time of trial during which the living would "all be fixed, unalterably in the joys and growing delights of heaven; or in the awful pains, and unbearable miseries of hell." Their only hope for eternal life, he reminded them, lay "in the all atoning blood of Jesus."[62] However different the message of the minister and the Masons on these occasions, Welch's toleration of their presence as a lodge at the funeral of their Master must have seemed to legitimize Masonic funeral assistance. Masonic funerals fit in with the tradition of the secular funeral, although they flouted its religiously principled simplicity.

Masonic funerals were thus countenanced, if not welcomed, by the local clergy. In 1814, when Austin Stowell died, forty-two Masons assembled for his funeral procession. The Reverend Brother Hollis Sampson preached a funeral oration, and Walter Janes offered the eulogy for the brethren.[63] Stowell had lived in Pomfret, and Sampson, whom we have met before, was the minister of one of the Congregational churches in Ashford. Similarly, when George Potter died in 1815, the large funeral procession of Masons went to the Baptist church to hear a sermon preached by the Con-

[61] Ibid., Minutes, I, April 1811. [62] Welch, *Sermon*, p. 26.

[63] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Minutes, I, February 22, 1814.

gregationalist minister Alvan Underwood.[64] Apparently, the use of any church, and the services of any minister, must have been seen as a necessary accommodation to the sensibilities of the families, or the community as a whole, when Masons participated in funeral ceremonials. Nevertheless very few more Masonic funerals were held.[65] Masonic participation could not have been very actively sought, even if it was countenanced. Changing attitudes toward death and mourning suggest why such funerals were so few.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the limits of salvation had been substantially extended by orthodox Calvinists even while a generalized religiosity engulfed death and dying, funeral, and mourning practices. Ideas and rituals surrounding both dying and the funeral became more comforting. A popular view of death as an escape from a difficult world, and a millennial and evangelical attitude, tended to ameliorate the harshness and helplessness of Calvinism. By the middle decades of the century society was "saturated with concern with death," and the "magnification of mourning" had produced new genres of consolation literature and iconography.[66] The rural cemetery movement had given the funeral and mourning a new kind of community activity, and even "Pope" Timothy Dwight approved the promise of New Haven's Grove Street cemetery for "a new sense of propriety in disposing of the remains of the deceased."[67] The socialization of dying, funerals, and mourning would seem to have argued for more Masonic funerals, so well suited in tone and style to the idea of death as an end of suffering and a source of moral instruction. However, two other factors counterbalanced: one, related to the roles of women and the idea of

[64] Ibid., Minutes, I, May 26, 1815.

[65] Biographical File, See Appendix III, pp. 344–345.

[66] Saum, "Death in the Popular Mind," p. 30; Douglas, "Heaven Our Home," pp. 44–50.

[67] French, "The Cemetary as Cultural Institution," p. 76.

heaven as a "celestial home"; the other, related to the new needs of Connecticut communities to find a way to balance competing denominations.

A recent study of New England consolation literature of the mid–nineteenth century points out that disestablishment and denominationalism led to wider areas of Christian consensus, tending to dull the harshest aspects of limitarian Calvinism. In the new multidenominational communities ministers were losing status as community leaders. At the same time, women's roles were changing as their economic productivity diminished. To assert their continuing importance, the "largely unreasoning strategy" of women and ministers was to "exalt home tasks and values and to depict the nation in crying want of domestication."[68] Death was a family affair. Although there is some evidence that death rituals were "unisexual," with men attending the death of their dying male relatives and women attending the dying females, the funeral and mourning rituals involved the whole household, and, indeed, the whole community.[69] Ministers and women were in charge of one of the few community activities over which they had unquestioned jurisdiction. Theological changes had enhanced their roles. New attitudes toward death permitted heaven to be defined as a glorification of home. The highest earthly goal for men was to achieve a life eternal, with their families, in a setting that mirrored that over which women presided on earth. Many ministers came to reinforce these visions of eternal, celestial domesticity, without dwelling unduly on the alternatives, at the same time that they extended their sphere of active influence from death and dying to funerals and mourning ritual. The "celestial home," not the "celestial lodge," was the allegory by which women and

[68] Douglas, "Heaven Our Home," p. 54.

[69] Carrol Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs*, I (Autumn 1975), 23.

ministers, the responsible survivors of the Masons, organized their attitudes toward death and mourning.

Whether or not a Mason requested a Masonic funeral, it was a community, as represented by family, friends, or clergymen, that decided whether or not the lodge would, in fact, participate in the rites. It seems likely that families on occasions so fraught with the need for community support tended to resist Masonic ceremonials. One vestige of this attitude remains in the archives of Putnam Lodge: a carefully written, hand-sewn manuscript of a eulogy prepared by Ingoldsby W. Crawford for the funeral of his old friend, Dr. Thomas Morse. The family declined the assistance of the Masons at his funeral, and across the title page of the manuscript Crawford added the note: "No Masonic ceremonies were had at the interment of the deceased, and the Eulogy was not spoken."[70] Similar decisions must have been taken by the families of other active Masons in these communities, unconsciously protective of their "celestial homes."

By the early 1820s the changing structure of the religious community also tended to discourage Masonic rites. There is some evidence that, perhaps because of its growing popularity, the Masons were beginning to divide along the lines of those who wished to associate the fraternity with Christianity, and those who wanted its ceremonies and rituals to remain suprareligious. For example, a group of Royal Arch Masons wrote a Memorial formally objecting to certain passages in Jeremy Cross's *True Masonic Chart*, where they discerned "omissions in religious Masonic services." A committee reported at the next annual meeting that they could meet the objections of the memorialists by expunging an expression in the funeral services that might be "construed as a prayer for the dead."[71] The cryptic entries suggest that some Mason

[70] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "Eulogy for Thomas Morse by Ingoldsby Work Crawford," 1885.

[71] Joseph K. Wheeler, *Records of Capitular Masonry in the State of Connecticut* (Hartford, 1875), pp. 120, 126.

church members were offended by the universalistic tone of the ceremony, while others sought to meet the objection by purging the ceremony of all religious implications.

The second objection went directly to the heart of the problem: the relationship of religion and Masonry. Was Masonry a Christian fraternity? The memorialists charged that since "no direct allusion or addresses in our public forms of prayer are made to the Savior of men . . . the Masonic institution is exposed, in consequence, to the suspicion of being no more than some modification of natural religion or heathenism." The Committee of Royal Arch Masons decided that since the Bible was acknowledged by them as "the Great and True Light in Masonry," and the Bible consisted of successive revelations, it was obvious that Christians and Masons were to "offer their prayers of Almighty God only in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ."[72] It would, therefore, be unnecessary to change the ceremonies to show that Masons were not only religious, but Christian.

The committee was not unanimous in this evasive formula, but their report was adopted and incorporated into the third edition of Cross's *Masonic Chart.*[73] Such evasion was necessary because the lodge, in such activities as the funerals, was functioning in an area of community life increasingly associated with the churches. One of the fundamental tenets of Masonry was that it served no particular religion. By refusing

[72] Ibid., p. 126. Jeremy Cross's book was first published in 1819 with illustrations by Amos Doolittle, a well-known New Haven engraver. *The True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor, containing all the Emblems explained in the Degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft, Master Mason, Work Master, Post Master, Most Excellent Master, Royal Arch, Royal Master and Select Master; Designed and Duly arranged, Agreeably to the Lectures. . . .* (New Haven, 1819). Jeremy Cross's book had been recommended by the Grand Lodge as a Masonic "text book." E. G. Storer, *The Records of Masonry in the State of Connecticut, with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England, and the Entire Proceedings of the Grand Lodge, from its First Organization, A.L. 5789* (New Haven, 1859), p. 310.

[73] Wheeler, *Records of Capitular Masonry*, pp. 126–127.

explicit affiliation even with Christianity, Freemasonry could function as a religion and, at the same time, maintain a suprareligious stance. On the other hand, a position above religions precluded Masonic assimilation into the first tentative interdenominational accommodation. For example, by refusing to associate as Masons with the Bible and missionary movements uniting many religious groups in the early 1820s, the Masons tested the limits of denominational coexistence.

Putnam Lodge and the Jewish Question

Freemasons considered themselves the institutional heirs of those who had striven for moral order since Adam. They were divinely inspired, if not indeed chosen by God. Their purpose was to form a self-perpetuating elite that preserved the universal, timeless knowledge of basic moral laws. As Simon Davis, Jr., told the members of Putnam Lodge, when they assembled for the celebration of Saint John's Day, all men are subject to moral laws "which have existed from eternity and therefore are equally binding on the whole human race."[74] As individuals they might, and often did, believe that these moral laws were contained in the Bible. Nevertheless, implicit in the Masonic concept of a universal morality was the idea that particular religions, when they were embodied in churches, were transitory, and even quasipolitical, institutions. Masons, as Masons, did not necessarily share the millennialist faith and hope inspiring the missionary efforts of the Second Great Awakening in Connecticut.

In 1798, the General Association of the Congregational Churches of Connecticut organized itself into the Connecticut Missionary Society. They did so in conformity with the theocratic ideals of New England Calvinism that God directly ruled

[74] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "Oration Delivered at Pomfret June 26, 1810, before Moriah and Putnam Lodges at the Festival of St. John the Baptist by Br. Samuel Davis, Jr."

nations, and that America "had a special destiny to fulfill as heir of ancient Israel, God's Chosen People."[75] As a chosen people, their special responsibility was to bring their growing nation into conformity with God's law. This same theological set soon led to the formation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, since "there was no doubt in the minds of the theocrats that the working out of their pattern for America, and through America for the world, was laying the groundwork for the Second Advent."[76] However, the idea that America as a nation had a divine mission to evangelize the world, firmly held on theological grounds by Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Baptists, could not be shared by the Masonic universalists. What, then, was a man to believe if he was both a Mason and a member of a theocratic, evangelical denomination?

At first, some lodges seem to have been divided between those who tried to reconcile their belief in the evangelical mission of Protestantism by including Masonry within Protestantism, and those who rigorously maintained that they were, as Masons, only of "the *Catholick Religion*" that included all faiths.[77] Evidence from all around the country, as well as from Connecticut, tells of the evolution of distinctions between the activities appropriate to the churches, to lodges, and to individuals who were members of one or both of these institutions.

As one of the first acts, the American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), founded in 1810,

[75] John Bodo, *The Protestant Clergy and Public Issues, 1812–1848* (Princeton, 1954), p. 5.

[76] Ibid., Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, pp. 423–424. William E. Strong, *The Story of the American Board, an Account of the First Hundred Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston, 1910), pp. 3–6, 80–85.

[77] [James Anderson], *The Constitutions of the Free Masons. Containing the History, Charges, Regulations &c. of that Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity* (London, 1723), p.54.

named the Reverend Pliny Fisk and the Reverend Levi Parsons to a mission to Palestine. It seemed logical and fitting to the heirs of the chosen people to begin their work by converting the descendants of the chosen people.[78] Both Fisk and Parsons had become Masons, and so when Fisk toured the South to raise money for the distribution of the Bible and the support of his effort to preach "among the Mohametans," he naturally appealed to the only other widespread, well-organized agency of charity and benevolence: the Grand Lodges of the states he visited. In his wake, supportive Masonic missionary and Bible societies were organized, but the scant records of the activities of these societies suggest intra-Masonic opposition to their establishment from the beginning. For example, the Grand Lodge of North Carolina suggested that aid might come from local lodges, with the significant Masonic proviso that the Bibles they recommend distributing "shall be *without note or comment*—the object being not to inculcate the opinions of a sect, but to *diffuse the principles of the Prince of Peace*."[79] The caution of the southern Grand Lodges was similar to the reaction of the Grand Lodges in other sections of the country.

Some of the Masonic lodges in New England became involved in helping Bible societies. As early as 1815 St. Paul's Lodge in Litchfield had voted "the sum of $50.00 to be given

[78] Bodo, *Protestant Clergy*, pp. 85–86. During that year, in an independent effort, Elias Boudinot helped to establish and became first president of the American Society for Ameliorating the Condition of the Jews. Its object was to help convert Jews to come to America and provide the land and tools for an agricultural settlement for them to people. Ibid., p. 86. The society had been organized as a Society for the Evangelization of the Jews, but, after the New York state legislature had refused to charter it on the grounds that the state constitution prohibited the proselytizing of citizens, the name had been changed, though not the purpose. A. E. Thompson, *A Century of Jewish Missions* (Chicago, 1902), p. 228.

[79] "Masonry and Christianity," *The Amaranth, or Masonic Garland*, June 1828, p. 78.

to the Foreign Missionary Society for translating the Holy Bible into foreign languages & for *no other purpose*."[80] In 1818, the Masters of the ninth Masonic district in Massachusetts asked the Grand Lodge of the state to appropriate money to translate, print, and distribute the Bible. Although the Grand Lodge found that it could not comply with their request because of lack of funds, it did issue an endorsement of the "universal diffusion" of the Bible as "our best, our only sure and safe guide, through the obscurity of this mortal sojourn, to regions of light ineffable and bliss eternal."[81] The members of the committee in this way testified to their personal endorsement of evangelical endeavors, but they just as clearly shifted supportive activity to individual and local, rather than central and official, initiative.

Antimission Masons were obviously present in all sections of the country, but the record of their activities is preserved uniquely in Connecticut. The first evidence of Masonic antimission sentiment can be found in the minutes of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut meeting in New Haven on October 14, 1818. Oliver Wolcott, Jr., newly elected as governor of the state and Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, presided. After the routine business, the Grand Master introduced the subject of raising money in the lodges "for the purpose of aiding the Foreign Bible Society in the translation and distribution of the Holy Scriptures in heathen countries." Although the "importance and utility" of such activities were lauded, the Grand Lodge voted that plans were not "sufficiently matured" for them to act and the matter was thus discreetly dropped.[82]

[80] A. William Pruner, *History of Saint Paul's Lodge No. 11, F. & A.M., Litchfield, Connecticut, 1781–1931* (Hartford, 1932), pp. 27–28.

[81] "Masonry and Christianity," p. 78.

[82] Storer, *Records*, p. 298. Menzies Raynor was Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge at this time. In a book published two years before, Raynor had taken a vigorous stand against the rising evangelical spirit of Connecticut Calvinism. *A Dissertation upon Extraordinary Awakenings, or Reli-*

The Grand Lodge appeared to have successfully sidestepped the issue, or left it for local settlement by the lodges.

Yet social pressures continued to weigh on Masonry as millennial expectations in the new republic spawned missionary efforts by almost every denomination, organizational monuments to the evangelical thrust of American religious thought. By 1821 the Episcopal Church had formed its own Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, and its agents were soliciting contributions in the larger parishes of the Diocese of Connecticut.[83] A few years later, when the Friends of the Missionary Society of Connecticut urged the General Association of Congregational Churches to make extraordinary efforts to raise funds "among the people of their connections," several lodges around the state responded to their appeal.[84] Yet resistance to Masonry as another denomination must have persisted because in Hiram Lodge in New Haven the pro- and antimission Masons soon came into open conflict.

On July 13, 1822, a notice, signed "Hiram," appeared in several of the New Haven newspapers inviting interested Masons to help form a Masonic Palestine missionary society. After some discussion about whether "a majority of the Masonic brethren of this city should be in favour of the measure," the group decided to write a constitution first, and then to solicit individual subscribers. In this way they avoided requiring a majority vote of support by the lodge itself. By January 6, 1823, the constitution was written and adopted,

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gious Stirs; Conversion, Regeneration, Renovation, and a Change of Heart; Conference Meetings, Extraordinary Gifts in Extempore Prayer; Evangelical Preaching, &c, &c. (New Haven, 1816).

[83] Robert Earnest Holzhammer, "The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society: The Period of Expansion and Development, 1823–35," *Historical Magazine Protestant Episcopal Church* (December 1971), pp. 367–368.

[84] Congregational Churches of Connecticut, *Proceedings of the General Association of Connecticut, June, 1822* (Hartford, 1822), p. 28. The Barkhamsted Lodge voted fifteen dollars to the Foreign Missionary Society in April of 1822.

and officials had been elected. The purpose of the organization was stated in the first article of the constitution: "Whereas the subscribers entertain a high sense of the utility and importance of associations for diffusing the Holy Scriptures among benighted heathen people, and having a particular desire to promote the happiness of our Jewish brethren, and others in Palestine . . . we do agree to form ourselves into a society to be called the New-Haven Palestine Missionary Society, the sole object of which shall be to raise funds to be paid to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, to be by them appropriated exclusively for the above object."[85] The response of the officers of Hiram Lodge to their organization was immediate, vigorous, and angry.

In a "special communication" in February, a committee was appointed to investigate the "character of the New-Haven Masonic Palestine Missionary Society." Later that month they reported that "strong objections" had been voiced both before and after the society was organized, because by meeting in the lodge room, and by using the word *Masonic* in their name, the society seemed to imply Masonic consent, and even Masonic sponsorship. However, the committee found that the society was "in some sense obnoxious to the principles of the Order." They pointed out:

> It is a fundamental principle that Masonry knows no distinction of sect or party, but stands on the broad basis of universal tolerance, acknowledging no creed or faith but a belief and trust in the one only and true God, benevolence and philanthropy being keystones of the arch which supports the structure. . . . The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions is known to be sectarian;—it is attached to a denomination not universally acknowledged or approved—the principles it inculcates are disseminated only by Missionaries of its own sect— . . . and

[85] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, Archives, "Circular," signed M. A. Durand, April 21, 1823.

> has no better claim to Masonic support than similar institutions of any other denomination or sect.[86]

No clearer statement of the fundamental issue could have been made. Hiram Lodge No. 1 printed and distributed the report to every lodge in the state and to all of the officers of the Grand Lodge.

The New-Haven Palestine Missionary Society responded with a long defense that they also distributed to all the lodges and all the Grand Lodge officers. They claimed to have been inspired by the fact that the missionaries themselves were Masons, and they were inspired by Masonic missionary societies that had been formed in other places to support them. It was known that "in the eastern part of the state, there are a number of Masonic Bible Societies formed, or forming," and that there were others in western Connecticut and Massachusetts as well.[87] Among them, they might have listed the Windham County Masonic Bible Society, which was about to involve the members of Putnam Lodge in the same kind of basic decision about the relationship of Masonry and religious missionary efforts that had divided members of Hiram Lodge.

[86] Ibid., "Circular," signed Wm. H. Ellis, February 28, 1823. There were other kinds of objections to the society, directed to its purpose as much as format. It was argued, for example, that Masons were already committed to dispense charity to needy brethren: "We have among us as many poor and distressed brethren, widows, and orphans who have much stronger claims upon our bounty than our Jewish Brethren, the heathen, or unknown strangers in foreign lands—who, however much they may need the bread of eternal life, enjoy a greater share of temporal blessings than many who surround us." Ibid.

[87] Ibid., "Circular," M. A. Durand, April 21, 1823. Aaron Bancroft in *A Discourse before the Worcester Society for Ameliorating the Condition of the Jews* (Worcester, 1824), claimed that at least 150 auxiliary institutions had been formed to help Parsons and Fisk and other missionaries in the Middle East. Bodo, *Protestant Clergy*, p. 87. No records of Masonic missionary activity seem to survive in the archives of the ABCFM.

On February 8, 1823, the Olive Branch Council of Select Masters, an organization of higher degrees of Masonry than those offered in the basic lodges, requested help from the lodges in northeastern Connecticut in setting up a Masonic missionary society. They intended to form a society "whose object shall be to ameliorate the condition of the Jews by sending them the Holy Book of Scriptures."

> The general spirit of philanthropy . . . calls upon us to awake from our slumbers to demonstrate, by active benevolence, that when we speak of Masonry, we mean something more than the gratification of the Epicure—Where are the descendants of those Master Builders, who rendered Mount Moriah the religious centre of the world? To the Jewish Nation we are indebted for all that is ancient, judicious and distinct in Masonry. From them under the great *I AM*, we derive all we know of the history of man and the will of Heaven, anterior to the advent of the long promised Messiah.[88]

Since Masons were heirs of the events of the Old Testament, it was at least as appropriate for Masons to send missionaries to the Jews as for the ABCFM to do so. However, the members of Putnam Lodge, after duly noting the arguments, voted "not to send delegates to Brooklyn."[89] The lodge may have received the circular letter from Hiram Lodge about the controversy in New Haven in time to use it in their deliberations on the invitation.

Representatives of the Olive Branch Council of Canterbury, Trinity Chapter of Windham, Warren Chapter of Pom-

[88] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, Archives, "Circular Letter from Olive Branch Council," February 8, 1823.

[89] Ibid., MSS, Minutes, II, April 1823, 28. April 24 reports that communication was received from Hiram Lodge No. 1 of New Haven relative to the Masonic Palestine Missionary Society and the Secretary ordered to report the concurrence of the lodge in their disapproval of the organization.

fret, and Moriah Lodge of Canterbury met in Brooklyn and proceeded to form the Windham County Masonic Bible Society.[90] Their procedures and their constitution seemed designed to forestall the kinds of criticism that Hiram Lodge had levied against the New-Haven Palestine Missionary Society. In the first place, they assembled as properly designated representatives. They declared in their constitution that they were organizing for a Masonic purpose: "the extention of the empire of virtue" through the distribution of "the Holy Book of Scriptures among the Jews, in and near the Ancient city of Jerusalem." Finally, to circumvent sectarian association, they named their own agents for receiving Masonic contributions: the Reverend Pliny Fisk and the Reverend Isaac Bird, "now at Jerusalem."[91] They took no notice of the reason their representatives were at Jerusalem, namely, that they were the missionaries of the ABCFM.

The members of Putnam Lodge must have heard about the successful organization of the missionary effort as the Windham County Masonic Bible Society from the three delegates from Warren Chapter, two of whom were officers of the new society, and all of whom were also members of Putnam. In June that year they celebrated the Saint John's Day festival with the Chapter and would have had ample opportunity for personal discussions about it.[92] There is no record of such

[90] Ibid., Archives, "Circular Letter," from Windham County Masonic Bible Society, May 19, 1823. The constitution they wrote at this meeting did not provide for a very active organization. There was to be one annual meeting for the election of officers and the payment of dues. Membership of the organization was confined to the Council of Select Masters in the area, the chapters of Royal Arch Masons, lodges, and "any association of individual brethren when the body to which they belong is not a member." "Constitutions of the Windham County Masonic Bible Society." The article on membership thus neatly provided for individual Masons from the Putnam Lodge area, even if the lodge itself did not participate.

[91] Ibid., "Constitutions of the Windham County Masonic Bible Society."

[92] Ibid., Minutes, II, April 1823.

discussion, of course, but at the next meeting of the Putnam Lodge in September of 1823, the members voted to send a delegate "to Brooklyn" and appropriated twenty dollars for dues.[93] At the next recorded meeting of Putnam Lodge, in April of 1824, the lodge reversed itself and voted "to withdraw from the Windham County Bible Society"—without comment.[94] The only way to explain that vote is by analogy to the controversy that had rocked Hiram Lodge in New Haven during the previous year.

The resolution of this conflict is in the records of the Charitable Society of Windham County, which later included many of those Masons who had wished to spread the gospel. The Charitable Society of Windham County had been formed in 1818 to include members of any other religious or charitable society. The society was "designed to aid any or all of those institutions in our county, the design and tendency of which are the promotion of the cause of Christ, as respecting either the knowledge or practice of the Christian religion."[95] Women thronged in as members. In 1825, just after the last known meeting of the Windham Masonic Bible Society, the Charitable Society decided to change its name and purpose to become the Auxiliary Foreign Mission and Charitable Society of Windham County. The names of Darius Matthewson and Asa May, members of Putnam Lodge and sponsors of the apparently defunct Masonic Bible Society, appeared among the active members. For women active in such organizations the recent history of the Masonic Bible Society must have suggested some divergence between the Masonic and the Christian interpretations of the evangelical imperative, which might have raised some doubt about the nature of the fraternity's moralistic universalism.

[93] Ibid., Minutes, II, September 1823.

[94] Ibid., Minutes, II, April 1824.

[95] Connecticut Congregational House, MSS, Records of the Charitable Society of Windham County (Conn.), 1818, pp. 4, 21.

In Windham County some Masons thought that the universal benevolence of the churches offered new opportunity and new purpose to Masonry. That subgroup within the Masonic membership was defeated, and those Masons affiliated with a specifically religious organization for doing their good work. Most Masons, especially when they had time to consider the implications of a church affiliation, declined to help the denominational efforts and insisted upon maintaining the suprareligious character of Masonry. Masonic distinctions between suprareligious missionary effort and interdenominational missionary effort put Masons, as such, outside the ecumenicalism of the orthodox Connecticut churches. The wariness of the religious part of these communities about the Masonic funeral rites had also emphasized the differences in style and philosophy between those subcommunities and the Masons. The orthodox clergy usually did not sanction Masonry by their membership, but the popularity of the lodge and the clergy's own conception of their role forestalled specific confrontations. The lodges grew because they united members of a growing subculture, an alternative to Connecicut's theocratic tradition. Wilson Carey McWilliams named the reasons for Masonic growth: "Behind the violent moods of the time, its millennial hopes and apocalyptic forebodings, lay the desire of men to discover some way to dignity and personal importance in the new world, some fraternity sufficient to enable man to be himself."[96]

[96] Wilson Carey McWilliams, *The Idea of Fraternity in America* (Berkeley, 1973), p. 228.

VI

Masonry, Manners, and Morality

Freemasons as moral educators found themselves in harmony with their time in Jacksonian America. Morality was, as one observer put it, "the cant and crack word" of society: "If you go to our fashionable churches, you will hear the fashionable clergyman preach 'morality'; if you visit a private gentleman's house, he is sure to entertain you with 'morality' if you attend a public meeting, the 'moral' speaker will address his 'moral' fellow-citizens on the subject of 'public morals.' . . . Morality seems to be the great lever of society; the difficulty only consists in finding the fulcrum."[1] Freemasonry rested its morality on the fulcrums of virtue and charity, Masonically defined. Masons were told that, in the course of time, "the mechanical branch of this institution gradually yielded to the moral." Freemasonry had become a "moral science," enjoined to "teach and inforce the observance of piety and benevolence."[2] However, it dispensed its benefits and communicated its knowledge of morality secretly and only to a self-selected group.

The fraternity bestowed charity and enforced its standards of virtue according to its own definitions. Also, it was a fraternity. Its exclusion of women became increasingly important in proportion to the narrowing and refining of the roles of

[1] Francis J. Grund, *Aristocracy in America* (New York, 1959), p. 205.

[2] "Extract from the Rev. Mr. Beede's Sermon," *The Freemason's Magazine and General Miscellany*, May 1811, p. 92.

middle- and upper-class women as the standard-bearers of morality. The exclusive and sex-specific characteristics of Masonic morality continually bred an unorganized resentment among those outside of the fraternity, which sometimes coalesced into articulate opposition.

Morality and Female Delicacy

In the early nineteenth century, women were described in much of the literature available to them as custodians of social morality, urged "to save the world by means of the family."[3] However, women were excluded from Masonic membership even though the lodges also were purveyors of moral education. In Anderson's *Constitutions*, the unadorned specification, "No Women," provided the bar.[4] Masonic writers explained in detail why such an association was a fraternity. They often used other male organizations, such as the guilds, army, monasteries, or government hierarchies, as the precedent, but, unlike those other organizations, the Freemasons often protested too much.[5] Their protestations were responsive to the fact that women tended to oppose the idea of a fraternity, especially one that took upon itself a separate system of moral education.[6] Since Masonic litera-

[3] William E. Bridges, "Family Patterns and Social Values in America, 1825–1875," *American Quarterly*, XVII (Spring 1965), 10. See also Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," *American Quarterly*, XVIII (Summer 1966), 161–175, and Ann Douglas, "Heaven Our Home: Consolation Literature in the Northern United States, 1830–1880," *Death in America*, ed. David E. Stannard (Philadelphia, 1975).

[4] [James Anderson], *The Constitutions of the Free Masons Containing the History, Charges, Regulations, &c. of that Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity* (London, 1723), p. 51.

[5] Wellins Calcott, *A Candid Disquisition of the Principles and Practices of the Most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, Together with some Strictures on the Origin, Nature and Design of that Institution* (London and Boston, 1772), p. 38.

[6] Lionel Tiger, *Men in Groups* (New York, 1970), pp. 112–118; Abner

ture in post-Revolutionary America was still derived from English sources, one can trace the changing force of women's objections to the fraternity from England in the first quarter of the eighteenth century to America in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

Within a few years after the establishment of the Grand Lodge of England, women's antipathy to Masonry was almost assured. In the *Freemason's Accusation and Defense*, an antimasonic tract in the form of six letters between a father and a son, the father tries to dissuade his son from joining a lodge on the ground that women considered Freemasons the "utter Enemies of the Fair Sex" and held them "in the greatest Abhorrence." "Your Mother and Sisters have wept incessantly since the Receipt of your Letter," he continued, and his son's fiancée "vows she will die before she will have a *Free-Mason*."[7] The unexplained fervor of women's antipathy to Masonry did not seem to detract from Masonry's appeal for the son.

In 1762 the publication of *Jachin and Boaz* began to give women grounds for believing that Masonry was specifically antifemale as well as exclusively male. The author described the oath-taking ceremony of the Apprentice as one requiring his coat be unbuttoned "and the point of a compass placed upon his naked left breast," as a calculated precaution: "This is done lest a woman should offer herself. If we believe the Irish, there is a lady at this time in Ireland, who has gone through the whole ceremony, and is as good a Mason as any of them."[8] The story of the Honorable Elizabeth St. Leger,

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Cohen, "The Politics of Ritual Secrecy," *Man*, the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, VI, no. 3 (September 1971). 434.

[7] Douglas Knoop, G. P. Jones, and Douglas Hamer, *Early Masonic Pamphlets* (Manchester, 1945), pp. 158–159.

[8] *Jachin and Boaz, or An Authentic Key to the Door of Freemasonry, Ancient and Modern, by a Gentleman Belonging to Jerusalem Lodge* (New York, 1808). p. 17.

daughter of the Viscount Doneraille, who overheard the lodge ceremonies, and so was led "beautiful and terrified" through the initiation ceremony binding her by oath not to divulge their secrets, became one of the favorite legends of modern Masonry.[9] The frequent rehearsal of that single titillating exception powerfully reinforced male solidarity.

In indirect response to women's hostility, Masons emphasized that their association was a benevolent one, protecting family life. It assisted the widows and orphans of Masons. It guarded the integrity of Masonic families. They reminded themselves and others that a Mason was charged, according to their ancient forms, to "Respect the Chastity of his Master's wife and his fellow's concubyne." Other versions of the Masonic charges directed him to forbear in "designs" upon "your fellow's wife" or "his daughter or her servant."[10] Although such charges seemed to protect all the familial interests of fellow Masons and were cited as an article of their virtue, their in-group morality did not seem to allay the fears of women. Wellins Calcott lamented to his English and American readers that "the ladies censure us with all the severity their delicate minds are capable of," in spite of the high moral purposes of the fraternity.[11]

By the Revolutionary period the suggestion came from England that the time might be ripe to make some concessions to feminine hostility. Capt. George Smith, Provincial Grand Master for Kent, addressed his book, widely read on both sides of the Atlantic, "to Mankind in General, and to the Ladies in Particular." Smith took the radical position that

[9] Retold in *The Amaranth, or Masonic Garland*, August 1828, pp. 145–149. See also Arthur Robert Waite, *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry (Ars Magna Latomorum) and of Cognate Instituted Mysteries; Their Rites, Literature, and History*, 2 vols., rev. ed. (New York, 1970), I, 17–18; II, 96–108.

[10] United Grand Lodge of England, *Grand Lodge: 1717–1967* (Oxford, 1967), p. 30.

[11] Calcott, *Candid Disquisition*, p. 38.

women ought to be allowed to form lodges of their own. He pointed to the formation of such lodges in Germany and France.[12] There was "no law ancient or modern that forbids the admission of the fair sex amongst the Society of Free and Accepted Masons, and custom only has hitherto prevented their initiation," Smith claimed, blithely disregarding the *Constitutions*. The important question was whether membership in Masonry was an appropriate form of activity for women, or a beneficial one. On balance, it did not seem to him "that a woman will be rendered less acceptable in the eyes of the world, or less qualified to perform any part of her duty in it, by employing a small allotment of her time in the cultivation of her mind by studying *free-masonry*." He thought that female minds were "as capable of improvement as those of the other sex." More important, membership could forestall their opposition. The study of Masonry would provide women with a constructive occupation, the lack of which was "too fatal not to be avoided."[13] Smith therefore urged the advantages of women's lodges on behalf of the women, on behalf of society, and on behalf of the fraternity.

In America the wooing of women's approval continued as a minor but persistent theme on public occasions, although the admission of women was never publicly considered. On the contrary, Masonic efforts to elicit tolerance, if not support, were all couched in language that emphasized the distance between the social roles of men and women and maintained the validity of a solely male association dedicated to morality. This was done in three ways. First, a few ornate and flattering explanations, or "apologies," for the exclusion of women were elaborated, and appeared with minor variations in most

[12] George Smith, *The Use and Abuse of Free-Masonry, a Work of Greatest Utility to the Brethren of the Society, to Mankind in General, and to the Ladies in Particular* (London, 1783). See also Marianne Monestier, *Les Sociétés Secrètes Feminines*, Avant-propos de Pierre Geyraud (Paris, 1963), pp. 102–165.

[13] Smith, *Use and Abuse of Free-Masonry*, pp. 361–364.

Masonic speeches. Second, the masculinity of the organization was reinforced by the development of a literature of drinking songs for the times of "refreshment" after the lodge meetings, some of them inappropriate for general celebrations. Third, in the wake of the agitation about the Illuminati, the Masons specifically solicited public feminine support. Some of these efforts had unintended results.

Masons tried to win the approval and support of women through direct appeal to their own sympathetic role as moral standard setters. In the period between 1800 and 1835 several Masonic magazines were published, and two of them were addressed to women as well as to Masons. One, *The Freemason's Magazine and General Miscellany*, published in Boston in 1811 and 1812, contained a section entitled "The Ladies' Toilette" in every issue. The other was *The Masonic Miscellany and Ladies' Literary Magazine*, published in Kentucky from 1821 to 1823. The editor of the *Masonic Miscellany* explained his effort to reach a dual audience: "Females, it is known, are not permitted to share in the labours or responsibilities of the Lodge," he reminded his readers, "and have therefore *sometimes* been found to entertain feelings of hostility or jealousy toward the institution." Nevertheless, Masons were devoted to "the dignity, welfare, and happiness of the female sex," he said:

> Should there be any among the female readers of this publication, hostile to the interests or even doubtful of the utility of our order, we trust they will sometimes turn their attention to the first pages of the *Miscellany*, and there become familiar with our principles and objects. If, after doing this, they should still be surprized, that an institution so eminently calculated to inculcate the virtues, to excite the feelings and to promote the designs, peculiarly dear to the female heart, should be closed against those whose characters are most congenial with its tendency and object,

> we trust they will not, on that account, oppose the fraternity, nor question the utility of its practical results.

Freemasonry, they were assured, was intended "to afford protection and support to defenceless WOMAN, and to call forth in her behalf the best and the noblest exertions of MAN."[14] Masonry not only adopted but exaggerated the social distance between the sexes.

The difference in sex roles was summed up in one of the first issues of *The Freemason's Magazine*, among the stories and poems that all seemed designed to emphasize that "a woman's power, as well as her happiness, has no other foundations than her husband's esteem and love."[15] In one short paragraph God's "admirable partition of qualities between the sexes" was summarized, beginning with "Man is strong—Woman is beautiful" and ending with "Man is a being of justice—Woman of mercy."[16] In both the literary and Masonic sections of the magazine Masonic writers concluded that women were superior in virtue, but so weak in other attributes and capacities that Masonry was either unnecessary or inappropriate for them. Such Masonic apologies for the exclusion of women, developed around the turn of the nineteenth century, were based on ideas about the inherent complementarity of sex differences, but several other themes recur or combine in Masonic literature. The most frequent are the arguments that the ritual was inappropriate to women's delicacy, that its teachings were unnecessary because of their superior virtue, that their presence in a lodge would distract

[14] "Introductory Remarks," *The Masonic Miscellany and Ladies' Literary Magazine*, July 1821, pp. 3–4.

[15] "Maxims for Promoting Marital Happiness," *The Freemason's Magazine*, April 1811, p. 47.

[16] "Parallel of the Sexes," *Freemason's Magazine*, May 1811, p. 128. The celebration of the radically different innate intellectual and emotional characteristics of men and women was part of the ubiquitous socialization of women to their role as custodians of virtue.

or pervert "fraternal affection," and that Masonry benefited them in spite of their exclusion.

When Masons wished to avoid considering the question of women's attitudes toward Masonry, or theirs toward an androgynous Masonic membership, they usually quoted a set piece called "Dalcho's Elegant Apology to the Ladies." Dalcho explained that women were excluded from the fraternity only because of "our own weakness." If women were permitted in a lodge "love would oftentimes enter with them" causing jealousy and rivalry, and distracting the men from their business. Dalcho added the argument of the superior virtue of women to his argument about the weakness of men. "The feelings of women are more exquisitely fine," he said. "They require not the adventitious aid of mystic institutions to urge them to acts of charity and benevolence, nor the use of symbols to lead them to virtue. Their own hearts are the lodges in which virtue presides."[17] This argument was the preferred one of Simon Davis, Jr., in his orations to the members of Putnam Lodge.

Davis borrowed freely from Dalcho, emphasizing that there was a "proper line of demarcation" between the duties and employments of men and women: "The broils of political controversy, the agitations of military life, the turmoils of professional competition, the severe labors of the field and of the

[17] "Dalcho's Elegant Apology to the Ladies," *Masonic Miscellany*, January 1822, p. 256; Waite, *Encyclopedia*, I, 169–171. Dalcho was well known for his work on Scottish Rite degrees. The same catalogue mentioned here was widely circulated in non-Masonic publications. Robert E. Reigel quoted it from the *Galena Advertiser* of March 7, 1835, in *Young America: 1830–1840* (Norman, Okla., 1949), p. 218. A Fourierist periodical summarized the differences between the rational powers of men and the nonrational nature of women by listing under columns headed *Male* and *Female*: truth-love, knowledge-wisdom, ignorance-folly, history-poetry, labor-amusement, head-heart, laws-commandments, action-reaction, thinking-reflecting, justice-mercy, mind-soul, intellect-understanding, talent-genius, in Barbara Welter, "Anti-Intellectualism and the American Woman," *Mid-America*, XLVIII (October 1966), 265.

workshop, as well as most of those active pursuits which call the agent from the privacy of domestic life, are usually the lot of man. They would mar the delicacy, offend the retiring modesty, and interfere with the milder, though no less interesting engagements in which the virtuous woman so much delights."[18] Or, as another orator put it, the activities related to Masonic membership were "arduous labours" and as such were the "peculiar province" of males. A woman who would engage in them "forsakes her proper sphere of action."[19] Masonic exclusiveness worked for the best interests of women, it was argued: "The gavel, or the trowel would as ill become a woman's modesty, as the sword or bayonet; and the temples even of a masculine *Wolstonecraft* would feel uneasy if wreathed with laurels earned in battle."[20] Their virtue would be sullied and their superiority degraded, the orator assured them, if they engaged in activity so inappropriate. It was "the plan of Deity" that the "hardier sex" concern itself with the "advancement of female happiness, the protection of widows and orphans, and the defense of 'injured innocence'—all the tasks of Masonry."[21]

Alongside the Masonic literature, obviously designed to allay criticism by women, an informal literature of songs, slightly ribald for that time, also helped reenforce male solidarity. One Masonic writer assured his readers that "his best

[18] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "An Oration delivered at Pomfret June 26th, A.L. 5810, Before Moriah and Putnam Lodges at the Festival of St. John the Baptist by Br. Simon Davis, Jr.," pp. 16ff. These ideas were firmly buttressed by nineteenth-century medical orthodoxy. See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Woman and her Role in Nineteenth Century America," *Journal of American History*, LX, no. 2 (September 1973), 332–356, esp. 333, 353.

[19] "Brother Yates' Oration," *Masonic Miscellany*, April 1822, p. 362.

[20] "Extracts from a Masonic Sermon," *Freemason's Magazine*, September 1811, p. 412.

[21] "Extracts from the Honorable W. B. Rochester's Address," *Amaranth*, July 1829, p. 122.

efforts have been used to present a work free from vulgar and objectionable sentiments," pointing up that other Masonic songs or songbooks may not have been.[22] Yet even the songs with less "vulgar and objectionable" sentiments celebrated the exclusion of women. While Masonic orators worked out elaborate reasons for their exclusiveness based on superior female virtue, they sang after meetings, to the tune of "Derry-Down," a revisionist interpretation of Genesis, in which Satan set Eve to find the secrets of Masonry. She tried to accomplish her purpose by offering Adam an apple:

> [She] said to her Spouse, *My dear eat and be d——d.*
> But Adam astonished, like one struck with thunder,
> Beheld her from head to foot over with wonder,
> *Now you have done this thing Madam* said he
> *For your sake no women Free-Masons shall be.*[23]

Superior feminine sinfulness as well as superior feminine virtue could operate as the basis for the exclusion of women.

The musical literature suggested the Masons uneasiness about women's attitudes toward the fraternity in other ways as well. One can only wonder at the social pressures which would set a Connecticut Masonic lodge to singing an "Address to the Masonic Society—By a Woman."

> Although your secret's from us is hid,
> And in your lodge we are forbid,
> We'll not distrust, we'll not complain,
> While gently you do hold the reign.

So tuneful a celebration of women's approval would not seem

[22] Luke Eastman, in *Masonick Melodies, Being a Choice Selection of the Most Approved Songs, Duets, Glees, Catches, Cannons, Hymns, Odes, Dirges, and Choruses, Appropriate to All Masonick Occasions, The Whole Set to Music* (Boston, 1818), p. iii.

[23] William Smith, ed., *Ahiman Rezon Abridged and Digested: . . . A Sermon Preached at Christ Church, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1783), p. 118.

necessary if women did not in fact, "distrust" or "complain."[24]

Although all the arguments of Masonry in post-Revolutionary America reenforced and reimposed the idea of female inadequacy, the special insistence of the literature—the reason for its existence at all—was the Masonic disclaimer that they usurped the special province of superior virtue that had been assigned women in the great dualism of those times. Women nevertheless seem to have reacted negatively to Masonry within the limits imposed by their roles. Mrs. Hannah Crocker's pamphlet on Masonry in 1815 suggests the complexity of women's responses.

The Reverend Dr. Thaddeus Mason Harris, a colleague of Dr. Jedidiah Morse in the Association of the Congregational Churches in Massachusetts, and his opponent in many theological battles during the first decade of the nineteenth century, enlisted the aid of Hannah Mather Crocker in combating antimasonic sentiments. The Reverend Dr. Harris was a devoted Masonic historian, speaker, and pamphleteer; Mrs. Crocker was one of the small bluestocking society of Boston.[25] Dr. Harris arranged for the publication of his correspondence with Mrs. Crocker on Masonry to show how one woman could be "superior to all jealousy" in spite of the exclusion of her sex.[26]

[24] Eliphalet Mason, *The Complete Pocket Song Book* (Northampton, Mass., 1802). Joshua Coit, for example, found his wife "seriously & unalterably discomposed" about his Masonic activity. Chester M. Destler, *Joshua Coit, American Federalist 1758–1798* (Middletown, Conn., 1962), p. 65.

[25] Edward T. and Janet W. James, eds., *Notable American Women* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), pp. 406–407; William Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit; or Commemorative Notices of Distinguished American Clergymen of Various Denominations*, 9 vols. (New York, 1857–1869), VIII, 215–220. Among Harris's published works were *Masonic Emblems Explained* (Boston, 1796) and *A Few Notes of the History of Free Masonry in Several Parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa* (Boston, 1798).

[26] [Hannah Mather Crocker], *Letters on Masonry by a Lady from Boston* (Boston, 1815), p. 4.

Mrs. Crocker prefaced her evaluation with the dry disclaimer that as a woman she was commenting "on a subject we are indeed debarred from investigating." She had once looked into the principles of Masonry, "not from any wish of prying into hidden mysteries, but from motives of benevolence, if possible to quiet the minds of several of my female friends, who were very anxious, on account of their husbands joining a lodge, lest it should injure their moral and religious sentiments," as well as disturbing "domestick happiness or comfort." She had reassured her friends that the principles of the fraternity were good, "if founded on a rational plan." Every benevolent institution she thought "has a happy effect on society at large."[27] Her reservations were related to the distance between theory and practice in any such association.

Dr. Harris, the voice of "Inquirer," asked the "Lady from Boston" to consider the religious effects of Masonry. Mrs. Crocker replied, with her usual air of disinterested moderation, that Masonry "may have a good effect on the members, if they will make a wise improvement of their boasted light and knowledge." It might even lead them to true religion. When true religion prevailed, she concluded, they would "all unite in one Grande Lodge; where, I trust, *even females* will be admitted to join in celebrating the praise of him who died that we might rise to bliss and happiness!"[28] The elaborate evenhandedness of her responses and her persistent references to the exclusion of women seemed to satisfy Dr. Harris. Indeed, he converted Mrs. Crocker's faint praise into what he wished she had in fact said.

Behind the measured responses of Mrs. Crocker lay an experience with Masonry that she recounted in her first letter,

[27] "I am sensible my friend, that the imprudence of some who style themselves Masons, had been a stumbling block to many; but in the light I view it, any other society might as well be productive of immorality as the masonic." Ibid., pp. 13, 10, 7, 14.

[28] Ibid., p. 19 [italics mine].

apologizing for the digression on "women's education." Many years before, she told Harris, she helped form and presided over "a *similar institution*, consisting of females only." They held lodge meetings, had their "*tokens*, *signs*, and *word*," and tried to follow "the original principles of true ancient masonry, as far as was consistent for the female character." They considered the fraternity "preeminent" and were treated by most Masons as "sisters," although this "gave umbrage to a few would-be-thought Masons."[29] The women had formed the society, Mrs. Crocker said, because of their desire for education and self-government. "[F]emale education was at a very low ebb." Women were considered "mere domestick animals and if women could even read and badly write their name it was thought enough for *them*," she reported. "But the aspiring female mind, could no longer bear a cramp to genius. They roused to thought, and clearly saw they were given by the wise author of nature, as not only helps-meet, but associates and friends, not slaves to man. I have reason to think this institution gave the first rise to female education in this town, and our sex a relish for improving the mind." Mrs. Crocker hoped to see "a revival of this, or a similar institution" among women, since it combined the cultivation of the mind with acts of charity and benevolence, and therefore seemed particularly appropriate for women who were even then beginning to be organized into societies for "beneficent purposes."[30]

A thoroughly private affair, their experiment was short-lived. Mrs. Crocker's letters gave testimony to the complexity of women's attitudes toward Masonry. Masonic apologies for

[29] Ibid., pp. 8, 9.

[30] Ibid., pp. 8–9; Gerda Lerner, "The Lady and the Mill Girl: Changes in the Status of Women in the Age of Jackson," *Mid Continent American Studies Journal*, x (September 1969), 11–13, discusses how the cult of true womanhood became a pervasive standard, accompanied by an increasing sense of "status deprivation."

male exclusiveness themselves demonstrate a need to justify a morality institution that was universal and yet reserved to males. Women were forestalled from objecting to the institution, or co-opted for its defense, because the Mason did dispense charity, and did try to enforce a system of morality. At a time when it was questionable for women to speak publicly on any topic, to object to charity and morality was unthinkable. In the course of the first decades of the nineteenth century, changing ideas in Connecticut society about social responsibility for benevolence and virtue moved women into increasingly self-conscious and public efforts to fulfill the duties enjoined by their role. Then, it can be argued, Masonry increasingly became an object of their concern. Its fraternalism deprived them of one of the few avenues of self-education and impinged on their increasingly specialized social assignment as the custodians of virtue and piety.[31]

Charity

One of the most vaunted claims for Freemasonry as a morality institution was that membership provided a far-flung network of mutual responsibility. Masons were told that charity was the "distinguishing characteristic of the Order." At his initiation, every Entered Apprentice was directed: "Above all, practice benevolence and charity; for by those virtues, Masons have been distinguished in every age and country."[32] The Masonic concept of charity differed in some

[31] For reasons related to the use of Masonry as a mechanism for "avoidance between man and wife" peculiar to Creole society in Freetown, Abner Cohen found that "[w]hile sharing with their husbands some of the benefits of Freemasonry, wives are annoyed by it." "The Politics of Ritual Society," p. 434. No matter what the cultural context, Freemasonry was clearly a "distancing" mechanism between men and women, potentially disruptive to the home and the growing cult of domesticity. See Douglas, "Heaven Our Home," p. 53.

[32] William Preston, *Illustrations of Masonry* (London, 1796), pp. 20, 47.

important ways from the charity enjoined upon the towns of Connecticut.

In general, Freemasonry provided a community defined by selective affiliation, while the towns of Connecticut provided local geographic communities defined by law. The lodge bestowed its charity in times of discrete, specific crisis, while the towns accepted continuous responsibility that functionally redefined charity as a burdensome civic duty. The charity of Freemasons was private and secret; that of the towns, a public concern. Under conditions of increasing social diversity and physical mobility after the turn of the nineteenth century, Masonic dedication to charity as part and proof of their commitment to morality was frankly and increasingly utilitarian, while the town and state governments increasingly sought to minimize or institutionalize their responsibility with respect to poverty and personal crisis. These differences can be traced in the histories of the New England townships in which the lodges operated as charitable agencies.

Many of the ideas and attitudes about charity in colonial New England were imported with the colonists. Even before settlement John Winthrop outlined the Puritan heritage of New England in his famous sermon "A Modell of Christian Charity." Inequality was the human condition, and God "hath so disposed of the Condicion of mankinde, as in all times some must be rich and some poore."[33] The idea that personal disaster was related to God's displeasure or represented retribution for sins sometimes braked sympathetic impulses or

[33] Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, eds., *The Puritans*, 2 vols. (New York, 1963), I, 195. According to Perry Miller, the English Puritan heritage of the seventeenth century had led to "a smug acceptance of economic inequality in a system where lesser grades had no other function in the cosmos than to let their benefactors be instruments of heaven." Perry Miller, *The Puritan Mind, From Colony to Province* (Boston, 1966), p. 401. Benevolence and charity described the harmony and good will that characterized this acquiescence. Benevolence or charity as alms, gifts, or substantive assistance to those in need, was a secondary meaning.

ready assistance. The divine plan provided opportunities for the rich to be paternally generous, and the poor filially grateful, in acquiescence to divine order.

The American experience somewhat modified English Puritan thought. Under changing economic and social conditions, religion tended to become more pietistic. The democratizing effect of both the Great Awakening and Second Great Awakening changed the commitment of the wealthy to "do good" from "half responsibility, half recreation" to "a broadly shared, genuinely popular avocation."[34] Like England, the local civil government was responsible for charity, in the sense of the relief of the poor and aged and ill.[35] The first general poor law in New England was enacted as early as 1673 in Connecticut and directed each town to take care of its own poor.[36]

By the end of the eighteenth century, the New England towns, carefully defining their community through laws and regulations about settlement, had assumed responsibility for

[34] Robert H. Bremner, *American Philanthropy* (Chicago and London, 1960), pp. 13, 21.

[35] The responsibilities of the town were defined by regulations about "settlement," or the acceptance by the town of a person's membership in it. According to law, the town officers were, *ex officio*, "overseers of the poor." A "principal part of the duty of the selectmen" was their responsibility to do whatever was necessary in providing for those who were lawfully settled in the town, whether they were residents of it at the time of their need or not, if they were "incapable of supporting themselves" and had no relatives who were "bound" to support them. Zephaniah Swift, *A System of Laws of the State of Connecticut*, 2 vols. (Windham, Conn., 1796), I, 119. See also Edward Warren Capen, *The Historical Development of the Poor Laws of Connecticut*, Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, XXII (New York, 1905). Capen's study remains the best legislative history of the state's provisions for the poor.

[36] Marcus W. Jernegan, *Laboring and Dependent Classes in Colonial America, 1607–1683: Studies of the Economic, Educational, and Social Significance of Slaves, Servants, Apprentices, and Poor Folk* (Chicago, 1931), p. 195.

"every case that can arise" of extreme want, and, according to Zephaniah Swift, everyone who was settled in a town knew "where to call for his bread in time of want." Swift was fully aware of the philosophical and social implications of this development: "The liberal and general provision of the law has in great measure, superseded the necessity of the exercise of the God-like virtue of charity," although there were still areas of "private distress" that called for "acts of generosity."[37] Poverty, whatever its cause, was generally assumed to be an endemic problem that had to be solved locally and routinely.[38]

In northeastern Connecticut, where, as one county historian put it, "everybody was poor," help from neighbors was warranted only by demonstrable and extreme need.[39] The subtly punitive tone of some of these arrangements was often balanced by clear neighborly concern. The records of the town of Ashford, for example, show many instances of arrangements designed to balance responsibility and frugality. A typical contract is that of Simeon Smith of Willington who agreed to keep Joseph Farnham's wife. The selectman carefully defined the agreement: "to board nurse and take care of

[37] Swift, *System of Laws*, I, 119, 121. See also Walter I. Trattner, *From Poor Law to Welfare State: A History of Social Welfare in America* (New York, 1974), pp. 34–38.

[38] David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (Boston, 1971), p. 26. By local regulations, or the decisions at town meetings, partial or total support was supplied by the town in various ways, depending on the ability of the needy poor to support themselves. In 1813 the towns were asked to provide workhouses for the able-bodied poor, the vagrant, and the vagabond who were sentenced there by the justice of the peace. The idea that poverty or personal disaster was related to an antisocial malingering persisted in all of these civil arrangements. Jernegan, *Laboring and Dependent Classes*, pp. 199–201.

[39] Richard M. Bayles, ed., *History of Windham County* (New York, 1889), p. 117. Bayles meant that in communities primarily made up of subsistence farmers, differences in wealth were not very great, and the line between poverty and need a shady one.

her in sickness and health and keep her cloathing as good at the years end as it is when he taken her and for her Labor and Service the sd. Smith doth agree to pay unto the Sd. Select Men or their successors twenty dollars and twenty-five cents at the end of the year and the Town doth agree if she should be sick so as not to be able to labor then the wages be deducted in proportion to the time she may lose and the sd. town to pay the Dr. Bill."[40] In such instances the person who had accepted a year's contract for care was not financially penalized for miscalculating costs. However, the careful computation of the extent of each person's dependency assured that only the minimal needs for survival would be supplied.[41] Poverty was defined as primarily the inability to work, and the right to public assistance was jealously guarded against abuse.[42]

[40] Ashford, Town Clerk, MSS, Town Record Book, 1810–1822 (B), 1816. On the other hand, Widow Joanna Bowen and Allen Bosworth apparently needed more than a home, and the town arranged for others to "board, nurse and cloathe" them at the rate of ninety-eight cents a week for Bosworth, who was able to work a little, and three dollars a week for Bowen, who probably needed help as well as support. Ibid., 1815.

[41] The towns had preventive measures for poverty in a system of guardianship. Selectmen were responsible by law for the "affairs and management of all persons in their want by idleness, misalignment, or bad husbandry" they were to appoint an overseer "to advise, direct or order" the person. The inhabitant was then "rendered incapable of making any contract, without the consent of such overseer." If this supervision "fail to reform such person" the next step was a civil action. Swift, *System of Laws*, I, 122–123. In the town of Brooklyn as many as four such appointments for men "likely by mismanagement & bad husbandry to become chargeable to the Town" were made in one year. Brooklyn, Town Clerk, MSS, Account Book, 1806.

[42] A town meeting in Pomfret voted to appoint an agent to see if there was "any necessity for the town against Asa Grosvenor for bringing one of the poor of the town of Ashford into this town, who is now become a town charge." Pomfret, Town Clerk, MSS, Doings of the Town, II, September 1795.

Equally important, the publicity involved in the town's settlement of the terms of its support might require public financial disclosures by relatives. An assembly act of 1715 had provided that parents, grandparents, and children were responsible for one another under penalty of fine.[43] In Pomfret, a town vote to "furnish support for Mr. Stephen Williams and his wife for the present" is followed by a resolution directing the selectmen to "call upon the Children of Mr. Stephen Williams to furnish support for said Williams and his wife."[44] The records of the town of Thompson include items like $43.33 to Winter "for keeping his son," and $51.73 to Stephen Teft "for keeping his grandmother & sundry goods."[45] The towns as agencies of charity were also, in part, supervisors of family relationships.

The particular care with which each case of need was handled was time-consuming, public, and expensive, and the towns constantly sought to simplify the procedure.[46] In the decade before the Revolution, most of the towns in the area tried to establish separate homes for the poor that would also be used as workhouses for the idle or the able-bodied poor, or idle. None of these survived the Revolution. Nevertheless, every few years thereafter the towns voted on some way of institutionally caring for or providing work for the poor and

[43] Bayles, *Windham County*, I, 117.

[44] Pomfret, Town Clerk, MSS, Doings of the Town, I, September 1801.

[45] Thompson, Town Clerk, MSS, Town Proceedings, II, December 3, 1819.

[46] Medical care for the indigent was part of civic charitable responsibility. Pomfret, for example, decided to "imploy Doctor Jared Warner a Physician for the Poor of the town in all cases the year ensuing upon the terms of paying his taxes of every kind—in case he will do it for that." Pomfret, Town Clerk, MSS, Town Doings, II, 1791. In Brooklyn usually the poor called on the doctor they preferred, and the doctors were reimbursed for their care and their prescriptions. Thus Widow Withy was comforted in her illness with deliveries of opium and tobacco, and the bills forwarded to the town. Brooklyn, Town Clerk, MSS, Account Book, 1821.

idle, always without success.[47] The towns had to balance their acknowledged civic duty to the poor and aged and ill against the heritage of ideas that related poverty to antisocial behavior and personal inadequacy. Civic charity, often tempered by overtones of disapproval, tended to be minimally defined. Under such conditions there was a social need for the charitable mission of Masonry.

Freemasonry, which had been formed in the English latitudinarian tradition, differed from Puritanism in its premises and conclusions about charity. "Men, in whatever situation they are placed, are still, in great measure, the same," Preston said. He pointed out that all were "exposed to similar dangers and misfortunes" and all, therefore, ought to be "actuated by the same motives and interests" that included the compassion born of a "mutual chain of dependence" throughout the animal kingdom and the human species. Masons did not acquiesce in disaster or poverty as divine retribution or divine distribution, but they were "shocked at misery under every form and appearance." They were associated to circumvent the "evils incident to human nature."[48]

Masonic membership provided a community of mutual responsibility that transcended the physical and psychological

[47] Early in the century institutional care was always equated with economical care. For example, in 1820, Lemuel Ingalls did a survey of the town poor for Pomfret. There were seventeen on his list, three of whom required only partial care. Ten of them were between the ages of sixty-six and more than eighty. One of the others was "totally incapable of performing some kind of labour," and a woman and her nineteen-year-old son were "under parr," but worked as much as they could. A farm to house them all was proposed, but Ingalls found that the operation of a farm could not be expected to assist the town in the expenses of their care since the amount of land needed to feed them would require a great deal more labor than "Paupers are able perform." Connecticut State Library, Archives, Pomfret MSS, Report on the Town Poor, 1820. See also Pomfret, Town Clerk, MSS, Doings of the Town, II, April 1821.

[48] Preston, *Illustrations*, pp. 20–21.

boundaries of the local community. The "blessings" of membership were "diffused with the institution throughout the habitable earth." Also, Masonic charity was broadly defined: it aimed to "soothe calamity, to alleviate misfortune, to compassionate misery, and to restore peace to the troubled mind."[49] A Mason was thus assured of "friends in every clime" to whom he could apply for help. The reciprocal rights and duties of Masons were not, of course, unlimited. "You are not charged to do beyond your Ability, only to prefer a poor Brother, that is a good Man and true, before any other poor people in the same Circumstances,"[50] the constitution said.

Masonic charity was secret unlike civic charity whose administration made the entire town privy to the needs of each recipient. The derogation of character implicit in acknowledging poverty must have compounded suffering. In contrast the Masons asked, "What has the world to do with private transactions whether a widow, an orphan, or a pilgrim has obtained relief?"[51] The secrecy of membership ensured the privacy of Masonic charity, and was regarded by the fraternity as another aspect of a superior morality.

How Masonic charity did in fact operate can be pieced together from the fragmentary sources. The records of Putnam Lodge show that the fraternity upon occasion distributed money for special and crisis needs that the towns could not have been expected to meet. For example, ten dollars was voted to procure the "removal of the corpse of the wife and child of Br. Thomas Lawson from Providence and inter them in Woodstock."[52] The town might have paid for the interment of the bodies in Providence, if the merchant from Ashford had

[49] Ibid., p. 53. [50] [Anderson], *Constitutions*, pp. 55–56.

[51] "Brother T. Cary's Oration of Masonry," *Freemason's Magazine*, September 1811, p. 410; "Charity the First of Masonic Duties," *Freemason's Magazine*, May 1811, p. 84.

[52] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Minutes, II, February 6, 1828.

pleaded indigence and he and his family had been properly settled, but the expense of moving the bodies would have seemed unnecessary. Other entries describe Masonic aid in time of crisis or calamity. In 1808 the lodge voted to give thirty-five dollars "to our much distressed but worthy Br. Calvin Eaton."[53] In 1819 Sally Lewis wrote to thank the lodge for their donation of ten dollars as "no small tribute of respect paid to the memory of my departed companion; nor do I deem it a small token of regard shown for my welfare."[54] The lodge voted twenty-five dollars to Brother Samuel Fenner in 1832 for a loss "lately sustained by an act of Providence, he having had his barn and hay burned by lightning."[55] The Masonic help could be summoned for emergencies rather than indigence. However, until about 1827, the record of charitable activity by the lodge is sparse. Whether because of increased activity, better reporting, or a more self-conscious and conspicuous concern for charity in response to antimasonic sentiment, the number of entries in the lodge records between 1826 and 1835 showing donations of five to ten dollars to widows and brethren in need increased significantly.

The records of charity in the lodges are sparse and fragmentary partly because charitable donations before the 1820s were often left to the discretion of the lodge officers. A vote as early as 1804 suggests that the lodge reimbursed the Master for money paid out of his pocket to a distressed brother, and, in 1828, it was formally voted that the Master be empowered to dispense charity if it did not exceed five dollars.[56] Some of the charitable acts of the lodges are hidden by the bookkeeping. For example, Federal Lodge in Watertown purchased a cow for the use of a widow and her children, and the cow was

[53] Ibid., Minutes, I, 1808.

[54] Ibid., letter from Sally Lewis to Walter Janes, n.d.

[55] Ibid., Minutes, II, September 7, 1831.

[56] Ibid., Minutes, II, November 7, 1804; April 30, 1828.

carried on its books for several years as a lodge asset.[57] Then, too, the records of another important function of the lodge seldom survive. For example, Harmony Lodge in Waterbury lent surplus lodge funds to its members at interest from the time the lodge started in 1797 until about 1852, when other banking arrangements were more widely and routinely available.[58] Before banking services were generally available the fact that Masonic definitions of charity included lending money in times of need as well as giving it was an important adjunct.

Some of the letters that survive in the archives of lodges add detail to the bare ledger entries. For example, one Royal Arch Mason wrote to Solomon Chapter, associated with King Hiram Lodge No. 12, that he had "by misfortune been reduced to the painful necessity of receiving his support from the poor house in Newtown for some time." Recent injury and doctor's expenses had been "oppressive." If "poverty and misfortune can claim a donation," he felt himself "intitled to ask of you some small charity."[59] When no response was forthcoming, his son wrote angrily to remind the chapter that,

[57] William C. Cleveland, *Federal Lodge No 17, A.F. & A.M.; 175th Anniversary, 1965* (Waterbury, Conn., 1965), p. 6.

[58] An audit of accounts in April, 1830, showed $1,260.81 due to the lodge. It seems unlikely that a backlog of fees would account for that sum. There is evidence of banking services in other lodges. For example, the Ridgefield Lodge voted "that no person shall have money borrowed of this Lodge for any longer than three Months at once, and that the same person shall not have Liberty to borrow." Ridgefield, Jerusalem Lodge No 49, Archives, MSS, Minutes, I, September 3, 1816. Commercial banking was still in its infancy in Connecticut although the Hartford Bank was organized in 1792, and there were banks in New Haven, Middletown, Norwich, and New London around the turn of the century. The careers of these early banks were often brief. P. H. Woodward, *One Hundred Years of the Hartford Bank* (Hartford, 1892), pp. 22, 82.

[59] Derby [Shelton], King Hiram Lodge No. 12, MSS, letter from Jesse Bradley, Newtown, 1823.

his father having been "a member of your chapter & having paid his money," it was "no more than Just and Reasonable that he sould (sins he has become Poor and penalis) have something Either in money or clothing."[60] His Masonic dues were regarded as an insurance premium. Yet relatives or friends appealed to lodges on behalf of Masons, and as an alternative as well as an adjunct to town charity. Stephen Smith wrote about the "Orphan Children" of the late Stephan Bray, a member of King Hiram Lodge. Smith explained that the children were in "needy circumstances and are now supported entirely by their friends, who are not very able, and should their friends' feeble support fail them, or they become in need of any extra expense they must inevitably fall upon the town of Southbury."[61] Here the family apparently regarded Masonic charity as a hedge against civic charity.

The banking and insurance advantages of Masonic charity were not limited by the resources of local lodges. The Grand Lodge of Connecticut also distributed Masonic funds. According to the first ordinance adopted in October, 1789, three dollars of the admission fees charged to each initiate was to be paid to the Grand Lodge. For each charter granted, the Grand Lodge received four dollars. Lodge funds were augmented by various fines for failure to report initiations, or to attend Grand Lodge meetings, or to make returns. After the General Assembly of Connecticut granted a charter of incorporation to the Grand Lodge in 1821, a committee was appointed each year to examine and settle lodge accounts. By 1824 the Grand Lodge had a surplus of $904.28 in accounts and eight shares in Hartford Bank. This fund was used for charity with increasing frequency over the years. The records of the Grand Lodge show that their assistance was requested for different needs than could be met by local sources.[62] The

[60] Ibid., letter from George Bradley, March 18, 1824.

[61] Ibid., letter from Stephen B. Bray, May 22, 1822.

[62] E. G. Storer, *The Records of Freemasonry in the State of Connecticut, with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England, and the Entire Proceed-*

case of Amaziah Bray illustrates the members' expectations of Masonry.

Amaziah Bray, a Past Master of Trinity Lodge No. 43, in Killingworth, because of his "destitute situation and low state of health" appealed to the Grand Lodge in May of 1823 to defray "a sea voyage for the recovery of his health."[63] Since the sum voted to him was not sufficient, in July Bray began to write to the lodges in the state, supporting his own affidavit with testimonials from Ralph Ingersoll, Grand Master; Stephen Hosmer, Past Grand Master; and Nathan Smith, a doctor. Bray apparently did not consider that civic charity was appropriate to his case. He had been a lawyer, dependent on his earnings "from the profit of his profession and the emolument arising from the sundry appointments with which he had been intrusted." After he had become ill and exhausted his savings, he and his family turned to their friends for support. At the time of his writing he thought "he had but one alternative left which is to submit his case to the consideration of his Masonic Brethren."[64] Amaziah Bray ap-

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ings of the Grand Lodge, from its First Organization, A.L. 5789 (New Haven, 1859), p. 357. In the 1825 revision of the bylaws the sums were changed to one dollar for every initiation and fifteen dollars for every new charter. Ibid., pp. 373–375. Formal insurance companies were organized in Connecticut around the turn of the nineteenth century; however, life insurance did not become generally available until the 1840s. See P. Henry Woodward, *Insurance in Connecticut* (Boston, 1897), pp. 2–7, 61. The fraternal associations that developed later in the century tended to be more explicit about their insurance aspects and some of them, including some groups of Masons, were explicitly formed as mutual benefit societies. However, secret fraternal mutual benefit or insurance societies did not come under some parts of the insurance regulation in Connecticut. See Fawcett v. Supreme Sitting of Order of Iron Hall, 64 Conn. 170 (1894). On the law after the development of various beneficial and insurance associations, see William C. Niblack, *The Law of Voluntary Societies and Mutual Benefit Insurance* (Chicago, 1888).

[63] Storer, *Records*, p. 339.

[64] Shelton [Derby], King Hiram Lodge No. 12, MSS, letter from Amaziah Bray, n.d.

parently never took his journey, but the minutes of the Grand Lodge show that "the widow of our late Bro. Amaziah Bray, being represented as in a very destitute situation," it was voted that "the sum of fifty dollars be appropriated to her relief from the funds of the Grand Lodge."[65] The Grand Lodge obviously defined charity on a broader scale than the towns could, even though relatively few benefited from Masonic largesse.

The most important difference between civic and Masonic charity lay in the fact that the towns were organized to support a clearly defined and stable population; the lodge, to support a mobile one. When "legitimate" poverty was dependent upon settlement in a town, an unsettled person who was poor or suffered disaster was a social derelict, specifically excluded from the civic arrangements. The towns protected their resources by guarding their territorial integrity. The vagabond or vagrant was as likely to be sent to jail as set to work.[66] However, when the land in the older areas of settlement was subdivided to the point that it effectively expelled the younger generation, and boundaries in the young nation expanded, the population became a mobile one. Then the universal and nongeographic fraternal charity of Masonry was invaluable. Masonic membership provided instant community in distant places with the built-in protection in times of need that previously had been available only with local community membership.

Applications for charters from Connecticut men living elsewhere, in places where there was no Grand Lodge, show that they appreciated the fraternity's portability. As early as 1798, "sundry brethren residing in Surrinam" wrote home for a charter so that they could form a lodge there. Although that application was not granted, when Tyrhand Kirtland, active in the Grand Lodge since its formation, applied for a charter for Ohio on behalf of a group of brethren "who had principally

[65] Storer, *Records*, pp. 357–358.

[66] Trattner, *From Poor Law to Welfare State*, p. 51.

emigrated from the State of Connecticut," the Grand Lodge of Connecticut chartered Erie Lodge No. 47. Similarly, James Kilbourn, who had with "sundry brethren" formed a settlement on the Sciota River, was given a charter for a new lodge called New England Lodge No. 48.[67] Then, too, some men who were about to travel applied for membership before they left their own communities. For example, when Ephraim Carpenter got a job as a sailor, he immediately asked the lodge in Brookfield to request a character reference from Putnam Lodge "because he wishes to go to sea before your next communication and wishes to have the degrees of Masonry conferred on him before he leaves this part of the country."[68] A Mason could go into any new area with a certain assurance.

By the end of the Masonic expansion of the 1820s, the concept of charity, which the fraternity thought of as one of its cardinal virtues, was called into question by many in the surrounding society. Masonic charity differed in its underlying assumptions and in its style from civic charity. In Connecticut charity was available to the settled members of a town, regulated by law, and invoked in times of extreme need and as a last resort. Persistent vestiges of the older Puritan ethic, which associated misfortune with divine retribution, made appeals to civic charity a painful necessity. Masonic charity, more broadly defined than its civic counterpart, was available to its members in times of personal crisis wherever they were. However, by the first quarter of the nineteenth century increasingly high social value was placed in virtues like individualism, self-help, and egalitarianism. In the changing temper of the times, critics of Masonic fraternalism did not consider Masonic charity so much a moral virtue as an unfair advantage enjoyed by a self-selected elite in America's great social competition.

[67] Storer, *Records*, pp. 106, 161.

[68] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, letter from Meridian Sun Lodge to Putnam Lodge, October 19, 1824.

Virtue and Justice

The basis of the Masons' claim to teach a "moral science" was their special code of virtue. Masonic virtue was based on principles that, Masons claimed, were "recognized by all civilized communities as inherent rights, and necessarily growing out of the very existence of human beings destined to have relations with one another."[69] A system of Masonic justice, based on these "immutable laws," slowly grew up, like the English common law, in the wake of specific solutions to their transgression. By policing the boundaries of Masonic virtue, Masonic justice helped the fraternity to define its moral territory.[70]

The principles of Masonic virtue were only partially expressed because it was assumed that they were universally known. Masonic morality or virtue was partly defined in the sixth section of Anderson's *Constitutions*, called "Of Behaviour." He compiled Masonic rules about behavior in the lodge, after the meeting was over, when Masons met among themselves outside of the lodge, and in the presence of non-Masons. These rules were summarized in the charges read at the close of each lodge meeting, conveying the importance of Masonic secrecy and of moderation in all behavior. Masons were told that after the lodge, they were to enjoy themselves "with innocent mirth, and carefully to avoid excesses." They were to avoid all "immoral or obscene discourse." They were to act in a serious and dignified manner during the meeting, at home and in their neighborhood. They were to behave as "wise and moral men" to avoid "irregularity and intemperance." Finally they were to avoid "wrangling and quarreling,

[69] Josiah H. Drummond, "Masonic Jurisprudence," in Henry Leonard Stillson, ed., *History of the Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons and Concordant Orders* (Boston, 1910), p. 537.

[70] Kai T. Erikson, *Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance* (New York, 1966), pp. 8–19, contains an interesting discussion of how deviance helps to define the "boundaries" of communities.

slandering, and back-biting, not permitting others to slander honest brethren."[71] These injunctions defined Masonic morality as pacific behavior, as vaguely formulated as the injunction that all Masons should be "good Men and true."

In the course of the lectures that accompanied and explained Masonic ritual, other laws of Masonic morality were explained. The first degree was "intended to enforce the duties of morality" so that Masons were ready for the further learning. Initiates were told about the virtues of "Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice." In the second degree Masons were taught that they ought to "judge with candor, admonish with friendship, and reprehend with justice" the conduct of their peers. By the third degree Masonic definitions were to have prepared the members to "improve the *morals and manners of men in society.*"[72] As we shall see below, the Masonic code of conduct was more specifically defined by the way in which Masons judged one another's conduct than by the Masonic codes of charges themselves.

Masons claimed their laws were universal natural laws of morality, and did not conflict with the civil law of Connecticut. Local and civil law, according to such arguments, might comport with, but did not encompass, natural moral law. Zephaniah Swift, one of the most famous Connecticut jurists of the period, argued in a similar vein when he pointed out that civil rights and laws were, or ought to be, based on natural moral ones. Civil laws were limited to regulating those areas of life necessary to ensure peace and good order in society, because men formed governments in order to preserve their natural rights. "It is evident that no government has adopted the moral law as a rule, because, in all, many actions are required to be done, which are morally indifferent, and many actions are not prohibited which are morally wrong. When it is acknowledged the government may omit

[71] [Anderson], *Constitutions*, pp. 53–56.

[72] Preston, *Illustrations*, pp. 57, 53, 54, 85.

the prohibition of immoral actions, and require the performance of indifferent ones, it follows as a consequence that they are guided by some rule different from morality. This rule is the political happiness of the people. It, however, must be considered, that no laws may contravene the principles of morality."[73] Even under civil law, according to Swift, the people still possessed "all the freedom of the natural state, in the exercise of acts of humanity, generosity and benevolence; in the formation of connexions of friendship, and in that intercourse between them, which constitutes the manners of the country." According to Swift's formulation, Masonic laws were those that regulated friendship, and therefore could not compete with or impinge upon civil law, properly defined.[74]

However, the bibliocratic tradition in New England society historically and philosophically linked civil law to Old and New Testament Christian morality.[75] Christianity, or the civil law based on it, defined morality for that segment of society that believed that moral laws, civil laws, and Christian law were or should be consonant. For them, Masonic claims to a codified virtue were inappropriate in a Christian community.

Nevertheless Masons, having defined a code of conduct as Masonic morality, developed the means of assessing conformity and dealing with nonconformity. Masonic morality was an effort to claim some areas of a member's life for fraternal regulation. The lodges were held to be the "proper and competent Judges" of all controversies and complaints among Masons. Members were never to "go to Law about what concerneth Masonry, without an absolute necessity apparent to the Lodge." If Masons were injured, they were to try to have their complaints settled by the Lodge, "never taking a legal

[73] Swift, *System of Laws*, I, 38.

[74] Ibid., I, 145–146.

[75] Perry Miller, *The Life of the Mind in America, from the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York, 1965), pp. 192–202. Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, *The Puritan Oligarchy: The Founding of American Civilization* (New York, 1947), pp. 41–77.

course but when the Case cannot be otherwise decided." Masons were to settle their complaints and quarrels outside of civil courts by "patiently listening to the honest and friendly Advice of Master and Fellows, when they would . . . excite you to put a speedy Period to all Law-suits." When Brothers and Fellows did become engaged in civil controversy, they were still bound by fraternal obligations. If all Masonic efforts at mediation and conciliation failed, Masons must "carry on their Process of Law-suit, without Wrath and Rancor (not in the common way) saying or doing nothing which may hinder Brotherly Love, and good Offices to be renew'd and continued."[76] Such instructions implied that Masonic morality sometimes overlapped civil morality. Masonry prescribed different rules of conduct in settling disputes, rather than a different kind of morality.

When the Masonic code of conduct was read at each meeting of the lodge, the members probably found a ready parallel in the attitudes of some churches. Some denominations had always limited the areas where divine moral law and civil law overlapped. For example, when the Killingly-Thompson Baptist Church joined in a covenant to "walk together in visible gospel communion," they stipulated "a Divine Rule which forbids brother going to Law with Brother."[77] Like the Masons, their differences were ideally settled within the church and according to their own standards of morality—an area outside of the concern of civil government.

The administration of Masonic justice was generally more like the disciplinary action in a church than the prosecution of a civil offense. Because they were voluntary associations, the harshest punishment at their command was, like excommunication from a church, expulsion from the lodge.[78] The

[76] [Anderson], *Constitutions*, pp. 54, 56.

[77] Thompson, Town Clerk, MSS, Killingly-Thompson Baptist Church, 1789.

[78] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "By-Laws of Putnam Lodge," comp. by E. S. Frissell.

ritually named penalties for transgressing the secrecy of the fraternity were horrible physical punishment, and the penalty for transgressing Christian moral law was eternal damnation, but in both associations lesser punishments were provided for lesser crimes or temporary abberation: the denial of a sacrament or communion in a church, or suspension for a stated amount of time from the lodge. The complaints in both cases were usually brought by fellow members, and the court for both was usually the full fellowship, not a judge and jury. In both church and lodge, a full confession, contrition, and repentance were themselves considered punishment—often sufficient to warrant the transgressor's reinstatement to full fellowship. However different from a courtroom, the lodge room was the scene of special legal dramas when controversies were arbitrated and complaints aired. In Connecticut's litigious communities, whose inhabitants were nourished on the legalisms of covenant theology and as jealous of their legal rights as they were suspicious of lawyers, the opportunity for members of the lodge to be their own lawyer, judge, and jury provided a pleasurable style and stage.[79]

Vague blanket terms, such as "unmasonic conduct," negatively defined Masonic virtue. Where committee reports still survive, they suggest that unmasonic conduct included a variety of civil crimes, as well as noncriminal conduct. Only an occasional case seemed to involve a kind of activity that would be considered only a Masonic crime. One Josiah Searles of St. Mark's Lodge was "accused of divulging such secrets, committed in his trust, as are by the Lodge considered highly improper."[80] He was reprimanded by a committee, but in no other way punished, even though the secrets he divulged were presumably Masonic secrets. Yet other kinds

[79] Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (Boston, 1955), pp. 76–88.

[80] Simsbury [Granby], St. Mark's Lodge No. 36, MSS, Committee Report, March 10, 1824.

of cases show how Masonic morality paralleled or overlapped civic and Christian morality.

Since most of the specific articles of the "ancient" charges directed the Masons to peaceable behavior among themselves inside and outside of the lodge room, it is not surprising that many of the reports that survive in detail describe cases of verbal abuse or physical assault. Abraham Holcomb of Granby urged the lodge to investigate Titus Barber's conduct because he felt himself "shamefully abused" by a brother Mason. According to Holcomb's report:

> I was sitting peaceably conversing at a Neighbours of mine on the evening of the 26th of August last when Titus Barber came in and about the same moment he entered the house began calling me a Damd Rascall a vilin and not only one but my brothers ware notorious rascalls and that your petitioner and they were aiding and assisting Brother Hischich in cheating and accusing me of violating my obligations as a mason he then thritened to strike me came up to me drew back his fist for that purpose calling me a Damned rascall and a vilin every other word which abuse calls loud for an explanation.[81]

Holcomb demanded that explanation before he would agree "to meet on the same floor" with Barber. Some sort of arbitration probably settled the case, for no disciplinary action is recorded. If Holcomb's wrath seemed somewhat disproportionate to Barber's threats, it was probably because Barber's actions, while they may or may not have been criminal, were clearly unbrotherly and unmasonic.

In another case involving physical assault, the errant Brother was brought before both civil and masonic tribunals. The Masonic complaint was brought "out of a sense of duty to this Lodge." Although he had not injured a fellow Mason, Brother Benjamin Dexter had injured the lodge by his behav-

[81] Ibid., Complaint of Abraham Holcomb, September 5, 1821.

ior in "threatening to beat and in fact beating and striking with a club in a public house many who were peaceably and lawfully collected."[82] Charges had been brought against him in the county court, and the lodge voted to suspend him for one year.[83] About a year later, he was again brought before a committee of the lodge that found that "Brother Dexter is unworthy the character he bears, that of a Mason." The lodge expelled him.[84] However, in another case, which involved public brawling, it was recommended that Samuel Fenner, "upon full acknowledgement" of his part, "sustain" his standing in Putnam Lodge.[85] From this variety of dispositions of similar cases it seems clear that an important Masonic virtue was a member's willingness to repent misconduct and to associate his standards of conduct with the corporate identity of the fraternity.

Another group of cases involved theft, and the seriousness of the Masonic crime was also only partially measured by the seriousness of the civil crime. For example, Aaron Child was accused of behavior "unbecoming a man and more especially a Mason" when he was found to have taken "clandestinely divers articles of good from certain persons in Southbridge, Massachusetts."[86] Child confessed to his crime and acknowledged that he was "sorry" that he had "wounded the cause of Masonry or injured the feelings of any of my Brethren" by his conduct, and he asked forgiveness.[87] Because of his "acknowledgement," the investigating committee praised his attitude and decided to "merely recommend that the said Brother Aaron Child be suspended."[88] Three years later

[82] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Committee Report, n.d.

[83] Ibid., Minutes, II, February 5, 1823.

[84] Ibid., Committee Report, September 7, 1825; Minutes, II, April 17, 1825.

[85] Ibid., Committee Report, April 28, 1824; Minutes, II, April 28, 1824.

[86] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Complaint, February 5, 1821.

[87] Ibid., letter from A. Child, March 12, 1823.

[88] Ibid., Committee Report, April 30, 1823.

another Brother was similarly suspended for only nine months after a proper show of repentance for "theft and intemperance."[89] At a lodge in Harwinton, one Mason who "illegally" took "property not my own," was simply forgiven when he had "humbly acknowledged" that he had "done wrong and transgressed the rules of order."[90] In short, criminal activity was also unmasonic, but the ability of the wrongdoer to demonstrate that he considered his offense as much a transgression against the fraternity as against persons or property helped to mitigate the offense and rehabilitate the offender.

Masonic virtue, as defined by the appeals to Masonic justice, included some kinds of behavior that fell in a borderland between the jurisdictions of the church and state: sexual behavior and family relations. The records of Putnam Lodge carry such charges as "incest," "unlawful attempts on a married woman," "gross violation of the natural ties subsisting between himself and family," and "abuses inflicted on some persons of his family." Unmasonic conduct of this kind was considered sinful as well as criminal in the surrounding community. In the hearing on such matters the churchlike function of the lodge was most apparent and the identification of Masonic virtue with Christian virtue most explicit. Northern Star Lodge in Barkhamsted recorded many cases in point.

Under the strong and enduring guidance of its founding Master, Dr. Amos Beecher, brother of the famous evangelical leader, the Reverend Lyman Beecher, Northern Star Lodge battled hard against the unmasonic tendencies of some of its members.[91] Three cases in 1825 and 1826 illustrate the quality of their concern. First, in September of 1825 a committee was appointed at the request of one of the brethren "to inves-

[89] Ibid., Minutes, II, April 1823; Committee Report, December 15, 1826.

[90] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Archives, Aurora Lodge No. 35, Harwinton, Minutes, I, July 2, 1827.

[91] "History of Masonry in Barkhamsted and New Hartford," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1957, pp. 11–12.

tigate certain reports which have gone abroad, respecting a disagreement between him and his wife, derogatory to his character as a man and a mason."[92] The committee interviewed the Mason's wife about "being afraid of him and his using threats to her," and concluded that the Brother was not "Guilty of any Misconduct that requires the interference of this Lodge."[93] In another case the same year the lodge voted to publish a notice about the expulsion of one of their brethren and the three counts of unmasonic conduct on which it was based. He had "deserted his lawful wife & Daughter, and absconded with an unmarried Woman," and, perhaps worst of all, he had not paid several of his brethren "their just dues" before he had left.[94]

In the third case the lodge and its committees were concerned with complaints against Arunah Case in 1826. There were at least six "specifications" of his transgressions. He had written "certain Lewd lascivious and defamatory letters," and he had "wickedly and willfully circulated certain slanderous reports" about a young woman by reporting that "she . . . had agreed to abscond next fall with a married man" and that he "had committed fornication with her." The committee found his claims to be untrue. In the third specification he was found "Guilty of Lascivious carriage and behavior" at another Mason's house, and in the fourth and fifth specification guilty of challenging a fellow Mason to "fight a duel" and so to have "threatened the Life" of a Brother.[95] A sixth accusation added later charged that Case's conduct "greatly desturbed the peace and harmony which before existed" between a fellow Mason and his wife. His conduct was "a direct violation of the Sacred rule laid down in the greater light (Bible) which, as Masons, is to rule and Govern our Faith and

[92] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Archives, Northern Star Lodge No. 50, Barkhamsted, Minutes, I, September 15, 1825.

[93] Ibid., September 23, 1825.

[94] Ibid., November 23, 1825.

[95] Ibid., August 10, 1826.

practice through Life."[96] The lodge voted to expel Case, and his appeal to the Grand Lodge was dismissed without hearing.[97] However serious the several charges, Arunah Case was readmitted to the lodge in 1830 because he displayed "repentance and reaffirmation" and those, according to the committee that heard his application, were the "*essential* requirements" for restoration.[98] Five years later he was suspended because for "some unmasonic conduct (he) has been an Inmate of the Penitentiary of the City of New York." By then he had exhausted the limits and the sanctions of Masonic justice.

The local enforcement of Masonic morality was bolstered by an appellate court, the Grand Lodge. By 1825, when the Grand Lodge of Connecticut revised its constitution and bylaws, fairly concrete procedures had evolved. Appeals had to be made in writing and read in the Grand Lodge, and the parties were given one month's notice. Then the Grand Lodge appointed a committee that, after due notice to the lodge and the appellant, traveled to the appellant's area of the state. There they conducted a full investigation. The lodge in question appointed one or more representatives to defend its decision, and the appellant could argue his case personally or by counsel. The committee reported back to the Grand Lodge with a "statement of the facts with their opinion thereon," and the Grand Lodge voted on its recommendation. In every case but one the Grand Lodge accepted the opinion of the investigating committee.[99]

The one case in which the judgment of the local lodge was reversed involved Elisha Tucker, who had been expelled from St. James Lodge in Preston. The Grand Lodge ordered

[96] Ibid., September 14, 1826.

[97] Storer, *Records*, p. 410.

[98] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Archives, Northern Star Lodge No. 50, Barkhamsted, Minutes, I, September 1830.

[99] Storer, *Records*, pp. 374, 194–195, 212, 251, 186, 169.

that he be restored in good standing "without expressing any opinion of the guilt or criminality" of Tucker because they objected to "the proceedings connected with his expulsion." These objections served as the only basis for a reversal of the subordinate lodge's decision. The accusations of a Brother had to be submitted in writing to his lodge; the accuser could not sit on the committee charged with finding the facts and making recommendations about the complaint; and, finally, the accused had to be formally notified of the time and place of the committee's hearing and of its report to the lodge.[100] Thus by 1826 some rudimentary kinds of procedural safeguards for the administration of Masonic justice had been standardized.

The sanctions available to the lodges, in their capacity as courts of Masonic justice, were often written into bylaws. In Putnam Lodge errant Masons could be reprimanded or fined one dollar by the chairman for misbehavior. All other punishments had to be voted on by the lodge: fines of up to two dollars, suspension for a stated period of time, or expulsion.[101] In the ordinary operation of Masonic justice the procedural precautions taken in the "trials" and the mildness of the judgments were in striking contrast to the fearsome sanctions prescribed by the oaths of each degree.

Except for punishment by expulsion, the purpose of the procedures and penalties was both to punish and to reclaim the errant. Even among a moral elite, unmasonic conduct was part of human frailty, and the purpose of the fraternity was progressive instruction in morality—an increasing "excellency" in Masonry. Because all judgments were made in terms of the standards of the institution, transgressions of Masonic virtue were often seen as dangerous to Masonry itself. Acknowledgment of the misdemeanor, repentance, and some statement of concern for, or identification with, the

[100] Ibid., p. 392.

[101] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "By-Laws of Putnam Lodge."

fraternity was usually sufficient punishment. In a case like that of William Huggins, in which a committee "could discover no Signs of Repentance," it was recommended that he be expelled from St. Mark's Lodge for his unmasonic conduct, a penalty usually reserved for repeated or very serious offenses.[102] The fraternity imposed punishments to maintain "the honor, duty, and good of this Lodge as well as the Craft in general."[103] The focus of concern was the fraternity as much as the transgressor.

On the whole, the Masonic system incorporated general standards of morality whether or not they were part of the civil law. Transgressions against Masonic virtue were not necessarily crimes. As one committee of Putnam Lodge reminded a member, he was being reprimanded for unmasonic conduct, "although we do not find that anything of a Criminal Nature has taken place."[104] However, criminal conduct was usually unmasonic conduct, although the Masons defined seriousness in their own terms. Masonic virtue was defined as peaceable conduct, and it could regulate areas of the lives of its members that were not regulated by civil law. Its guiding principles were the same as those of Christian morality, and the enforcement of that morality most similar to church discipline. Unlike civil procedures, which primarily punished transgressors, the procedures of Masonic justice, like those of church discipline, employed confessions, repentance, and forgiveness to bring about a reformation. The object of church discipline was to save an individual soul, but that of Masonic discipline was, at least in part, to save a corporate reputation.

There were several overlappings in form and function between the Masonic lodge and the churches. Although

[102] Simsbury [Granby], St. Mark's Lodge No. 36, MSS, Minutes, I, November 8, 1824.

[103] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Warren Lodge No. 50, Andover, Minutes, I, February 12, 1817.

[104] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Committee Report, February 1807.

Freemasons constantly emphasized that they were not concerned with particular theologies, the lodge and the churches could not avoid an occasional collision on the paths of righteousness. Similarly, when the fraternity exercised its self-appointed prerogatives as an autonomous social group, it put itself on a collision course with the political state. Zephaniah Swift notwithstanding, there was no clear consensus in the early years of the Republic about which areas of American life came under civil law and which were left to natural law: what was public and what was private. In this context the facts that Freemasonry had taken form before the political state, had allegiances to a worldwide community, and a rumored connection with European revolutionary movements were important. In addition, Masonry had its own constitution, laws, taxing system, and educational program, and it dispensed charity and administered justice according to its own standards. While such an institution might be avowedly unconcerned with politics, it seemed to some to be dangerously similar to an autonomous shadow "state."

At the beginning of the nineteenth century new lines were being drawn everywhere to delimit the social space of political and religious groups. The area occupied by autonomous social groups was at least ambiguous.[105] Especially in administering Masonic justice, Freemasons were vulnerable to charges that they overlapped the jurisdiction of the civil courts, competed with the discipline of the churches, or in-

[105] Ideas and attitudes about the functions of religion and civil government were, of course, philosophical fundamentals for any individual or group. In a brilliant analysis of the relationship of religious and other social attitudes to party structure, Ronald Formisano has shown that "broad antiorganizational and antipower impulses," sometimes evangelical in origin, shaped the form and activities of the Antimasonic (and Whig) party. "Political Character, Antipartyism and the Second Party System," *American Quarterly*, XXI, no. 4 (Winter 1969), 683–709, esp. 685–686 and 706–709. See also James S. Chase, *Emergence of the Presidential Nominating Convention, 1789–1832* (Urbana, Ill., 1973), pp. 115, 125–225.

vaded individual rights. However, the socially acceptable format of a morality institution, which dispensed charity and enforced Masonic virtue, forestalled most overt criticism, while the limitations of social role of one large segment of the population antagonistic to the fraternity, women, helped privatize opposition. However, the need to draw lines to limit or demystify Masonry, no matter how benign and satisfying the association, was foreordained by its churchlike, statelike structure. Though Masonry was assuredly neither a church nor a state, it was not always easy for the churches or the political parts of the state in antebellum Connecticut to rest on that assurance.

VII

The Masonic Counterculture: "That Which Is Not Bread"

Exclusiveness, secrecy, and a pseudoaristocratic style continuously attracted members to Masonry. Another explicit attraction, and a largely unformulated source of antimasonry, was the fact that the fraternity served in part as a leisure activity, representing a subsystem of ideas and values at odds with the Calvinist tradition. In 1829, when the inhabitants of the First Ecclesiastical Society of Woodstock presented a memorial to the Reverend Ralph Crampton listing fourteen objections to Masonry, most of their concerns were theological, but they could not forbear to criticize some cultural aspects of the Masonic alternative. If Freemasonry was a religious institution, they said, it was guilty of "excluding a great portion of the human family from its saving influence." If it was a social institution, its secrecy was "a powerful engine in the hands of aspiring demagogues indangering your civil & religious liberties." Whichever it was, they were emphatic that the style of the fraternity was repugnant: "Because of its royal attire, high sounding titles, professed antiquity, and unwarranted claim to the patronage of the wise King Solomon and the holy St. John, the young and credulous are forcibly induced to spend their time and money for that which is not bread & their labour for that which satisfieth not."[1] Masonry

[1] Connecticut State Library, Woodstock, MSS, Records of the First Ecclesiastical Society, September 7, 1829, pp. 14–15.

was at once immoral and elitist—to use terms they might not have distinguished.

The source of some of their objections to Masonry lay in the self-conscious egalitarianism of Jacksonian America. Indeed, one of the most interesting recent analyses of political antimasonry has focused on contemporary charges of elitism: that Masonry gave its members "grossly unfair advantages" in the great American race for wealth, power, and prestige. Egalitarianism was not the property of any one social or political group: "After 1815, not only in politics but in all spheres of American life, egalitarianism challenged elitism and, in most spheres and places, egalitarianism won."[2] Yet Masonry continued to grow throughout the first quarter of the nineteenth century as the beneficiary of the fact that the social goal of most Americans was fluidity of status and upward mobility, not always egalitarianism, however leveling was the rhetoric of the times. Masons found that the local lodge could be an invaluable gatehouse to a wider, more inclusive, more cosmopolitan world.

The increasing popularity of Masonry in Connecticut in the early years of the century showed that the relative equality of a preindustrial economy could foster patterns of social behavior that, though they might be democratic in some sense, were not egalitarian. With industrialization, the conditions of life in many of the communities became increasingly stratified, but since political democracy was extended during that same time span, the myth of equality flourished.[3]

[2] Lee Benson, *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York as a Test Case* (New York, 1964), pp. 17, 336.

[3] Edward Pesson, "The Egalitarian Myth," *American Historical Review*, 76, no. 4 (October 1971), 989–1034. See also Pesson's "The Lifestyle of the Antebellum Urban Elite," *Mid-America*, 55, no. 3 (July 1973), 163–183. Richard D. Brown, "The Emergence of Urban Society in Rural Massachusetts, 1760–1820," *Journal of American History*, 61 (June 1974), 36, shows that "[t]he organizational variety, heterogeneity, cosmopolitanism, and range of individual choice in personal associations" characteristic of

Tocqueville thought that increasing equality was a "providential fact" and that in America two forms of thought and action "developed in the same ratio of equality of condition." One was individualism (which he described as "self-interest"), and the other the propensity to form associations of groups with the same self-interest (which he called "self-interest rightly understood").[4] The credo of egalitarianism and the rhetoric of individualism might challenge and win political and social battles against Masonry, but in the battle itself the same combination of changing political and economic factors that produced individualism and egalitarianism set up the opposing associational and elitist groups, such as the Masons.

The structure of Putnam Lodge in 1822, and some description of the style and tone of Freemasonry, will help to locate the fraternity in its community. Such an analysis also helps explain how and why the egalitarian objections of the Antimasons were mobilized into a confrontation with Masonry in Woodstock in 1829. The Antimasons objected to the fraternity because they believed that it threatened the local social structure as well as the religious cultural patterns, while the Masons valued the fraternity as a way of enlarging their networks of communication, as a source of social distinctiveness, as a means of self-education and self-realization, and as a source of ethically licensed social pleasures.

Putnam Lodge Elitism

The Masonic world view was not egalitarian. It was based on ideas of innate differences and such differences inevitably

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urban society had become characteristic of small towns in Massachusetts, findings that can be extended to Connecticut through this study. See also Michael Kammen, *People of Paradox: An Inquiry Concerning the Origins of American Civilization* (New York, 1973), pp. 234–237.

[4] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Phillips Bradley, 2 vols. (New York, 1954), II, 104–106, 134–135.

led to hierarchical social arrangements. As Preston pointed out, "All men are not blessed with the same powers, nor have all men the same talents: all men, therefore, are not equally qualified to govern."[5] Masonry, however, provided an equal opportunity for each to exercise his talents. He pointed out, "All preferment among Masons is grounded upon real Worth and personal Merit only."[6] Worth and merit were defined in part as devotion to and mastery of the rituals and ceremonials and other learnings of Masonry. Members all moved through the ranks of Masonry "when otherwise qualify'd" only "according to Merit." Since the hierarchical structure of each lodge was achieved through recognition of the uneven talents and abilities of the members, "each class is happy in its particular association."[7] Preston in glowing terms described a meritocracy, and all Masonic literature thereafter contained similar social preferences, which differed more in tone than content from American variations on that theme.

Egalitarianism, however widely shared as a political and social ideal, was subject to various interpretations and espoused with varying degrees of awareness of its dynamic implications. Some, such as Tocqueville, emphasized that relative equality of condition of all men would eventually produce ideas and opinions "similar in proportion as their conditions assimilate." Differences among men would be "casual and transient," he thought.[8] His projections did not fully account for the "strain toward differentiation" that, as he had also noticed, attended the homogenization of egalitarian society. Others, such as Calvin Colton, a Connecticut clergyman who soon became one of the leading Whig theoreticians, tried to provide for individual differences by defining American

[5] William Preston, *Illustrations of Masonry* (London, 1796), p. 31.

[6] [James Anderson], *The Constitutions of the Free Masons, Containing the History, Charges, Regulations &c. of that Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity* (London, 1723), p. 51.

[7] Preston, *Illustrations*, p. 31. See also pp. 54–55.

[8] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II, 272–273.

egalitarianism as the equal opportunity for each citizen to "rise gradually in the world, as the reward of merit and industry." Egalitarianism simply meant unimpeded mobility: "No exclusive privileges of birth, no entailment of estates, no civil or political disqualifications." Then each man would rise "according to his talents, prudence, and personal exertions."[9] The fact that this variation of egalitarianism would result in economic and social stratification, and that any individual's starting point in his rise or fall would be determined by the unimpeded achievements of prior generations, simply was not considered. Colton's egalitarianism was very close to the Masonic ideal.

Although their ideas and practices about *access* to the fraternity conformed with the egalitarian ethic in the community, the Masons celebrated the separate hierarchies they constructed. Dr. Robert C. Robinson, in a Saint John's Day celebration in 1822 in Cummington, Massachusetts—a town not unlike those in northeastern Connecticut—described the Masonic ideas about hierarchy most succinctly. "The idea of equality is an absurd one," he said: "All men, to be sure, are equal as it regards their origin and destination: and as it respects their privileges and their inalienable rights, but there is no such thing as equality in point of rank. It is nothing but a dream which has disturbed the waking hours of ignorant mortals. There ever has been—is at present, and for ever will be, degrees of rank in society."[10] On the whole, it seems that the differences between Masonic hierarchical notions and the widely shared social myth of egalitarianism was only a matter of emphasis: one extolled the process, and the other the results.

[9] Edwin C. Rozwenc, ed., *Ideology and Power in the Age of Jackson*, Documents in American Civilization Series, (Garden City and New York, 1964), p. 356.

[10] Robert C. Robinson, *An Address, Delivered at Cummington, before Orion Lodge, June 25, A.L. 5822* (Northampton, 1822), pp. 8–9.

The patterns of leadership and membership in Putnam Lodge provide some basis for comparing the "natural" distinctions of Masonry and the "artificial," which it corrected, showing how in operation the lodge set itself apart from the community as a whole. By these patterns Masonic membership violated the egalitarian ethic of the communities in northeastern Connecticut not by recruiting membership only from one segment of society, or rewarding a palpably different kind of "merit" than was rewarded by community esteem, but by its vigorous, continuous and, above all, factually exclusive hierarchical structure.

In 1822 a census of the Putnam Lodge membership showed that the fraternity was a stable form of association.[11] Men tended to maintain some relationship with it for a long time after they had joined. Between 1800 and 1822, 216 men were initiated into the lodge. Of these, 59 had either died or moved away by 1822, but 147 of the 157 Masons presumably living in the area were still active. Although this seems to represent a remarkably low rate of attrition, the patterns of individual association with the lodge differed widely. For example, a total of 120 Masons attended lodge meetings during the three-year period from 1819 to 1822, but 68 of them came only once a year, or once every other year, suggesting a continuous but nominal relationship. Fifty-two members, or roughly one-third of the membership, attended at least half of the meetings every year, held offices, or were active on committees. They represented a core group in the organization, consistently associated in the Masonic hierarchy.

[11] The material in this section is compiled from the Biographical File, and the attendance records, not always complete or accurate, of all the lodge meetings between 1819 and 1822 in the Minutes, II. In 1821 a division of the lodge was proposed, and a census taken in 1822 named all in the area who considered themselves, or were considered by the lodge, as members in good standing. Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Census of Putnam Lodge, 1822.

Some of the core group were men who had been active in the lodge from the time of its formation in 1801. For example, eleven of the twenty charter members of the lodge still attended meetings. Rensselaer Child, who was a teacher, surveyor, and landholder in Woodstock, often attended to meet fellow charter members such as Dr. Thomas Hubbard of Pomfret; or Judah Lyon, who owned the large tavern at Muddy Brook; or Major Moses Arnold, a town leader and manufacturer, initiated at one of the first meetings of the lodge. Most of them were important figures in their towns. Two-thirds of the membership of the lodge, however, were men in their twenties or early thirties, and they held many of the ceremonial offices even if the lodge leadership had not passed into younger hands. The core group included men of all ages, and about half of them held some office during their active association with the fraternity.

If Masonic merit was different from other kinds of social or personal merit, the rewards of town office and of lodge office could be expected to have gone to different men. The records of Putnam Lodge show strong affinities between the appraisal of merit in the part of the town and of the lodge, but there were also differences. Luther Rawson, for example, was Worshipful Master of the lodge in 1821 and 1822. Rawson had been a member of Putnam since 1805, and then had moved slowly along the range of offices between 1810 and 1820 until he was elected to the highest office, Worshipful Master. In Woodstock, where he lived, Rawson had held many minor offices, but he was not elected to any of the major offices, such as selectman or representative during the period of his Masonic activism. Men such as John Williams or Samuel Dresser held lesser offices in the lodge over a period of time, but did not move up to Mastership, although they were active in local office and were selectmen of the town of Pomfret. Then, too, long-term membership alone was not rewarded with office in the Lodge. The largest group of active members,

men such as Zwinglius Judson, Lorin Brown, Benjamin Warren, Israel Osgood, Abiel Fox, Eleazer Keith (to name random representatives from all of the towns who were variously active in their towns) attended meetings very often, but, if they held office at all, they did not move up through the ranks of the Masonic hierarchy.

As in most associations, there were probably few men popular enough to be elected who were willing to assume the burdens as well as the dubious honor (given the ambiguous position of the lodge) of the most conspicuous ceremonial Masonic offices. Those who became Master of the lodge were usually men who were also active in the community. The meteoric careers of two young men, one preceding and one following Luther Rawson as Worshipful Master, are cases in point. Ingoldsby Work Crawford of Union applied to the lodge for membership as soon as he was twenty-one years old. Three years later, he was elected to his first lodge office and four years after that he was elected Worshipful Master. Crawford held office in 1816, 1817 and 1819, at the same time that he held several offices in Union. In 1818, he represented Union at the state constitutional convention and later was sent to the state legislature for eight sessions. Crawford was elected to these offices even though he was an avowed Universalist, a church affiliation that placed him outside of conventional Connecticut establishment. He later became an associate justice of Tolland County and the port collector of New London during President Jackson's administration, at the same time that he moved on to the higher degrees of Masonry and to offices in the Grand Lodge.[12]

Young Asa May's rise was equally rapid. He wrote from New Haven, where he was attending Yale, about his interest in joining the fraternity, and he was initiated upon his return

[12] Harold D. Carpenter, "Ingoldsby Crawford, Leader in Masonry," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1953, pp. 18–19. Biographical File.

in 1819. Four years later, May was elected Worshipful Master. Moving with similar swiftness through the town offices, he was chosen as one of the selectmen within five years of his return and served as the town representative for eight sessions prior to his death in 1829.[13] The Masonic definitions of merit were obviously somehow related to the standards of the community at large, and there was recognition of both kinds of merit in Masonic and civic forums.

The attitudes toward Masons may have been affected by the fact that, after two decades of operation, the lodge had become a switchpoint in a complex network of family lines. The rejection of the Sons of Cincinnati because of the hereditary nature of their association was part of local history and lore; there was some reason to suspect Masonry on the same grounds as the Cincinnati. For example, Charter Member Rensselaer Child had brought his son Asa to the lodge. Charter Member Andrew Brown's son Lorin joined. Evan Malbone, Sr., helped to initiate Evan Malbone, Jr., and Charter Member John Fox, his sons Pearly and Abiel. Charter Member Elisha Gleason's son George had joined in 1812, followed by Arthur in 1820, Guy in 1823, and David in 1826. However, the names of the Masonic brethren who witnessed the initiations of their natural brothers and other relatives is a long one; so long that by the 1820s three surnames—those of Child, Payne, and Lyon—accounted for twenty-seven members, and combinations of different surnames would have yielded other large numbers. The possibility of some hereditary or familial connections to Masonry was not totally without foundation, and fears of an elite based on kinship would have compounded the Masonic affront to egalitarian sensibilities.

On balance, however, the durability and intimacy of the relationships of the members probably were not so important as the lodge's economic, political, and religious diversity.

[13] Harold D. Carpenter, "Pomfret Masons Ride Anti-Masonic Storm," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1952, pp. 9, 19.

The lodge contained men such as "Squire" Lemuel Grosvenor, a charter member who amassed a sizable estate and whose distinguished local career had taken him from membership on General Washington's staff as a young man, through all the honors of the town and Masonic office, to a seat on the county court and a generalship in the state militia. At the other end of the economic range were men such as Giles Eldredge, who inscribed himself as a "yeoman" on his application to the lodge, and was described simply as a "labourer" in his obituary years later.

The membership was politically diverse. Most of the prominent political leaders in the lodge were probably men like John McClellan, a moderate Federalist in a Federalist dominated state. On the other hand, most of the leaders of the minority parties were also members of the lodge. Thus Dr. David Knight, a prominent Jeffersonian, was a member in the early years; Ebenezer Stoddard, Jr., a "Tolerationist turned Democrat," was active in the second decade of the life of the lodge; and Ingoldsby W. Crawford, a Jacksonian leader, and Aaron Child, a Whig leader, were prominent in politics and Masonry in the 1820s.[14]

Finally, virtually every religious group in these towns was represented in the lodge. At one end of the spectrum of religious beliefs was Dr. Thomas Morse, who "differed in his opinion from his respectable Brethren and fellow citizens" since he was moved to religious belief by "the deliberate conviction of his understanding, and the generous impulse of his heart"—euphemisms for freethinking or deism.[15] Along the range of religious beliefs (in no particular order), came men such as Jesse Bolles, a leader in the Baptist community; Ingoldsby W. Crawford, a Universalist; members of the Tuffts

[14] Ellen D. Larned, *History of Windham County*, 2 vols. (Worcester, Conn., 1874, 1880), II.

[15] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "A Eulogy for Dr. Thomas Morse by Ingoldsby Work Crawford."

family who were among the few Unitarians in the area; Benjamin Allard, who had been admitted to a Woodstock church as a "methodist member"; and the Episcopalian Malbones.[16] However, men such as Pearly Howe, the son-in-law of Deacon Jedidiah Morse, or Amos Payne and Theophilus B. Chandler, deacons of Woodstock's First Congregational Church, were also active members.

As an organization with the discretion to choose its members from among the applicants, Masonry was exclusive by definition. Nevertheless, the diversity of its membership suggests that neither wealth, politics, nor religion governed admission. Since certain families tended to associate themselves with Masonry, there was some generational continuity, extending a kinship network. Men who otherwise were prominent in their communities also, though not always, tended to be rewarded for Masonic merit. Some men not otherwise notable in their communities had important roles to play in the lodge. The membership seems best explained as an association of like-minded men who were attracted to Masonry because of its exotic qualities and its personal or social usefulness. Masonry was most significantly elitist in its separateness and in its celebration of meritocracy and hierarchy. Those who believed that egalitarianism was the organizing and controlling spirit of America's social arrangements, no matter how society itself was actually organized, were uneasy and suspicious of Masonry, no matter how the fraternity actually functioned.

Secret Friendship

The growth of egalitarian ideas and the growth of majoritarian political democracy in America contributed to new social tensions about the community's right to knowledge and the individual's right to privacy. The dual commitment to

[16] Larned, *Windham County*, II, 259. Biographical File.

majoritarianism and individualism required a constant process of balancing public and private concerns. Masonry, as a private self-selected fraternity guarding a secret knowledge, seemed to some to challenge the value of democratic publicity, while others valued the secrecy for providing "protection, fellowship and security" during a period of rapid social and political change.[17]

Masons appreciated the social and psychological uses of secrecy, especially because of the atomizing tendencies of individualism. Georg Simmel's work on secrecy still provides the best framework for trying to understand secrecy. Human relations, he pointed out, were based on some balance of knowing and not knowing about others. Since not everything could be known about anybody, the amount and kind of knowledge of another was defined by the needs of the particular relationship. Modern societies had become "credit economies" in a much wider sense than the economic one. Confidence, which is an "hypothesis of future conduct," was the basis of such "credit." Confidence in the ability to make projections about another's conduct on the basis of some kinds of partial knowledge about him, of some certainty about his business, his plans and his purposes, is "one of the most important synthetic forces within society." According to Simmel, this need for confident predictability leads to increasing demands to know about other people in a greater variety of situations, as social contacts themselves became more variegated.[18]

In spite of the need for areas of publicity, secrecy always

[17] Edward A. Shils, *The Torment of Secrecy* (Glencoe, Ill., 1956), p. 27; Noel P. Gist, "Secret Societies: A Cultural Study of Fraternalism in the United States," *The University of Missouri Studies*, XV, no. 4 (October 1940), 112.

[18] Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Secrecy and Secret Societies," trans. Albion W. Small, *American Journal of Sociology*, XI (January 1906), 444–452, 464.

has "charms and values." The "relation which is mysterious in form regardless of its accidental content," is an attractive one. Secrecy creates within a community a subgroup that has special reasons for a sense of confidence among the members. The exclusion of those outside the circle of secrecy results in "a correspondingly accentuated feeling of personal possession." Exclusion heightens the sense of individual difference, provides a center of unity, and, within the subgroup, "counterbalances the separatistic factors" that Tocqueville had lamented as a consequence of democracy.[19]

The corporate structure of eighteenth-century America's small agricultural communities had provided broad areas of predictability about its inhabitants. We must assume that the beginnings of the atomized structure of the nineteenth century, and the unpredictability inherent in mobility and economic complexity, made the creation of new centers of cohesion and "knowing" a new imperative. Inevitably outsiders considered Masonry antisocial in proportion to how much they feared the unpredictability of relationships in an individualistic society. Thus, Masonry may have allayed for its members, but aggravated for outsiders, that tension between knowing and not knowing in the "credit" systems of democratic social economies.

Masons defended secrecy as one of the virtues of the fraternity, and often tried to associate the ideas of secrecy and privacy. The grounds of defense varied. Sometimes the unimportance of Masonic secrets was emphasized and at others, the high or even sacred virtue of the secrets as kept. As one Congregational pastor-Mason said, "Many *hate* the in-

[19] Ibid., p. 464; De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II, 104. Wilson Carey McWilliams points out that the construction of covenant fraternities requires "a recognition of values and truths higher than those of the old community," so that the price of the new identity may be alienation from the older community. *The Idea of Fraternity in America* (Berkeley, 1973), pp. 22–23.

stitution not because they are opposed to any principles of moral goodness, or the benefit to the world by the Establishment of the *Order*, but because they are *unacquainted* with its fundamental principles." However, he assured his audience, the lodges were founded for the highest moral purpose—among them the virtue of keeping secrets. It would "be an injury to the Craft and no benefit to the world" if they were known, since Masonic secrets were the substance of universal Masonic communication.[20]

In a Saint John's Day sermon delivered in Wilmington, Vermont, not long after he left the Putnam area, the Reverend Brother Hollis Sampson defended Masonic secrecy in another way, which could hardly have been calculated to mollify the external critic. Secrecy, he thought, was one of Masonry's merits. To reveal Masonic secrets "to the ignorant and viscious, would be prostituting their purpose and profaning their sanctity." Simon Davis, Jr., of Putnam Lodge, echoed this attitude. The secrets of Masonry, he pointed out, could not be made available "to the multitude" because "the truths taught by Masonry" required "long and patient attention" and study. "By preserving our own secrets we not only give a test of our prudence, but we abstain from casting our pearls before Swine."[21] Explicitly elitist claims to Masonic secrecy were often based on a rather pessimistic valuation of human nature, on the "weakness of human nature" that led men to be "more charmed with novelty than with the intrinsic

[20] Ezekial L. Bascom, *The Opposition of "The World" to Religious and Moral Societies: A Sermon delivered at Westfield (Mass.)* (Hartford, 1815), pp. 7, 11. McWilliams similarly explained the secret as "necessary" to fraternity because "fraternity is a personal relation, depending on more than formal doctrines, based on qualities of spirit that cannot be 'taught' in a formal sense." *Idea of Fraternity*, p. 60.

[21] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "An Oration delivered at Woodstock before Moriah and Putnam Lodges, at the Celebration of St. John the Baptist Day, June 24, A.D. 1812," by Simon Davis, Jr., p. 12 et passim.

value of things."[22] As one of the Masonic clergy argued, if all men were acquainted with the secrets of Masonry, "the good offices arising from the institution, would be subject to all those deductions it now meets within the world at large, and against which it is our endeavor to guard."[23] Democratization would devalue the Masonic system of morality.

Thus the secrecy of Freemasonry provided a powerful appeal to many men who were products of antebellum egalitarian culture. Secrecy was the distinguishing characteristic of the association, its heritage, its duty, and its virtue. Secrecy marked and protected their special knowledge; it protected the special garb, paraphernalia, and rituals of Masonry that helped set the members apart from the rest of the community in the shared experience that bonded them together. "[W]hat is the evil . . . where is the mischief of keeping those things secret which unite us in a solemn bond for the attainment of these laudable objects?" asked the Reverend Oliver Bray.[24] On the contrary, it was a Masonic virtue, said Walter Janes:

> What though the ignorant may laugh to scorn
> The Secrets that our *mystic rites* adorn,
> And say that *secrecy* they do despise:
> Yet, 'tis a virtue *we* know how to prize.[25]

[22] Preston, *Illustrations*, p. 13; "On Secrecy," *Freemason's Magazine and General Miscellany*, May 1811, p. 96. McWilliam's modern formulation of Preston's insight is in the analysis of secrecy "as a means to ends other than the protection of the secret," ensuring both group distinctiveness and cohesion. *Idea of Fraternity*, p. 59.

[23] Hollis Sampson, *A Masonic Discourse Delivered in Wilmington, Vermont* (Brattleborough, Ver., 1817), p. 7.

[24] Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (Boston, 1955), pp. 12, 205; Lionel Tiger, *Men in Groups* (New York, 1970), pp. 167–169.

[25] Walter Janes, *Masonic Poem, Delivered at Mansfield (Conn.) before Trinity Chapter of Royal Arch Masons; and Eastern Star and Uriel Lodges; on the Anniversary of St. John the Evangelist. . . .* (Brooklyn, 1819), p. 14.

Masonic secrecy built a barrier against fear of the dangers of unimpeded individualism and the uncomfortable shiftings within an expansive, mobile society.

The growth of Masonic decorative arts further identified Masons as a secret subculture. Some of the objects decorated in this folk art form were only for use by Masons, such as the elaborately turned or carved lodge furniture, the magnificently embroidered aprons, the membership certificates and illustrations of Masonic monitors by engravers such as Connecticut's Amos Doolittle, or the jewels (pendant medals) of office by local artisans as well as such master craftsmen as Paul Revere. However, the decorative vocabulary of Masonry, based on their symbolic use of builders' tools in the rituals—the square and compass, or the level, or the plumb line—came to be used on non-Masonic objects as well. Forty six varieties of flasks decorated with Masonic symbols have recently been catalogued, and such devices decorated many other commonly used or publicly displayed objects, from boxes and tables to tavern signs and tombstones. One Masonic writer has claimed that in the antebellum period Masonic decoration "can be considered as a national style": that "Masonic imagery seemed to permeate American culture almost as Christian symbolism permeated the art of the Middle Ages."[26] However extravagant the claim, it points to the

[26] *Newtown Bee*, March 5, 1976, pp. 59, 56. Masonic decorative art has received very little attention. Allan Gowans, a Mason, contributed "Freemasonry and the Neoclassic Style in America," *Antiques* (February 1960), p. 172, and the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum of our National Heritage has published the catalogue of its exhibit, *Masonic Symbols in American Decorative Arts* (Lexington, Mass., 1976). On Amos Doolittle, see "Amos Doolittle, 1754–1832," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, June 1963, pp. 7, 14; "Amos Doolittle's Art Survives a Century," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, February 1951, pp. 8, 12; and Jeremy Ladd Cross, *True Masonic Chart and Hieroglyphic Monitor* (New Haven, 1819). See also "Emblems of Fraternity in God's Acre, Granby," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, December 1949, p. 10, and Allan I. Ludwig, *Graven Images: Stonecarving and its Symbols, 1650–1815* (Middletown, Conn., 1966).

important distinction that must be made between Masonic symbolism and other decorative symbolism: the Christian symbolism of the Middle Ages communicated widely shared abstract ideas, while Masonic symbolism, however familiar it became, could only mysteriously allude to Masonry's secret separateness.

The secret elitism of Masonry figured importantly in political and religious Antimasonry. "This form of Exclusive Fraternity annuls the higher and broader bond which unites men in the family of Man," said the author of an Antimasonic tract. "The claims of suffering man, if he be not a Mason, cannot be urged on the fraternity," he complained. "[A] Mason is a brother, but a man is only a neighbor."[27] Although the ideal of publicity in politics and governmental actions may have been "inherent in the American experiment in representative government," it was imperfectly realized in the first decades of the new republic.[28] The areas of legitimate individual privacy were similarly ill-defined. Increasingly, however, objections to Masonic secrecy were tied to ideas about democratic style and polity, and the right to privacy was increasingly questioned as a sufficient explanation of Masonic secret separatism.

Physical and Social Mobility

Among the explicit appeals of Masonry were its advantages for a physically and socially mobile population. Preston's

[27] *Truth's Proofs that Masonic Oaths Do Not Impose Any Obligations* (Norwich, Conn., 1830), pp. 9, 13.

[28] Nelson S. Dearmont, "Federalist Attitudes Toward Governmental Secrecy in the Age of Jackson," *Historian*, XXXVII (February 1975), pp. 222–240. Masonry was not the only secret society in Connecticut. The Moral Society at Yale, the Linonia and Brothers Unity, and the Phi Beta Kappa were all secret. Ralph Henry Gabriel, *Religion and Learning at Yale: The Church of Christ in the College and University, 1751–1957* (New Haven, 1958), p. 72.

words were often quoted to remind members of their "stronger obligation" to one another than "the common ties of humanity." Members were required to provide "kind and friendly offices" for strangers who were Masons.[29] Simon Davis, Jr., told the lodge at Pomfret, "the wise & skillful Mason, is destined to suffer but half misfortunes wait," in a faithful echo of Preston's message, if not his spelling. "Should he travel the dreary deserts of Siberia or be cast upon the bleak inhospitable shores of Newholland," he reminded the lodge, "possessed of the key that opens to him every language, he can take by the hand a friend in whose fidelity he may with safety confide."[30] Thus Bennet Roberts of Goshen, when applying to his local lodge for membership, pointed out that he would soon be a missionary to the heathen.[31] The promising young Pomfret lawyer, Ebenezer Stoddard, Jr., joined the lodge just before he left for his first term as a United States congressman.[32] Masonic membership seemed to offer a universal visa for those who were physically mobile.

The distance need not have been so great nor the place so exotic as Siberia or Washington, D.C., before a Mason needed a friend in whom he could "safely confide." John E. Benjamin of Southington used the Masonic network when he wrote to Hiram Lodge No. 12 in Derby to ask them for a favor, discreetly performed: "As a brother of the Mystic order I request you to inform me by mail whether Augustus Bristol is at Humphreysville or in your neighborhood. . . . Having no acquaintance in that part of the country I have taken the liberty

[29] "Advantages of Freemasonry," *Freemason's Magazine*, May 1811, p. 67.

[30] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "An Oration delivered at Woodstock . . . June 24, A.D. 1812," by Simon Davis, Jr., p. 3. McWilliams, *Idea of Fraternity*, pp. 100–107.

[31] Masonic Files of James R. Case, MSS, Olive Branch Lodge No. 61, Goshen, applications.

[32] Biographical File. See Appendix III, pp. 344–345.

to apply to you for information. I wish you not to mention anything of this matter to any person."[33] Members obviously assumed fraternal responsibility and discretion within the Masonic network. More than that, they could assume its permanence.

In the early decades of the Republic, Americans had not yet achieved a serene confidence in the immutability of their political arrangements. Masonic orators reassuringly observed that "while whole nations have either disappeared or have so changed by great natural and political convolutions as not to be traced, Freemasonry, like a venerable fabric, founded on the strong and unshakable pillars of piety, charity, and benevolence, has stood the test of time and resisted the shock of changes."[34] Since Masonry was supranational, it was a fixed point of reference in the midst of political change or factional strife. So lofty and protected a forum, however, could not prevent fraternal responsibility from conflicting with Masonic injunctions "against all Politicks."

Although politics probably was not discussed during lodge meetings, the "refreshment" periods that followed the meetings could be protracted and convivial. It seems very unlikely that current pressing problems and recent important events were not discussed then.[35] There are hints that they were. For example, when Jonathan Woodward of Coventry wrote to John McClellan of Woodstock because it was "common" for candidates for public office "to solicit the patronage of those whom they deem their friends," he couched his appeal in

[33] Derby, Hiram Lodge No. 12, MSS, letter from John E. Benjamin, August 18, 1818.

[34] "Master Smith's Charges, 1795," *Freemason's Magazine*, January 1811, p. 13.

[35] Abner Cohen found that in discussing public issues in Freetown, the Freemasons soon worked out a "stereotyped" answer, a collective response that he assigned to Masonic discussion. "The Politics of Ritual Secrecy," *Man*, the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, VI, no. 3 (September 1971), 445.

Masonic language. "Although not intimately acquainted with you," he wrote, "I presume I may claim a confident in you. . . ."[36] Masonic disclaimers about the relationship of fraternal and political networks must be read in the light of their special means of communication and their sense of mutual responsibility—and of a wide range of individual standards and experiences. At the very least Masonry contained the potential for political discrimination.

As important as Masonry was for its physically mobile population, it was equally useful for the socially mobile. Freemasonry seemed to promise an accessible form of self-education and self-improvement that would accelerate the realization of social or intellectual pretensions, or ornament them. Preston had pointed out that "Freemasonry comprehends within its circle every branch of useful knowledge and learning, and stamps an indelible mark of pre-eminence on its genuine professors, which neither chance, power, nor fortune can bestow."[37] In Connecticut, though perhaps less so than in other parts of the country, access to anything more than the rudiments of education was becoming more limited. The widely shared belief that education was related to social progress was rooted in ideas about the "indefinite perfectibility of men and institutions." Paradoxically, such ideas tended to limit educational opportunity at commonly available levels because they led to the notion that moral education rather than substantive education made good citizens and protected the proper functioning of democratic institutions. Substantive education, always an avenue to higher social status, was increasingly relegated to private and therefore less accessible institutions of higher learning.[38] Therefore the local opportu-

[36] Connecticut Historical Society, McClellan papers, Box 6, 1801–1806, letter from Jonathan Woodward, May 31, 1802.

[37] Preston, *Illustrations*, p. 26.

[38] Merle Curti, *The Social Ideas of American Educators*, rev. ed. (Patterson, N.J., 1965), pp. 48, 60, 82, 22, 27.

nity for Masonic education in universal and eternal verities as a "moral science" had obvious attractions, while, at the same time, there were hints to the outsider or the initiate that Masonry might provide even richer and more esoteric fare.

The published lore of Masonry tended to associate the fraternity not only with moral science, but with science in general.[39] It was well known that Freemasonry had been elaborated in England by members of the Royal Society and other amateur scientists. At the time they had begun their work, Newtonian philosophy and "natural science" were of a piece, encompassing both religion and scientific truths.[40] The scientists who clustered around the Royal Society in that era became the particular spokesmen of the "quest for useful knowledge," ideas especially important in American eighteenth-century educational philosophy.[41] An interest in science as useful knowledge became very widespread. In spite of the increasing specialization required by the burgeoning sciences, the New England farmer and craftsman, spurred by necessity, became marvelously inventive in useful "scientific" pursuits. By the nineteenth century interest in useful science was a great grass-roots movement, assisted by scientific associations, lyceums, and public forums such as the Lowell Institute, even while its systematic study was relegated to institutions of special or higher learning.[42] As the

[39] Robinson, *An Address*, pp. 6–7.

[40] Cecil J. Schneer, *The Search for Order: The Development of the Major Ideas in the Physical Sciences from the Earliest Times to the Present* (New York, 1960), pp. 3–4, 8–12.

[41] Meyer Reinhold, "The Quest for 'Useful Knowledge' in Eighteenth Century America," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 119 (April 1975), 109; Brooke Hindle, *The Pursuit of Science in Revolutionary America, 1735–1789* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1956), pp. 378–384.

[42] Linda Kerber, "Science in the Early Republic: The Society for the Study of Natural Philosophy," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 29, no. 2 (1972), 263–280; Margaret W. Rossiter, "Benjamin Silliman and the Lowell Institute: The Popularization of Science in Nineteenth Century America," *New England Quarterly* (December 1971), pp. 602–626.

economic fruits of technical invention and innovation were just beginning to be harvested, the idea that virtue was related to knowledge was slowly being transformed into the belief that science and wealth were also related, and were vaguely synonymous with knowledge and virtue. In the context of limited access to substantive knowledge, or higher education, and a widespread interest in science as useful and good, the idea that the technical skills of operative masons had been handed down to speculative Freemasons as part of their "mysteries" was powerfully attractive.[43]

One illustration of the myth of scientific knowledge propagated by Masonry is illuminating. In Preston's *Illustrations of Masonry*, and in many of the American works derived from that source, references to the Lelande-Locke manuscript describe how John Locke himself believed that the Masons were the custodians of ancient scientific secrets. The manuscript purported to be a copy of an ancient history of Masonry, and a cover letter from John Locke commented on the history. It described Masonry as the descendant and heir of the ancient Pythagorean secret societies, which had preserved and guarded a special mathematical knowledge.[44] Historians among the speculative Masons were always seeking links between Masonry and the technical secrets of the great builders of all ages, and so they were delighted to have a manuscript that proved the relationship.

The Lelande document, written in the form of a catechism in something like Middle English, provided English Masonry with an exotic pedigree:

[43] Dirk J. Struik, *Yankee Science in the Making*, rev. ed. (New York, 1962), pp. 179–182. McWilliams suggests that men reacted against the "grim and unrelieved sense of their own sinfulness," in Reformation theologies by "seeking some affirmation in the life of society." This search for meaning led to efforts to see in science and technology a way to "eliminate restrictions from human life." *Idea of Fraternity*, p. 55.

[44] Schneer, *Search for Order*, pp. 22–30, for ideas relating Pythagoras to secret societies and a mystique of mathematics.

> Peter Gower, a Grecian, journeyedde for kunnynge yn Egypte, and in Syria, and yn everyche londe whereas the Venetians hadded plauntedde maconrye and wynnynge entraunce yn al lodges of maconnes, he lerned muche, and retournedde, and woned yn Grecia Magna, waksynge, and becommynge a myghtye wyseacre, and gratelyche renouned, and . . . maked manye maconnes, wherefromme, yn processe of tyme, the arte passed yn Englonde. . . . Natheless maconnes hauethe always, yn everyche tyme, from tyme to tyme, communycatedde to mankynde soche of her secrettes as generallyche mughte be usefulle; they haueth kep backe soche allein as shulde be harmfulle yff they comed yn euylle haundes.[45]

In his commentary Locke said that the document meant that Masonry consisted of "natural mathematical and mechanical knowledge" part of which "the Masons pretend to have taught the rest of mankind, and some part they still conceal." The name, Peter Gower, had at first puzzled him, but "as soon as I thought of Pythagoras, I could scarce forbear smiling." Locke then rehearsed some of the history of the Pythagorean secret society, and his belief that its members had been the custodians of the earliest knowledge of "the true system of the world, lately revived by Copernicus."[46] In his letter Locke explained the relationship of Pythagoreans and Masons and

[45] Preston, *Illustrations*, pp. 132–134.

[46] Ibid., pp. 131, 133. Locke was particularly interested in the Masonic concealment of the art of "ffyndynge neue artes." He said that "the idea that I have of such an art is, that it must be something proper to be employed in all the sciences generally, as algebra is in numbers by the help of which, new rules of arithmetic are and may be found." Masons who knew no mathematics would have been comforted by Locke's claim that the most attractive part of Masonry to him was the Masons' claim to "skylle of becommynge gude and parfythe." "I wish," wrote Locke, "it were communicated to all mankind, since there is nothing more true than the beautiful sentence contained in the last answer, 'that the better men are, the more they love one another.' " Ibid., pp. 135, 137.

as freely associated mathematics and morality as did other Masonic writers. The Lelande-Locke manuscript was not proved a literary hoax until the twentieth century, and so it was part of the history and lore of New England Masonry in the early nineteenth.[47]

The general association of Masonic knowledge with geometry, or a basic and unifying scientific principle somehow related to it, found its way into American Masonry. All of the Masons of Putnam Lodge heard the charge of the second degree each time a member passed from the rank of Apprentice to a Fellow Craft: "The impressive ceremonies of this degree are calculated to inculcate upon the mind of the novitiate the importance of the study of the liberal arts and sciences, especially the science of geometry which forms the basis of Freemasonry and which being of a divine and moral nature is enriched with the most useful knowledge, for while it proves the wonderful properties of nature, it demonstrates the more important truth of morality."[48] The attention of the Fellow Craft was therefore directed to the study of geometry, but, as we have seen in Chapter I, geometry itself was not taught in the lodge; only geometry Masonically defined. Where there were few local measurements to help define the differences between a science and a pseudoscience, Masonry invited its members into a mysterious world of new knowledge.

Although geometry, or science, was not part of Masonic education, the lodges did provide other educational opportu-

[47] It was often referred to in the orations. For example, by George H. Richards, *An Oration delivered before Union Lodge No. 31, December, 1817* (New York, 1819), p. 8.

[48] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, "Charges for the Second Degree." Speculative Masonry had been inspired by the eighteenth-century reading of fifteenth-century manuscripts about Masons in which it was reasoned that "Geometry is said the measure of Earth, wherefore I may say that men live all by Geometry." John Harvey, *The Medieval Architect* (London, 1972), quoting the Cooke MS, p. 193. See above, pp. 25, 42.

nity, valuable where alternatives were rare. The program of Masonic education consisted in the transmission of long rituals and lectures about the moral wisdom associated with Masonic symbolism. The rituals provided information, as well as opportunities to exercise intellectual muscle. Jeremy Cross, the official lecturer of Connecticut Masonry in 1818, traveled all around the state lecturing and consulting with the local lodges on their work.[49] Cross was an unusually successful teacher in Masonry because of his "literal accuracy." One Masonic historian put it, "He always did the same thing in the same way, and repeated the same instructions in the same words." There is no evidence that Cross or Webb had any special skills in mathematics or in the liberal arts. Contemporary accounts report that he could not answer any questions that did not directly relate to his lectures. "When you memorize what I am teaching you, you will know as much as I do," he promised.[50] What Cross taught the Masons was a perfect uniformity in the rituals of American Masonry, but a

[49] Storer, *Records*, pp. 293, 310. His lectures were endorsed by his own Masonic teacher, Thomas Webb Smith, whose Prestonian lectures had become the Masonic orthodoxy of New England. James R. Case, *Jeremy Ladd Cross, Renowned Author and Lecturer* (Privately printed, 1958), p. 5.

[50] Ray V. Denslow, "Jeremy Cross and the Cryptic Rite," *The Masonic Crafts*, August 1930, pp. 223–224. Jeremy Cross, *The True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor, containing all the Emblems explained in the degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow-Craft, Master Mason, Work Master, Post Master, Most Excellent Master, Royal Arch, Royal Master and Select Master: Designed and Duly arranged Agreeably to the Lectures* (New Haven, 1819). Cross's diary suggests that he himself had become a Mason and then lecturer in the course of his pursuit of religious truth and personal salvation, a search that brought him into churches of all denominations wherever he happened to be. To make his "theory and practice" in Masonry agree, he decided that it was important to correct his own moral behavior, and he found at one point in his internal religious odyssey, "the stricter I lived up to the moral standards the more pleasure and comfort I found." His experience with Masonic morality may have described one form of its educational usefulness. New York Grand Lodge, Archives, "A Diary Kept by Jeremy Cross from August 17, 1817 to April 2, 1820" [typescript].

great deal of vigor and some art were exercised in transmitting that knowledge, and a certain satisfaction must have accrued from learning it.

Finally, the lodge acted as a conduit for various kinds of information. First, the lodge rosters published in various state and regional almanacs were among the first mailing lists in the country. In the files of Putnam Lodge there are many letters, obviously forms, announcing new publications. In the early years publishers or authors used the lodge rosters to announce new books about Masonry, but in later years the mailings were of more general interest, not necessarily Masonic. In 1818 John Hamilton Robinson sent a prospectus for his map of Mexico and Louisiana, with "particular attention paid to the northwest area claims." In 1822 Jacob Gideon wrote to Putnam Lodge that he proposed a newspaper to be called *The United States Gazette and National Emporium*. In its columns he planned to provide "all the latest information" in the fields of medicine, law, religion, and "all proposals of a national character," from internal improvements to observatory plans, and news of Masonic events. This kind of information, widely distributed, would provide the "bonds" of political union, in the same way that other common information linked the Masons.[51] All the circulars and announcements they received as Masons placed the local lodge in a national network of communication, a cosmopolitan community that was, in a limited sense, educational in itself.

Many of the lodges also provided libraries for their members, a valuable educational advantage where books were scarce and schools sparse. The books listed by King Hiram Lodge No. 12 in Derby suggest that lodge libraries were quite eclectic.[52] King Hiram Lodge library contained an atlas;

[51] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, Archives, broadsides, 1821.

[52] Derby, King Hiram Lodge No. 12, MSS, Committee Report to Brother James Smith, February 4, 1822. In comparison, the "Catalogue of the Social Library in Abington, Connecticut," shows a first shelf list of about 100

Goldsmith's *England*, *Rome*, and *Greece*; a few novels; a text on Italian; a history of the French Revolution; and twenty volumes of *The World Displayed*. Among its several dozen volumes were some that the more religiously conservative elements in a Connecticut town could not have sanctioned: a biography by the notorious Voltaire and six volumes of Gibbon's *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, a work banned even at Harvard in the 1790s.[53] Masonic libraries must be accounted an important educational facility in serving the needs of a socially as well as physically mobile population.

Social Pleasure

Within the framework of an association dedicated to moral education, an unexceptionable purpose in antebellum New England, the Masonic lodge provided space for ideas and activities that were not so generally acceptable. Freemasons claimed, in orations, sermons, and publications, that the pleasure of fraternity was one of the virtues of the association. Their ideas about recreation, social pleasure, and convivial gaiety were antithetical to the traditional tone and style of social life in New England. This most vague of Masonry's attractions was not the least important one.

Ideas about the joys and pleasures—and the uses—of friendship and fraternal association were celebrated in all the Masonic literature. "If we duly consider MAN," said Calcott, "we shall find him a social being; and . . . such is his nature,

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books, most of which were religious. Many of the lodges seem to have had similarly large libraries. See, for example, A. William Pruner, *History of St. Paul's Lodge No. 11, F. & A.M., Litchfield, Connecticut, 1781–1931* (Hartford, 1932), p. 34, and Walter Bell, *History of King Solomon's Lodge No. 7, F. & A.M., Woodbury, Connecticut, 1765–1915* (Woodbury, Conn., 1916), p. 29.

[53] Gustav Adolf Koch, *Republican Religion* (New York, 1933), note on p. 290.

that he cannot well subsist alone."[54] If men were by nature social, as Preston and Calcott and Connecticut Masonic orators emphasized, by joining the fraternity they were acting according to innate needs or divine plan. Since fraternal and benevolent feelings were "bestowed upon the rational species by nature," man's ability to use this faculty was a measure of his level of civilization. The idea that such associations were virtuous and pleasurable because they were responsive to the mandates of nature frequently recurs. Friendship, although it did not "remove the disquietudes," tended "at least to allay the calamities of life."[55] Masonic friendship, said Preston, was "traced through the circle of private connections to the grand system of universal benevolence." Yet it was the style and tone of this connection that made it particularly comforting and valuable, Wellins Calcott reminded them. In the lodges, "the kind and brotherly cordiality that presides here affords the most pleasing sensations."[56] The joys of Masonic association were linked to its usefulness, to the naturalness of fraternity as a form of recreation, and to the legitimacy of such pleasures.

Calcott and Preston emphasized the legitimacy of Masonic pleasures because they also came from a social milieu where such joys had been frowned upon. According to Lewis Feuer's theory, a new "hedonistic libertarian spirit" had underlain the English scientific revolution at the end of the seventeenth century and informed the American and scientific revolutions a century later.[57] Thus the work of Bishop

[54] Wellins Calcott, *A Candid Disquisition of the Principles and Practices of the most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, Together with Some Strictures on the Origin, Nature and Design of that Institution* (London and Boston, 1772), p. 1.

[55] Preston, *Illustrations*, p. 4.

[56] Calcott, *Candid Disquisition*, p. 37.

[57] Lewis Feuer, *The Scientific Intellectual: The Psychological and Sociological Origins of Modern Science* (New York, 1963), pp. i–vii et passim.

Thomas Sprat, historian of the Royal Society, is a plea for a new and enlarging spirit of work and play. The pursuit of science could be a pleasurable recreation, and such pleasures were not inconsistent with Christian devotion. "Happiness in this World, or being employ'd about Earthly Affairs," and the "honest pursuit of the Conveniences, Decencies, and Ornaments of a Mortal Condition" were legitimate goals.[58] Transported to America, ideas about the legitimacy of social pleasure were in implicit revolt against the prevailing Puritan social orthodoxy, explicitly legitimized by descriptions of the usefulness of such pleasures.

We need not here go into the history of Connecticut's blue laws, made notorious for their repressiveness by the Tory historian the Reverend Samuel Peters in *A General History of Connecticut*. "Dancing, fishing, hunting, skating, and riding in sleighs on ice are all the amusements allowed in the colony," Peters noted. Such limitations explained why "the people look sour and sad" on Saturday night, and "appear to have lost their dearest friends, are almost speechless, and walk softly" by Sunday.[59] Others have refuted or defended his analysis, most of them by comparing Connecticut's laws and customs with those of surrounding areas or of England.[60] On the whole it seems clear that many light recreational ac-

[58] Thomas Sprat, *The History of the Royal Society for the Improving of Natural Knowledge* (London, 1722), p. 67. See also R. H[owlett], *The School of Recreation* . . . (London, 1732), p. 4.

[59] Samuel Peters, *A General History of Connecticut from its First Settlement under George Fenwick, esq., to the Latest Period of Amity with Great Britain; including a Description of the Country and many curious and interesting Anecdotes . . . by a Gentleman of the Province*, 2nd ed. (London, 1782), pp. 320, 304.

[60] James Hammond Trumbull, *The True Blue-Laws of Connecticut and New Haven and the False Blue-Laws invented by the Rev. Samuel Peters* (Hartford, 1877); "Review of J. Hammond Trumbull, the True Blue-Laws . . . and the False Blue-Laws invented by the Rev. Samuel Peters," *The Churchman*, XXXVI, no. 6 (August 1877); James Hammond Trumbull, *The Rev. Samuel Peters: His Defenders and Apologists with a Reply to the*

tivities were deemed "inconsistent with the gravity always to be preserved by a serious Christian" in New England, and that the suppression of levity was an "unwritten law."[61]

Frederick Sawyer's testimony in his *A Plea for Amusements*, written about a dozen years after the period we consider here, was based on his observations about life then. In his book, Sawyer went over the hitherto "taboo grounds" of the ascetic heritage of Puritan ideals, and their "distrust of pleasure and amusement." Our Pilgrim forefathers "neither brought with them any taste for light-hearted amusement," he said, "nor suffered any to introduce them among them." Their piety and good citizenship were "measured by the near approach they make to the ascetic state." It was not that social pleasure was discussed, he claimed, but that it simply was not part of the structure of their ideas. Amusement, "distraction," those things that Sawyer defined as belonging to the "light, cheerful and sportive employments of our body and mind," as distinct from those that were "laborious and serious," were not worthy of consideration.[62] George Whitfield, for example, was supposed to have said that there was scarcely any form of recreation that could be called innocent.[63]

By the turn of the nineteenth century, a sense of optimism

Churchman's Review. . . . (Hartford, 1877); Walter F. Prince, "An Examination of Peter's Blue Laws," *American Historical Association, Annual Report for 1898* (Washington, D.C., 1898), pp. 97–138. Richard Waterhouse in "Reluctant Emigrants: The English Background of the First Generation of the New England Puritan Clergy," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, 44 (December, 1975), 185, suggests that the republication of the *Book of Sports* spurred some to migrate.

[61] T. J. Wertenbaker, *The Puritan Oligarchy* (New York, 1947), p. 162, quoting "A Testimony Against Evil Customs," p. 2. See also Robert B. Weaver, *Amusements and Sports in American Life* (Chicago, 1936).

[62] Frederick W. Sawyer, *A Plea for Amusements* (New York, 1847), pp. 137, 40, 19, 16.

[63] J. L. Hammond, *The Growth of Common Enjoyment*, L. T. Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lectures No. 3, May 1933 (London, n.d.), p. 7.

began to outweigh earlier forebodings. This new mind set was most explicitly voiced by Zephaniah Swift, when, like Sprat, he pleaded that religion was "compatible with the enjoyments of rational pleasures and innocent amusements." He said:

> The natural and the moral world exhibit many rich and copious themes of contemplation; and in our connection with our fellow creatures, there is room for the exercise of those social feelings which awaken and inspire the tenderest transports of the heart. In the constitution of things, a foundation is laid for a vast variety of amusements and diversions, which are calculated to relax the mind and the body. . . . Why should the Deity endow us with a capacity to relish pleasure, and at the same time make it criminal to enjoy it? Yet there are some Fanatics and Bigots who exhort us to put an eternal mourning on our countenances. They would throw a perpetual gloom over every prospect of life, and exclude every ray to cheer and comfort the heart of the weary traveler in this toilsome pilgrimage, excepting what are derived from the consideration of happiness in a future state.[64]

Zephaniah Swift was stating the claim of a subculture within Connecticut society, institutionalized in part by Masonry.

The way that Putnam Lodge operated was itself a visible protest. Every three months, with the full of the moon to light their nighttime travels, anywhere from thirty-five to seventy-five men from the towns of northeastern Connecticut made their way over hills and winding country roads to fill one of the taverns of the First Episcopal Society in Pomfret. Meetings lasted from several hours in morning sessions to the better part of a couple of days. Usually, after the business was

[64] Zephaniah Swift, *The Correspondent. Containing the Publications of the Windham Herald Relative to the Result of the Ecclesiastical Council respecting the Rev. Oliver Dodge* (Windham, Conn., 1793), pp. 122–123. See also David M'Clure, *A Sermon Delivered at the Installation of Village Lodge of Freemasons in Simsbury, Connecticut* (Hartford, 1794), p. 23.

completed, the lodge was adjourned for "refreshments" before the members went their different ways, and the sound of their singing could not have been confined to their lodge rooms. Masonic songs were important in the life of the lodge. Benjamin Franklin's first American edition of the *Constitutions* in 1734 was also the first songster printed in the colonies.[65] However, the musical history of New England is usually written in terms of the ordering and elaboration of psalms and of choir music and the poverty of its other musical culture, even though there always must have been popular songs as well.[66] Masonic music did not have its own musical form or prosody, but it did have an extensive musical literature. Masonic music should probably be subsumed under anachreontic music—a style that was supposed to reflect an ironic enjoyment of life.[67] Some of the anachreontic societies formed in England in the eighteenth century have been described as "semi-Masonic," and similar singing societies were formed in America in the early nineteenth century.[68] In their simplest form anachreontic songs were drinking songs, sometimes mildly salacious, and such tunes, along with other songs and ballads, filled the Masonic manuals and songbooks.[69] The spirit of the songs and the religious con-

[65] Irving Lowens, *A Bibliography of Songsters Printed in America before 1821* (Worcester, Mass., 1975).

[66] William Treat Upton, *Art-Song in America: A Study of the Development of American Music* (Boston, 1930). See also Oscar G. T. Sonneck, *A Bibliography of Early Secular American Music* (Washington, D.C., 1905).

[67] Eric Bloom, ed., *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (New York, 1954), I, 143.

[68] Fred W. Minderman, *The Sixth Liberal Art* (n.p., n.d.), p. 4. See also Herbert T. Leyland, *Thomas Smith Webb: Freemason, Musician, Entrepreneur* (Dayton, Ohio, 1965).

[69] For examples see John M. Burnham, *The Vocal Companion and Masonic Register* (Boston, 1802); Luke Eastman, *Masonick Melodies* (Boston, 1818); Samuel Larkin, *The Columbian Songster and Freemason's Pocket Companion* (Portsmouth, N. H., 1798); or [David Vinston], *The Masonick Minstrel* (Dedham, Mass., 1816).

straints in the surrounding musical culture, more than the songs themselves, made Masonic music offensive to some members of New England communities. Thus the Antimasons could say of the seemingly innocuous songs of the Masons, "The airs commonly performed in the lodges unequivocally express the varied immorality of Freemasonry."[70]

In addition to the regular tuneful meetings of the lodge, Masons assembled from time to time for special communications, and groups of three or four met on committee business in various parts of the lodge's area. At their semiannual celebration of Saint John's days in December and June, the lodge often invited distinguished guests, sometimes even women, to join their festivities.[71] The Masons were hardly an inconspicuous part of the life of the towns. Their secrecy, their ceremonial garb, their songs, and their rituals at funerals and public celebrations were flamboyant in the sober context of a Connecticut community.

Masons were sometimes accused of using the meetings of the fraternity for "bacchanalian revels."[72] At least part of the foundation for this accusation was that the growth of Masonry after the turn of the century coincided with a growth of concern about increasing liquor consumption. There is not much evidence, however, that the pattern of consumption in the lodges differed significantly from that of the community in general. Consumption was high everywhere.[73] The use of the tavern meeting place was not particularly significant either. As was the case with political meetings, a tavern was the only place large enough to accommodate their numbers. Selectmen

[70] *The Antimasonic Review and Magazine*, II, no. 9 (New York, 1828), p. 279.

[71] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, A. E. Frissell, "History of Putnam Lodge," pp. 6–7.

[72] *Truth's Proofs*, p. 4.

[73] Charles Roy Keller, *The Second Great Awakening in Connecticut* (New Haven, 1942), pp. 138–139.

or other civil authorities appointed the taverners annually and expected them to behave responsibly in helping to control excesses.[74] Every public gathering, from meetings of the General Association of Congregational Churches and General Assembly to funerals and hayings, provided liquor. Wine or beer was a fringe benefit, an uncounted part of the wages of most workers. Then, around 1810, under the leadership of several of the clergy, the general acceptance of patterns of high liquor consumption began to be questioned, and Connecticut's temperance movement formed.

Attitudes in the lodges seemed to mirror the range of attitudes in the community as a whole, and the Masons concerned themselves about the regulation of the consumption of liquor at least as early as other segments of the population. As early as 1815, the lodge in Harwinton forbade the consumption of strong liquor and voted that nothing but wine should be drunk between the time the lodge was organized and it closed.[75] In 1822 the Olive Branch Lodge No. 61 in Goshen, with "three-fourths of the members present," voted that "the use of ardent spirit in the Lodge be prohibited, except by special vote of the Lodge." This resolution, like some in other places, was withdrawn, but the fact of the motion implies the recognition of a problem.[76] When some lodges became concerned about liquor consumption, and vacillated in their attitudes about how to handle the problem, their behavior did not differ significantly from the behavior of other groups in the towns and villages of Connecticut.

[74] Zephaniah Swift, *A System of the Laws of the State of Connecticut*, 2 vols. (Windham, Conn., 1795), I, 124.

[75] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical File, Aurora Lodge No. 35, William Wallace Lee, "Free Masonry in Harwinton, Conn.," p. 11.

[76] Masonic Files of James R. Case, MSS, Olive Branch Lodge No. 61, Goshen, "Resolve . . . ," n.d., and "To the Worshipful Master from M. Harrison, July 21, 1822." See also Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical File, Meridian Sun Lodge No. 32, "Items about Meridian Sun Lodge."

Although there was little resistance at first to the idea of routine drinking, unless it was carried to excess, a strong suspiciousness and aversion to the notorious Masonic practice of drinking toasts on every convivial or public occasion was imbedded in the Puritan mind. Cotton Mather had railed against the drinking of toasts as "a heathen custom," first used by the pagans as a drink offering to their demons. "It becomes Christians to beware of having any fellowship with such unfruitful works of darkness."[77] An early Massachusetts law had forbidden "that abominable practice" because it led to other sins, and the Synod of 1679 had condemned so "heathenish and idolatrous" a practice.[78] The idea that toasts were sinful, rather than that drinking itself was, complicated the changing of attitudes of the general community toward the Masonic use of toasts and their consumption of liquor.

Communities in Connecticut were divided in their response to the temperance reformers, and initially temperance pleas attracted little support. The temperance movement dated from the sermons of Herman Humphrey, Roswell Swan, and Calvin Chapin around 1810, but the Connecticut Temperance Society was not formed until 1829.[79] By that time various prominent citizens in many communities had added their organizational skill to those of some of the clergy. The sentiments of temperance groups moved from disapproval of hard liquor to the demand for total abstinence. Although general ideas about temperance had always received community approval in principle, the activities of the temperance movement sometimes aroused resistance. In the Putnam Lodge area, the Reverend Mr. Lyman of Woodstock and the Reverend Mr. Dow of Thompson were at first somewhat

[77] Wertenbaker, *The Puritan Oligarchy*, p. 164, quoting Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (London, 1702), v, 55.

[78] Ibid., pp. 164–165.

[79] Jarvis Means Morse, *A Neglected Period of Connecticut History, 1818–1850* (New Haven, 1933), pp. 204–209.

suspicious of the popular enthusiasm. The Reverend Mr. Atkins thought his health required a moderate consumption of spirits. The Windham County Association as a whole, according to one observer, "talked *well*, talked *right*, but spoiled it all by taking their grog afterwards."[80] The same might have been said of the lodge.

The clergy led the early temperance movement, but, in keeping with the changing role of the clergy, lay leadership took over to organize the crusade on a broad popular base as a voluntary association. In Windham County the Temperance Society, founded in 1829, named Darius Matthewson, a prominent officer of Putnam Lodge, as its first president. However, the board also included such Antimasonic leaders as Smith Wilkinson and John Holbrook of Pomfret.[81] In 1834, perhaps out of deference to Matthewson, Putnam Lodge voted to "dispense with distilled spirits" in the meetings.[82] It reversed itself a few months later, but passed the resolution again in 1839. In 1840 the town of Pomfret voted to forbid the sale of liquor, and it remained a "No License" town for more than a hundred years.[83] The divisions in the towns with regard to the use of liquor were acted out in the votes and reversals of the lodge. If one wishes to consider only chronology, it might appear that Putnam Lodge was in the vanguard of temperance reform.

Masonic lodges were not primarily drinking clubs, but they did celebrate the joys and pleasures of festivity and friendship. Their fraternity embodied brotherly love, and was designed "to promote and enjoy that social intercourse and

[80] Larned, *Windham County*, II, 481. [81] Ibid., II, 484.

[82] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Minutes, III, April 1834; September 1834. See also "Down the Masonic Years from 1801 with a Famous Lodge, Putnam, No. 46." *Connecticut Square and Compass,* April 1949, pp. 1, 6–7.

[83] Susan Jewett Griggs, *Early Homesteads of Pomfret and Hampton: Folklore and Firesides* (Abington, Conn., c. 1950), p. 53.

mutual friendship designed by our beneficent Creator to endear man to man, to soften the cares and sweeten the enjoyments of life."[84] A fraternity founded on the inclusive principles of Masonry offered a refuge from the political and religious divisiveness of a hostile and chaotic world. "Would you ask, wherein the great strength of this fraternity lies," queried Hosea Ballou in the midst of a tirade against "religious superstition and bigotry." His answer was "brotherly love," which enables "the worthy mason, with the assistance of his brethren" to "stand on his feet, and walk in the midst of danger without fear."[85] It was not only the pleasures of fraternity they were extolling, but the uses of a place "where true friends in social union meet," itemized by Putnam Lodge's bard, Walter Janes:

> But where *affection* with kind tears and smiles,
> Soothes every pang, and every fear beguiles;—
> Where *love* and *sympathy* their charms impart,
> To solace and to tranquilize the heart;—
> Where happy *concord* holds her peaceful throne,
> With each endearment *virtue* calls her own;—
> Where *wisdom*, *strength*, and *beauty*, are combin'd,
> To *aid*, *support*, and to *adorn* the mind;—
> Where *order*, free from strife, assumes controul;
> Where *peace* and *harmony* cement the whole.[86]

Part of Masonry's "pleasures" comprised the barriers the lodge erected against a divided and hostile world, to create an orderly and safe subcommunity.

[84] Sturges Gilbert, *A Sermon delivered by the Rev. Sturges Gilbert, of Kent, before the Fraternity of King Solomon's Lodge, at Woodbury, the 27th of June, A.L. 5815* (New Haven, 1815), pp. 5–6.

[85] Walter Ferris, *Five Sermons by Rev. Walter Ferris . . . to which is subjoined a Festival Sermon by Brother Hosea Ballou* (Randolph, Ver., 1807), p. 99.

[86] Walter Janes, *Masonic Poem*, p. 4.

Throughout the first decades of the nineteenth century when Masonry was growing most rapidly, the Connecticut clergy often warned parents that recreation and social pleasures were dangerous. In 1822, for example, the General Association published a sermon about the education of Connecticut's children. If church members wished to educate their children "in the way they should go," they must know that "the amusements of youth, which, in themselves, appear trifling or innocent," could be of serious consequence. Parents must help their children resist the corruption of frivolity, and, in turn, be prepared to have their children resist them and brand them "with the names of superstition and bigotry." Parents were to teach their children that "time is a talent, for the use of which we are accountable to God, and the waste of time in vain amusement or hurtful indulgences is a great sin."[87] In that vein the Reverend Joel Hawes, when he lectured to the young men of Hartford and New Haven in 1828, told them he was convinced that a fatal common mistake was that there was such a thing as "slight deviations from duty."[88]

More important, as Sprat had pointed out, recreation as a form of social activity had class connotations. In England leisure and education had been the property of the upper classes. For the New England orthodox the only Biblical prescription for leisure activity proclaimed, "The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunities of leisure, he that hath little business shall becom wise."[89] Later the elitism of the Federalists was based on similar notions: they wanted social and political leadership in the hands of those who had the op-

[87] Congregational Churches of Connecticut, *Proceedings of the General Association of Connecticut, 1822* (Hartford, 1822), pp. 29–31.

[88] Joel Hawes, *Lectures Addressed to the Young Men of Hartford and New Haven, and Published at their United Request* (Hartford, 1828), p. 38.

[89] John Winchell Riley, Jr., "Dynamics of Non-Family Group Leisure in a New England Town, 1857–1935" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1937), pp. 1–2.

portunity, through the right use of leisure, to "become wise." Others, partly susceptible to the same ideas, came to think of the lodges as good schools for learning the behavior appropriate to new social roles. Themes of pleasure, leisure, education, and leadership were most complexly interrelated in Connecticut throughout this period.

In the study of a small town in New England in the nineteenth century, not unlike the towns in the Putnam Lodge area, it was found that organized group leisure was almost nonexistent before 1850. Group leisure activity began in the form of educational lectures, "a sort of opening wedge out of the period of Puritan abstinence from play."[90] Masonry as a form of education had been the prior "opening wedge" to enjoyment because it afforded opportunities for learning new forms of behavior as well as new kinds of information. Masonry's membership was also useful because it provided for fraternal association among men of disparate backgrounds and ideas. Then, too, men in the remotest lodges in Connecticut had the heady pleasure of being symbolically associated with the great and learned in all places and all times. Yet the same features that had made Masonry attractive to some made it repellent, threatening, or immoral to others, and, by the late 1820s, this difference of attitudes took spectacular public form in the confrontation between Masons and Antimasons.

[90] Ibid., p. 92.

VIII

"The Great Moral Shock": Antimasonic Organization

Masonry flourished and antimasonry was dormant in Connecticut after the turn of the nineteenth century. The establishment of Masonry and the disestablishment of the Congregational churches had deprived unorganized orthodox antipathy to the fraternity of political religious leadership. However, in 1826 a series of criminal acts by Masons in upstate New York transformed local antipathies into widely shared antagonisms, organized into active, open opposition to the fraternity. An Antimasonic movement spread to several states, including Connecticut.[1]

In September of 1826 William Morgan of Batavia in upstate New York was abducted by a group of Masons shortly after he announced the publication of an exposé of Masonry. He was taken to an unused fort at Niagara and then he disap-

[1] The most comprehensive study of Antimasonry is (still) Charles McCarthy, *The Antimasonic Party: A Study of Political Antimasonry in the United States, 1827–1840*, Annual Report of the American Historical Association, I (Washington, D.C., 1903). The most recent study is by Michael F. Holt, "The Antimasonic and Know Nothing Party," *History of U.S. Political Parties 1789–1860 From Factions to Parties*, ed. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (New York, 1973), I, 575–593. Two recent important treatments of Antimasonry in particular states are in Lee Benson, *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York as a Test Case* (New York, 1964), and Ronald P. Formisano, *The Birth of Mass Political Parties: Michigan, 1827–1861* (Princeton, 1971).

peared. The conduct of those involved in the kidnapping, and those who controlled the machinery of justice in punishing them, confirmed the worst fears of Morgan's neighbors about the secret power of Masonry to "thwart the operation of the democratic principles." Their "great moral shock" reverberated throughout the countryside, mobilized an indignant investigation of the "fearful moral influence" of Masonry, and coalesced into a coherent movement to eliminate the fraternity.[2]

The trials of those who had abducted Morgan began in January of 1827. In the absence of a dead body or any proof about Morgan's whereabouts, the accused could only be tried for conspiracy. David C. Miller, Morgan's partner, immediately published his exposé, *Illustrations of Masonry*, with an eloquent introduction describing the abduction.[3] In February, April, and August of 1827, various participants in Morgan's abduction were tried; but the choice of Masonic jurors, the silence of the local press, and the circumspection of law enforcement officers who were also Masons outraged some people. The sentences were light, ranging from a few months to two years.[4]

[2] *Report of a Committee to the New York Senate, together with Extracts from Authentic Documents, Illustrating the Character and Principles of Freemasonry* (New Haven, 1829), pp. 6–7. Local conditions must explain the overreaction to Morgan's threatened exposé. Fourteen American editions of *Jachin and Boaz, or, An Authentic Key to the Door of Freemasonry, by a Gentleman belonging to the Jerusalem Lodge*, an exposé first published in London in 1762, had appeared between 1796 and 1857, including one Spanish edition published in Philadelphia as recently as 1822. See William Leon Cummings, *Bibliography of Anti-Masonry* (New York, 1963).

[3] *The Proceedings of the United States Anti-Masonic Convention, held at Philadelphia, September 11, 1830, Embracing the Journal of Proceedings, the Reports, the Debates and the Address to the People* (Philadelphia, 1830), pp. 21–33.

[4] There were also many editions printed in various places. The edition quoted here is *Illustrations of Masonry by One of the Fraternity who has devoted 30 years to the Subject, with an Account of the Kidnapping of the Author*, 2nd ed. (printed for the author, 1827).

From the fall of 1826, self-appointed groups, representing a broad cross section of the population including Masons, mounted *ad hoc* investigations, organized political demonstrations, and addressed memorials to various authorities.[5] In January of 1827 the Reverend Elder David Bernard, pastor of the Baptist church in Warsaw, a dozen miles from Batavia, was so outraged by the conduct of Masons that he renounced his membership in the fraternity and urged a convention of several Baptist churches to officially discountenance all members who would not follow suit. That meeting was the prototype of many small convocations of churches to anathematize the fraternity. Meanwhile secular citizens' groups were also forming. By 1828, the year of the Jackson-Adams presidential election, Antimasonry had become an organized political movement in New York.

Political Antimasonry was powered by civic and religious outrage. Early in 1828 a small group of ex-Masons in Le Roy, a town near Batavia, organized themselves as the Anti-Masonic Society. Members of Putnam Lodge in Connecticut were dismayed to find that Herbert A. Reed, formerly of Thompson, and formerly a member of their lodge, was among the leaders. Meanwhile, in a meeting in March some of the same ex-Masons were among the delegates from twelve towns to resolve to take political action against the fraternity. Thurlow Weed of Rochester, a newspaper editor and political leader, helped them to organize, and Solomon Southwick of Albany, another editor and an active Antimason, were among the leaders of both groups. Assembling in Utica in August of 1828, the two groups organized into an Antimasonic party, because they had become convinced that the urgency of the cause and the intricacies of politics made it advisable to "dis-

[5] For the formation of the Antimasonic party see especially Ronald P. Formisano, "Political Character, Antipartyism and the Second Party System," *American Quarterly*, XXI, no. 4 (Winter 1969), 683–709, and James S. Chase, *Emergence of the Presidential Nominating Convention, 1789–1872* (Urbana, Ill., 1973), pp. 121–155.

regard the two great political parties that at this time distract the state of the Union."[6] The newly formed party nominated Antimasonic candidates for office, among them Solomon Southwick for governor, and appointed committees for publication and correspondence to spread word of their activities. Within a short time Antimasonic political parties sprang up in several of the middle, northern, and northwestern states. A national party was organized in 1830.

The Antimasonic movement soon spread to Connecticut and was briefly organized as a political party whose goals were characterized by religious rather than egalitarian arguments. More important than political Antimasonry, a broad social movement preceded, accompanied, and survived the political party and decimated Masonry in Connecticut for a generation. Antimasonry thus displayed a mixed pattern of failure and success.[7] The temporary deployment to political ends of a deeply felt religious conviction about Masonry only worked to help separate the idea of social morality from its orthodox, communitarian base. The only attempt of the Antimasons to accommodate their purposes to the give-and-take of coalition politics in Connecticut put into power those who were least sympathetic with their goals. Then, too, although social Antimasonry spread far and deep and almost destroyed the fraternity, it did so at the cost of dividing religious subcommunities and forcing a religiously diversifying society to

[6] The most complete exposition of these early events is in Elder David Bernard, *Light on Masonry: A Collection of the Most Important Documents on the Subject of Speculative Free Masonry: . . . in relation to the Abduction of William Morgan, Proceedings of Conventions, Orations, Essays &c, &c, with all the Degrees of the Order conferred in a Master's Lodge as Written by Captain William Morgan; all the Degrees conferred in the Royal Arch Chapter and Grand Encampment of Knights Templars, with the Appendant Orders, . . . making Forty-eight Degrees of Free Masonry with Notes and Critical Remarks* (Utica, N.Y., 1829), pp. 413–501.

[7] Seymour M. Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason: Right Wing Extremism in America, 1790–1970* (New York, 1970), p. 46.

more explicitly separate civil and religious spheres of action.

In Connecticut the career of Antimasonry both as a party and a movement had two stages. The first fell in the period between 1826 and 1830, when Antimasons formulated their sentiments and, assisted by men and information from the epicentrum of the Masonic storm in New York, organized Antimasonic social and political activities. During the second stage, from 1830 to 1835, a political party incorporated their ideas, with indifferent results, while a broad social movement almost succeeded in proscribing Masonry.[8] Antimasonic activity in the Putnam Lodge area illustrates the interaction of religious and political forces and the growth of state-wide and interstate networks.

Mobilizing Public Opinion

Antimasonry, imported from New York, organized social sentiment already present in Connecticut. A steady flow of information and exhortation spurred people in various parts of the state to formulate and act upon their ideas about Masonry. For example, news of the "situation of Masonic affairs" around Batavia reached Putnam Lodge soon after Morgan's disappearance. On October 10, 1826, Herbert A. Reed wrote to the Secretary of the lodge asking for a certificate of his Masonic membership. He had recently moved from Thompson, Connecticut, to Le Roy, New York; and, he said, a stranger who was a Mason needed identification in his town because of recent events there:

> You perhaps may not know the situation we are placed in in this place—the fact as far as it is *possible to put on paper*

[8] Leland M. Griffin, "The Antimasonic Persuasion: A Study of Public Address in the Antimasonic Movement, 1826–1838" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1950), p. 11ff. Griffin divides the movement into two stages characterized by a changing rhetoric. He describes the first stage from 1826 to 1830 as one that sought "conviction" and the following stage, 1830 to 1838, as "one of persuasion."

> is this—about 2 months since a man by the name of Morgan associated with some others undertook to publish the secrets of Masonry up to the Arch degree & did go as far as to get the manuscripts ready for printing—in fact they did print the 3 first degrees—the Masons were indeed alarmed & about the 11th of September last Morgan was missing & has not since been heard from. You may possibly conjecture what course was persued with him.[9]

It later appeared that Reed had requested credentials in order to be able to renounce active membership in Masonry. The story of Morgan's disappearance may have been new to some in Putnam Lodge, but others in the lodge may have had some part in planning "what course was persued" with Morgan.

At least three Masons from Putnam Lodge may have been involved in Morgan's disappearance. Dr. Thomas Hubbard, a distinguished leader in medical affairs and humanitarian movements, a charter member of the lodge, and later Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, was reported to have been a member of the committee of the Grand Chapter appointed before Morgan's disappearance to look into the threatened publication and recommend a Masonic response. Asa Child, a member of a large family in Woodstock, who had been "made" a Mason in Putnam, was also supposed to have been at that meeting.[10] Furthermore, according to rumor, Asa May, a young and enterprising Masonic and civic leader from Woodstock, went to upstate New York while Morgan was held in the fort and participated in one of the mysterious conferences that were supposed to have decided Morgan's fate.[11] Whether before or after the fact of Morgan's disappearance,

[9] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, letter to Joseph Bartlett, October 10, 1826.

[10] [Colonel Knapp?] *Antimasonic Almanac: 1830* (New York, n.d.), pp. 46–47.

[11] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, A. E. Frissell, "A History of

the events in New York were well known in the Putnam Lodge area through informal networks of communication.

Soon Antimasonry flared up in several places in Connecticut. During the trials and investigations of the Morgan affair, the Reverend John Whittlesey of Salem, later an important Connecticut Antimasonic leader, began to proclaim the evils of the fraternity. Because Whittlesey was a Mason, he was brought to trial before the "Court of Salem Lodge No. 71," in New London County on April 30, 1827. Whittlesey was charged with accusing Masonry of being a "forern driven and corrupt institution" and "dangerous for they would take mens lives." Masons were "Drunkards and caroused all night," he said, and they "persecuted" him because he would not "get drunk cuss and sware." He disassociated himself from them. Most important, Whittlesey, according to the testimony, urged Masons to "forget the Oath" because the Masonic obligations were not binding, or damning: "no more than to say—by God or to tell a Ly." He had urged his son, Oramel Whittlesey, also a Mason later active in the Connecticut Antimasonry, to demonstrate the signs of Masonry, which, he said, were known by "every old woman in town."[12] Whittlesey was expelled from the lodge, but not before he had renounced his membership.

Antimasonic news traveled fast. Soon after Herbert A. Reed had renounced Masonry in upstate New York, Putnam Lodge met and voted to inquire into the reports about his Antimasonic conduct. On April 30 he was expelled.[13] By then,

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Putnam Lodge No. 46, A.F. and A.M., within the Jurisdiction of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Connecticut, in Chronological Order, 1801–1901," p. 100.

[12] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical File, MSS, Salem Lodge No. 71, "A Minute of Evidence . . . April, 1827 . . . ," [no signature]. Whittlesey was pastor of the Methodist church and a friend of Henry Perkins, a lawyer in Salem, who became very active in the Antimasonic movement.

[13] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, Minutes, II, April 30, 1828.

copies of the *National Observer*, edited by Solomon Southwick, a prime mover of Antimasonry in the meetings Reed was attending, found their way into Connecticut. By November of 1828, Henry Perkins of Salem and William Reed of Thompson, Herbert A. Reed's brother, were among the thirteen names listed as the Connecticut agents of the paper.[14]

Other Antimasonic publications soon brought Reed's Fourth of July oration, with its emphatic insistence that the goals of the New York group must be "the entire overthrow of the Masonic institution."[15] Reed's case for the politicization of Antimasonry was of particular interest to his readers in Connecticut. To develop his arguments, Reed had quoted at length from an oration by William Brainard, delivered to his lodge at Norwich in 1825 and then published. Brainard liked to exercise his oratorial talents, and his speech about Masonry had been intemperate and bombastic:

> It is powerful! It comprises men of rank, wealth, office, and talent, in power and out of power, and that in almost every place where power is of any importance; and it comprises among the other classes of community to the lowest, in large numbers, and capable of being directed by the efforts of others, so as to have the force of concert throughout the civilized world. They are distributed, too, with the means for knowing each other, and the means of keeping secret, and the means of co-operating—in the desk, in the legislative hall, on the bench, in every gathering of men of business, in every party of pleasure, in every enterprise of government, in every domestic circle, in peace and in war, among its enemies and friends, and on one place as well as another; so powerful indeed it is at this time, that it fears

[14] *National Observer*, November 4, 1826, p. 1.
[15] Bernard, *Light on Masonry*, p. 460.

> nothing from violence, either public or private; for it has every means to learn it in season, to counteract, defeat, and punish it.[16]

Even "the world in arms" could not abolish Masonry, Brainard said, because it was "a powerful institution." Brainard's words amply confirmed the Antimasons' suspicions, and he was quoted in many Antimasonic publications and at Antimasonic political meetings for years to come.

Speeches such as Brainard's helped to set the program of the Antimasons. At the first meeting of the Antimasonic Society in New York, the speakers reviewed the Morgan affair and decided that "even this *government itself*, with all its power," might not be able to suppress the fraternity. The only power strong enough to counterbalance the great weight of Masonry was the "moral force" of public opinion: "This opinion speaks in our public meetings—it speaks from the sacred desk—it speaks through the organ of the press—it speaks through the ballot boxes. . . ." It was the only proper force in such an "emergency."[17] From the beginning Antimasonry was a different kind of political movement because it sought political power primarily as a means of compelling public opinion on one social issue.

Antimasonic attitudes toward the power of the press indicated the new sophistication in national politics that had made the Adams-Jackson election "a landmark in development of journalism as the chief arena for presidential politics."[18] Of course the political press had played an increasingly important role from the Revolution of 1776 to the revolution of 1800. Its virtues had been displayed when, within two weeks of completion, newspapers were so widely

[16] Ibid., p. 465.

[17] Ibid., p. 430.

[18] Robert A. Rutland, *The Newsmongers: Journalism in the Life of the Nation, 1690–1972* (New York, 1973), pp. 119–120.

distributed that the new Constitution was available everywhere for public discussions.[19] As early as 1793 Noah Webster had bragged that "In no other country on earth, not even in Great Britain, are Newspapers so generally circulated among the body of the people." A generation later de Tocqueville, going to "the utmost limits of European civilization" in America, found newspapers on the pioneers' crude tables.[20] Yet the concept of freedom of the press, especially as the newspapers also grew more politically scurrilous, was not fully developed, as the Alien and Sedition Acts had shown. According to which historian one reads, the period from 1801 to 1833 was either the Dark Ages of journalism or its Gilded Age, when extreme partisanship helped order the confusing world of factional politics. Newspapers, with postage at a penny and a free exchange to printers, were cheap, ubiquitous, and highly partisan.[21]

The Antimasons were quite correct that their short-term goal of winning electoral office and their long-term goal of influencing public opinion could be achieved only by putting their own oars into the muddy waters of political journalism. Their assessment of the power of Masonry and their experience with the press in reporting the Morgan affair convinced Antimasons that the press "had been awed into the most slavish silence, by the influence of free-masonry."[22] Thurlow Weed and Solomon Southwick, as newspaper editors and Antimasonic leaders, set as one of their first goals to increase the number of newspapers that would help mobilize public opinion against Masonry. The distribution of information about the evil implications of Masonry seemed crucial (and perhaps sufficient) for their purpose.

[19] Clinton Rossiter, *1787: The Grand Convention* (New York, 1966), pp. 257–315.

[20] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Journey to America*, ed. J. P. Mayer (New Haven, 1959), pp. 338–339; John C. Miller, *Crisis in Freedom: The Alien and Sedition Acts* (Boston, 1951), pp. 232–233.

[21] Rutland, *The Newsmongers*, pp. 83–84, 90, 102.

[22] *Report of a Committee to the New York Senate*, p. 11.

Antimasonic groups in New York accordingly sent Noble D. Strong to Hartford to establish a newspaper.[23] Strong had been a minister and then a teacher in Auburn, New York, before he found his life work in spreading the story of the evils of Masonry. He established the *National Intelligencer* in Hartford by November of 1828. At that time the *Canal of Intelligence* in Norwich was the only other newspaper in Connecticut to publish Antimasonic news.[24] These two papers, it was hoped, would "speedily revolutionise Connecticut."[25] Meanwhile Henry Dana Ward started the *Antimasonic Review* in New York, and he also circulated Antimason reports, resolutions, exposés, and editorials in Connecticut.

By the end of 1828 Antimasonic channels of information were able to report the beginnings of organized Antimasonry in Connecticut. According to the organizers an Antimasonic meeting in Norwich on December 19 brought out 700 people. Henry Perkins of Salem chaired the meeting, and Noble D. Strong gave the major address. The Reverend John Whittlesey of Salem called for a resolution to hold a state Antimasonic convention in Hartford.[26] A meeting was also held in Brooklyn that week, and another in Wolcottsville on January 22, 1829.[27] Although the Masons of Connecticut did not publicly react to the gathering organization and power of the Antimasonic movement, there is some evidence that in the first few years of the Antimasonic movement they, or those who were not Antimasons, actively opposed the new political force.[28]

[23] *National Observer*, November 28, 1828, p. 3.

[24] Ibid., July 22, 1829, p. 3. They declared that they had recently opened their columns to aid in "the prostration of Masonry," probably earlier that year.

[25] *Anti-Masonic Review*, August 1828, p. 3.

[26] *Antimasonic Intelligencer*, December 16, 1828.

[27] Ibid., December 16, 1828.

[28] Connecticut Historical Society, MSS, Masonic Papers, 1788–1869. Three members of the First Church in Goshen objected to the admission of Eben N. Thompson because he belonged to a lodge "composed in many

The Amaranth, or Masonic Garland, a monthly magazine, was started in Massachusetts and circulated widely in Connecticut. The *Amaranth* acted as a source of information on Antimasonry and anti-Antimasonry and provided Masons with useful defensive information about the history and activities of the fraternity. Initially Masonic defensive arguments were addressed to the tone and quality of the Antimasonic campaign rather than the issues raised. In September of 1828 the *Amaranth* reported the spread of counter-renunciations, similar to those of the seceding Masons circulated in the Antimasonic press. The anti-Antimasons followed the same pattern as the seceders by renouncing the new movement as a "wicked and unholy institution."[29] Yet soon organized Antimasonry provoked anti-Antimasons to more aggressive tactics in popularizing their cause.

The anti-Antimasons began to imitate the Antimasons by organizing meetings and actively recruiting popular support. The *Amaranth* reported a meeting in Vermont called by men who were "neither masons nor have pledged themselves to oppose masonry," to inquire into the efforts of their fellow citizens because of the "popular excitement." In such forums the anti-Antimasons condemned the "excitement of a popular passion and prejudice, as an evil most fatal to the peace, and even the existence of a republic." Anti-Antimasons claimed that they did not object to either Masonry or Antimasonry as private opinions, but they did object to the politicization of

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instances of men of irreligion and infidel characters." Thompson replied, "I never calculated to attend Masonick Lodges composed of infidels and irreligious men—neither do I calculate to associate with a body of men whether Masons or not professing any such principles—neither do I intend to perform any works inconsistent with my duty as a Christian, the Grace of God assisting me." The reply was a refusal to renounce Masonry.

[29] "Anti-Masonry Renounced!!" The *Amaranth, or Masonic Garland*, September 1828, pp. 177–178. Griffin, "The Antimasonic Persuasion," p. 188, described the development of a stylized form of renunciation by Antimasons.

Antimasonry, which suggested to them "a political hobby-horse on which to ride into power and office."[30] For them the central issue was fast becoming whether Masonic membership should automatically bar a candidate from office, and they put themselves on record as resolved to support office seekers on merit alone. Connecticut anti-Antimasons concurred.

In February of 1829, a few weeks after the December meeting of Antimasons in Norwich, a "Citizens' Meeting" in Brooklyn, Connecticut, like the one in Vermont, assembled men who were "neither Masons nor pledged to support Anti-Masonry" to consider the problems raised by the Antimasonic meeting. Nathan Witter, the father of Putnam Lodge member Dr. Asa Witter, chaired the meeting. The assembly found that the conduct of the Antimasons was "of a piece with that fierce and violent spirit of religious persecution which has been the disgrace of human nature in all ages." The "denunciations and invectives pronounced by strangers to us" at Norwich and elsewhere had injured friends and neighbors. The evils of Masonry had not been proved "by these persons who have recently been among us," and the spirit of Antimasonry was such that they "must strongly suspect a tree which can produce so bitter fruit."[31] They selected a correspondence committee and passed several general resolutions about the cooperation of friends for the good order of the community. The anti-Antimasons are the only visible forces in the Masonic counterattack on Antimasonry, but their activities at least show that the Masons were neither defenseless nor apathetic.

The Antimasonic movement in Connecticut in 1828 nevertheless more deeply eroded the respectability of the

[30] "Citizens' Meeting at Randolph, Vt.," *Amaranth*, September 1828, pp. 178–180, 184, 182.

[31] "Citizens' Meeting held at Brooklyn, Conn.," *Amaranth*, February 1829, pp. 338, 340.

fraternity than the visible activity in the public Antimasonic meetings seemed to warrant. In May of 1828 the Grand Lodge had some trouble in finding a Grand Master. Daniel Brinsmade, who had been Grand Master for two years, declined reelection "on account of his many avocations," and neither Lyman Law nor John S. Peters, both of them politically prominent, would accept the office. After an adjournment, James A. Goodwin accepted the Grand Mastership and, apparently somewhat heartened, the Grand Lodge rescinded an earlier resolution to postpone indefinitely all applications for new lodges. By May of 1829, however, although the same slate of officers accepted reappointment, the Grand Secretary had to report that "a large and increasing delinquency in the returns from subordinate Lodges, on account of the prevailing excitement and panic which was now existing on the subject of Masonry," made it best for them to suspend publication of their "meagre returns."[32] Social Antimasonry took its toll before political Antimasonry was fully organized.

The primary motive behind Antimasonry in Connecticut was a religious conviction of its evil, and that belief was politicized. The increasing amount of information about Masonry through a growing Antimasonic press, and the activities of religious groups, began to involve many people in a variety of efforts to outlaw or destroy the fraternity. The evangelical impulse of the Antimasonic movements in upstate New York had sent forth many proselytizing missionaries. (The accusations of the Brooklyn anti-Antimasons that the movement was the product of the agitations of "strangers" among them, had at least that basis in fact.) Spokesmen for Antimasonry suddenly seemed to appear all over the state. Noble D. Strong had certainly seen his participation in local

[32] E. G. Storer, *The Records of Freemasonry in the State of Connecticut, with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England, and the Entire Proceedings of the Grand Lodge, from its First Organization, A.L. 5789* (New Haven, 1859), pp. 422, 437.

political conventions as part of his job in publicizing Antimasonry. Solomon Southwick, candidate for governor of New York on an Antimasonic ticket and publisher of the Antimasonic weekly newspaper, the *National Observer*, delivered an address in the Methodist church in Ridgefield.[33] Abijah Catlin II of Harwinton, who had gone to New York to attend the trials related to the Morgan affair, recruited Antimasonic lecturers to speak in and around Harwinton at his own expense.[34] Avery Allyn published the *Rituals of Freemasonry* in Boston in 1828, and toured Connecticut giving mock rituals to instruct anyone contributing twenty-five cents to the cause.[35] Samuel D. Greene came from Le Roy on a lecture tour, during which he discussed his personal reminiscences of the Morgan affair. In the fall of 1829 he was one of the major speakers as a large meeting assembled on Woodstock Hill to consider the religious and civic implications of Masonry.[36] The efforts of these touring spokesmen could not have been unwelcome to the small group of Antimasons who had met in Hartford as early as February of 1829 to plan for an 1830 convention to form an Antimasonic political party.[37]

Although an itinerant ministry had long been part of the rural religious landscape in Connecticut, itinerant political exhorters from outside the state were not as familiar figures. The traveling political meeting was part of the Antimasonic search for a way to recruit citizens to their cause. Because

[33] A. N. Lewis, *Centennial Anniversary of Montgomery Lodge, A.F. & A.M.: Historical Address* (Hartford, 1884), pp. 30–31.

[34] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical Files, Aurora Lodge No. 35, "History and Catalogue of Members of Aurora Lodge No. 35," East Plymouth [Harwinton], by William W. Lee, pp. 18–19.

[35] William T. Hastings, *Phi Beta Kappa as a Secret Society with its Relations to Freemasonry and Antimasonry* (Washington, 1965), pp. 98–99.

[36] Samuel D. Greene, *The Broken Seal, or Personal Reminiscences of the Morgan Abduction and Murder*, 4th ed. (Boston, 1872), pp. 167–168.

[37] *U.S. Anti-Masonic Convention, 1830*, p. 71.

they saw the power of public opinion as the only possible equal adversary of Masonry, Antimasons found that they had limited success in publicizing their ideas in spite of their innovative methods. The Masons, they claimed, used their local influence with the press to block Antimasonic news reporting. Gen. Nathaniel Terry, the Connecticut delegate to the first national Antimasonic convention the following year, reported that he had found it impossible to arrange for any information about Antimasonry in any of Hartford's eight newspapers: "In the state of Connecticut, which the vanity of its inhabitants sometimes calls the Athens of America, there are hundreds of thousands of our citizens who know nothing about this subject. They do not read the anti-masonic paper—for they are told that it is a contemptible thing, set up by some worthless person from New York: they are deterred from taking this, and all the other presses are muzzled, completely muzzled."[38] His observations were echoed by the Senior Warden of St. John's Lodge in Hartford, where Strong's paper was published. He reported that the *Anti-Masonic Intelligencer* itself did not get much circulation, and seemed to function as an underground press: "of one Hundred Subscribers to the anti-Masonic newspaper printed in this town, but few are willing to own they take it, and it is with difficulty a Mason can obtain one to read."[39] Furthermore, Terry pointed out, no other press printed Antimasonic arguments or reported their activities. By 1829 other kinds of Antimasonic publications imported into Connecticut or published there helped to spread their message.

The single most important Antimasonic publication was Elder David Bernard's *Light on Masonry*. It contained descriptions of the rituals of Masonry through many of its degrees; reports and depositions on the Morgan affair; and the

[38] Ibid., p. 90.

[39] Connecticut Historical Society, MSS, Masonic Papers, 1788–1869, letter to Grand Secretary from Horace Goodwin II, October 11, 1833.

history, documents, and reports of the Antimasonic movement in New York. Bernard's book became one of the principal sources of facts on the nature and operation of the fraternity, the "Bible of Antimasonry."[40] A growing pamphlet literature added documentary evidence in the following years. For example, a pamphlet published in 1829 by "Several Citizens of New Haven" publicized the report of a select committee of the New York state senate charged with considering legislative conduct about the abduction of William Morgan. "We have been compelled to resort to *this method* to convey important intelligence to our citizens, the public press, their legitimate organ, being awed to silence on this subject, by the alarming influence of Masonry," they claimed.[41] A series of articles, previously printed in the *Anti-Masonic Intelligencer*, was published as a pamphlet called *Secret Societies*, "convenient to be read and carried in the pocket . . . and republished, by anyone . . . any way best calculated to serve the Anti-Masonic cause." Antimasons were convinced that the dissemination of knowledge about Freemasonry was all that was necessary to destroy the institution. "Public opinion is omnipotent in the final rule of this country," the anonymous author told his readers.[42]

An exchange of pamphlets between the Reverend Joseph Emerson of Wethersfield and the Genesee Consociation of New York 1829 prefigured the range of clerical responses to the Antimasonic movement. Emerson's point of view represented that of the more traditionalist orthodox clergy of Connecticut, and the Genesee Consociation that of the more militantly evangelical. The Reverend Mr. Emerson wrote to the Genesee Consociation because he was pained by their resolves to exclude "those who sustain any connection with the institution of Masonry." He considered Masonry "a moral,

[40] Griffin, "The Antimasonic Persuasion," p. 168.

[41] *Report of a Committee to the New York Senate*, p. 3.

[42] *Secret Societies* (Hartford, 1829), pp. 1, 6.

pacific, benevolent, humane and social institution." Although he admitted that "the genius and habits of Masonry are not the most happily adapted to the exigencies of the present time," the fraternity played a positive role in the community. Christianity was "immeasurably superior to Masonry," Emerson pointed out, but there were worthy men among the Masons. He was sure of the "intrinsic lawfulness" of Masonry, and so for government to forbid them would be "rank tyranny." Emerson hoped that the consociation would be persuaded that they had issued an "unrighteous decree."[43]

The consociation responded with a lengthy defense, printed in Hartford for distribution in Connecticut, in which they pointed out that their resolve had applied only to Masonic ministers or candidates for the ministry. They were convinced that the institution "was highly dangerous in its tendency to the best interests of society." If the people, who "are always the best judges of their own interest," have decided that secret societies should be prohibited—and all scriptural maxims supported that view—then not to prohibit them would be the tyranny. The "*few*" would "trample on the privileges of the '*many*.' " The Morgan affair had displayed the evils of Masonry. It was therefore incumbent upon all "firm friends of freedom" to show that there were no advantages to Masonic membership. Then, they thought, "this institution which has been built up and enlarged on the principles of the most consummate selfishness" would be "brought down to ruin by the same principles."[44] If politics and publicity were combined with moral exhortation to shame the Masons, even unregenerate Masons would leave the fraternity out of selfishness and to save their reputation. The consociation's appeal to publicity and egalitarian democracy as a way

[43] Joseph Emerson, *Letter to the Members of the Gennesee Consociation, N.Y.* (Brooklyn, Conn., 1829), pp. 8, 13, 7, 15.

[44] *Reply of the Genesee Consociation to the Letter of the Rev. Joseph Emerson of Wethersfield, Connecticut* (Hartford, 1829), pp. 14, 24.

of imposing moral standards on an erring society only thinly masked its religious motivation. The main impetus in the politicization of Antimasonry, as the Woodstock excitement in 1829 showed, was more than political.

The Woodstock Excitement

In 1829 Antimasonic excitement in the Putnam Lodge area divided the town of Woodstock into warring camps, and the surrounding communities became involved as participants or allies. Preliminary skirmishes began in the First Church of Woodstock, which had always been at least as contentious as other churches in Connecticut. Just before the Revolution the Reverend Eliphalet Lyman had been ordained according to the stricter Congregational tenets of the Cambridge Platform, rather than the semipresbyterian organization prescribed by the Saybrook Platform.[45] He had probably long since recovered from the indignity inflicted on him when he had been prosecuted for "disturbing the public worship" because he had rebuked Oliver Dodge of Pomfret for occupying his pulpit without invitation. Lyman had been counseled by his deacon, Jedidiah Morse, Sr., and his pupil, Jedidiah Morse, Jr., during the first Antimasonic excitement.[46] In 1824, after forty-five years of service, Lyman requested dismissal from his church ostensibly because his parishioners were unable to support him. He remained in Woodstock, but the church was without a pastor until 1827 when Ralph Crampton accepted a call.[47] Crampton soon became the focus of strong animosities within the community.

[45] Hartford, Congregational House, MSS, "Records of Ordinations, Dismissions, Deaths &c. of the Pastors of Congregational Churches in Windham County," II, 218, 220.

[46] See above, p. 101.

[47] *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut; Prepared under the Direction of the General Association, to Commemorate the Completion of One Hundred and Fifty Years since its First Annual Assembly* (New Haven, 1861), p. 516.

The Reverend Mr. Crampton was a Freemason, like several of the prominent men in his congregation, although he had joined the fraternity before he came to Woodstock. He soon made his affiliation clear by addressing Putnam Lodge at the Saint John's Day celebration. During the first year of his ministry news of the Morgan affair was being discussed in the lodge and in the community. By June of 1829, when he again addressed the lodge at its celebration, the community was quareling openly about Masonry.

In August some of the inhabitants of the First Ecclesiastical Society of Woodstock called a special meeting at which a committee was appointed to draft a memorial "stating the grievances of a majority of this Society, and their views, on the Institution of Speculative Masonry." By September their committee had found, and documented with Biblical citations and references to Bernard's *Light on Masonry*, that "the oaths administered, the penalties imprecated, the duties enjoined, the doctrines taught, the vices licensed, and the crimes prescribed" by Masonry were objectionable on fourteen different counts. Most of the objections were founded on Masonic claims to a divine origin "teaching the moral and Christian duties by the use of Mechanic tools, emblems, and hieroglyphics." They found that Masonry was not only blasphemous, but secret, exclusive, and antidemocratic. They were "unwilling that our Minister, one who is set as a watchman should belong to and support such an Institution by the weight of his Character and name." They hoped he would "publickly disolve his connection there with," or that he would "feel it his duty immediately to try to convince us of our errours."[48] The assembled members of the society approved the report and the committee sent it to their minister.

Before Crampton could prepare his reply, a meeting on Woodstock Hill addressed by a neighboring clergyman, Dr.

[48] Connecticut State Library, Woodstock MSS, "Records of the First Ecclesiastical Society," pp. 13–14, 16–17.

Daniel Dow of Thompson, dramatized local public concern about Masonry. All the Antimasons of the area joined to hear a discussion of the fraternity, thereby making Antimasonry a social movement, rather than a local church concern. The Reverend Dr. Dow's message at that meeting helps explain why there was so little public clerical leadership of the Antimasonic movement, however religiously impelled that movement was.

Daniel Dow, apparently one of the few clergymen in the area to openly preach against Masonry, had been trained by Enoch Pond, one of the few Congregational clergymen in the area to join the Masons.[49] Pond, whatever his reasons for becoming a Mason, had himself studied with Nathaniel Emmons, a famous New Light theologian among clergymen educators. New Light clergy "took an extreme view of Divine agency in regeneration and held firmly to complete individual moral responsibility."[50] Dow's training with Pond had prepared him to shed "all Arminian notions" when he was called to the church in Thompson. He had found that the Thompson church housed every shade of opinion: "Errorists of every kind running to and fro, and many having itching ears running after them, some openly avowing their infidelity; while others were proclaiming what they called good news and glad tidings; by which they meant, that impenitent sinners, drunkards and all, were sure to go to heaven."[51] As a New Light

[49] See above, pp. 158–160.

[50] Henry F. May, Introduction to *Oldtown Folks* by Harriet Beecher Stowe (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), p. 12. Emmons later wrote to the Third Antimasonic Convention in Massachusetts that he considered Masonry "the darkest and deepest plot that ever was formed in this wicked world against the true God, the true religion, and the temporal and eternal Interests of mankind." *Antimasonic Republican Convention of Massachusetts, held at Worcester, Sept. 5th and 6th, 1832: Proceedings, Resolutions and Address to the People* (Boston, 1832), p. 18.

[51] Daniel Dow, *A Reminiscence of Past Events: A Semi-Centennial Sermon Preached at Thompson (Conn.), April 22, 1846* (New Haven, 1846), p. 15.

Congregationalist, Dow's faith left little room or patience with the social morality taught by Masonry. His blunt eloquence earned him the respect and indulgence of his heterogeneous community, and his independence of mind was protected by a funded salary established early in his career.[52]

In 1829, as Antimasonry gathered force, Dow began to question Masonry in public as a useful institution. One member of his Congregation, George Larned, a founder of Putnam Lodge and son of Gen. Daniel Larned, was as publicly offended by Dow's position. The local myth was that when Dow preached on Masonry Larned "rose from his seat in a prominent position in the church, and with every feature flaming with indignation marched out of it in the very midst of the sermon."[53] Dow must have been fully aware that he risked the wrath of the Masons in his community by consenting to preach at the Antimasonic meeting on Woodstock Hill.

The message Dow gave reflected conviction and caution. He had chosen Isaiah 21:12 for his text, "If ye will inquire, inquire ye." God not only allowed, but required free inquiry, he told the assembly: "God has endowed the human mind with the faculty of inquiring, reasoning, and, in this way, arriving at the knowledge of truth." It was especially appropriate to inquire about Freemasonry because of the religious implications of membership. "Mr. Town, Mr. Preston, Mr. Webb, and others," he said, thought Masonry to be "not merely the handmaiden of religion; but to be Christianity itself—the highest kind of Christianity, even the perfection of it." The enemies of Masonry claimed that it was "nothing but infidelity." If Masonry was religious, "the inquiry certainly ought to be made, what sort of religion is it?"; and if it was only a "handmaiden of religion," inquiry was still important

[52] Ellen D. Larned, *History of Windham County*, 2 vols. (Worcester, Conn., 1874, 1880), II, 350.

[53] Allen B. Lincoln, ed., *A Modern History of Windham, Connecticut, A Windham County Treasure Book*, 2 vols. (Chicago, 1920), I, 10.

"in order that both the handmaid and the mistress may perform their appropriate duties." Questions had to be answered because Masonry was "a subject capable of agitating" the churches, and, he reported, it had already divided the membership of almost every denomination in other churches, far and near.[54]

Dow urged his audience to consider the weighty testimony of "christian brethren, and pious clergymen," who had seceded from Masonry, and "the doings of Churches and conventions of Churches, and Associations, and Consociations, and Assemblies of very respectable Civilians," who had found that Masonry was corrupt, and dangerous, and inconsistent with liberty, religion, and law. Even if, like Dr. Emerson, a man joined the order for the good it could do, he might now consider whether "even out of condescension to your brethren, and to allay this unhappy excitement, to make so small a sacrifice as to give up an Institution" so divisive. Dow knew that public criticism of the fraternity might unleash dangerous social forces, and he, with a moderation rare among the Antimasons, warned of the excesses that inquiry might engender. Inquiries must be impartial, decorous, and prayerful: "Let truth be your object—let universal benevolence inspire your hearts."[55] Dow did not pretend to be free from personal bias, but he phrased his indictments in the form of questions, even if he then provided the answers.

A few days after Dow's sermon at the Woodstock Hill meeting the Reverend Mr. Crampton was ready to reply to his parishioners. Crampton said that he was "deeply sensible of the unhappy situation" in which the community found itself and "would willingly make almost any sacrifice except that of

[54] Daniel Dow, *Free Inquiry Recommended on the Subject of Freemasonry; a Sermon, Preached at Woodstock, September 11, 1829, before a Large and Respectable Number of Citizens, and Published at their Request* (Norwich, Conn., 1829), pp. 3, 9–11, 5.

[55] Ibid., pp. 12–13, 15.

conscience" to solve their dilemma. However, he did not recognize his fraternity from their description of it. He belonged to *another* fraternity of the same name, "as different from the one you mention as the Protestant Presbyterian Religion is from the Roman Catholic." In his Masonic experience, he had not done, nor was he required to do or say, anything "which in my view would interfere with my duty to God or man."[56] The society heard the letter and adjourned without recording their response, but subsequent events show that the community was polarized by the confrontation. For example, Theophilus B. Chandler, one of the founders of Putnam Lodge, asked to be discharged from his duties as deacon in the face of Antimasonic criticism. Crampton refused to consider his resignation because Chandler would "assign no reasons" for his request. Then, on December 16, 1829, Crampton called a special meeting of his congregation to request their unanimous consent in calling a council for his own dismissal. "I make this request," he said, "from the firm belief that it will be for the interest of Christ's kingdom, especial as the Society have seen fit to give me notice that they wish to have the contract existing between them and myself terminated."[57] Accordingly, the church voted to call the Reverend Eliphalet Lyman out of retirement to convene an ecclesiastical council.

The council, made up of the pastors of six adjoining churches, assembled at Crampton's house on December 24, 1829, to hear Crampton's formal request for dismissal. Then a committee from the society requested that their correspondence with Crampton on Freemasonry be heard, probably so that the real issue would be understood and the neighboring clergy recruited to the cause. The council concluded that "the sole ground on which the Society acted" was "the

[56] Connecticut State Library, Woodstock MSS, "Records of the First Ecclesiastical Society," pp. 17–19.

[57] Ibid., pp. 6, 10.

connection of Mr. Crampton with the institution of Freemasonry," but the ground on which they consented to his dismissal was that the society would no longer support him. They avoided all judgments—except by adverbial implication—on Freemasonry, "with which they are happily acquainted only from the reports of others," and supplied Crampton with a recommendation stating that he was a "minister of the gospel in good & regular standing."[58] No other consociation or association or council of the Congregational clergy of Connecticut is on record as taking a public position on Masonry, however well known the positions of individual Antimasonic clergymen. The clergy were aware that any corporate condemnation of the fraternity would affect a number of their colleagues as well as create further dissension between and within many churches and societies. Crampton's experience, and Dow's conduct, had shown how crucial was the power of the purse of the church society.

If the meeting on Woodstock Hill followed the pattern of those in Norwich and Brooklyn, its purpose was to organize Antimasonry as a political movement in preparation for the state Antimasonic convention that was to meet in early February in Hartford. Antimasons knew that only a broadly mobilized public opinion would counterbalance the power of Masonry. Political as well as religious support had to be won over. Thus Darius Barlow and Spaulding Bastow, both active in calling Crampton to account in the First Church in Woodstock, were also active in the meeting on Woodstock Hill, and then served as Woodstock's delegates to the Hartford meeting.

Before the delegates set off for Hartford, the Masons in the Putnam Lodge area circulated a pamphlet addressed to the

[58] The Reverends Daniel Dow of Thompson, Abiel Williams of Dudley, Massachusetts, Alvan Underwood of West Woodstock, James Porter of Pomfret, Samuel Backus of North Woodstock and Reuben Torrey of Ashford, each attending with one deacon. Ibid., pp. 13–16.

citizens of Connecticut, *A Serious Call, or Masonry Revealed*, which illustrated the difficulty Masons had in responding to attacks on the fraternity. They could not deny the Morgan affair, nor could they answer the charges that Masonry was basically incompatible with orthodox Calvinism, since their definitions of the relations of Masonry and Christianity were varied and explicitly nontheological. They resorted instead to satirical attacks on the character and leadership of Antimasonry. The authors of *A Serious Call* emphasized throughout that Antimasonry was based on the testimony of seceding Masons, that the "sun of Anti-Masonic piety" highlighted the "triumphant influence on the cause of apostasy." They said in mock satisfaction that they were proud of the leadership of Strong and five other seceding Masons known in their communities for "their perjured lips and lying tongues." They descriptively listed the Antimasonic leaders as "the disappointed office seeker, the demoniacal fanatic, the censorious bigot, the fulminating hypocrite, the blasphemous infidel, and the political priest" and they added innuendoes about the "integrity" of Potter, the "piety" of Reed, and the "veracity" of Holmes. "Our pious brethren who have exploded the notion of a moral accountability—who have shown the absurdity of the vulgar idea that the observance of one's promise was a duty, surely deserve the highest confidence of their country." Most of the rest of the long pamphlet was devoted to exaggerating the claims of Antimasons to the point of absurdity. The authors closed with mock exhortation to further Antimasonic activity, showing that they were fully aware of the dynamics of the Antimasonic crusade: "If you find a church satisfied with their minister, if he is a mason, go into that church, talk of horrid oaths—Morgan's blood—the rights of man, and under the pretence of a religion, call an . . . anti-Masonic Convention. . . ."[59]

[59] *A Serious Call, or Masonry Revealed; being an Address Prepared by the Order of the Anti-Masonic Convention held at Woodstock on the Anniversary*

The Woodstock controversy shows the dilemma of the Connecticut clergy in the Antimasonic excitement. Many churches and societies demanded that the clergy conform to, rather than lead, the sentiments of their communities. With the growing organizational complexity of religious life, the more evangelical or pietistic covenanted churches became separate subcommunities. It was important that the church's internal harmony be protected and the distinctiveness of its religious community guarded. Under these conditions a clergyman was an arbitrator and harmonizer as much as a spokesman. From the Reverend Samuel Nott of Lebanon at the beginning of the period, to the Baptist Elder Calvin Phileo at the end, the most urgent arguments of Antimasonic clergymen always stressed the point that Masonic membership disrupted the internal harmony of the church.[60] Masonry was another "covenanted community," which overlapped that of the church. Most of the clergy, on the basis of their new experiences with denominationalism, tolerated Masonry and Antimasonry if they, too, did not disrupt the church community.

Although Antimasonry was strong in the orthodox but religiously diverse communities of northern and central Connecticut, the clergy did not lead the Antimasonic excitement. There had always been theological grounds for a Calvinist to oppose Masonry, but the competition inherent in religious diversity and the evangelical thrust of the Second Great Awakening made the unchurched portion of the community a complex problem for a minister.[61] After 1818, when denominational competition intensified, the Connecticut clergy began

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of the Death of William Morgan (Boston, 1829), pp. 3–5, 7, 15, 13, 30, 37.

[60] Calvin Phileo, *Light on Masonry and Anti-Masonry, and a Renunciation of Both* (Providence, R. I., 1831). See also above, pp. 105–109.

[61] Elwyn A. Smith, *Religious Liberty in the United States: the Development of Church-State Thought Since the Revolutionary Era* (Philadelphia, 1972), pp. 68–90.

to join the lodges. Perhaps their motives were Pauline, like Dr. Joseph Emerson's, who reasoned that "from the lips of a brother, they would be likely to hear the truth with more attention, understanding, and candor, and with greatest prospect of spiritual benefit."[62] For a minister like Emerson, and there were, of course, many other kinds of ministers, the proscriptive immediacy of Antimasonry endangered his evangelical mission.

Neither the Congregational clergy nor the Congregational churches acted in a unified manner. A few, such as the Reverend Joshua Williams of Harwinton, were militantly or evangelically Antimasonic; some, such as Dow, opposed the institution but moderated their conduct when community passions flared; and others, such as Crampton, refused to permit Masonry or Antimasonry to sway them. Thus one of the largest evangelical efforts in Congregational Connecticut—Antimasonry—was led by a religious laity. They moved from religious to political activism in the name of moral government, but largely without benefit of clergy. The complex relationship between religious and political Antimasonry in Connecticut exhibited the new constraints on clerical leadership, even in a political movement based on fundamental attitudes about both religion and society.

The Antimasonic Party of Connecticut, 1830–1835

In 1830 the Antimasonic movement was organized into a party, an appropriate and feasible tactic considering the fluidity of Connecticut politics. No fixed political structure existed in the state, although a two-party system was about to emerge. A long period of "conservative reaction" had followed the election of 1818 and the subsequent adoption of a new state constitution. Some still called themselves Federalists, but, according to Jarvis M. Morse, they were fast

[62] Emerson, *Letter to the Gennesee Consociation,* p. 14.

degenerating into a "social clique" rather than a party.[63] The conservative citizens of Connecticut seemed satisfied with the limited reforms embodied in the new constitution, in which the largest single change had been the disestablishment of the Congregational churches.

The majority of the people of Connecticut fell between the extreme conservatism of the older Federalist leaders and the moderate reformism of the Jeffersonian Republicans. The level of political activity in the state declined as party lines wavered or disappeared. By 1821 Oliver Wolcott, Jr., the Republican incumbent governor, carried all but 1554 of the 10,064 votes, but the total vote was less than half that of the important election of 1818. By 1822 Connecticut was a state with a one-party system, although the dominant Republicans were divided among themselves, and the way in which they were organized could hardly have been called a system. In that year caucuses of the Republican party in New London, New Haven, and Tolland County each published a different list of nominations for state and federal offices.[64]

Around 1822 one group of Republicans began to separate from the rest. Appropriately enough for Connecticut, they were called New Light Republicans, because they tended to frame their interests by an evangelical egalitarianism. They were so few that, in the presidential election of 1824, John Quincy Adams commanded the votes of almost the whole gamut of Republicans in the state. In 1826, however, the Republican caucus failed to renominate Oliver Wolcott, Jr., for a tenth term as governor. Instead Gideon Tomlinson, who had "a leaning" toward the New Light group of Connecticut Republicans, won the nomination, and later the election.[65]

By 1828, the New Light end of the Republican spectrum had taken the name of the party for themselves, and united

[63] Jarvis Means Morse, *A Neglected Period in Connecticut's History, 1818–1850* (New Haven, 1933), pp. 30–83, 54.

[64] Ibid., pp. 61–62.

[65] Ibid., pp. 70, 81, 89, 87.

with other political groups as the Unionist party (or Independent party) to elect the ever popular Gideon Tomlinson. However, by the time that the Antimasons came onto the political scene the coalition was beginning to split apart. The more conservative among the Unionists, those who had favored Adams in the last national election, began to call themselves National Republicans, while the New Light Republicans among the Unionists were sometimes called Democrats. Allegiances and labels were not so firmly fixed, nor parties so well organized, as to preclude a new group that might combine the older religious conservatism with newer egalitarian creeds. The formation of the Antimasonic party at this juncture in the political history of the state acted as a catalyst in precipitating a two-party system by providing a new ingredient in the factional mixes.

On February 3, 1830, 140 representatives of the Antimasonic citizenry of forty-four towns assembled at Allyn's Hall in Hartford. They elected the Honorable Nathaniel Terry, mayor of Hartford and prominent in business affairs, as president of the convention.[66] The Putnam Lodge area provided much of the active leadership: Gen. Stephen F. Palmer of Ashford was one of the two vice-presidents, and Jonathan Nichols of Thompson and Zalmon Storrs of nearby Mansfield were two of the three secretaries of the convention. They voted to seat Henry Dana Ward of New York (who later gave the "Address to the People") and Noble Davies Strong "of Hartford" as seceding Masons, though "not delegated members of this Convention," and they then proceeded to their organizational work.

[66] The complexities of some of the relationships between Masons and Antimasons can be glimpsed by comparing the overlapping directorships in various business enterprises mentioned in local business histories and political party leadership. See, for example, *Insurance in Connecticut* (Boston, 1897) and *One Hundred Years of the Hartford Bank* (Hartford, 1892), both by Patrick Henry Woodward.

First, three committees were set up to generate material about Masonry for publication in the state. One reported on "the Truth of the Disclosures of Freemasonry made by William Morgan and the Le Roy convention and on Bernard's *Light on Masonry*." A second reported on "the Oaths of Freemasonry," and their influence on "the liberties of our country." The third studied "the effects of Masonic obligations, rites, ceremonies, and acknowledged Principles, upon the interests of the Christian Religion." All of the reports aimed to gather information for the crusade-campaign. Next, the convention set up a political apparatus, named more committees, and named and urged the support of "suitable Antimasonic Candidates" for state and local offices.[67] To facilitate their election, a state Antimasonic committee corresponded with county and town committees, who corresponded with each other. The state committee was empowered to make contact with similar committees of other states.

For state offices the Antimasonic party nominated Gideon Tomlinson for governor, Thomas Day for secretary, and Isaac Spencer for treasurer, all of whom were incumbent candidates on the National Republican ticket. However, for lieutenant governor they pointedly nominated William T. Williams instead of John S. Peters, who was well known as an active Mason. The test of Antimasonic strength therefore came in the race for lieutenant governor, since all nominations coincided with the Republicans' except for that one office. When the votes were counted in April of 1830, John S. Peters had been elected along with Gideon Tomlinson.[68] However, in an Antimasonic area such as Woodstock, only eighteen votes supported Peters and the National Republicans, and Ingoldsby W. Crawford, a Mason and a Jacksonian Democrat, received sixty-one votes, while William T. Wil-

[67] *Proceedings of the Antimasonic State Convention at Hartford, Feb. 3, and 4, 1830* (Hartford, 1830), pp. 3–4.

[68] Ibid., pp. 5, 3–4. Morse, *A Neglected Period*, p. 108.

liams, the Antimasonic candidate, polled 143 votes. The bald fact of Peters's victory tends to obscure the differential strength of Antimasonry in the state.

Political Antimasonry was initially unevenly successful because opposition parties were confused and disorganized. In the years just prior to 1830, political battles over a district plan of nomination for the Senate in the national elections caused much political shifting. Traditionally, a caucus of party managers had informally apportioned nominations among the parties. Then, in the May session of 1826, a geographic district plan was passed as an amendment to the state constitution. Its ratification was to be voted on at the time of the national election in 1828. Indeed, the district plan was the chief issue of the campaign of 1828. In that campaign, the Jacksonians became identified with the antidistrict position, and the Republican party, the Union coalition of Anti-Jackson men, were prodistrict. The Union ticket had also associated itself with Adams and the National Republican party.[69] The small communities from which Antimasonry drew most of its strength had traditionally been part of the Unionist-Republican coalition, but they had also been against a districting plan. In 1828 the state as a whole voted for the Unionist-Republicans and the new plan. However, a strongly Antimasonic area such as Woodstock gave Adams 143 votes for president on the Unionist-Republican ticket, but only 27 voted for districting. Twenty votes had gone to the Jackson ticket, but 118 had voted against districting.[70] The state as a whole voted for the districting plan. In Woodstock clearly neither of the state coalitions represented their particular blend of political and social beliefs.

Another issue before the people around the time of the

[69] Woodstock, Town Clerk, MSS, Town Proceedings, III, April 18, 1829; Morse, *A Neglected Period*, pp. 92–93.

[70] Woodstock, Town Clerk, MSS, Town Proceedings, III, November 18, 1828.

1828 election was directly related to traditional views of the relationship of church and state, and thus was particularly interesting to Antimasons. That issue was whether court testimony was valid if the witness did not believe the Christian tenets of accountability to God in a future state. In 1828 the state supreme court, presided over by a prominent Mason and one-time leader of the old Federalist party, David Daggett, had reversed the decision of the lower court that a Universalist was a competent witness. In the General Assembly, religious libertarians, offended by the decision, prepared a witness bill providing that religious belief or unbelief was not related to the capacity of a citizen to exercise that right of citizenship. Religious conservatives countered with a bill to proscribe witnesses who did not believe in a future state of accountability, which easily passed in the lower house. However, the session ended before the senate could pass it, and the bill was put over for the 1830 session of the legislature, a bellwether of Connecticut's continuing concern about the relationship of religion to civil government.[71]

In the election of 1830 there was great confusion about nominations under the new district plan for the Senate. As David Daggett wrote to Jabez Huntington, who was active in the anti-Jackson coalitions in Congress: "There is such a mixture of democracy, Jacksonianism and antimasonry that our condition is somewhat like that of the woman at Milford who said 'none of her children *look alike* but *Gershom*.' "[72] The Antimasons had supported Gideon Tomlinson because he was not clearly a Jacksonian, even though he was a representative of the most "liberal" part of the Union ticket.[73] The events of the May session of the state legislature, however, showed the

[71] Morse, *A Neglected Period*, p. 102.

[72] Connecticut Historical Society, MSS, letter from David Daggett to Jabez Huntington, March 25, 1830.

[73] Morse, *A Neglected Period*, p. 89. Tomlinson was married to the daughter of one of Putnam Lodge's most loyal Masons, Mathew Bowen.

Antimasons that the candidates of the established coalitions were unlikely to represent their point of view. For example, when the General Assembly met in May of 1830 they appointed a committee on religious freedom to consider the problem of ecclesiastical tests. The bill they reported directly reversed the 1829 witness bill that had required religious belief for civil competence, and that bill passed in the same session that the legislature voted to dispense with religious ceremonies on election day for reasons of economy. To those concerned with the traditional Calvinist basis of Connecticut civil society, the state seemed engulfed "in a wave of infidelity," and the seats of government occupied by unbelievers.[74]

There is no record of an Antimasonic convention in Connecticut in 1831, but the silence of the press on Antimasonry was profound. The *Anti-Masonic Intelligencer* and the *Canal of Intelligence* had ceased operation, and the *Free Press* of Tolland, a newly established Antimasonic paper, apparently did not circulate far or long.[75] A caucus or correspondence system, rather than a convention, may have decided for Zalmon Storrs as the Antimasonic candidate for governor; and Dr. Eli Ives, a colleague on the Yale Medical School faculty of Masonic Grand Master Dr. Thomas Hubbard, ran for lieutenant governor. The Democratic party and the National Republican party united to support John S. Peters for governor, but the Democratic party nominated Henry W. Edwards for lieutenant governor, and the National Republicans (the coalition of anti-Jackson men) supported Orange Merwin. Although Peters won easily, the Antimasons, even with so

[74] Ibid., p. 106.

[75] *The Proceedings of the Second United States Anti-Masonic Convention, held at Baltimore, September, 1831: Journal and Reports, Nomination of Candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States, Letters of Acceptance, Resolutions, and the Address to the People* (Boston, 1832), p. 7. The Tolland *Free Press* is mentioned in the meeting, but no other record of it exists.

obscure a candidate as Storrs and so limited a program as the extirpation of a fraternity, polled about a third of the total vote for governor and about a quarter of the votes for lieutenant governor. In that election the vote for lieutenant governor precipitated a constitutional crisis. Since none of the three candidates had received a majority, the General Assembly was required to decide, but the two houses refused to meet in a joint session. Voting separately, the lower house elected the National Republican candidate; the senate, the Democratic candidate. The Antimasons were either unwilling or unable to solve the impasse by voting in a block for the candidate of one of the other parties. The state managed without a lieutenant governor that year.[76]

Perhaps to garner Antimasonic support, the National Republican majority in the House passed a bill to restore the religious features of election day, but the bill predictably failed in a Democratic senate.[77] The National Republicans, concerned to maintain a religious element in public life, seemed the natural allies of political Antimasons in Connecticut. However, the resolve of the national Antimasonic party to put a candidate in the field for the elections of 1832 ensured that the state Antimasonic party would present its own candidates for at least another year.[78]

The Antimasonic party in Connecticut continued to operate until 1832 because of the sustaining activity of the national Antimasonry party. In 1830 the Connecticut Antimasonic Convention elected eight delegates and eight substitutes for a national meeting in Philadelphia on September 11. At the convention Connecticut men served on seven of the fourteen committees set up to consider the nature of Masonry and the

[76] Morse, *A Neglected Period*, p. 109.

[77] Ibid., p. 110. It required an amendment to the Constitution in 1832 to resolve the issue of election procedures when a third party should command a substantial fraction of the popular vote. Ibid., p. 109.

[78] *U.S. Anti-Masonic Convention: 1830*, pp. 74–75.

methods of destroying it. They participated in the decision there to nominate candidates for president and vice-president on an Antimasonic ticket, because the "principal object of masonry in the United States" had been the "acquisition of political power," making Antimasonry "necessarily political."[79] Yet the religious roots of Antimasonic politicization were everywhere apparent. For example, among the strongest positions taken at the convention were those on Masonic oaths. At least three committees considered the oaths, and John Holley of Connecticut addressed the convention on the subject. In the discussion Amasa Walker of Massachusetts summed up what seemed to be a widely shared conviction: "The opposition to these oaths is the sure foundation of anti-masonry." If a basic article of social morality required men to keep their oaths, Antimasons were faced with the immediate contradiction of persuading Masons to disavow their oaths. If Masons could be convinced that "oaths are neither morally, legally, or religiously binding it would be the most effectual measure we can possibly take to destroy the institution."[80] In Connecticut, where oath taking had so recently

[79] Ibid., p. 73. Nathaniel Terry of Hartford, who had chaired the state Antimasonic convention, was one delegate. Zalmon Storrs, active in the convention and later the Antimasonic candidate for governor the next year, was also part of the delegation. Jonathan Nichols of Thompson also attended, and may have been able to meet his former neighbor, Herbert A. Reed, in the New York delegation. John M. Holley of Ridgefield, whose brother Myron Holley was one of the most active Antimasonic leaders in New York, joined the delegation. Henry Perkins of New London County, Noble D. Strong recently of Hartford, Elisha Stearns of Tolland, and Calvin Barker of Simsbury, rounded out the list of delegates. At the Convention, Connecticut men served on seven of the fourteen committees set up to consider the nature of Masonry and plans to attack it. They decided to convene in Baltimore on September 26, 1831, to nominate candidates for the national election, and they began to generate campaign literature. *State Antimasonic Convention, Connecticut*, p. 26; *U.S. Anti-Masonic Convention: 1830*, pp. 163–164.

[80] Ibid., pp. 110–111.

been the subject of a hard-fought witness bill, the Antimasonic party organized on a platform that would have required Masons to renounce the obligations imposed by Masonic oaths.

Reinforced by the ideological fellowship of the National party, the Antimasonic party of Connecticut held its last state convention in January of 1832.[81] No records of the convention survive, but the national Antimasonic slate appeared on Connecticut ballots the following November, and Antimasons again nominated a separate ticket for state office: former Senator Calvin Willey of Tolland for governor and John M. Holley of Salisbury for lieutenant governor. The National Republican ticket, which had nominated John S. Peters and Thaddeus Betts, won a victory for "the party of the *status quo*."[82] During the legislative session of 1832, the Antimasons rallied to cut their loss by trying to pass specifically Antimasonic legislation.

In 1832 John Whittlesey of Salem, Gaius Lyman of Hartford, Giles Mansfield of New Haven, and Ezra Adams, Jr., of Canton, all of whom had been active in the 1830 Antimasonic state convention carried Antimasonry to the floor of the General Assembly by presenting a memorial requesting the repeal of the 1821 and 1825 acts of incorporation for the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, Hiram Lodge No. 18, and Widow's Son Lodge of Stonington. The memorialists claimed that incorporation empowered Masonic lodges to use, manage, and convey property, and thus it implied governmental approval of the fraternity. Recent exposures of Masonry prompted the memorialists to request the General Assembly to inquire into "the nature of its oaths, obligations, and penalties, its claims to antiquity, morality and religion; its

[81] *Memorial Against the Masonic Incorporations of Connecticut: together with the Report and some of the Debates in the General Assembly, May, 1832*, Anti-Masonic Pamphlet No. 1 (n.p., n.d.), p. 1.

[82] Morse, *A Neglected Period*, pp. 112–114.

charities and high sounding titles." They claimed that Masons violated the fundamental conditions of its charter of incorporation because parts of the rules and regulations of Masonry were manifestly "repugnant to the constitution and laws of this State and those of the United States." Yet one of their most interesting tactics was to disassociate themselves from the political proscription of Masonry in the midst of their most specifically political effort. They did not wish to be construed as asking for the abolition of Masonry, they said: "this work is in the hands of the People, and the force of public opinion is at this moment exerting a power which shakes the institution to its deepest foundations."[83] Even the Antimasons were not sure that it was within the power of civil government to abolish a voluntary association.

The memorial was referred to a select committee of the General Assembly, chaired by Stephen F. Palmer of Ashford, one of the vice-presidents of the Connecticut Antimasonic Convention of 1830 and one of the first senators elected to the General Assembly on the Antimasonic ticket under the new districting plan of 1830. In spite of so sympathetic an appointment, the General Assembly did not give the committee the power to call for persons and papers, and so the full-scale legislative investigation and exposure of Masonry for which the Antimasons had hoped was not possible. The committee's findings were a series of compromises. The members found that the oaths of the first and second degrees were "of evil tendency" and "illegally administered," but that "no sufficient reason for abolishing" the fraternity existed. They merely recommended that the assembly put the corporation on the same footing as other charitable corporations, requiring them to report funds, receipts, and disbursements. The proposed resolution called for far less than the classic Antimasonic demand for proscription, but the response of the

[83] *Memorial Against Masonic Incorporations*, p. 3.

assembly was ominously negative. The resolution was simply rejected.[84]

Still, at the very time of its political failures, Antimasonry had, as it claimed, begun to "shake" the Masons. We have already seen the meagerness of the returns made by the subordinate lodges to the Grand Lodge in 1829. In 1830, only forty-eight of the seventy-five lodges were represented at the annual meeting of the Grand Lodge, which was, as usual, set in a time and place to coincide with the meeting of the General Assembly. The Grand Secretary was directed to write to the lodges to "urge upon them their duty" in spite of the "adverse circumstances" of the "present emergency." The main business at that meeting was a resolution to tender to the Grand Lodge of Vermont sympathy at its "afflictions" in the "fiery furnace of persecution." The Masons of Connecticut were "conscious that 'we contend only for the principles which Franklin approved, which Warren taught, and which Washington loved.' " Masonry everywhere, they said, would remain "firm" in these trials.[85]

The determination of the Grand Lodge was soon tested. At the 1831 meeting, just before the session of the General Assembly at which the petition against the corporate status of Masonry was presented, attendance was so poor that no roll of representatives was recorded—only the presence of "a quorum of subordinate Lodges." All of the officers of the Grand Lodge, with the exception of the Grand Treasurer and the Grand Secretary, refused reelection. Finally Dr. Thomas Hubbard, who had recently moved from Pomfret to New Haven and the medical faculty of Yale, accepted the unsought honor, and others were found to fill the other Grand Lodge offices.[86] The same list of officers was reelected in the 1832 meeting, but Dr. Hubbard took the opportunity to ad-

[84] Ibid., p. 4.

[85] Storer, *Records*, pp. 441–442.

[86] Ibid., pp. 443–444.

dress the Grand Lodge "on the present state of Masonic Institution, and on the duty of Lodges and of individual Masons, under the unreasonable and fanatical excitement which now exists in relation to the Order." That evening, the members decided to adopt the "Declaration of Freemasons," recently published by the embattled brethren in Massachusetts, and to distribute copies to all of the lodges in the state to be signed, returned, and eventually published.[87]

The Declaration of Freemasons was a "public avowal of the principle of the Order, and of the nature and tendency of the Institution." Worded to specifically deny the allegations of the Antimasonic press about the nature of their oaths, the Masons maintained: "The obligations of the Institution require of its members a strict obedience to the laws of God and man." Convinced of that, Masons would neither renounce nor abandon it. Their declaration was as defiant as it was "firm": "Should the people of this country become so infatuated as to deprive Masons of their civil rights in violation of the written constitution and the wholesome spirit of the just laws and free government, a vast majority of the Fraternity will remain firm, confiding in God and the rectitude of their intentions for consolation under the trials to which they may be exposed." Over 1200 Connecticut Masons signed the declaration, including distinguished National Republicans such as David Daggett and Jacksonians such as Ralph I. Ingersoll. However impressive that number, it represented only about a quarter of the Masons in the state, more "shaken" by the Antimasonic movement than any voting pattern showed.[88]

In spite of the brave words of the Masons, the number of delinquent and failing lodges continued to increase, and the representation to the Grand Lodge to decrease. In 1832 the vast majority of Masons in Connecticut were discretely silent.

[87] Harold D. Carpenter, "Hubbard, A Valiant Leader of Masonry," *Connecticut Square and Compass*, December 1951, pp. 6, 34.

[88] Storer, *Records*, pp. 452–453.

Many lodges had simply ceased operation. The others operated with great circumspection. Horace Goodwin II, the Senior Warden of St. John's Lodge in Hartford, explained the position of loyal Masons, who had met "while the Anti-Masonic convention was in session." After a long evening of "free communication on the proposed plans of the Antimasons to disturb the peace of society in the town" they agreed "to have our Lodges less frequent, and all Masonic notice given in the ancient private manner, to avoid all parade and have no individual altercation on the subject of Free Masonry, and avoid all controversy." Their prudent tactic "strictly observed," they believed "had been the means of disarming & putting down the demon in this neighborhood."[89]

The year 1832 marked the political nadir of Antimasonry. The Antimasonic vote narrowed the National Republican's victory to a slim majority, since conservatives in the state were presented with a choice. In Woodstock, for example, the Antimasonic candidates polled 135 votes, and the National Republicans polled 57, while the Democratic candidates polled 78 votes, reflecting a range of attitudes toward Masonry that went from proscription to implicit support of the fraternity.[90]

The following year, the election of 1833, was the last year that Antimasons in Connecticut functioned as a political entity. In that year political Antimasonry in Connecticut committed suicide by supporting a Democratic candidate instead of the Republican, even though the Republicans were their closest political neighbors in attitudes about the role of religion in civil affairs. Until 1832 Antimasons had been moderately effective in keeping their political machinery running. John Holbrook was recruited to run the *People's Press* for a

[89] Ibid., pp. 450–462.

[90] Connecticut Historical Society, MSS, Masonic Papers, 1788–1869, letter to the Grand Secretary from Horace Goodwin II, October 11, 1833.

short time in Brooklyn—long enough to publicize the Antimasonic ticket for the national elections.[91] A series of Antimasonic pamphlets had been issued, and correspondence maintained with Antimasonic committees elsewhere. In 1833, the year after Jackson's election, there were still three tickets for state office, with Zalmon Storrs, the perennial Antimasonic candidate, running against Henry W. Edwards for the Jacksonian Democrats and John S. Peters for the Republicans. Once again, the Republican candidate did not receive a majority of the electoral vote because of the Antimasonic vote, and the decision on the governorship itself went to the assembly. Aided by the national victory of their party the preceding year, the Democrats had managed to capture a majority of the lower house, even though the majority of the people of Connecticut were not Jacksonians. When the Antimasonic delegates decided to cast their votes with the Democrats, the election of the Jacksonian governor was assured.[92] Henry W. Edwards, the son of Pierpont Edwards, one of the founders of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, became governor of Connecticut because of Antimasonic support.

Although Antimasonic candidates graced the ballots of individual towns for a while, the presence of the Antimasonic party was not a factor in Connecticut politics after 1833.[93] Their activities in the 1833 session of the legislature, in which they had obtained a swing vote, demonstrated not only their failure, but also part of the reason for it. In that session of the legislature, Gaius Lyman, one of the perennial leaders of political Antimasons, presented a petition signed by four-

[91] Woodstock, Town Clerk, MSS, Town Proceedings, III, November 18, 1832.

[92] Ibid., August 1, 1832.

[93] Morse, *A Neglected Period*, p. 116. By 1835, it polled only 489 votes for governor.

teen hundred men asking that some legal provision be made to prohibit the administration of oaths in all cases not authorized by law. The reasons for the petition was that recent literature about Masonic oaths had shown that abhorrent penalties attached to them, that such oaths were "obviously inconsistent with our allegiance to the State, and the obedience which is required by our Maker and with those fundamental principles which constitute the basis and cement of civil and religious communities."[94] Unlike the committee on Masonic incorporation during the previous session, the committee to which the petition was referred was granted full investigatory power in a ruling that looked suspiciously like a gentleman's agreement between the Antimasons and the Democrats.

The Antimasons in Connecticut had finally achieved their opportunity to run a great legislative show (like those in other states) to publicize their cause and to arouse public opinion as a counterforce to Masonry. They failed because they could not make distinctions between their religious and political goals in order to secure the attention and support of either of the better established parties or coalitions. The Antimasons insisted on emphasizing Masonry's contradiction of traditional religious beliefs in Connecticut, an issue that was skirted, rather than confronted, by the other political parties. Also, they failed to put on a good show. Their two principal witnesses, Jarvis F. Hanks, a colleague of Ward from New York, and Calvin Hatch, a locally distinguished renouncing Mason from Farmington, were not particularly impressive. The testimony before the committee covered a wide range of objections to Masonic oaths, but dissipated its force by a rambling consideration of Masonry itself. The witnesses testified that the charitable enterprises of Masons were lamenta-

[94] *Truth's Proofs that Masonic Oaths Do Not Impose Any Obligations* (Norwich, Conn., 1830), pp. 4, 3.

bly small, that their rituals were blasphemous, and that the conduct of the meetings was immoral. Only then did they go on to assert that the oaths required of its members "an unqualified surrender of natural and civil rights." Generally the testimony was designed to show that Masonry was evil, blasphemous, and exclusive, more than that it was unconstitutional or politically dangerous.[95]

In their report to the legislature the committee pointed out that the oaths of Masons were "highly improper" and "should be prohibited by legal enactment" because they were "most assuredly opposed to the spirit of the Gospel and the pure system of morality therein inculcated,"[96] hardly a usual legal test even in Connecticut. It was recommended that only authorized people be empowered to administer lawful oaths, under penalty of a fine. However, so much time was spent formulating their recommendations that their bill came out of committee conveniently too late to be considered in that session of the legislature. The bill, which proscribed Masonic oaths by regulating the administration of all oaths, was presented at the 1834 session. Both the lower house and the senate voted to postpone it "indefinitely."[97] Thus the Masons, although they had never appeared as parties in the political maneuvers, had effectively won the right to survival because of the political ineptitude of the Antimasons.

Although the Antimasonic party commanded a sizable minority of the electorate they had not managed to make their authority felt in the coalition politics of Connecticut. By arguing against Masonry as a violation of orthodox religious practices in a political forum, the Antimasons had forfeited wide political support. An issue about doctrinal orthodoxy could no longer win over a majority of the increasingly heterogeneous population of the state. When Antimasons had tried to attach their absolute religious convictions about the essential

[95] Ibid., pp. 5, 13.
[96] Ibid., p. 7.
[97] Ibid., p. 8.

sinfulness of the fraternity to one side or another in the political tugs of war of coalition politics, they had acted as a gadfly more than as a counterweight. They unwittingly provided both coalitions within the state with an added incentive to link their destinies with one or another of the two major parties in national politics.

IX

"The Grand Inquest of the Nation": Masonry Recapitulated

Although the growth of lodges and the diversity of their membership showed that Freemasonry in post-Revolutionary and Federal Connecticut served many individual and social uses, a substantial fraction of Connecticut's citizenry thought that the fraternity epitomized a system of values repugnant to Connecticut's heritage and America's ideals. The impetus of Antimasonry in Connecticut, even when the movement was politicized, was primarily religious.[1] Antimasons tried to organize a "grand inquest of the nation," to expose its evils and

[1] The relative importance of the political and religious aspects of Antimasonry has been variously assessed. Lorman Ratner, *Antimasonry: The Crusade and the Party* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1969), pp. 1–18. Historians have always had trouble fitting Antimasonry into the history of political parties. For example, Seymour Lipset and Earl Raab, in *The Politics of Unreason: Right Wing Extremism in America, 1790–1970* (New York, 1970), p. 23, describes beliefs about specific causes and specific solutions as characteristic of political movements rather than parties. Ronald P. Formisano's multifaceted discussion of Antimasonry in *The Birth of Mass Political Parties: Michigan, 1827–1861* (Princeton, 1971), pp. 60–71, brings together the most recent scholarship on both aspects of Antimasonry under the organizing aegis of his formulations about antiparty movements. Formisano's "Political Character, Antipartyism, and the Second Party System," *American Quarterly*, XXI, no. 4 (Winter 1969), 691–697, contains the best formulation of the relationship of religious and political Antimasonry in "antipartyism."

dangers, and to gain a popular verdict against the fraternity.[2] Some of the Antimasonic arguments, examined here in local detail, reveal not only the reasons for hostility to the fraternity, but, conversely, serve to review various facets of the powerful appeal and the multiple social uses of the Masonic alternative in Federalist Connecticut.

The failure of the Antimasonic party, in spite of some regional voting strength, was an instructive goad to more stable, inclusive party politics. Antimasons were not able to translate their activities into a political program or transform public opinion into durable political support. Defining Masonry as the single source of society's ills, they had a single, dubious, and uncompromising objective to offer the shifting coalitions of Connecticut politics. Most Antimasonic arguments were ultimately rooted in ideas of the relationship between Protestant orthodox religious beliefs and civil society that no longer pertained to Connecticut. The growth of denominations and nonreligious foci for moral and social reference meant that an inclusive civil religion was the aegis of public morality, effectively separating church and state by separating public and private religion.[3] This was so broadly true by 1835 that the success of social Antimasonry requires as much explanation as the failure of political Antimasonry.

The power of social Antimasonry is obscured by the failure of political Antimasonry in Connecticut. Local strengths were counterbalanced by the successes of unconcerned coalitions

[2] *Secret Societies* (Hartford, 1829), p. 4.

[3] Leo Pfeffer argues convincingly that "tension is a function not of the group's theological beliefs . . . but of positions or practices which threaten or trench upon strongly held national secular values." "The Legitimation of Marginal Religions in the United States," in *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*, ed. Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone (Princeton, 1974), p. 14. Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," *Daedalus* (Winter 1967), pp. 3, 7–9, 12–13. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Phillips Bradley, 2 vols. (New York, 1954), I, 314–326.

among other parties or factions. A review of Connecticut's Antimasonic literature provides some explanation. The feeble realization of the mighty propaganda effort envisioned by the Antimasonic leaders can be found in the limited circulation of the proceedings of state and national Antimasonic conventions, Henry Dana Ward's *Antimasonic Review*, Morgan's *Illustrations*, Bernard's *Light on Masonry*, a small pamphlet series largely copied from journalistic efforts in other states, and a few short-lived newspapers. The previously established press, as we noted in the last chapter, was strangely silent about Antimasonic party activity, reporting its presence mainly through election returns.[4] Nevertheless, Antimasonic arguments seem to have been so intensely felt where they were recorded and so widely effective in their local impact on the lodges, that they must have spread through other, more ephemeral, channels of communication, which have left little or no trace.

Almost every printed Antimasonic argument contained a religious dimension, signaling a basic hostility to the fact that Freemasonry was quasi-religion or a religious surrogate. The arguments were largely addressed to the Masons themselves, to show them the error of their ways. Antimasons particularly attacked their beliefs about the antiquity of Masonry, its cult of Washington, its style and the obligations entailed by membership: all of them characteristics valued by the brethren. Thus the Antimasonic confrontation of Masonry dramatically measured ideological and cultural differences in Connecticut, and recorded and circulated them for Connecticut readers.

Masons and Antimasons alike appreciated the legitimizing function of Masonic lore on its own antiquity. For Masons the history of the craft traced back to Biblical sources, gave the fellowship a precious meaning. Antimasons, with Henry Dana Ward reporting for the committee to inquire into the an-

[4] See above, pp. 275–277, 282, 300.

tiquity of the order at the national convention in 1830, discovered that it was founded "at London on a mechanics' holiday, A.D. 1717." Its purpose was *"to dupe the simple for the benefit of the crafty."* These facts, as Ward thought, would promptly destroy "the pride of birth and the boast of an illustrious ancestry" of the "foundling."[5] Its origin, others found, "legitimately belongs to the taverns of London," and no claims to a distinguished heritage should attach to membership.[6] Sometimes, instead of denying the antiquity of Masonry, Antimasons attacked it *on the grounds* of its antiquity. As one editor put it, "In the present enlightened state to which society has advanced, we contend that the opinions and tenets and pretended secrecies of 'olden times' handed down to us, should be fully, fairly, and freely canvassed." Arguments about the dead hand of the past were nationalistic in tone and couched in terms of the "destinies for which we were created."[7] Yet the most emotion-laden arguments about Masonic antiquity were religious. Masons boasted of "pure and sublime principles," which had been "sacredly preserved, inviolably concealed, and mysteriously handed down for ages through faithful and appointed agents, to King Solomon, king of Tyre, and Hiram Abif!" Those boasts were blasphemous: *"Horrible profanation! gross imposture! and most contemptible delusion!"*[8] Masons were giving themselves proprietary airs about the Old Testament, based on myths

[5] *The Proceedings of the United States Anti-Masonic Convention held at Philadelphia, September 11, 1830, Embracing the Journal of the Proceedings, the Reports, the Debates, and the Address to the People* (Philadelphia, 1830), pp. 35, 33.

[6] *Anti-Masonic Review*, I, no. 4 (1828), 107–108. Also II, no. 5 (1829), 156, and II, no. 11 (1829), 332.

[7] William Morgan, *Illustrations of Masonry by one of the Fraternity, who has devoted 30 years to the Subject, with an Account of the Kidnapping of the Author*, 2nd ed. (n.p., 1827), p. iv.

[8] *U.S. Anti-Masonic Convention: 1830*, p. 97.

suggesting divine origins. Such claims could not be countenanced by the religious community. By attacking the folklore of the fraternity, Antimasons showed that they were aware that historic sanctions contributed powerfully to the Masonic mystique.[9]

Antimasons went on to attack more recent Masonic history in a further effort to undermine the fraternity's legitimacy. Anglo-American Masonry had survived the Revolution in part because the fraternity had been able to establish an American identity through its Masonic Revolutionary heroes, including George Washington, who was almost universally revered in the generation after his death.[10] The Masons had dramatically claimed him at his death, with corporate mourning and a variety of public rites that had temporarily forestalled criticism of the fraternity.[11] Antimasons therefore now tried to distinguish between the nationalistic and Masonic cults of Washington, in order to continue to participate in the one while discrediting the other. They sought to disassociate the monumental man from Masonry in three ways: they contended that Washington had implicitly renounced his membership, or that he was mistaken in his understanding of Freemasonry, or that he had never really valued the association. The Antimasonic convention in Hartford was told that when Washington had cautioned Americans about "Secret Societies combined for political purposes, . . . it is more than probable, that he had in view the Masonic Order."[12] That warning was, in effect, Washington's implicit renunciation of the fraternity. Yet if Antimasons recognized that, in fact, Washington had not renounced Masonry, they concluded that he had remained a member only because he did not understand the nature of the fraternity. Any other suspicion, said

[9] See above, pp. 20–22, 33–36. [10] See above, pp. 58–61.

[11] See above, pp. 110–111.

[12] *Proceedings of the Antimasonic State Convention of Connecticut, held at Hartford, Feb. 3, and 4, 1830* (Hartford, 1830), p. 25.

William Wirt, as he accepted the nomination of the Antimasonic party for the presidency, "would be parricide."[13] Washington, the people of Connecticut were told, must have been kept in ignorance of the "work and designs of darkness and villainy" that Masons cloaked by his name. If even Washington had not detected the "dangerous tendencies" of the fraternity, it was easier to understand why other great and good men, innocent themselves of the sin of blasphemy, had remained members.[14]

Finally, Antimasons argued Washington's indifference. "Washington never visited a lodge but once or twice after 1768; and never presided in one," one Antimasonic investigator found.[15] He may have allowed his membership to lapse by inanition because he understood that its purposes were liable to abuse. For the people of Connecticut, however, the report of Washington's advice to Governor Jonathan Trumbull, the younger, clearly showed Washington's indifference to Masonry. The young aide-de-camp asked Washington for advice about joining Masonry. Washington replied "that masonry was a benevolent institution which might be employed for the *best or worst* of purposes; but that for the most part it was merely *child's play*, and he could *not give* him any advice on the subject."[16] Trumbull never be-

[13] *The Proceedings of the Second United States Anti-Masonic Convention, held at Baltimore, September, 1831: Journal and Reports, Nomination of Candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States, Letters of Acceptance, Resolutions, and the Address to the People* (Boston, 1832), p. 67.

[14] *Secret Societies*, p. 5.

[15] *U.S. Anti-Masonic Convention: 1831*, p. 75.

[16] J. Hugo Tatsch, "The Anti-Masons and Washington," *Grand Lodge Bulletin, Iowa Masonic Library* (October, 26, 1925), p. 225. This anecdote was published in the *Philadelphian*, July 23, 1830, a religious newspaper edited by the Reverend Ezra Stiles Ely and widely circulated among evangelical groups. See also C. C. Hunt, "George Washington, The Mason," *Grand Lodge Bulletin, Iowa Masonic Library* (October 25, 1925), pp. 201–203.

came a Mason, and that fact, the Antimasons claimed, set a better precedent for Connecticut than Washington's membership. Yet the nationalistic and Masonic cults of Washington did still overlap, and the Antimasons could not divest the Masons. "When the Order was persecuted by religious fanaticism and political jealousy, his unsullied virtue was its apology, and his irreproachable life its pledge,"[17] the Masons claimed.

The fraternity had offered its members exotic experiences, unconnected with the realities of life in a Connecticut township. Antimasons attacked the format, ceremonies, and rituals of Masonry on both nationalistic and religious grounds. Masonry was a "gaudy show" of "scenes that are past" made obsolete by the "sweeping march of the moral mind" in America. "Why this unnecessary mummery should be so much countenanced in this country, above all other countries in the world, is a matter of astonishment," said William Morgan's publisher.[18] Cadwallader D. Colden, a distinguished renouncing Mason of New York, also pointed out that Masonic ceremonial was an affront to the spirit and style of Americans. "It had often occurred to me as a little extraordinary that in this republican country of ours, where we claim to be such pure democrats, there should be manifested in those who become masons, such a passion for finery, pageantry, dignities and titles," he mused.[19] Masonic ceremony and style were not only inappropriate, they were ridiculous, he said. "I have known many persons whose brains have been

[17] Thaddeus Mason Harris, *Discourses, Delivered on Public Occasions, Illustrating the Principles, Displaying the Tendency, and Vindicating the Design of Freemasonry* (Charlestown, Mass., 1801), p. 297.

[18] Morgan, *Illustrations*, p. vii.

[19] Extracts from Mr. Colden's letter were published in New Haven in 1829, *Report of a Committee to the New York Senate, together with Extracts from Other Authentic Documents, Illustrating the Character and Principles of Freemasonry* (New Haven, 1829), p. 21.

turned by their elevation from humble occupations to royal titles and imaginary thrones. Indeed, I have never known a *very great mason, who was not a very great fool.*"[20] So impressed were the Antimasons of Connecticut with this indictment that the Antimasonic *People's Press*, published briefly in Brooklyn in 1832, quoted his observation instead of a party platform on the masthead.[21] The rites and rankings that Masons found spiritually satisfying, legitimizing their conviviality and the pleasures of fraternalism, were perceived very differently by Antimasons.

Antimasons were not only concerned that the style of Freemasonry was "vain, foolish and inconsistent with our republican institutions" but that its ceremonies were profane.[22] For them the lodges were "scenes of extravagant mirth, bacchanalian revelry." The admission, passing and raising of candidates were "occasions of much indecent sport and ridiculous merriment, accompanied by mock-murders, feigned discoveries and profane and blasphemous ceremonies and representation."[23] The blasphemous nature of the rich and colorful ceremonials were best described by analogy: "Because its moral features bear so striking a resemblance to the woman, that John the Revelator saw, sitting upon a scarlett coloured beast, arrayed in purple and scarlet colours, decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearles, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations, with this name written upon her forehead, Mystery, Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots, and abominations of the earth." Connecticut Antimasons urged the rejection of Masonry "that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her pleasures."[24]

[20] Ibid., p. 22.

[21] August 1, 1832, p. 1.

[22] *Report of a Committee to the New York Senate*, p. 23.

[23] *Truth's Proofs that Masonic Oaths Do Not Impose Any Obligations* (Norwich, Conn., 1830), p. 4.

[24] Connecticut State Library, Woodstock MSS, Records of the First Ecclesiastical Society, p. 14.

Such arguments failed to appreciate the growth of a mind set that no longer equated simplicity and virtue or found sin in any secular pleasures.[25]

The "group insurance" functions of Masonry had often attracted members. Antimasons claimed that the prior allegiance of Masons in their charitable and fraternal obligations threatened the community as a whole. One of the major Antimasonic political efforts in Connecticut had been to have the act of incorporation of Masonry revoked on the grounds that "said charters were granted upon a representation that 'the object of the Masonic Fraternity is to promote charity and good will to men.' " Masonic charity was a "*hypocritical* garb for an evil endangering civil liberties."[26] It did not require "such extensive apparatus as *masonry*, to dispense such a pittance of charity."[27] An Antimason in Boston computed that one lodge in the area had, in the course of the previous eighteen years, spent $1,946.41 in public ceremonial duties while distributing $35 in charity.[28] The Freemasons gave too little, and to too few, to justify their existence on that ground.

Antimasons argued two kinds of redefinition of Masonic gifts to downgrade its appeal. First, they pointed out, money "given to its brethren by a society so organized, cannot in any sense be called a charity; it is a debt." Since Freemasons were sworn to sustain their members, the discharge of that obligation is not a charity.[29] Second, they argued that if Masonic dispensations were charity they usurped a religious duty. "What necessity is there for a Secret Society, with all

[25] See above, pp. 254–266.

[26] *Memorial Against the Masonic Incorporations of Connecticut: together with the Report and some of the Debates in the General Assembly, May, 1832*, Anti-Masonic Pamphlet No. 1 (n.p., n.d.), pp. 4, 6.

[27] *Reply of the Genesee Consociation, to the Letter of the Rev. Joseph Emerson of Wethersfield, Conn.* (Hartford, 1829), p. 10.

[28] Samuel D. Greene, *The Broken Seal: or Personal Reminiscences of the Morgan Abduction and Murder* (Boston, 1837), pp. 57–58, quoting from the *Christian Herald*, Boston, April 14, 1830.

[29] *Anti-Masonic Review*, I, no. 9 (1828), 15 [italics theirs].

its horrid oaths, its laws written in blood, its high sounding titles and its vast power and influence, to do the deeds of Charity?" he asked.[30] Antimasons did not recognize that Masonic "debts" associated with fraternal interdependence had seemed to some more reliable and less painful than either civic compulsion or Christian charity.[31]

Masonry as an educational institution promised mysterious informational riches. Antimasons took particular exception to the Masonic claim of privileged knowledge. Strong pointed out to the Connecticut Antimasons that such promises were impostures. One "respectable Clergyman" reported his disappointment after "he had become a Mason for the purpose of perfecting himself in the science of Geometry, having been told that it was well understood and taught in the Lodge." Another Mason who had joined under a similar misapprehension said: "As to the sciences, the whole scope of instruction goes no further, than frequently to remind the brethren, that the sun rises in the East, and sets in the West, and rules the day, and that the moon rules the night."[32] Masonry was vulnerable to the criticism that there was some distance between its promises of special arcane knowledge and the information actually imparted. Indeed, during the worst of the Antimasonic excitement the Royal Arch Masons of Connecticut addressed themselves to the problem of how to convey more substantive knowledge.[33] Yet Masons also knew that the whole format of the Masonic experience was usually an

[30] *Antimasonic State Convention, Conn.*, p. 21.

[31] See above, pp. 43–44, 200–213.

[32] *Antimasonic State Convention, Conn.*, p. 17.

[33] In 1835 a committee of the Royal Arch Chapter reported that in some lodges "an unusual degree of attention has been paid to the subject of lectures and experiments in the various branches of useful learning." Lodges, they thought, "might become seminaries of learning, extensively useful, each having its own library, or certain articles of apparatus." In this new use of Masonry, "Masonic Hall" would "resemble the popular Lyceums." Joseph L. Wheeler, *Records of Capitular Masonry in the State of Connecticut* (Hartford, 1875), pp. 174–175.

adequate substitute, an educational enlargement of the lives of its members, and they continued to value it according to their own definitions of education.[34]

On the whole the advantage of Masonry that was the hardest for them to substantiate, but troubled Antimasons as much as it attracted Masons, was the promise of special preference within the fraternity. Antimasons assailed this aspect of the fraternity on secular or political grounds, although they called upon the principle of Christian brotherhood to reenforce their arguments. Their accusations imputed both conscious and unconscious political malpractice. Freemasonry, they claimed, worked to the political advantage of its members as a "natural result of the secret system itself." Masons formed "a *political caucus* in effect, without suspecting it in their own hearts."[35] As an organization, Masonry tended "to advance the selfish interests of its members by exclusive privileges."[36] The Connecticut Antimasons resolved in convention that Masonry served "to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force, and to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will—of a small, but oftentimes, artful and enterprising minority of the community." They concluded that Freemasonry was "a government, aiming at Supreme Power, and at Universal Dominion" and must be combated as such.[37] To destroy Masonry, they politicized their religious movement. They agreed with the Reverend George Allen of Massachusetts that "*the character of Masonry gave existence to the* [Antimasonic] *party, and the political action of masonry compelled the party to be political.*"[38] However, Antimasons were ill-equipped to do battle in political

[34] See above, pp. 41–43, 247–254.

[35] *Anti-Masonic Review*, II, no. 3 (1828), 74–75 [italics theirs]. See above, pp. 245–247.

[36] George Allen, *Thoughts on "the Excitement" in Reply to a Letter to Hon. Edward Everett* (Worcester, Conn., 1833), p. 41.

[37] *Antimasonic State Convention, Conn.*, pp. 13–14.

[38] Allen, *Thoughts on "the Excitement*," p. 33 [italics his].

arenas. As Ronald Formisano had shown, the Antimasons epitomized "broad antiorganizational and antipower impulses" in American society, sometimes evangelical in origin, which interpreted a party as a threat to their individuality, autonomy, and freedom of conscience. By defining Masons as a "party," Antimasons believed that they had automatically exposed its antidemocratic and anti-American design.[39]

Finally, the supradenominationalism of Masonry had broadly and powerfully appealed to men in Congregational Connecticut. Antimasons charged blasphemy or impiety. They vehemently rejected the conciliating claim that Masonry was an "auxiliary" or "handmaid" of Christianity. "Our Religion wants no handmaid," they asserted.[40] Connecticut Baptists applauded the news that the Saratoga Association had voted "disfellowship" for Freemasons on the ground that the fraternity "amalagamates in its societies men of all religions . . . thereby defeating all its pretensions to the morality and religion of the Bible and sapping the foundations of Christian fellowship."[41] An orthodox Calvinist community such as the First Society in Woodstock rose up in wrath when the thought that Freemasonry claimed "to be of divine origin, teaching a way of Salvation independent of our Saviour's merits," and then they found that their deacons were members.[42]

The religious community, groping its way to a mul-

[39] Formisano, "Political Character," pp. 686, 692–697.

[40] *Antimasonic State Convention, Conn.*, p. 22.

[41] David Bernard, *Light on Masonry: A Collection of the Most Important Documents on the Subject of Speculative Free Masonry: . . . in relation to the Abduction of William Morgan, Proceedings of Conventions, Orations, Essays &c, &c. with all the Degrees of the Order conferred in a Master's Lodge as Written by Captain William Morgan; all the Degrees conferred in the Royal Arch Chapter and Grand Encampment of Knights Templars, with the Appendant Orders; . . . making Forty-eight Degrees of Free Masonry with Notes and Critical Remarks* (Utica, N.Y., 1829), p. 335.

[42] Connecticut State Library, Woodstock MSS, Records of the First Ecclesiastical Society, pp. 88–89.

tidenominational detente, could not yet envision accommodating a suprareligious institution that might not even be Christian. They only knew that "every lineament of the Institution presents to us an odious contrast to every feature of our lovely Religion."[43] However, when specific parochial appeals were added to Antimasonic arguments, they could not but offend others besides Masons. Although there were few Catholics in Connecticut in 1830, Antimasons warned of the "popish" implications of Masonry. Analogy had to serve: they claimed the secret power of Masonry was like the secret power of the Jesuits.[44] They also found it ominous that Freemasonry could accommodate non-Trinitarian and even non-Christian religions. The higher degrees of Masonry, the "invention of a school of infidel philosophers in France," were "first introduced into this country by Jews" as the "fit instruments of the anti-Christian wickedness of Voltaire" and therefore inevitably led to "infidel principles of every description."[45] Moreover, as John Holley told the national convention, another aspect of Masonry was "replete with the most distressing apprehensions." An independent African Grand Lodge had been formed that was "coextensive with our union." "We are afraid to look in upon their proceedings, to count their inmates, or to specify their resources," he warned.[46] Although there were no "African" lodges in Connecticut, the inclusiveness of Masonry clearly threatened their ideal of a homogeneous society.

In Connecticut the separation of church and state had been recognized with the adoption of the new state constitution in 1818. Uneven social processes had further secularized ideas

[43] *Antimasonic State Convention, Conn.*, p. 12.

[44] Bernard, *Light on Masonry*, p. 336. *Anti-Masonic Review*, I, no. 4 (1828).

[45] *U.S. Anti-Masonic Convention: 1830*, p. 81. *Anti-Masonic Review*, I, no. 2 (1828), 41.

[46] *U.S. Anti-Masonic Convention: 1831*, p. 81.

about civil arrangements. By the 1830s the political milieu in Connecticut permitted the passage of a relatively liberalized witness law, and, in the name of economy, the civil government could dispense with religious exercises on election day. Antimasonry as a political movement based on ideas about the homogeneity of Connecticut society was long since outmoded by reality. However, the politicization of Antimasonry gave Masons their best counterattack. Masons recognized that the principle at stake was "the separation of civil from ecclesiastical affairs." They warned that Antimasonry was a "bold and unblushing attempt to revive the exploded church and state system against the admonitions of past experience, and in the face of the constitution."[47] Politically knowledgeable people remembered that Nathaniel Terry, the president of the state Antimasonic convention at Hartford and one of Connecticut's delegates to the national Antimasonic convention in Philadelphia, had been one of the leaders of the "opposing party" in the constitutional convention of 1818.[48] The association of political Antimasonry with a desire for religious reestablishment was not an advantage at the polls in Connecticut. Although a large minority of the population of Connecticut even as late as 1835 might have still preferred the older church-state relationship, the majority was unwilling to challenge or reverse the arrangements of the Constitution of 1818.

Reasons for the political failure of Antimasonry seem clear enough. In spite of that failure, the Masonic lodges of the state were devastated, as we saw in some detail in Chapter VIII. Only about a quarter of the estimated Masonic population publicly defended the fraternity by signing the Declaration of Freemasons in 1832. The Grand Lodge of Connecticut

[47] *Address to the Leaders of Political Anti-Masonry, Being an Exposition of the New Political System under the Guise of Anti-Masonry. By a Citizen* (New Haven, 1830), p. 15.

[48] Maria Louise Greene, *The Development of Religious Liberty in Connecticut* (Boston, 1905), p. 485.

was forced to operate on a reduced scale long after the Antimasonic party had scattered. As late as 1841 the Masons voted down a resolution on "the expediency and propriety of a general celebration on the part of this Grand Lodge on the 24th of June next." In 1844, because of the default of so many of the lodges, the Grand Lodge voted that "the Masonic jurisdiction of each subordinate Lodge in this State shall extend in every direction from its usual place of meeting to the usual place of meeting of the adjoining Lodges."[49] The state organization of the fraternity retrogressed to the broad regional jurisdiction that had characterized the early days of Masonry under the Grand Lodge. Not until 1849, when a group of Connecticut men set out to find gold in California, was a charter for a new lodge issued, and then only to men who would organize themselves far from the scene of the persistent Antimasonic pressures in Connecticut itself.[50]

The political tallies of Antimasonry do not describe the local pressures generated by movement as well as do the many local anecdotes and myths. In Litchfield, for example, the members of St. Paul's Lodge left their horses some distance from town and went on foot, by different routes, to their meeting place. The Master of the lodge received a letter threatening to burn his house unless the lodge was discontinued, and the furniture and records of the lodge were distributed among the members and hidden in various attics and barns.[51] Windsor Lodge met in the attics of its members' houses after 1829, and the time and place of each meeting

[49] E. G. Storer, *The Records of Freemasonry in the State of Connecticut, with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England, and the Entire Proceedings of the Grand Lodge, from its First Organization, A.L. 5789* (New Haven, 1859), pp. 450–462, 533–536, 579.

[50] James R. Case, *Historical Sketch of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, Organized July 8, 1789* (n.p., 1965).

[51] A. William Pruner, *History of St. Paul's Lodge No. 11, P. & A.M., Litchfield, Connecticut, 1781–1931* (Hartford, 1932), pp. 32–34.

were kept a close secret.[52] Morning Star Lodge near Warehouse Point survived by meeting no more than two or three times a year, secretly, in the woods near town.[53] The fears and suspicions generated by Antimasonry in some places were so great that when the Woodbury Masons marched through Millville in a defiantly public Saint John's Day celebration, one Masonic "survivor" recalled that people along their route ran into their houses and closed their doors.[54] In some parts of Connecticut the Masonic lodges, which had only been secret about their ritual, became an underground organization.

Antimasonic ideas could not always command consensus within the religious groups that gave the movement its main constituency, but they lastingly affected the community. One church in Killingly, for example, was torn by dissension about the fraternity for many years. Sometime around 1830 the members of the North Society of Killingly agreed that "Abstinence from Masonic exercises & practices [be] made a criterion of reception into the church," but the vote was far from unanimous. In 1832 they called the Reverend William Bushnell to help their aging pastor, Elisha Atkins. Bushnell accepted only on the condition that the dissension about Masonry be "healed" before he came. "But unhappily," he reported, "instead of allaying discontent, and reconciling those whose affections had been to some extent alienated, the breach had been made wider and discontent and disaffection have increased to hostility, & an injury thus inflicted on the church which may not soon be healed." Bushnell found he could not preach to so divided a community, and, in 1835, he

[52] Robert Fitch Beldon, *History of Washington Lodge No. 70, A.F. & A.M. of Windsor, Connecticut* (n.p., n.d.) pp. 12–16.

[53] Bernard Fearon, *A History of Morning Star Lodge No. 28, A.F. & A.M.* (Warehouse Point, Conn., 1971), p. 8.

[54] Robert S. Walker, *History of Harmony Lodge No. 42, F. & A.M., Waterbury, Connecticut, 1797–1947* (Waterbury, Conn., 1947), p. 34.

requested dismissal.[55] The church itself continued to quarrel about Masonry for several years, showing that differences about the fraternity divided even religious subcommunities, the main cohorts of the Antimasonic movement.

Local opposition to Masonry was so strong and stormy in the Putnam Lodge area that the survival of the lodge tells us something about the limitations of Antimasonic power. Perhaps vehement religious Antimasonry sometimes provoked equally vehement Masonic resistance. It should be noted, however, that some lodges ceased to operate in communities that were less fiercely divided politically than the Putnam Lodge area.[56] In Putnam Lodge, itself, an increasing number of members fell away from the fraternity as social Antimasonry persisted and spread, while a small core group remained steadfast. Between 1828 and 1835, about 141 out of possibly 185 members of Putnam Lodge still in that area attended lodge meeting at some time, but only 36 men attended continuously throughout the period, providing a core group for institutional continuity.[57] Less than one-half of the Masons in the area, a group of 68 men (some of whom were Masons but not members of the Putnam Lodge itself) were willing to go on public record by signing the Declaration of

[55] Connecticut Congregational House, MSS. "Records of Ordinations, Dismissions, Deaths &c of the Pastors of Congregational Churches in Windham County," II, 219–222.

[56] Storer, *Records*, pp. 504–505. Towns such as Cheshire, Wallingford, Guilford, Stamford, and Hamden, did not send delegations to the Antimasonic convention at Hartford in 1830, but the lodges ceased to operate in these towns by the mid-1830s.

[57] Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46, MSS, compiled from Minutes, II–III, 1828–1835. About twenty-eight of these men attended only once until 1830, and not thereafter and about forty-one attended only once after 1830, when Antimasonry had become a state-wide political issue as well as a local one. In 1827 eighty-four attended the November meeting; in 1832, seventeen attended.

Freemasons in 1832.[58] These figures suggest that Antimasonry as a social movement could influence public behavior more than it could affect private belief. Masonry commanded an allegiance that public opinion about the fraternity could not destroy, but could and did dramatically curtail.

There are, of course, many reasons that Antimasonry succeeded as a social movement while failing as a political movement. One of them, unexplored because of the difficulties of conventional documentation, is that Antimasonry worked through apolitical and private networks of opinion and communication, exerting its influence in the home and through family pressures, rather than recording them at the polls. The general context of the movement and the attitudes of both Masons and Antimasons warrant the hypothesis that a silent and unorganized Antimasonry among women accounted for part of the power of public opinion that crippled Masonry.

Recent work on the history of women provides a broadly descriptive outline of their roles in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Women then were reacting to "the great pressures that accompanied the emergence of the nuclear family."[59] Women's roles were more stratified than at previous times, and the rising level of expectation associated with the beginnings of better education for women coincided with the new constraints.[60] Ideas associated with the "cult of true womanhood" assigned each sex a separate sphere of action, and Masonry reinforced those ideas in the elaborate and flat-

[58] *Ibid.* A list of signers in the Putnam Lodge area was collected, but for some reason it was not forwarded to the Grand Lodge in time to be published with the names of other staunch Masons in the state.

[59] William L. O'Neill, *Everyone Was Brave: A History of Feminism in America*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1971), p. 5.

[60] Gerda Lerner, "The Lady and the Mill Girl: Changes in the Status of Women in the Age of Jackson," *Mid Continent American Studies Journal*, X (Spring 1969), 12.

tering ways developed to deal with the exclusion of women from its ranks.[61] However, the structure and substance of Freemasonry were devoted to the communication of moral knowledge, which, as we have noted in an earlier chapter, was a purpose that impinged on a legitimate sphere of opinion and action by women. As John Abbot pointed out in *The Mother at Home* (one of the most successful volumes of domestic literature in the 1830s) women as "first in the transgression, must be yet the principal earthly instrument in the restoration." Women as wardens of the family "must be the great agents in bringing back our guilty race to duty and happiness."[62]

William Taylor and Christopher Lasch have shown that women in the antebellum period found solace in the sorority of church-related activities for the same reason that some men turned to fraternities. Both were driven by the cloying "cult of women and the Home" to find "communities of sympathy and understanding" among their own sex. The cult of the purity of women was predicated on the idea of "the coarseness of men," and so women found a simple proof of the fraudulence of Masonic claims to function as an agency of social virtue: their own exclusion.[63] Religious and evangelical movements were within women's allotted spheres even though a few such movements had taken on a political dimension, such as the organized protest against the transportation

[61] See above, pp. 188–197. See also Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs*, I, no. 1 (Autumn 1975), 1–29, for a description of the "homosocial networks" through which ideas and attitudes were communicated, such as, one may speculate, Antimasonry.

[62] Philip J. Greven, Jr., *Child Rearing Concepts, 1628–1861* (Ithaca, Ill., 1973), p. 133.

[63] William R. Taylor and Christopher Lasch, "Two 'Kindred Spirits': Sorority and Family in New England, 1839–1846," *New England Quarterly*, XXXVI (March 1963), 34–35.

of the mail on Sunday.[64] They were church-related efforts to safeguard the home, and, as such, were "in no wise contrary to female decorum."[65] Women, unquestioningly barred from public roles, were also told that they wielded an "efficient and unobtrusive influence" through which they could be "exceedingly useful." The Reverend John Mitchell of North Haven was sure that their private influence was important: "They that are acquainted with women's history from the beginning till now, or with the signs and movements of the times, will hardly think her behind the other sex in the service of Christ."[66] Because it was often a church-related, a private, unorganized, familial Antimasonry—the duty of women—surrounded the political movement.

Women had been educated to Antimasonry in another way, too. The antimasonry of the 1790s spawned a literature about the Illuminati that must have had a long term effect on women's attitudes toward secret societies insofar as they were important consumers of the novel. Charles Brockden Brown, one of the first in the "new and untrodden field" of American moralist storytelling, created a series of similarly motivated characters based on his idea of the Illuminati, *Wieland, or the Transformation* and *Ormond, or the Secret Witness* were both published in New York in 1798, and *Memoirs of Carwin*,

[64] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, "Prelude to Abolitionism: Sabbatarian Politics and the Rise of the Second Party System," *Journal of American History*, LVIII (September 1971), 322, 328–333. See also Ronald W. Hogeland, "The Female Appendage: Feminine Lifestyles in America, 1820–1860," *Civil War History*, XVII (June 1971), 112–113.

[65] Charles Roy Keller, *The Second Great Awakening in Connecticut* (New Haven, 1942), p. 234; Hogeland, "The Female Appendage," pp. 109–110. See also Keith F. Melder, "The Beginnings of the Women's Rights Movement in the United States, 1800–1840" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1963).

[66] John Mitchell, *The Practical Church Member: Being A Guide to the Principles and Practice of the Congregational Churches of New England* (New Haven, 1835), p. 165.

written at about the same time as the other two, was published posthumously in London in 1822. The protagonists were all "high-minded" villains, "political and social enthusiasts, endowed with noble and generous impulses, who begin life in benevolent service, but who, on being caught up in the web of social errors, turn fiends." Brown, as his contemporary biographer noted in his diary, had "taken up the schemes of the Illuminati."[67] Shortly after the publication of Brown's first novels, Sally Wood took up the same theme in *Julia and the Illuminated Baron*. Mrs. Wood explained that she had written the novel to warn of the dangers of the French Revolution as a "revolution from piety and from morality." At the end of Julia's adventures (involving a noble hero named, coincidentally, Ormond), the "principles of the Illuminati" had triumphed in France: "anarchy, confusion, cruelty and bloodshed succeeded."[68] There seems to be no study of the Masonic figure in American literature, although clearly such a theme existed, and so one can only conjecture that women read and were influenced by a literary antimasonry long before the Antimasonic movement of the 1830s.[69] Hannah Crocker, who had so ambiguously defended Masonry in the aftermath of the Antimasonic stirrings in the early years of this period, confessed that "perhaps I stand alone on female ground, as an advocate for Masonry."[70]

[67] David Lee Clark, *Charles Brockden Brown, Pioneer Voice of America* (Durham, N. C., 1952), pp. 160, 173, 169, 188–192, 336.

[68] [Sally Sayward Barrell Wood], *Julia and the Illuminated Baron; a Novel: Founded on Recent Facts, which have Transpired in the Course of the Late Revolution of Moral Principles in France, by a Lady of Massachusetts* (Portsmouth, N. H., 1800), pp. viii–ix, 284.

[69] David Brion Davis in his stimulating and suggestive article, "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVII (September 1960), p. 207, puts this theme in a larger framework.

[70] American Antiquarian Society, Hannah Crocker Mather MSS,

Because women's sphere was enlarged by the increasingly public or parapolitical religious activities in which they were encouraged to participate, Antimasons summoned them to the cause. Masons boasted in their chivalric oath that "A Mason is solemnly sworn to protect the chastity of a brother Mason's wife and sister," but Antimasons interpreted their oath as license "to indulge in unlawful, carnal connection with any except those excepted."[71] Antimasonic orators attacked the "licentious and profane spirit, this contempt of the female sex and of the married state" inherent in the exclusive fraternalism. Henry Dana Ward pointed out to the assembled delegates at Hartford in 1830 that, in "the division of duties," women were not "excluded from doing good." "Are acts of beneficience to be performed by men only?" he asked. The "true reason" for excluding women from the fraternity, he said, was that Masonic moral purposes were only a sham: women "cannot be entrusted with the knowledge of the power and aggrandizement which Masonry proposes to itself; and their moral sense would be shocked at the unhallowed means by which those ends are to be obtained."[72] Women, who might have welcomed Masonic assistance in the task of moral education, could only be offended by the alleged Masonic corruption of those tasks.

An anonymous pamphlet published in Boston in 1832 and purporting to describe the ritual and ceremonies of "Masonesses" in Europe can only have served as an antimasonic tract aimed at women, even though its descriptions were without commentary. The lodges described by "a Lady" were composed of women and men who were Masons, and the Masons conducted the ceremonies. According to the Master's

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"Antiquarian Researches made Pleasant and Easy, by an Original Antiquarian." See above, pp. 197–200.

[71] *Anti-Masonic Review*, I, no. 8 (1829), 237–238.

[72] *Antimasonic Convention, Conn.*, p. 21.

first discourse it was only the vulgar, "always unjust, unpolished and malicious" who "have indefatigably laboured to prepossess the Fair Sex against our assembly," although Masons were prepared to include female members "who are discreet as they are amiable, and who are the properest to afford comfort and delight." The ceremonies of the lodge, from the first degree when the "princess Candidate" waits in an antechamber alone with the "brother introducer," to the ritual story of Lot's incest for the second degree, to the "sign of perfection" for the fourth degree—involving "putting the left hand in the bosom" twice before the mixed assembly, once to register astonishment and once joy, to symbolize the miraculous cure of Moses's leprous hand—must have deeply affronted genteel sensibilities.[73]

Anne Royall, who was herself a great admirer and supporter of Masonry, was sure that women were in the vanguard of Antimasonry. At the time of the Antimasonic movement, Mrs. Royall was one of America's few professional women journalists. Her first book, *Sketches of History, Life, and Manners in the United States*, printed in New Haven in 1826, had been successful enough so that she tried to earn her living as a professional writer. In 1827 and 1828 she made an extended tour, largely financed by Masons, through Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, and all the New England states. Trips to the south in 1829 and 1831 were similarly financed.[74] The Masons were rewarded by nine vitriolic tour books describing her journeys, in fascinating and highly per-

[73] *Illustrations of the Four First Degrees of Female Masonry, as Practiced in Europe, By a Lady* (Boston, 1832), pp. 8, 2, 18, 31. The only copy of this pamphlet that I have found is in the Springfield Public Library.

[74] Sarah Harvey Porter, *The Life and Times of Anne Royall* (Cedar Rapids, Ia., 1909), p. 100. Mrs. Royall was not the only woman journalist financed by the fraternity. When Sarah Josepha Hale's husband, a Mason, died, Brother Masons were reported to have financed her efforts to establish *The Lady's Book*, later *Godey's Lady's Book*. Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741–1850*, I (Cambridge, Mass., 1930).

sonalized detail, commenting on life and politics and denouncing her enemies and theirs.

Mrs. Royall's enthusiasm about the fraternity had preceded Masonic sponsorship of her journalistic activities. She loved Masons not only for the help they had given her, but for the enemies they shared. Her own violent antipathies included all the evangelical churches and their activities, which, she thought, encroached on personal freedom and democratic government. She was particularly opposed to "the blueskins," or Presbyterians, as the most blatantly theocratic of the churches, but she was against, among other things, all tract societies, missionary societies, Bible societies, Sunday School efforts, and Sunday mail campaigns.[75] When her familiar enemies appeared in the ranks of Antimasonry, she included Antimasons among her antipathies.

Anne Royall called women who participated in church-related activities "blue-skin women," and, as she thought, all blueskins were Antimasons.[76] Apparently a male taboo, or the entailment of nineteenth-century chivalry, prevented Masons from directly attacking the Antimasonic efforts of women. As one friend warned Mrs. Royall, people didn't care whom she lashed out against if she "let the Females alone." Her response was characteristically splenetic: "No! My own sex have brought my country to the brink of ruin, by supporting a legion of blue-skin Priests. I disown my sex. I will attack the enemies of my country, come in what shape they may—whether in the shape of angels or serpents, or (as the cant word is) my own sex—crime is of no sex!"[77] Her diatribes against women were directly related to her perception of them as the unwitting, thoughtless tools of the clergy. "The

[75] George Stuyvesant Jackson, *Uncommon Scold: The Story of Anne Royall* (Boston, 1937), pp. 143–144, 126–130.

[76] Porter, *Anne Royall*, pp. 118–122; Jackson, *Uncommon Scold*, p. 82.

[77] Anne Royall, *Mrs. Royall's Southern Tour, or Second Series of the Black Book*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1830–1831), II, 105.

lord save us from petticoat government," she lamented, "they would soon fill Congress with those fire-brands, missionary patriots, and *anti-masons*."[78] Mrs. Royall knew that the work of her "own sex" was indirect, but she acknowledged its presence and its power.

Only a single reference to women's participation in public organized Antimasonry survives, its importance heightened by the rarity of any such display by women prior to the abolitionist movement. (The unique Fanny Wright, for example, was not so much famous as notorious for her lectures on social reform, and frequently a bodyguard had to protect her entrances to public platforms, so angered was the public by her lack of "female delicacy.")[79] According to local newspaper accounts, a group of women assembled in Wheatland Township, New York, to pass and publish Antimasonic resolutions.[80] Usually the record is more oblique, as when a church historian casually couples the idea of women speaking out in prayer meeting with Antimasonry, indicating the more usual platform for women than the ones on which Fanny Wright had stood.[81]

In Connecticut persistent local legend links women to Antimasonry. For example, in Lebanon, according to one story, Joseph Metcalf almost caught his daughter eavesdropping on a lodge meeting in his house. When he tried to discover if she had overheard any of the lodge ritual, his wife stopped all inquiry: "What! can't you make your infernal deviltry work tonight?" she is reported to have asked, while her husband retreated before her hostility.[82] Another local legend in the

[78] Ibid., II, 211 [italics added].

[79] Francis Wright, *Views of Society and Manners in America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. xix.

[80] *Batavia Republican Advocate*, December 8, 1826. I am indebted to Ronald P. Formisano for this reference and for the one in footnote 81.

[81] Joseph R. Page, *History of the Brighton [Presbyterian] Church* (Rochester, N.Y., 1877), p. 19.

[82] Connecticut Grand Lodge, Historical Files, Eastern Star Lodge No. 44, "The Oldest Masonic Hall," *New York Times*, n.d.

Harwinton area describes the influence of an Antimasonic clergyman in arousing an enduring opposition to Masonry among the women in his church.[83] A Masonic historian in the Salisbury area remembered how Antimasonry had penetrated the home: "Households were divided against themselves in angry conflicts between Masons and Antimasons. Members of the same family sat at the same table without speaking to each other. Matrimonial as well as business engagements were ruptured by the same cause."[84] Another Masonic historian from Norwich recalled, "Mischievous fanatics parted husband and wife, and broke up families."[85] It seems clear that Antimasonry invaded the sanctuary of the antebellum Connecticut household, and thereby moved into women's sphere of responsibility—and power.

The private, unorganized, familial efforts of women help to explain the impressive efficiency of Antimasonry as a social movement. All of the male-oriented life styles available to them in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, whether as ornaments of the household or the romanticized custodians of virtue, permitted women who were so inclined to aid the Antimasonic cause. Few women yet exercised the radical option which led some middle- and upper-class women to publicly try to transform the world to a greater conformity with their superior virtue, but a great number of women acted as "the female appendage" to evangelical efforts.[86] However unorganized, they exercised a self-conscious, domestic power. Although Henry Ward Beecher was to notice with some surprise that women's power in the home had been minimized because it was not a public power, women had been socialized since

[83] Ibid., "History of Aurora Lodge No. 38, East Plymouth (Harwinton)," p. 18.

[84] A. N. Lewis, "Historical Address," *Centennial Anniversary of Montgomery Lodge No. 13, A.F. & A.M.* (Hartford, 1884), p. 27.

[85] Charles William Carter, "Origin and History of Somerset Lodge," *Centennial History of Somerset Lodge No. 34, F. & A.M., of Norwich, Connecticut, 5795–5895* (n.p., n.d.), p. 36.

[86] Hogeland, "The Female Appendage," pp. 107, 109–114, et passim.

the turn of the century, by Masons among others, to believe and act as if they were the "only suitable moral agents within society."[87] In Antimasonry the homebound, private force of women must somehow be reckoned.

When all the evidence on the history of Masonry and Antimasonry is sorted and weighed it appears that the fraternity commanded strong allegiances in antebellum Connecticut, and thus the success of Antimasonry was mixed. Nevertheless, social Antimasonry was strong enough to deal Masonry a blow from which even incomplete recovery took a generation. Antimasonry commanded subgroups in the communities, and influenced a wider segment of society than it commanded, but its social weight could not be converted into political power. The single goal of the destruction of the fraternity, the theocratic implications of the movement, and the private, apolitical activities of women were not the coin of Connecticut's political transactions. Yet neither do economic factors or denominational affiliations appear to account for the power of social Antimasonry. It must be remembered that Masons and Antimasons were members of the same communities, and members of the same subpopulations within those communities. The study of Putnam Lodge found Masons in every segment of the population. Even if Antimasons could be identified with one or more subgroups, the Masonic population would overlap them. In the end the destructive power of social Antimasonry must be ascribed to the local strength of one set of ideas and attitudes as opposed to another, mobilized by social stress to upset the balance of their peaceable coexistence.

Historians who have tried to plot the values of American society have always been forced to use a double line graph to indicate the contradictions they discover. In this study the terms orthodoxy and latitudinarianism have served to de-

[87] William E. Bridges, "Family Patterns and Social Values in America, 1825–1875," *American Quarterly*, XVII (Spring 1965), 10.

scribe one aspect of the contrasting mind sets in antebellum Connecticut. However, beginning with Tocqueville's sweeping, contemporaneous analysis of the nature of American character and institutions, it has been clear that the balance of opposite ideas has been the beam on which American society rested. Many of the paradoxes Tocqueville discerned can be subsumed under his perception of the tensions of individualism and the tyranny of the majority, like "self-interest" and "associational effort."[88] More recently Michael Kammen has suggestively described and analyzed the "biformities" of American civilization so as to help explain such sudden political-religious upheavals as Antimasonry. For Kammen, American society is like a triptych, with the unstable pluralism of American society as one panel and a constant "quest for legitimacy" as the other, both framing the central panel of American biformities—those unions of opposite ideas and attitudes which constitute the culture. Kammen found that the "plethora of dualisms, functional and dysfunctional alike, encourage very rapid change—social, political and attitudinal—and that inconsistencies in American thought persistently provide the basis for unanticipated shifts in feeling and perception." The success of social Antimasonry was a result of, in Kammen's words, "the push-pull" or forces inherent in a "contrapuntal civilization."[89]

Underlying the Antimasonic initiative were the ambiguities and ambivalences, in precarious balance, of attitudes about democratic individualism and the elitist functions of associational efforts; about the meaning and the limits of freedom of religion, given the necessity for order and restraint in a dem-

[88] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Phillips Bradley, 2 vols. (New York, 1954), II, 9–13, 109–113; Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York, 1955), p. 114; Marvin Meyers, *The Jacksonian Persuasion: Politics and Belief* (Stanford, Cal., 1957), pp. 42–54.

[89] Michael Kammen, *People of Paradox: An Inquiry Concerning the Origins of American Civilization* (New York, 1973), pp. 89, 91–92, et passim.

ocratic society; and about the relationship between personal privacy and civically responsible publicity in increasingly mobile and diversified communities. Masons and Antimasons had made different choices, in accordance with their beliefs, to keep their fears down and their hopes up. The Antimasonic initiative stirred and roiled the issues, and many Masons must have retreated in order not to further muddy community relationships. As Antimasonry grew in its evangelical intensity, the Masons' freedom to meet was questioned and hedged; their special "sacred" places were endangered; their symbols, rites and rituals were desecrated; their joys and pleasures were impugned. For many Masons their pleasant and pleasurable game was simply over.[90]

After a time, Masonry revived in those places where it had almost been extinguished for many of the same reasons that had earlier accounted for its growth. As we have seen, the lodges of Connecticut had supplemented or replaced some of the traditional functions of local communities or churches by providing another, though exclusive, focus for allegiance, and a different reference for standards of morality. The lodge operated as a club for like-minded men, a school of social attitudes, and a financial insurer. Masonry was the nexus of new lines of communication and trust at the beginning of an era of unprecedented mobility and change. Freemasonry had provided—and would again provide—a variant religious experience, a source of social distinctiveness, a means of self-education, and an ethically licensed form of enjoyment within the constraining tensions of American society.

[90] Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (Boston, 1955), pp. 9–12, 20–25.

APPENDIX I

THE STRUCTURE OF
~FREEMASONRY~
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I°
ENTERED APPRENTICE
II°
FELLOWCRAFT
III°
MASTER MASON

BLUE LODGE

EASTERN STAR CHAPTER

TALL CEDARS OF LEBANON FOREST

GROTTO

MASONIC
SOUTHERN ~ JURISDICTION ~ NORTHERN

4° SECRET MASTER
5° PERFECT MASTER
6° CONFIDENTIAL *OR INTIMATE* SECRETARY
7° PROVOST AND JUDGE
8° INTENDENT OF THE BUILDING
9° ELU OF THE NINE ~ MASTER ELECT OF NINE
10° ELU OF THE FIFTEEN ~ ELECT OF THE FIFTEEN
11° ELU OF THE TWELVE ~ SUBLIME MASTER ELECTED
12° GRAND MASTER ARCHITECT
13° ROYAL ARCH OF SOLOMON ~ MASTER OF THE NINTH ARCH
14° PERFECT ELU ~ GRAND ELECT MASON
~LODGE OF PERFECTION~
15° KNIGHT OF THE EAST OR SWORD
16° PRINCE OF JERUSALEM
• COUNCIL OF PRINCES OF JERUSALEM~
17° KNIGHT OF THE EAST AND WEST
18° KNIGHT *(PRINCE)* ROSE CROIX
~CHAPTER OF ROSE CROIX~
19° *GRAND* PONTIFF
20° MASTER OF ALL SYMBOLIC LODGES ~ *MASTER AD VITAM*
21° NOACHITE OR PRUSSIAN KNIGHT
22° KNIGHT OF THE ROYAL AXE *OR PRINCE OF LIBANUS*
23° CHIEF OF THE TABERNACLE
24° PRINCE OF THE TABERNACLE
25° KNIGHT OF THE BRAZEN SERPENT
26° PRINCE OF MERCY *OR SCOTTISH TRINITARIAN*
27° KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE TEMPLE
28° KNIGHT OF THE SUN *OR PRINCE ADEPT*
29° *GRAND SCOTTISH* KNIGHT OF ST ANDREW
30° KNIGHT KADOSH ~ *GRAND ELECT KNIGHT KADOSH*
~COUNCIL OF KADOSH•
31° *GRAND* INSPECTOR INQUISITOR *COMMANDER*
32° MASTER *OR SUBLIME PRINCE* OF THE ROYAL SECRET

SCOTTISH RITE

GRAND LODGES

YORK RITE

MARK MASTER
PAST MASTER
MOST EXCELLENT MASTER
ROYAL ARCH MASON

CHAPTER

ROYAL MASTER
SELECT MASTER
SUPER EXCELLENT MASTER ~HONORARY~

COUNCIL

ORDER OF THE RED CROSS
ORDER OF KNIGHTS OF MALTA
ORDER OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

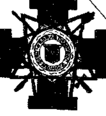
CONSISTORY

ORDER OF THE RED CROSS OF CONSTANTINE

COMMANDERY

KNIGHT COMMANDER

COURT OF HONOR
SOUTHERN JURISDICTION ONLY



33°
HONORARY
INSPECTOR GENERAL
SUPREME COUNCIL

SHRINE

ORDER OF HIGH PRIESTHOOD

YORK CROSS OF HONOR

ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND

CHART
PUBLISHED BY
THE MASONIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNITED STATES
700 TENTH STREET, N.W
WASHINGTON, 1, D C
DESIGN BY C DEJ. HERCULES, '56

TITLE VARIATIONS FOR DEGREES OF THE NORTHERN JURISDICTION SHOWN AT THE RIGHT

APPENDIX II

Officers of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, 1789–1835

	Grand Master	*Deputy Grand Master*	*Grand Senior Warden*	*Junior Grand Warden*	*Grand Treasurer*	*Grand Secretary*
1789	(Convention)	William Judd (President)	Ephraim Kirby (Secretary)			
	(Convention)	William Judd (Chairman)	Ephraim Kirby (Secretary)			
1789	Pierpont Edwards	William Judd	Ralph Pomeroy	Samuel Wyllys	George Phillips	Elias Shipman
1790	Pierpont Edwards	William Judd	Ralph Pomeroy	Samuel Wyllys	Henry Champion	Elias Shipman
1791	William Judd	Ralph Pomeroy	Samuel Wyllys	Ephraim Kirby	Henry Champion	John Mix
1792	William Judd	Ralph Pomeroy	Samuel Wyllys	Ephraim Kirby	Henry Champion	John Mix
1793	William Judd	Ralph Pomeroy	Samuel Wyllys	Ephraim Kirby	Henry Champion	John Mix
1794	William Judd	Ralph Pomeroy	Samuel Wyllys	Ephraim Kirby	Henry Champion	John Mix
1795	William Judd	Ralph Pomeroy	Samuel Wyllys	Ephraim Kirby	Henry Champion	John Mix
1796	William Judd	Samuel Wyllys	Ephraim Kirby	Eliphaet Bulkeley	Henry Champion	John Mix
1797	William Judd	Samuel Wyllys	Ephraim Kirby	Eliphaet Bulkeley	Henry Champion	John Mix
1798	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Ebenezer Huntington	Samuel Bellamy	Henry Champion	John Mix
1799	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Ebenezer Huntington	Samuel Bellamy	Henry Champion	John Mix
1800	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Ebenezer Huntington	Samuel Bellamy	Henry Champion	John Mix
1801	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Ebenezer Huntington	Samuel Bellamy	Henry Champion	John Mix
1802	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Samuel Bellamy	Samuel Whittlesey	Henry Champion	John Mix
1803	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Samuel Bellamy	Samuel Whittlesey	Henry Champion	John Mix
1804	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Samuel Bellamy	Samuel Whittlesey	Henry Champion	John Mix
1805	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Samuel Bellamy	Samuel Whittlesey	Henry Champion	John Mix
1806	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	Samuel Bellamy	John R. Watrous	Henry Champion	John Mix
1807	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	John R. Watrous	Solomon Cowles	Henry Champion	John Mix
1808	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	John R. Watrous	Solomon Cowles	Henry Champion	John Mix

1809	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	John R. Watrous	Solomon Cowles	Henry Champion	John Mix
1810	Stephen T. Hosmer	David Daggett	John R. Watrous	Solomon Cowles	Henry Champion	John Mix
1811	Stephen T. Hosmer	John R. Watrous	Solomon Cowles	Aaron Smith	Henry Champion	John Mix
1812	Stephen T. Hosmer	John R. Watrous	Solomon Cowles	Aaron Smith	Henry Champion	John Mix
1813	Stephen T. Hosmer	John R. Watrous	Solomon Cowles	Aaron Smith	Henry Champion	John Mix
1814	Stephen T. Hosmer	Solomon Cowles	Aaron Smith	James Ward	Henry Champion	John Mix
1815	Stephen T. Hosmer	Solomon Cowles	Aaron Smith	James Ward	Henry Champion	John Mix
1816	Solomon Cowles	Aaron Smith	James Ward	John H. Lynde	Henry Champion	John Mix
1817	Solomon Cowles	James Ward	John H. Lynde	Levi H. Clark	Henry Champion	John Mix
1818	Oliver Wolcott, Jr.	James Ward	James Babcock	R. I. Ingersoll	Henry Champion	John Mix
1819	Oliver Wolcott, Jr.	Lyman Law	T. H. Cushing	R. I. Ingersoll	Henry Champion	William H. Jones
1820	Oliver Wolcott, Jr.	Lyman Law	T. H. Cushing	E. Goodrich Jr.	Henry Champion	William H. Jones
1821	Lyman Law	T. H. Cushing	R. I. Ingersoll	D. B. Brinsmade	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1822	Lyman Law	R. I. Ingersoll	E. Goodrich Jr.	Thomas K. Brace	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1823	I. Ingersoll	E. Goodrich Jr.	D. B. Brinsmade	James Carrington	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1824	I. Ingersoll	E. Goodrich Jr.	D. B. Brinsmade	J. M. Goodwin	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1825	E. Goodrich Jr.	D. B. Brinsmade	James Carrington	William C. Gay	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1826	D. B. Brinsmade	J. M. Goodwin	A. D. Scoville	William C. Gay	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1827	D. B. Brinsmade	J. M. Goodwin	A. D. Scoville	C. A. Ingersoll	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1828	James M. Goodwin	A. D. Scoville	William C. Gay	C. A. Ingersoll	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1829	James M. Goodwin	A. D. Scoville	William C. Gay	C. A. Ingersoll	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1830	James M. Goodwin	A. D. Scoville	William C. Gay	C. A. Ingersoll	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1831	Thomas Hubbard	Coddington Billings	W. C. Abernerthy	Leonard Hendee	Laban Smith	Justin Redfield
1832	Thomas Hubbard	Coddington Billings	W. C. Abernerthy	Leonard Hendee	Laban Smith	William H. Jones
1833	Thomas Hubbard	Leonard Hendee	W. H. Ellis	D. T. Brainard	Laban Smith	David Kimberley
1834	Leonard Hendee	W. H. Ellis	D. T. Brainard	D. T. Brainard	Laban Smith	David Kimberley
1835	W. H. Ellis	D. T. Brainard	Aner Bradley	Aner Bradley	Laban Smith	David Kimberley

APPENDIX III

The Biographical File of Putnam Lodge Members, 1801–1835

A Biographical File was compiled for this study in order to locate and describe the members of Putnam Lodge. Three hundred and four men joined the lodge between 1801 and 1835; 298 of them can be assigned to one of the seven towns from which membership was drawn. Of the six who have not been located, one was a charter member, one was initiated in 1812, one was listed on the lodge census in 1822, another on the list of regular members in 1835, and two were men who affiliated with the lodge in 1835.

The main sources of information about the members were in the Putnam Lodge archives. The minutes of lodge meetings in the manuscript Records of Putnam Lodge I (1801–1819) and II (1819–1871), provided lists of officers and attendance records for meetings. Assorted manuscripts supplied other kinds of information. The applications for membership and various lists and censuses were especially useful. The archives also contained manuscript notes for a history of the lodge by Findley M. Fox, a manuscript by A. F. Frissell, "A History of Putnam Lodge No. 46, A.F. and A.M., within the jurisdiction of the M. W. Grand Lodge of Connecticut, in Chronological Order, 1801–1901, Compiled from the Records," and a manuscript, "Excerpts from the Record," compiled in 1940 by Vernon Wetherall. In the samples of entries in the Biographical File listed below, all of these records are noted as "Lodge Records."

The Connecticut State Library (CSL hereafter) has assembled four catalogues that were important sources of information. The Barbour Index contains vital statistics from the towns of Connecticut. The Federal Census Records of Connecticut contain several censuses of the early nineteenth century. The Church Records

Index contains records of the baptisms, admissions, marriages, and deaths of the members of several of the churches in the Putnam Lodge area. The Hale Newspaper Collection has notices of marriages and deaths.

E. G. Storer in *The Records of Freemasonry in the State of Connecticut, with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England and the Entire Proceedings of the Grand Lodge from its First Organization, A.L. 5789* (New Haven, 1859) provided information about Grand Lodge office and attendance. Many genealogies were also consulted for possible clues about the members. Two secondary works were especially useful. Ellen D. Larned, *History of Windham County*, 2 vols. (Worcester, Conn., 1874) included biographical information about the occupations or community services of many members. Clarence W. Bowen's *History of Woodstock*, 8 vols. (Norwood, Massachusetts, 1926–1943), provided a uniquely detailed source of information. The records of the towns themselves, an occasional memorial sermon, and an even more occasional published work by a member furnished further details for the Biographical File.

When the Biographical File was compiled, it was possible to tell when members had joined the lodge, how active they were, and something about their lives in the various communities. The following summaries of entries in the Biographical File list three men from each of the five towns supplying Putnam's membership, chosen to illustrate both the extent and the limitations of the information.

Alexander, William (1787–?). Alexander was initiated into Putnam Lodge in 1814, at the age of twenty-seven, passed to the degree of Entered Apprentice in 1815, and was raised to the Master's degree in 1816. He served as Junior Deacon in the lodge in 1817, as Senior Deacon in 1818, and as Secretary in 1831 and 1832. Alexander was an active member of the lodge and frequently attended the meetings during the Antimasonic period. He signed the Declaration of Freemasons in 1832, and was enrolled as a "regular member" in 1835, but, for unexplained reasons, lost his membership later that year. At around that period, he had moved to the Westfield section of Killingly, one of the

centers of Antimasonry, where he continued to live until at least 1850. Sources: Lodge Records; Census File; Barbour Index (CSL).

Bates, Luther (1767—?). Bates was initiated in 1802 at the age of thirty-five. In 1811 and 1812 he served as a Steward at lodge meetings, but he held no other office. He was probably a farmer. In 1800 and 1815 his name appears on census and tax lists, showing that he lived in Thompson during that period, but he died or moved away sometime between 1815 and 1822, since his name does not appear on the lodge census of 1822. Sources: Lodge Records; Census Index (CSL); Town Records.

Bishop, Ebenezer (1767–1834). Bishop was born in Norwich, but lived most of his adult life in Woodstock. He was a charter member of Putnam Lodge, and he was admitted to the North Woodstock Church the year the lodge was established. Bishop was one of the town's doctors. He held no office in the lodge, and attended meetings infrequently, but he maintained his relationship with the fraternity. He was on the lodge census in 1822, and signed the Declaration of Freemasons in 1832 shortly before his death. Sources: Lodge Records; Census Index; Larned; Church Records Index (CSL); Bowen.

Converse, Jonathan (?–1845). Converse was a veteran of the American Revolution, and was listed as a resident of Thompson from 1800 until 1840, although he probably did not live there continuously during that period. His Masonic record in the area begins with his affiliation with Putnam in 1829. Although he held no lodge office, Converse frequently attended meetings during the Antimasonic excitement, signed the Declaration of Freemasons in 1832, and was listed as one of the regular members in 1835. He was a deacon in Thompson's Baptist Church. In the early years of the century he was very active in politics as a Jeffersonian. Sources: Lodge Records; Larned; Bayles; Barbour Index; Census Index.

Corbin, Ichabod (c. 1778–1863). Corbin, a farmer who lived in Woodstock was initiated in 1804, when he was about twenty-five years old. He took the other two degrees that same year. Although he held no offices, Corbin frequently attended lodge meet-

ings, especially during the Antimasonic period. He was baptized in 1780, but not admitted into the North Woodstock Church until 1831. He signed the Declaration of Freemasons in 1832 and was listed as a regular member of the lodge in 1835. Sources: Lodge Records; Bowen; Church Records Index.

Dresser, Samuel (1787–?). Dresser was a farmer, born in Pomfret, who lived there throughout the period of this study. He was initiated into the lodge in 1803 and took the other two degrees during the same year. For the next thirty-two years he was one of the more active members of the fraternity. He served as Senior Deacon in 1816 and 1817, and as Treasurer in 1821 and 1826. In 1825 and 1826 he represented Putnam at the Grand Lodge meetings. He signed the Declaration of Freemasons in 1832, and was listed as a regular member in 1835. In 1834 he wrote the Abington Congregational Church that he "did not consider himself any longer a Member of the Ecclesiastical Society in Abington," although he had been active in the Society earlier. Sources: Lodge Records; Barbour Index; Grand Lodge Records; Bowen; Census Index; Records of the Abington Congregational Church, MSS (CSL).

Fowler, John, II (1793–1843). Fowler was born in Lebanon, Connecticut, the son of a Revolutionary War veteran, and he attended Lebanon Academy. He served in the War of 1812, and may have moved to Woodstock shortly thereafter. He was admitted as a freeman in the town of Woodstock in 1817 and married Mary Bacon of that town in 1819. In 1821 he applied for membership in the lodge, describing his occupation as "Merchant." He was passed and raised to the master's degree that year. In 1822 Fowler served as Steward, in 1822 and 1824 as Secretary, in 1825 and 1826 as Junior Warden, and in 1827 and 1828 as Senior Warden. He then served as Worshipful Master of the lodge from 1829 to 1831, and he attended the Grand Lodge as Putnam's representative from 1827 to 1829. Fowler was also active in town and county government, serving as justice of the peace, pension agent, and county commissioner among his other offices. Although he had served as Master of the lodge during the Antimasonic excitement, Fowler only attended one meeting in 1832, one in 1833, and did not sign the Declaration of Freema-

sons in 1832. He was not listed as a regular member of the lodge in 1835, even though he still lived in the area. Sources: Lodge Records; Barbour Index; Census Index; Bowen.

Gleason, Elisha (1766–1828). Gleason's father was a veteran of the French and Indian War who moved to Pomfret in 1763 to settle on a farm. Gleason was also a farmer. He was one of the charter members of Putnam Lodge and served as a Steward in 1802 and 1804, as Junior Deacon in 1805, and as Senior Deacon in 1806. Although he held no lodge offices thereafter, he frequently attended meetings, and three of his four sons were initiated into the lodge. Gleason himself had stopped attending lodge meetings some time before his death in 1828. Sources: Lodge Records; Barbour Index; Census Index; Lillian M. Wilson, ed., *Genealogy of the Descendants of Thomas Gleason of Watertown, Massachusetts, 1607-1909* (Haverhill, Mass., 1909), pp. 82, 148.

Janes, Walter (1777–1827). Janes was a farmer and lived in Ashford. He was initiated into the fraternity in 1811 and received his other two degrees the following year. He served as Senior Deacon in the lodge in 1815, as Junior Warden in 1816, as Senior Warden in 1817, and as Worshipful Master in 1818. During 1818 he also attended a Grand Lodge meeting as Putnam's representative. Janes went on from his "blue lodge" activity to membership and offices in the higher degrees of Masonry. He was very popular as an orator and spoke for the lodge at two funerals of members. Sources: Lodge Records; Grand Lodge Records; Census Index; Walter Janes, *Masonic Poem, Delivered at Mansfield (Conn.) before Trinity Chapter of Royal Arch Masons; and Eastern Star and Uriel Lodges, on the Anniversary Festival of St. John the Evangelist, to which is Added a Eulogy Pronounced at the Grave of Brother Asher Stowell of Pomfret (Conn.), February 22d, A.L. 5814, Together with an Address Delivered June 30th A.L. 5819 at the Interment of Brother Stephen Lewis of Ashford (Conn.)* (Brookfield, Conn., 1819).

Olney, Hezekiah (1793–1848). Olney was a hatter by occupation and the proprietor of the New York Hat and Cap Store in Thompson, where he was a neighbor of George Larned. He was initiated into the lodge in 1820 at the age of twenty-three, and,

although he frequently attended meetings, he held no office. He stopped attending meetings around 1832, did not sign the Declaration of Freemasons, and was not listed on the lodge census in 1835. He did, however, become the sheriff of Windham County, and served in local offices as well. Sources: Lodge Records; Census Index; Bayles; Larned.

Palmer, Joseph, Jr. (1782–1839). Palmer was the son of one of Ashford's doctors, and he himself became a doctor and lived in Ashford until his death. He was affiliated with the lodge in 1805, having been initiated and taken his other two degrees in Warren Lodge. Palmer served as Secretary of the Putnam Lodge in 1807 and represented the lodge at a Grand Lodge meeting in 1808. He was still active between 1820 and 1822, when he served as Junior and Senior Warden. In 1823 he married Tabitha Simmonds of Ashford, and thereafter became inactive. He did not sign the Declaration of Freemasons in 1832, nor attend meetings during that period, nor was he listed as a regular member in 1835. Sources: Lodge Records; Grand Lodge Records; Barbour Index; Larned; Census Index.

Sabin, Samuel (1780–?). Sabin was a farmer in Pomfret. He applied for admission to the lodge in 1807, when he was twenty-seven years old, and moved up to the Master's degree the following year. In 1810 he married Betsy Gleason, one of the daughters of Elisha, and probably moved from Pomfret shortly thereafter to the Palmyra, New York, area. There is some evidence of correspondence with the lodge after his move. He may have been one of Putnam's sources of information about Antimasonry in upstate New York. Sources: Lodge Records; Barbour Index; Census Index.

Stone, Stephen A. (1794–?). Stone applied for lodge membership in 1818 and listed himself as twenty-five years of age and a farmer by occupation. At that time he lived in Killingly. Sometime thereafter he became "Keeper" of the General Boarding House in Pomfret Factory Village, and after 1822 opened a tavern, probably in Killingly. Stone attended meetings infrequently, but he maintained his membership in the lodge, and in 1833 and 1835 acted as Steward. He signed the Declaration of Freemasons in

1832 and was listed as a regular member in 1835. He later moved to Thompson. Sources: Lodge Records; Census Index; Barbour Index; Bayles.

Warren, Benjamin (1791–1851). Warren was a farmer in the Eastford section of Ashford who was admitted to the lodge in 1814. He was passed to Entered Apprentice in 1815 and raised to Master in 1816, but he did not serve in any lodge offices. Warren attended meetings frequently for several years, signed the Declaration of Freemasons in 1832, although he was attending less frequently at that time, and was listed as a regular member in 1835. However, he was also listed later in 1835 as having "lost" his membership for unexplained reasons, perhaps because of withdrawal. Sources: Lodge Records; Barbour Index; Census Index.

Warren, George (1798–?). The son of Luther Warren, the town clerk of Killingly for many years and frequently one of the selectmen, George Warren was a farmer in Killingly. He was initiated into the fraternity in 1826, but he did not take his other two degrees until 1831, at the height of the Antimasonic excitement. For some reason, however, he stopped attending lodge meetings in 1832, did not sign the Declaration of Freemasons, and was not listed as a regular member in 1835 although he still lived in the area. He had married Sally Day of Killingly in 1821, and in 1837 he and his wife were admitted into the North Killingly Church, one of the churches in the area most torn by dissension about Masonry and one in which membership in the church was refused to members of a Masonic lodge. Sources: Lodge Records; Church Records Index; Barbour Index; Town Records.

APPENDIX IV

Population Tables on Putnam Lodge and its Territory

Table 1

Towns of Putnam Lodge:
Population, 1790–1840

Town	1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840
Ashford	2583	2445	2532	2778	2661	2651
Brooklyn	1328	1202	1200	1264	1415	1488
Killingly	2166	2279	2512	2803	3251	2685
Pomfret	1768	1799	1905	2042	1978	1868
Thompson	2267	2341	2467	2928	3380	3535
Woodstock	2445	2463	2654	3017	2917	3053

Source: Conn. State Library, First through Fifth Censuses of the United States, Connecticut (photocopy).

Table 2

Population of United States, Connecticut, and Windham County, 1790–1840

Year	U.S.	Conn.	Windham Co.
1790	3,929,827	237,946	28,921
1800	5,305,925	251,002	28,222
1810	7,239,814	261,942	28,550
1820	9,638,131	275,248	25,031
1830	12,866,620	297,675	26,631
1840	17,069,453	309,978	27,797
Percent Increase	334.4	30.3	−3.9

Source: United States Bureau of the Census with Cooperation of the Social Science Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1957* (Washington, D.C., 1960), Ser. A123–180, p. 3; Conn. State Library (Census of the United States, Connecticut), 1790, vol. 5; 1800, vol. 5; 1810, vol. 5; 1820, vol. 5; 1830, vols. 17–18; 1840, vol. 19 (photocopy).

Table 3

Per Capita Wealth in Dollars, 1800–1840

Town	1800	1811	1820	1830	1840
Ashford	25.01	22.24	12.15	10.94	10.83
Brooklyn	26.81	27.55	19.58	15.90	17.14
Killingly	18.00	29.80	10.51	9.84	10.24
Pomfret	41.62	28.87	17.94	17.19	18.30
Woodstock	25.51	24.31	13.25	12.31	11.90
Windham Co.	24.95	24.47	17.36	12.31	11.90
Connecticut	23.40	21.32	14.19	12.54	14.04

Source: Conn. State Library, Grand Lists of the State of Connecticut, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Census of the United States, Connecticut.

Table 4

Wealth Distribution in Lands and Buildings in 1815 by Percentage of Masons

Assessed wealth—$	Ash- ford	Wood- stock	Pom- fret	Thomp- son	Kill- ingly	Brook- lyn	Total
Below 1000	1.3	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.8	0.	2.1
1001–2000	3.4	8.2	7.7	7.1	4.8	0.	6.2
2001–3000	5.1	12.5	5.7	3.1	7.9	0.	6.5
3001–4000	10.1	15.9	5.9	9.1	0.	0.	9.2
4001–5000	21.4	16.7	10.5	0.	0.	0.	8.7
Over 5000	20.0	22.2	12.1	9.4	10.0	20.0	15.0
% of Masons in total tax pop.	4.7	10.1	6.4	4.9	4.4	2.5	6.4

Source: Conn.State Library, Windham County MSS.; The Taintor Collection, Land Lists.

Table 5

Thompson Tax List: 1830

Total tax—$	No. of Polls	% of Total Polls	% of Masons*
Below 25	254	45.5	1.2
26–50	104	18.0	2.9
51–100	125	22.0	4.0
Over 100	83	14.5	18.5

Source: Thompson, Town Clerk, MSS.; Tax Lists.
*Masons were about 3.5% of the adult male population of Thompson at this time.

In this list as well, Masons were found in every category but they came predominantly from the top wealth categories as measured by taxable property.

Table 6

Changes in Occupations in Towns of Putnam Lodge, 1820–1840*

Town	% in Agriculture 1820	% in Agriculture 1840
Ashford	74.6	74.1
Brooklyn	81.7	68.0
Killingly	72.5	43.0
Pomfret	76.6	81.7
Thompson	64.4	60.0
Woodstock	78.7	73.3
Windham County	76.0	53.0

Source: Conn. State Library, U.S. Census, Conn., 1820, Vol. v; U.S. Census, Conn., 1840, Vol. XIX.
*Brooklyn became a county probate center and the seat of the county court after 1820, and so the "business" population of the town was increased.

Table 7

Town of Woodstock: Occupational Distribution of Masons and Non-Masons, 1820–1822

Occupation	% of Town (1820)	% of Masons (1822)
Agriculture	78.7	61.4
Commerce and Professions	1.5	22.7
Manufacturing	19.8	15.9

Sources: Conn. State Library, U.S. Census, Conn., 1820, Vol. v; Pomfret Putnam Lodge No. 46 MSS.; Census of Masons, 1822; Biographical File.

Table 8

Distribution of Ages at Initiation into Putnam Lodge, 1801–1835

Age at Initiation	Total	1801–1818	1819–1835
21–25	89	42	47
26–30	75	44	31
31–35	24	16	8
36–40	7	4	3
Over 40	12	8	4
	207	114	93

Source: Pomfret, Putnam Lodge No. 46 MSS.; Minutes I, II, III; Membership Census 1822–1835; Biographical File.

Table 9

Masonic Officeholding: 1801–1835

	Town Leadership Offices (Percent of Masons)	Representatives (Percent of Masons)
Pomfret	17.5	25.0
Killingly	7.4	15.2
Woodstock	28.6	32.4

Source: Pomfret, Killingly, Woodstock, Town Clerk MSS.; Minutes of Town Meetings; Biographical File.

Table 10

Political Activity of Masons and Non-Masons in Woodstock, 1801–1835

	All Officeholders	Non-Masons	Masons	% Masons
All Offices	455	386	69	13.0
Moderator or Selectmen	67	47	20	29.0
Representative	37	25	12	32.4
Political Leadership*	76	54	22	28.9
Political Activist	61	48	13	21.1

Source: Woodstock, Town Clerk MSS.; Town Record Book, Vols. II and III; Biographical File.

*This category is only roughly comparable with the Political Leadership category in Table 9, since it omits special agents.

APPENDIX V

Some Bibliographic Observations

Manuscripts and Archives

A large part of this study consists of the analysis of the records or minutes of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons in the State of Connecticut, Putnam Lodge No. 46, and, to a lesser extent, other Connecticut lodges. Since such an analysis depends on some familiarity with local history and biography, a variety of unpublished or locally printed material was used (see Appendix III). The major repository of Masonic historical material is the office of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut in Wallingford. The Grand Lodge maintains a card index of every Mason in the state as far back and as complete as local records permit. The Grand Lodge also keeps the early manuscript minutes and records of lodges, especially those now defunct, including Northern Star Lodge No. 58 of Barkhamsted, Olive Branch Lodge No. 61 of Goshen, and Warren Lodge No. 50 of Andover. A Historical File of mementos, programs, newspaper clippings, speeches, manuscript lodge histories, and lists of members is also housed there. Of course, the quantity and quality of their archival material on any lodge depends on the uneven record-keeping habits of each lodge over time.

The Grand Lodge did not begin to keep its own records systematically until about 1836. Then, E. G. Storer was elected Grand Secretary, and he became the first historian of the Grand Lodge. In 1848 Storer began to assemble and publish the records of the Grand Lodge from whatever material he could collect. A few years later a fire destroyed this new archive. *The Records of Freemasonry in the State of Connecticut with a Brief Account of its Origins in New England and the Entire Proceedings of the Grand Lodge, from its First Organization, A.L. 5789* is therefore the major source of informa-

tion about its early history. In recent times the Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge, Col. James R. Case, has devoted many years, much energy, and great talent to ferreting out whatever collateral material might illuminate that early period, to collecting and preserving Masonic ephemerae and manuscripts, and to encouraging local historians to research and write about lodge history. Much of Colonel Case's work is found in a magazine formerly published by the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, *Connecticut Square and Compass*. The library of the Grand Lodge has a relatively complete file of the magazine, and the most extensive collection of published lodge histories in the state.

Putnam Lodge No. 46, now located in South Woodstock, is one of the few lodges in the state whose archives contain materials and manuscripts from the early nineteenth century other than the bare bones of minute books. Randomly preserved correspondence, committee reports, censuses of the lodge in 1822 and 1835, applications, bills, and notes flesh out their records. Manuscripts of the orations of Simon Davis, Jr., in 1810 and 1812, the work of previous historians of the lodge and of its present historian, Harold D. Carpenter, have been useful (see Appendix III). The archives also contain some published material not readily available elsewhere, such as *A Serious Call, or Masonry Revealed; being an Address prepared by order of the Anti-Masonic Convention held in Woodstock on the Anniversary of the Death of William Morgan* (Boston, 1829). A few other lodges have varying amounts of archival material, but most lodges, such as Hiram Lodge No. 1 of New Haven, have lost or destroyed early correspondence and files, preserving only the minutes of meetings and account books.

Congregational House in Hartford is the repository of the manuscript records of consociations and associations of the Congregational churches in Connecticut, as well as printed and manuscript material on individual churches. In the middle of the last century the Reverend R. C. Learned compiled "Records of Councils for Ordination, Dismission, Deaths &c of the Pastors of Congregational Churches in Windham County," written by the local ministers. This compilation contains some reports that are rich in descriptive detail. Among the manuscripts at Congregational House, the typed

copy of the "Autobiography of Rev. Samuel Nott, D.D.," and the "Minutes of the Windham Association" were particularly useful.

The history and genealogy department of the Connecticut State Library has many town and church records in manuscript, as well as a good collection of published local histories and genealogies. Among the manuscripts, collections such as the "Abington Ecclesiastical Society Papers, 1761–1883," or "Records of the North Society of Killingly, 1728–1856" provide valuable information for trying to understand the role of a particular church in its community. Miscellaneous manuscripts, such as "Account of the Town Poor" in the Pomfret collection, supplement the town records. The Taintor Collection contains land lists for every town in Windham County in 1815, and provides an invaluable comparative index of wealth in lands and real property since so few town tax lists survive from that period.

The offices of the town clerks in Pomfret, Thompson, Ashford, Killingly (Danielson), Brooklyn, and Woodstock minimally contain the manuscript records of town meetings, and each town preserves varying amounts and kinds of other records. For example, Thompson has a "Town Proceedings Book I, 1785–1818," which includes town accounts, and a separate "Town Proceedings" and "Account of the Town Treasurer" after 1818, as well as some school district minutes and the early records of the Baptist church. As another example, the town clerk's office in Brooklyn preserves a few records of the justice of the peace from 1800 to 1821, a list of freemen, and a "Book of Records" containing the accounts for the town poor for several years after 1805, in addition to its "Town Records." Postbicentennial researchers may find that local workers have explored some forgotten corners in such offices and brought some new materials to light.

The manuscript collection of the Connecticut Historical Society has one relevant box: Masonic Papers, 1788–1869. Their McClellan Family Papers contain some interesting material about life in Woodstock around the beginning of the nineteenth century. Other useful manuscript collections include the Morse Family Papers in the Yale University Library and the Waldo Family Papers in the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Selected Reference Works

A few reference works are so useful in compiling biographical information or town histories for Connecticut that they should be mentioned particularly. John Warner Barbour's guidebook, published in New Haven in 1838, is illustrated by the author with a sketch of each town, which may be more accurate than his facts, though perhaps not as interesting as his folklore: *Connecticut Historical Collections, Containing A General Collection of Interesting Facts, Traditions, Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, etc., Relating to the History and Antiquities of Every Town in Connecticut with Geographical Descriptions*. Franklin Bowditch Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College with Annals of the College History*, 4 vols. (New York, 1885–1912), and William Buell Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit or Commemorative Notices of Distinguished Clergymen of Various Denominations*, 9 vols. (New York, 1857–1869), are rich mines of information on the educated elite. Finally, *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut Prepared under the Direction of the General Association to Commemorate the Completion of One Hundred and Fifty Years since its First Annual Assembly*, published in New Haven in 1861, contains brief histories of each Congregational church in Connecticut, with a list of the names and dates of the clergymen who served it.

Masonic History

The sources for this study are listed, and sometimes commented upon, in the notes. Since many of them pertain only to a study of Connecticut Masonic history, I offer here a rough topographic map to the mountains of Masonic literature confronting someone who wishes to study Masonry in a different framework.

Any student of antebellum Masonry should begin by acquiring familiarity with [James Anderson] *The Constitutions of the Freemasons, Containing the History, Charges, Regulations &c of that Most Ancient Right Worshipful Fraternity for the Use of the Lodges* in any of the American editions since Benjamin Franklin published it in Philadelphia in 1734. The 1917 edition, with a foreword by Masonic historian Joseph Fort Newton (Anamosa, Iowa) is useful.

The *Ahiman Rezon*, the constitution of the Ancients, was used more frequently in the middle and southern states, and was published at least in 1756, 1764, 1778, and 1787 editions in the eighteenth century alone. William Smith's *Ahiman Rezon Abridged and Digested; as a Help to All That Are, or Would Be Free and Accepted Masons, to Which is Added A Sermon, Preached in Christ-Church, Philadelphia . . . Published by Order of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1783) is an interesting and early American edition. Samuel Col's *The Freemason's Library and General Ahiman Rezon* (Baltimore, 1819) and Frederick Dalcho's *An Ahiman Rezon for the Use of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free-Masons of South Carolina* (Charleston, S. C., 1822) are examples of nineteenth-century editions with some local materials.

In addition to the constitutions, both Ancient and Modern, American Masonic writers leaned heavily on two other basic Masonic works. William Preston's *Illustrations of Masonry* (London, 1792) was almost universally quoted, usually without attribution, in the American Masonic literature. Wellins Calcott's *A Candid Disquisition of the Principles and Practices of the Most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, together with some Strictures on the Origin, Nature and Design of that Institution*, first published in London in 1769, circulated widely in America according to the subscription list appended to the 1772 Boston edition.

Antebellum handbooks on Masonry, mnemonic aids, and materials for lodge lectures were based on the English sources, but they also should be glanced at. Regionally important in the northeast were *The New Free-Masons Monitor; or Masonic Guide* (New York, 1818) by James Hardie, *The Freemasons' Monitor or Illustrations of Masonry* (Boston, 1816) by Thomas Smith Webb, and *True Masonic Chart and Hieroglyphic Monitor* (New Haven, 1819) by Jeremy Ladd Cross. Since Cross traveled widely as a teacher or lecturer on Masonic ritual, combining the sale of Masonic books and paraphernalia with his work, his *Monitor* was probably more widely distributed than the other two. Depending on the frame of the research, the works of middle and late nineteenth-century writers on Masonic jurisprudence, such as Luke Lockwood, Albert G. Mackey, or the

eminent and prolific Harvard law professor and Masonic "jurisprude," Roscoe Pound, may also be informative.

The historical minutes of Grand Lodge meetings have been published by several states, including Illinois, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. The Grand Lodge library or offices of any state will probably also have the most complete holdings of local lodge commemorative histories, some of them quoting from or publishing part or all of their own records. The greatest body of contemporary material, however, is the pamphlet literature on Masonry, almost always the published orations of local clergy or other notables on the occasion of a Saint John's Day celebration. Since non-Masons as well as Masons were often invited to give the oration, these pamphlets should be read in the context of some familiarity with regional history and biography to yield the best evidence about local attitudes and events. In addition, the short-lived Masonic periodicals, hard as they are to locate, yield, among the long quotations from Calcott and Preston, the contemporary Masonic "news," unavailable elsewhere. *The Freemasons Magazine and General Miscellany*, edited by the Reverend George Richards, was published in Philadelphia from 1811 to 1812. *The Masonic Miscellany and Ladies Literary Magazine*, survived only briefly, from 1821 to 1823, in Lexington, Kentucky, but it circulated at least as far as to Connecticut. In Boston, Charles W. Moore edited *Masonic Mirror and Mechanic's Intelligencer* from 1824 to 1828, and a new series, *The Masonic Mirror*, continued from 1829 to 1833. *The Amaranth, or Masonic Garland*, apparently designed to provide material for combating Antimasonic arguments, seemed to have a wide distribution in New England in 1828 and 1829. The Antimasonic movement of the 1830s marked the end of an era of Masonic periodical publication.

The Antimasonic movement was precipitated by the threatened publication of an exposé of Masonry. The historian of Masonry should note that exposés have been published almost since the formation of England's Premier Grand Lodge. One of the most popular was *Jachin and Boaz; or, An Authentic Key to Door of Freemasonry, Ancient and Modern, by a Gentleman Belonging to the Jerusalem Lodge*, first published in London in 1762. Before 1825 it

went through sixteen editions in England and about a dozen in America after it was first printed in New York in 1796. In addition, *Jachin and Boaz* was prefixed to an abridged version of Abbe Agustin de Barreul's *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism* and published in French, English, and German in the last few years of the eighteenth century and reissued in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1812. Bibliographic facts suggest that it was the secrecy, not the secret, that was important in antimasonry.

The secondary works by Masons on Masonry at first seem very numerous, but many of them are different editions of the same books. They can be divided roughly into institutional histories and philosophic or symbolic explorations, but these categories overlap. The authors are often guided by what one Masonic historian has called "imaginative theorizing." Douglas Knoop and G. P. Jones, in *Masonic History Old and New* (n.p., 1942) point to the growth of two schools of Masonic history, beginning in the 1870s, one of which they called "verified" history and the other "mythical." The first tends to deal with the institutional aspects of Masonry, and the other with philosophy or speculation about the meanings of its symbols. These categories overlap because Masonic historians are first of all Masons, writing for fellow Masons for a variety of purposes, historical verities only one among them.

With some appreciation of the range of purposes of Masonic historians, the non-Masonic historian of Masonry might begin his inquiry into the institutional history of Masonry by looking at Robert Fiske Gould's *The History of Freemasonry Throughout the World*, published between 1882 and 1887 in London and Edinburgh in three- and six-volume editions, and in America around the turn of the century, in four- and five-volume editions. This work, widely popular in its beautifully illustrated presentation editions, was revised by Dudley Wright and brought out in a six-volume edition in New York as late as 1936. Its chief competitor among the multivolume institutional histories was *The History of Freemasonry, Its Legends and Traditions, Its Chronological History, and The History of the Symbolism of Freemasonry, the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite and the Royal Order of Scotland* by Albert G. Mackey and William R. Singleton Clegg, published in New York in 1898 and 1906 in seven- and three-volume editions. These and similar institutional

histories fill bookshelves and include both mythical and verified history.

A more convenient reference for both the history and the philosophy of Freemasonry are the encyclopedias. Albert G. Mackey's *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, a multivolume work published early in the century, was revised and republished in Chicago in 1946 in two volumes as *Mackey's Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*. That same year H. L. Haywood, another prolific Masonic historian, issued *Supplement to Mackey's Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*. Equally authoritative among such works is Arthur Robert Waite's *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry (Ars Magna Latomorum), and of Cognate Instituted Mysteries; their Rites, Literature and History*, first published in London in 1921, and revised and reissued in New York in 1970. Many of the other short, global institutional histories of Masonry are based on the encyclopedias and the multivolume histories, and many of them reflect intra-Masonic historical biases obscure to the non-Masonic historian.

In recent years more careful institutional history has been written by Masons, some of whom are concerned to sort out the verified from the mythical. One of the most impressive of these works is by a lawyer, Henry Wilson Coil, and was published in two volumes by the Missouri Lodge of Research (Fulton, Mo., 1967–1968): *Freemasonry Through Six Centuries*. Some of the most scholarly work on Masonry, though unencumbered by scholarly paraphernalia, has been done by Douglas Knoop of Manchester University, England. His work, and that of other careful students of Masonry, can be found in the transactions and publications of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, the English Masonic research lodge. In America there are some two dozen state lodges of research that sometimes publish their work in periodicals such as, for example, the *Grand Lodge Bulletin, Grand Lodge of Iowa*.

Among the Masonic historians who have worked on early American Masonic history, Melvin M. Johnson, J. Hugo Tatsch, Joseph Fort Newton, Charles H. Callahan, and James R. Case have been cited in this study. *Freemasonry in the American Revolution* (Washington, D.C., 1924) by Sidney Levi Morse, *Masonry in the Formation of Our Government, 1761–1799* (New York, 1927) by Philip A. Roth, and *The Builders: A Story and A Study of Masonry*

(Cedar Rapids, Ia., 1916) by Joseph Fort Newton might also be mentioned, although they all claim too much for Masonry. A number of state studies have been written by Masons, preeminent among them *History of Freemasonry in the State of New York* (New York, 1922) by Ossian Lang and *Freemasonry in Pennsylvania, as Shown in the Records of Lodge No. 2 . . . .* (Philadelphia, 1908–1919) by Norris Stanley Barrett and Julius F. Sachse. Finally, in discussing institutional historians a word should be said about Bernard Faÿ, whose *Revolution and Freemasonry, 1680–1800* (Boston, 1935) is often quoted uncritically by American historians because of his scholarly credentials. Americans are prone to read words such as *democratic*, or even *liberal*, as positive or laudatory, thereby mistaking the thrust of Faÿ's analysis. Faÿ, when he served in the Vichy Government during World War II, actively sought out French Masons for deportation or death because his extreme rightist views led him to consider them dangerous. Faÿ was later tried and convicted of war crimes because of these activities. His works should be read with his biases in mind. *New York Times*, Nov. 26, 1946, p. 21 and Dec. 6, 1946, p. 10.

Many of the secondary works on Masonry are histories of its rituals, symbolism, philosophy or mythical history, tracing the fraternity back to ancient origins. Masonic symbolism has always fascinated Masons and beguiled outsiders, and provided both with fertile fields for growing theories. For example, in *The Way to Things by Words and Words by Things . . .* (London, 1766) John Cleland, who supported his interest in linguistic research through the popular best seller, *Fanny Hill*, found that Masonry could be traced to the ancient Druids. Thomas Paine in *On the Origins of Freemasonry* (New York, 1810) came to the same conclusion, for other reasons. John Fellows, *An Exposition of the Mysteries, or Religious Dogmas and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians, Pythagorians, and Druids. Also an Inquiry into the Origins, History, and Purpose of Freemasonry* (London and New York, 1860) carried this style of Masonic history onto the American scene.

After the middle of the nineteenth century, works on Masonic symbolism or philosophy proliferated. Albert G. Mackey's *Symbolism of Freemasonry*, first published in London in 1869, has been a perennial favorite of the fraternity and has been reissued in

Chicago in a revised edition as recently as 1946. The prolific and popular George Oliver published both *The Antiquities of Free-Masonry* and *The Revelations of a Square* in New York in 1885. The 1880s alone saw the publication of such books as John A. Weisse, *The Obelisk and Freemasonry* (New York, 1880); Robert H. Brown, *Stellar Theology and Masonic Astronomy* (New York, 1882); G. F. Fort, *History and Antiquities of Freemasonry* (New York, 1889), all of them popular well into the twentieth century. Speculation about the origins of Freemasonry was often combined with expositions of Masonic philosophy, as in John T. Lawrence's *The Perfect Ashler* (London, 1912). One reason for the longevity of this kind of material is that the Masonic publishing houses, which have grown up since the middle of the nineteenth century, reprint as often as they publish. Another reason is that these publishing houses often reprinted compilations of Masonic literature, many of them multivolume collaborative works that provide instant lodge libraries, such as the fifteen volume, *Little Masonic Library*, printed in Kingsport, Tennessee, in 1946. These mythical histories and philosophies provide the inspirational literature of Masonry especially for its quasi-religious function. Helpful in approaching such material are several articles in *Religious Movements in Contemporary America* (Princeton, 1974) edited by Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone, especially "Ritualization: A Study in Texture and Texture Change" by Mary Catherine Bateson, and "The Historical Study of Marginal Religious Movements" by John A. Wilson.

Because Freemasonry was nondenominational and sometimes used as a religious surrogate, its relationship with various denominations has sometimes been written about by scholars as well as polemicists. One of the most interesting religious-historical problems in the relationship of Masonry to the Church of the Latter Day Saints. *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, Mormon Prophet* (New York, 1945) by Fawn Brodie is indispensable as an introduction. *Mormonism and Masonry* (Washington, D.C., 1924) by Samuel H. Goodwin, *"Mormonism" and Masonry* (Salt Lake City, 1932) by Elmer Cecil McGavin, and *The Relationship of "Mormonism" and Freemasonry* (Salt Lake City, 1934) by Anthony W. Ivins are the material of a continuing dialogue between the church and the lodge.

Black Masonry, the Prince Hall "affiliation," is an important movement in the history of American race relations that has only recently received scholarly attention. Prince Hall was a free black resident of Boston, one of several black men who were initiated into a British army lodge in 1775 and then formed African Lodge No. 1. After the Revolution, during which Hall fought in the American army, he helped found African Grand Lodge No. 458 chartered by the Premier Grand Lodge of England in 1784, the sponsoring aegis of all American modern Masonry. The Prince Hall Masons have sought full and unqualified recognition by their brethren in America ever since. William Henry Grimshaw has written *Official History of Freemasonry among the Colored People of North America, Tracing the Growth of Masonry from 1717 down to the Present Day* (New York, 1969), which provides a starting point. Recently William Alan Murashin's 1971 Ph.D. dissertation, "Middle Class Black Masons in a White Society: the Role of Fraternal Orders in the Creation of a Middle-Class Black Community," has been published as *Prince Hall Freemasonry in America* (Berkeley, 1975).

Finally, a few finder's notes on the history of the Antimasonic movement of the 1830s may be useful. Charles McCarthy's "The Antimasonic Party," *American Historical Association Annual Report for the Year 1902*, I (1903), remains the most comprehensive work on political Antimasonry. A good bibliography of contemporary Antimasonic literature for the period is appended to Leland Griffin's Ph.D. dissertation at Cornell, "A Study of Public Address in the American Antimasonic Movement, 1826–1838." The best bibliography, however, is the work of a Mason, *A Bibliography of Anti-Masonry* by William L. Cummings, revised and enlarged for publication in New York in 1963. (Dr. Cummings's unparalleled collection of Antimasonic literature is now in the library of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite in Lexington, Massachusetts, where it is being catalogued, and may eventually be open to scholars.) A few state political studies include important work on Masonry, among them *Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791–1850* (New York, 1939) by David Ludlum; *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York, A Test Case* (Princeton, 1961) by Lee Benson; *The Burned Over District* (New York, 1965) by Whitney Cross; and *The Birth of Mass Political Parties, Michigan 1827–1861* (Princeton, 1971) by

Ronald Formisano. Several other relatively recent works consider the dynamics of the movement as a whole: "The Antimasonic and Know Nothing Parties" by Michael Holt, in *History of U. S. Political Parties, 1789–1860 From Factions to Parties*, I (New York and London, 1973), edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.; *The Politics of Unreason: Right Wing Extremism in America, 1790–1970* (New York, 1970) by Seymour M. Lipset and Earl Raab; and "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVII (September 1960) by David B. Davis. Recent work usually owes something to Richard Hofstadter's formulations about the paranoid style; but implicitly linking Antimasonry with the idea of mental disorder, however hedged or redefined, tends to be dismissive. A fresh and evocative approach to politics in Antebellum America, including Antimasonry, is Ronald P. Formisano's "Toward a Reorientation of Jacksonian Politics: A Review of the Literature, 1959–1975," in the *Journal of American History*, LXIII, no. 1 (June 1976), 42–65.

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