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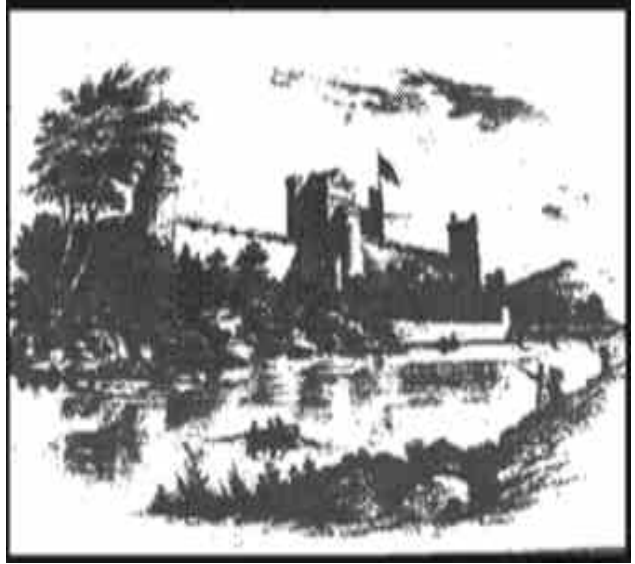
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MASONIC EDUCATION
SERIES

From Whence



We Came Book II

A Masonic Novel and Discussion
Based on the
Actual History of Freemasonry

Where Did It All Start ?

This quarter we continue with our story of Freemasonry after the Bubonic Plague which devastated Europe. We look at the movement from operative Masonry to the introduction of speculative Masonry.

As with last time, each story takes a piece of actual Masonic history and builds upon it.

Each story is designed to be read in the lodge in a slow and clear manner. Some lodges have enjoyed assigning the different speaking parts and reading as a play.

There is meaning and a message in every story. In some stories there is more than one.

Each story tells us something about our Masonic history and more importantly our reason for being here.

Eventually the Plague did end and people either burned or buried their dead. For the next few years they shed their tears over the love ones who were no longer there, and the even more for the families who would never be born. But time and England go on.

In the next two hundred years there was Richard II, and the Kings Henry numbering up to VII, with a couple of Edwards and one more Richard interspersed between. Yet, for the average man the name of the one on the throne meant little. Because few cared what happened to the common man. Their demands were all the same, to pay taxes the people couldn't afford and fight wars they neither cared about nor understood.

To the stonemasons the name of the one on the throne was of less importance than the name of the Master of the Guild. Though each was free to seek wages as he saw fit, a good Guild Master meant less worry about some hostile nobleman or an errant Bishop. One of the best Guild Masters was Master Grumwold. The brothers didn't know how he did his task, but it didn't matter because they traveled in safety and stonework seemed to always be available.

From Whence We Came Book II

Speaking Parts: Tom Ward, Master Grumwold, Lord Aaron, Brother Allen,

The year was 1532

Under the leadership of Master Grumwold the guild was prospering. There was more than enough work for all and everyone seemed content, if not happy.

The noonday sun had just reached its peak when Tom Ward entered the guildhall. Master Grumwold looked up from his desk and observed that Brother Ward appeared fidgeting to get his attention. “Yes, Brother Tom, you have something you wish to discuss?”

“Indeed, Sir, but I know not how to breach the subject.”

Grumwold smiled, “Tom, I have always found the best way is just to say it.”

“Very well then, I have just now left the lands of Aaron of Cambridge where we are building a barn, a fine barn built to house thirty horses and six carriages. The barn is...”

Grumwold held up his hand. “Brother Tom, you didn’t come here in the heat of the day to tell me about barns. What is it you want to say?”

“Your pardon, Sir, but I know not what to make of it. Just this morning Lord Aaron came to me while I was at my labors and asked about the guild.”

“What type of questions would a nobleman ask of a tradesman?”

“At first it was simple things, do we have enough work? Was stone readily available? But then he questioned me about why I paid Brother Bernard when he was too sick to work and how I arrived at the price of my work.”

“What did you tell him?”

“The truth. I told him we try to help our own in a time of need and I set what I consider to be a fair wage based on the task at hand. He asked me if I would charge a nobleman or a king more than I would a storekeeper or a tradesman.”

“Your answer?”

“I told him no, a task was a task regardless of for whom it is being done.”

“These are strange questions. What else did he say?”

“Nothing. He smiled and looked directly in my eyes. This disturbs me, Sir. Never has a nobleman looked directly in my eyes.”

All that afternoon and into the early evening Master Grumwold thought of what he had been told. Why would a nobleman concern himself over a tradesman?

It bothered him throughout his supper and during his prayers. One question kept arising... why?

But he wouldn't have to wait long for an answer. That night, as he sat poking the fire he heard a knock on his door. When he opened it a fine carriage was in front of his house and a man who he recognized as Lord Aaron stood outside. He bid him to enter. His wife saw Lord Aaron and scurried to the kitchen. "Yes Sir, I am honored by your presence. How may I be of service?"

"May we sit? asked the nobleman. Grumwold was taken aback. A nobleman doesn't sit in the house of a tradesman. It just isn't done. Grumwold looked up. Lord Aaron was looking in his eyes. Quickly Grumwold looked down.

"Master Grumwold, I have received reports. Reports I do not understand. I have heard that your guild of stonemasons has a certain code... rules."

"Yes sir, we have what we call the Old Rules. They are several centuries old."

"These Old Rules. They are a code of conduct?" asked Lord Aaron.

"Oh, yes Sir, Your Lordship. A code of conduct and fairness which we swear to uphold."

"To whom do you swear this oath?"

"Well, Sir, actually to each other and fairness to all mankind."

"You do not swear an oath to the King?"

"No, the oath is to someone greater."

"Greater than the King? Who? The Pope?"

"No Sir, to God."

"You swear such an oath to the Almighty?"

"Yes Sir, without hesitation."

"Is this only in your guild?"

"No Sir, it is said in guilds throughout England and Scotland. I have been told it is also said in France, but of this I am not certain."

"Can you tell me of these oaths?"

"No Sir, with all due respect, I can't. A part of the oath is we tell no one but ourselves."

"You realize who you are speaking to?"

"Yes Sir, with all respect, I do."

"You know with one word I can take away all your possessions and send you off as an outcast."

Discussion

1. In this part of the story one of the workmen is approached by a nobleman. Why was the workman surprised? Why was he uncomfortable over the conversation?
2. What kind of questions did the nobleman ask? Do we know why he was asking this information?
3. Why was Master Grumwold concerned about the questions?

Second Meeting In April

“Yes Sir, I am very aware of it.”

“Yet you still won’t tell me? What would you do if I did?”

“Sir, I have brothers throughout the kingdom who will feed me and if you decide to chase me they will hide me. I don’t wish you to do those things, but I do not fear them.”

Lord Aaron suddenly became quiet and for several long minutes looked into the fire. “What if I decided to kill you?” Asked Grumwold.

“I presume this too is your right, Sir, but you also have a reputation as a fair and honest man. Since I have done you no harm, I would expect none from you.”

Grumwold assumed he was plotting his fate, but then Lord Aaron looked up and asked, “have you ale?”

Grumwold saw his wife peeking around the corner and motioned her to bring him ale. When she gave the tankard to Lord Aaron he looked up and asked, “You will not be drinking with me?”

“Me Sir, drink with you, a nobleman?”

“Yes, if you would honor me.”

For a while they sat, peered into the fire and talked. They talked of Kings and of hunting. They did not talk as a Lord and a Servant, but as friends.

Then Lord Aaron looked at Grumwold, “How do I find out about these private words, these... secrets of yours?”

“Sir, you would have to be one of us.”

“Well then, how do I become one of you?”

Grumwold was ill prepared for the question. He didn't know what to say. Until now, no nobleman even acknowledged they existed except to do work, now one wanted to become one of them.

“Is there anything in your rules that say I have to be a stonemason to be a member?”

“Sir..., I don't know of such a rule, but its always been that...”

“Master Grumwold, its always been that we must swear allegiance to the Pope in Rome, but now we swear that same allegiance to Henry as the head of the church. Its always been that the world was flat, but now some Italian has sailed off to the west and didn't fall off. The Bible has always been in Latin, but now they're printing one in English. “Always” isn't forever.”

“I know not of some of these things you speak of but...”

“Where in your rules does it say a nobleman cannot be a man of honor too?”

“It is not in our rules.”

“Good. Speak to the others and see if they would accept Aaron of Cambridge into their guild.”

“Sir, with all humility, we swear to be brothers... equals. How could you, a nobleman...”

“Master Grumwold, I am asking to become one of you and am aware of what I am saying. Please, if you would, ask your... brothers... if I may learn of your secrets and become one of them.”

Yes, your Lordship, I will ask but I don't...”

Lord Aaron placed his finger on Grumwold's lips. “Ask, Master Grumwold, just ask.”

With this Lord Aaron drank the last of his ale and left.

The rest of the night was restless for Grumwold. He wasn't sure how he would direct Lord Aaron's request to the craftsmen. It had never been done before. A nobleman in a craft guild? It was unheard of. In the past a noblemen would have nothing to do with craftsmen. Now one wanted to be a brother.

Discussion

1. How would you approach your brothers if you were in Master Grumwold's situation? Do you really believe the men knew the importance of Lord Aaron's request? How could his request change Masonry? What was the best thing that could happen? The worst?
2. What advantage would Lord Aaron have in joining the guild? What advantage would the guild have in accepting him? Did they have anything in common? What?
3. How will it change the guild if they accept Lord Aaron? Is it a risk if they don't? How can admitting Lord Aaron benefit the guild? How can it hurt them?

It was Tuesday morning and each Tuesday the craft met in council. If Master Grumwold was to approach the guildsmen, this morning was ideal.

When the door was closed and bolted with the Tyler at guard they began. After the usual rituals of assurance and prayer Master Grumwold spoke. "Brothers, I have been up most of the night thinking what I would say to you. Yet, even at this late hour I have no more idea than when I was first approached." He was silent for a second. "We have another who wishes to join the guild."

None found this news out of the ordinary. Stonemasons progress and move regularly. "Who is it that is making the request" one asked. "Is it that apprentice of Clyde of Downy? His master has died and he will need training."

"No," responded Master Grumwold. "This one is not an apprentice. Indeed, he is not even a stonemason. It is Lord Aaron of Cambridge who makes the request."

Some laughed, some just smiled and shook their heads. Laughing out loud one said "seriously, Master Grumwold, is there someone making a request?"

"Yes, Lord Aaron of Cambridge. The lord of our manor and town. He wishes to join the guild and become one of us."

They could tell from the expression on Grumwold's face he was not joking. The laughing stopped. It was Lord Aaron making the request.

"Why would a nobleman make such a request? What does our guild possess that would be of interest to him?" one asked.

"The Ancient Code of Rules. He wishes to know more of them."

"But he's not a stonemason. Only a stonemason may know these things," blurted one of the men.

"Where does it say that?" asked Grumwold. "Name one place in the rules that such is written or said."

"But it is custom," they responded. "That is always the way."

"Custom is not a rule. Does it make it right?"

Brother Allen, a massive man with a deep voice stood in the back of the room and looked toward the front. "May I speak, Master Grumwold?"

Master Grumwold nodded and said, "such is your right."

“Master, brothers, it hasn’t been that long ago that we lived in fear of the noblemen. They owned us and could do as they wish. For this reason, they were our enemies. It was the same throughout the kingdom. That was the reason we formed, simply to protect ourselves from the nobles.” They all nodded in agreement. “Yet, Brothers, have any of us known fear or torture from Lord Aaron or did we know it from his father Lord Kip? No, we have gone our way in peace. We have prospered under his rule. Lord Aaron and his father like him are good men. The kind of men spoken of in the Ancient Rules. Now, why a man of nobility and wealth such as Lord Aaron would desire to join with a smelly group such as us I cannot answer. It has never been done, but before Lord Kip treated us as civil men... that had never been done either. As for me, I welcome him. And I challenge any manjack here to give just reason why he should not be. As is our custom, if any man does not wish him admitted, he shall not be admitted. But I know of no reason why he should not be allowed to unite with us.”

Master Grumwold sat silently. Then he stood and said, “is it agreed? We pass the bowl?. We vote on the request? Each man nodded yes.

Without another word one of them rose and went to a cupboard. He withdrew a small bowl and set it at the end of one of the tables. Inside the bowl were small pieces of leather cut into circles. Some were white, some were black. As each man passed the bowl he withdrew one piece of leather. It took more time than usual, because each knew his vote had the power to change the guild system forever.

When the bowl had gone completely around the tables they all stood and formed a line before Master Grumwold. Each man, in turn, stepped in front of Master Grumwold and dropped his ballot on the table. In the end, all the ballots were white. Lord Aaron of Cambridge was to be received into the guild.

Discussion

1. Master Grumwold was very reluctant to bring Lord Aaron's request before the guild. Should he have been? Why?
2. Is it reasonable to believe the Lord of the Manor could, or would, coexist peacefully with a group of stonemasons? Why? Why not?
3. Even today it is often said "we never did it that way". Is this acceptable reason for not doing something? Give examples.
4. Lord Aaron's "petition" was openly discussed in the guild. We do not do it this way. What are the reasons we should. Should not.
5. How does this discussion compare to an "Investigating Committee?"
6. Do you feel free to discuss a petitioner's qualifications even if you are not on the Investigating Committee? Where would you direct your concerns?

That afternoon Master Grumwold rode to Lord Aaron's castle. It was a small castle by many standards with little in the way of massive battlements and other protections for war. Grumwold didn't have any idea how many generations ago it had been built but he was certain that it had been several. Such was the way of the manor castles of England and those who live in them.

He was met at the door by a servant who asked him to wait until he could advise Lord Aaron. Almost instantly the servant returned with Lord Aaron immediately behind him. "Master Grumwold, please come in. Please do. I hope you bring good news." He conducted Grumwold into a massive room with comfortable chairs and shelves lined with books. Never had Grumwold seen such a fortune of books.

"Please sit, Master Grumwold and tell me of your news." Lord Aaron was smiling broadly.

Grumwold sat on the edge of one of the massive chairs. "Lord Aaron, before I tell you of today's events. May I ask you a question that has bothered me since we first spoke, and I know has bothered others within the guild?"

"Certainly, please feel free to ask me anything."

"You give the enthusiasm of this request similar to an apprentice about to be elevated to a journeyman, and I apologize if these things may not sound right, but they are the things I know. Why would a man with wealth and position concern himself with becoming a part of a group such as ours? We have little. You have much. Quite simply, why?"

Lord Aaron sat for the first time. His smile turned to thought. He motioned a servant to bring wine for the two of them. He looked at Master Grumwold for a long time, then spoke. "Master Grumwold, I did not submit my request to you in jest. I have thought about it for a very long time, and my final decision to approach you was made this week after making confession to my priest. As we walked out the door I noticed a stonemason working on the fence around the church cemetery. I commented to the priest that he was doing a good job and such a fine job was likely to be expensive. The priest responded to me that he didn't know what the cost would be, but he had no doubt it would be fair."

"I commented that obviously he had worked with the stonemason before. He said no, but that the stonemason was a member of the guild, so he had no worries."

Master Grumwold shrugged his shoulders indicating he didn't understand.

"See, you, like my priest take it for granted. My priest didn't know the man, yet he knew the man would charge a fair price. You saw no problem in my priest's assumption."

Master Grumwold shook his head. "I still don't understand." "Master Grumwold, I was born with wealth, prestige, and I guess you would say power. They are mine, but I wasn't born with one thing that every man should have and that stonemason has so much of, the dignity of honesty and integrity."

Lord Aaron stood and peered out the window. "Money doesn't buy integrity. It certainly doesn't buy honesty. As a matter of fact, a lust for money can cost a man both and often does. Let me ask you a question, Master Grumwold, do you sleep at night?"

"Well, yes," he said, "but it's after a long days labors."

"Maybe so, Master Grumwold, but many men don't. Even our King has to take herbs and teas just to sleep, and even then it's not restful. Here's a man with all the money and power of England at his beck and call, yet he must take herbs to sleep."

"I'm a simple man, Sir, I don't see why King Henry has these miseries."

"He has these miseries, my good friend Grumwold, because his conscience keeps him awake. He has challenged the rules of God and of man for his own pleasures. And now he pays the price."

"Sir, I really don't understand these things," said Master Grumwold.

"No, you wouldn't, Master Grumwold. But let me ask you, have you ever wronged a man?"

Grumwold smiled, "No Sir, not really."

"Does your oath and Code of Rules play into this?"

Grumwold smiled thoughtfully, "Yes Sir, I guess in some ways it does. I have sworn to do some things, and not do others. Yes, those things enter my mind every day, some times many times in a day. But with all respect, Sir, and I am being bold to ask, but have you ever wronged a man?"

“To be honest with you, Master Grumwold, I don’t believe I ever have, and I’m sure this question was asked when you were discussing me at your guild.”

“Yes Sir, it was, at length.”

“Had I ever wronged one of the stonemasons?”

“No Sir, and they knew of no one you had wronged. Otherwise, they would have not voted for you.”

“A vote You had a vote?”

“Yes Sir, every member was present and every man voted. All any man had to do was drop a black ballot on the table and I could not be here now.”

“But you are here, Master Grumwold. You are here! That means the guild will accept me.” He smiled broadly. “Oh, this is such good news!”

Grumwold was surprised by the enthusiasm of Lord Aaron whose only question was “what do we do next?”

Master Grumwold stood and told Lord Aaron that someone would contact him shortly about the arrangements. He knew that this response was much better to Lord Aaron’s question of “what do we do next” than the total truth that he had absolutely no idea.

Discussion

1. Lord Aaron felt that joining with the guild would give him some things he didn’t otherwise possess. What are some of these things. Were his expectations realistic? Are they realistic today?
2. Was Lord Aaron willing to give up anything to join the guild? What things?
3. Do you feel the craftsmen felt good about their decision? What concerns might they have?
4. Master Grumwold was the Master of the guild. Lord Aaron was the Lord of the manor. What conflicts could arise? What benefits.
5. How would you have voted on Lord Aaron’s “petition”? Why?”

That evening Master Grumwold called several of the brothers to the guild hall. For the most of the day he had pondered how to include Lord Aaron, who wasn't a stonemason, into a guild of stonemasons. Normally, an apprentice would be told of the Ancient Rules in a ceremony shortly after he began work. The same night he would take an oath to follow those rules. In a ceremony that emphasized the importance of his craft and oath he would receive his first leather apron.

For seven years he would operate as an apprentice learning the stonemason's craft. If he had done well after the seven years, he would be elevated to a journeyman, or fellow of the craft. As an apprentice and a journeyman he was paid wages by a Master who was obligated to care for his needs and those of his family. He could remain a journeyman as long as he wished or until he expressed a desire to create his own guild. If he was found worthy, he would be invested with the title of Master. Each of the men Master Grumwold summoned that evening could be Masters for the asking. Each was an expert in his craft and well versed in the studies of the Ancient Code.

Yet, the man who would soon be at the door of the guild, and had been accepted for admission, was neither a stonemason nor would he be learning a trade. He only wanted to learn the lessons of moderation, honesty and integrity. Though his desires were simple, they had never been sought before. And it was up to Master Grumwold and his guild to teach this deserving man those lessons. The only question now was... how?

When they were seated Master Grumwold spoke first. "We, of course, will repeat the Ancient Code as we do with all apprentices, but this man is not an apprentice. I doubt he has ever picked up a stone unless it was to throw it in a pond or at a rodent."

Wallace Red then spoke. "Lord Aaron has asked to be a part of a stonemason's guild and learn our ways. Our ways are as stonemasons. He too must learn these ways. It must be done."

One of the older members of the guild stood quietly. He looked gently at each person present. No one spoke until he broke the silence

“Why these things became a part of us so long ago none of us know. But they are a part of us.... That is all that matters. Now, a man comes before us and wants to learn the ways of our Ancient Rules and bind himself by our Code. This is all he seeks. We know Lord Aaron is a good man. If he were not, there would have been black ballots among the white.” Brother John smiled again, “He is a nobleman, and if being a nobleman is a craft... he has learned his craft well. He is already a Master of his craft. He does not seek wages. He seeks wisdom. That wisdom that is so a part of us. This is all this man seeks, and My Brothers, we are bound to give it to him.”

Each of them nodded in agreement, but Brother John lifted his hand once more. “My Brothers, you have the gift of youth. I have the gift of age. The good Lord has allowed me to see things you have yet to see, but soon God will give me one more gift than I deserve. I pray you don’t think Lord Aaron’s request to learn our ways will end tonight. Tonight, Lord Aaron will become the first of millions of good men, most yet to be born, who will seek our ways.”

They smiled, “millions,” they muttered to each other grinning broadly.

“Yes, My Brothers, millions, and these are not the babblings of an old man twisted with age. They are the words of a man who has seen that there are good men in this world in uncountable numbers. They are there and they are seeking something that can be found in our Ancient Rules and code. And they are seeking each other.’

“Brothers, look around you. Our children seek more than we did, and we sought more than our fathers. Such is the way of the world. Most of our sons may learn to be a stonemason, but one, maybe two, will seek more. He will want to learn. His life will be more than laying one stone upon another, he will go to the university and seek knowledge. Where we are satisfied to build a house for a family, he will learn the mathematics and geometry needed to build cities and workplaces for mankind. No, our days are numbered,” once more he smiled. “and this is good.” Our sons, and their sons behind them will build things you and I cannot imagine.

They will travel to distant lands doing the same, but with them, many will carry the knowledge of our Ancient Rules and that will make the things they build and the great wonders they create good. “Yes, these things will be good. And it begins here... one week from tonight.”

For a second they were all silent. Were these the babbling of an old man or would tonight change history? They did not know, but suddenly, what would happen seemed very important.

Master Grumwold spoke. “Millions, I do not know about millions, our task is for one. How do we bring Lord Aaron as one of us.”

Brother Millege had been very quiet then spoke. “Why should we do it any differently than we always do? We tell a man the Ancient Rules and then he abides an oath. This part needs to be no different. An oath to be fair and honest is the same regardless if it’s stonework or selling bread. No, what we need to examine is the duties of the craft. Now we are looking beyond the craft... we are looking at life. Yet, even in life as in stonework the first thing that needs to be learned is to build a foundation. Is this not true?” They all nodded in agreement. “Is this not the apprentice’s duty? Is this not the first degree of life?” Again, they nodded. Then we will tell him of this first degree. We will tell him about building a foundation.”

Brother Millege became very quiet and thoughtful. For several minutes he sat looking at his hands folded before him. “Yes, we will give him examples. Examples of great things that have been built... that started with a foundation. What is the greatest thing that has ever been built?” He looked around at the others. One said “The Parthenon in Greece.” Another said “The Tower in London.” One jumped up and said “The Hanging Gardens.” Then one said “These things were all great buildings, but the greatest of them all was the Temple of Solomon.”

“The Temple of Solomon, the Temple of Solomon, the Temple of Solomon, yes, yes, King Solomon’s Temple. That is it!” screamed Brother Millege. “Nothing grander has ever been built! Yet, it started with a single stone! A single thought! Yes, that is it and there are stories in the Bible to tell us of its building. My Brother, you are a genius! We will recite these stories as a part of our ceremonies. We will tell him of the Cedars of Lebanon, of how the stone was quarried, and of the

wisdom of Solomon.” Brother Millege was almost jumping around the room. The others looked at him as a wild man. “Brother Millege, you can read and write. Most of us cannot. You have obviously read a Bible. Most of us have never seen one. We know not of what you speak.”

“Maybe not, My Beloved Brother,” shouted Brother Millege, “But you will! Yes, you and the whole world will know. Yes, we will all know of magnificent King Solomon and his works. Master Grumwold, we have several days to prepare. With your permission I will work with you to prepare the ceremony. We will make it something to remember. It will reverberate throughout the world.”

“Actually I more pictured a quiet, dignified, ceremony,” said Master Grumwold “but we will go with your wisdom.”

Discussion

1. Why did Master Grumwold call the meeting? Why were only certain members asked to come?
2. Do you feel that all of them were aware of how important the meeting would be? Why would it be so important?
3. Was the advice the brothers gave good? Why? Why not?
4. Why would the “initiation” be any different? Was this important?

The night of the initiation the Guild Hall was magnificent. Though it was usually somewhat dusty and ill kept, that night every surface was clean and polished. While Master Grumwold and Brother Millege were planning the ceremony, every other brother and their families were doing their part. Extra candles and lanterns were brought into the main room. Flowers adorned most of the walls. And every area glowed.

They all gathered for a sumptuous meal in the early part of the evening and dined on roast pig and goose with every trimming that could be imagined and later the men moved toward the main room. The feeling was almost somber as the huge door closed and the massive bolt slammed in its place. Each of the officers and every member was dressed in their finest. The whispers stopped when Master Grumwold rose.

“Tonight, Gentlemen and Brothers, we write history. No one is certain how long there has been a guild of stonemasons in Europe, but tonight we welcome the first man who does not work in stone in as a full and upright member. Brothers, tonight we welcome Lord Aaron of Cambridge as one of our own. Any brother who has second thoughts may speak his peace now and the ceremonies will immediately cease. This is our rule. But if no man has any objection, we will now begin.” The room was completely silent. The only sound that could be heard was the wind outside.

“Since there is no objection, I order Lord Aaron of Chamberlain to enter.” The door of a small adjoining room opened and Lord Aaron was escorted in. He was clothed in his finest ceremonial garments, such as are only worn when one is in the presence of the King. As per custom, he was seated in a chair in the middle of the room. Master Grumwold stood before him and recited the Ancient Rules, one at a time. After each, he asked if there was any question.

When he was through he asked Lord Aaron to rise. A small alter was placed before him and he was instructed to kneel. Then, Master Grumwold said the words of the oath to God and asked Lrd Aaron to repeat them after him, which he did. Then he swore to uphold the oath under penalty of death. Lord Aaron swallowed and said he did.

Lord Aaron was allowed to rise and return to his seat in the middle

of the room. Master Grumwold moved away and Brother Millege stood before him wearing a white cassock and leather apron. He congratulated Lord Aaron and began to speak. He spoke of learning and of growth. He spoke of how the stonemason's craft relates to life. He spoke of the importance of a foundation in any of life's ventures and how it compared with the foundation of that greatest of all buildings and accomplishments, the great Temple of Solomon.

He talked of tools of iron, and organization. He talked of cedar from Lebanon and how the stones were quarried. He talked of God's blessings and the wisdom of Solomon. Every man present grasped for the Brother's words. They were beautiful, they made every man feel important just for being there. Many had wondered about the brother's prediction the craft with no stonemasons would flourish. Now, no one doubted he was right.

That every man felt a new pride he had never felt before and someone commented that even Lord Aaron appeared to have more spring in his step. Every man knew he had not only seen history made that night, he knew he had been a part of it.

And Lord Aaron lived up to his word and made an outstanding member. He studied his assignments and learned them well. Within a few months he asked if it would be permissible for members of his staff and court to unite with the brothers. Each was welcomed with open arms and Brother Millege learned his fine speech and committed it to memory. Others learned it and carried it to other guildhalls in England.

Within a few months, Lord Aaron commissioned a guildhall to be built by the members of his guild and designed by Master Grumwold. The building was beautiful and no detail was left untended. It was one of the finest accomplishments for miles around. Every member welcomed the opportunity to tell everyone they met that it was their guildhall and not only were they a member, they also helped build it.

Lord Aaron went on to learn the words of Brother Millege and presented them at other guild halls throughout England. He was a fine example of the craft and in three years was made a journeyman or fellow of the craft. His work continued and several years later he was made Master of a new guild, a guild composed of good men, but not one was a stonemason.

The brother's prediction came true. Within a few years, the ability to learn the skills of a better man became the most desired effort in a good man's path.

Discussion

1. The initiation of Lord Aaron was obviously special. Why?
2. Lord Aaron wore his finest garments to the event. What did this say? What does it say when we "dress up" for lodge?
3. List the ways that initiating Lord Aaron changed Masonry.
4. Why was masonry improved by the initiation?

