

ANTI-MASONRY FROM 1698 TO 2000

by Yasha Beresiner

Introduction

More than 350 years is a hefty chunk of History. There have been many changes since Elias Ashmole was initiated into Freemasonry—as we understand that term today—on 16 October 1646 in Warrington. Technology has surpassed our imagination, and the success of the Freemasonry we practice today must be well beyond the greatest hopes and expectations of our founding forefathers.

One thing, however, has not changed: human nature. Envy, jealousy, spite, greed and ambition among men was there long before 1646, and will be there long after the year 2000. And so far as anti-Masonry goes . . . *plus ça change plus c'est la même chose!*

In 1698, a small pamphlet was distributed in the streets of London, warning Londoners to beware of 'those called Freed Masons' who practice 'Mischiefs and Evils'. In 1991, Martin Short, author of *Inside the Brotherhood*, the sequel to Stephen Knight's *The Brotherhood*, used almost identical words, calling Freemasonry an evil institution and its members mischievous in their activities. Three hundred years and the same words are used and same sentiments are expressed. You see what I mean when I say *plus ça change plus c'est la même chose!*

The pamphlet I mentioned—the earliest overt evidence we have of antagonism toward our Society—is an exceedingly important document in the history of anti-Masonry and needs further consideration. It consists of a single small-sized leaflet, 100 mm by 165 mm, set in *Roman* type and of which only one single original copy is extant in the Library and Museum of the United Grand Lodge of England in London. It is headed 'To All Godly People, in the Citie of London' and dated at the base 1698, nearly two decades before the formation of the premier Grand Lodge. The text reads as follows:

Having thought it needful to warn you
of the Mischiefs and Evils practiced
in the Sight of GOD by those called
Freed Masons, I say take Care lest their Cer-
emonies and secret Swearings take hold of
you; and be weary that none cause you to err
from Godliness. For this Devlish sect of
Men are Meeters in secret which swear against
all without their Following. They are the
Anti Christ which was to come leading
Men from Fear of GOD. For how should
Men meet in secret Places and with secret
Signs taking Care that none observe them to
do the Work of GOD; are not these the Ways
of Evil-doers?
Knowing how that GOD observeth pri-
vily them that sit in Darkness they shall be
smitten and the Secrets of their Hearts layed
bare. Mingle not among this corrupt People
lest you be found so at the World's Conflag-
ration.

Three lines outside the body of the text, at the base, it says:

Set forth as a Warning to this Christian Generation by

M Winter, and Printed by R Sare at Gray's
Inn-gate, in Holborn.
1698.

Very little information of the circumstances under which the pamphlet was issued are known. There is no information of *M Winter*, who must clearly have been the author. The time period and context within which the leaflet was issued, however, are of relevance and interest. In the leaflet, Freemasonry is condemned for the anti-religious standing of its membership. Knoop and Jones in their short paper published in (1942) *AQC* 55, give a prime example of how much important and consequential information can be obtained from the content of this simple leaflet. They were able to speculate and conclude on the possibility that Winter, the author, was pious, probably a chiliast, condemning the Masons as crypto-Romanists; that these denunciations in the leaflet in 1698 may have been based on fact, although there was no reason for the Masons to be accused of popery. The content of the leaflet affirms that Freemasonry was considered an evil institution because of the secret signs and meeting places.

The oaths referred to in the pamphlet do not correspond to the obligations we take today; the leaflet indicates that oaths were taken against all non-Masons. They were more likely to be an interpretation of operative practices. The term '*Freed Masons*' is a term referring to members of the London Company—the Worshipful Company of Masons of the City of London—which traces its Grant of Arms to the year 1472. What was clear is that at the time of the distribution of the leaflet, Masonic oaths and secret meeting places were considered to be anti-social.

Winter may have genuinely believed the Masons to be involved in plots against the Government. The Freemasons were seen as *Socinians* (deniers of the divinity of Christ) and the term '*Anti Christ*' is used in the leaflet to support Gnostic and Judaizing controversy. The most interesting conclusion reached by Knoop and Jones is that the statement in the leaflet that the Masons were anti-Christ implies that they were anti-Trinitarian. Therefore Freemasonry may well have adopted a deistic attitude toward religion long before Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723.

The very existence of this leaflet—which, incidentally was discovered by Bro Albert Frost of Sheffield and donated by him to the Grand Lodge Library in 1943—indicates that Freemasonry in 1698 was of sufficient consequence to justify such an attack. Had we been an organisation of inconsequential activity, one of the many hundreds of the period, we would have been ignored. From a viewpoint of classification only, the 1698 pamphlet is seen as a religious attack on Freemasonry. It was the first of a long series of such attacks.

The Papal Bulls

When considering anti-religious allegations against Freemasonry, the Papal Bulls instantly come to mind. In 1738 the well-known Papal Bull *In Eminenti* was issued by Pope Clement XII.^{*} This Bull prohibited Catholics from becoming Freemasons under the penalty of excommunication. There followed a series of Bulls and Edicts emanating from the Vatican, confirming the hostility of the Catholic Church toward the Freemasons. The subject of Papal Bulls, which remains the greatest manifestation of the controversial concept of Papal infallibility, has been extensively covered in Masonic literature. They are the most overt reflection of the Church's hostility to Freemasonry.

The word *Bull* is derived from the Latin *bulla* which, in Roman times, described any type of decorative stud used on armour or doors. In Etruscan times the *bulla* was worn as a charm, often in the shape of a heart. This may be the origin of the ecclesiastic practice of attaching a metal ingot suspended by variously coloured ribbons to the end of official documents. The Papal Bull is at the top

^{*} Clement XII was born Lorenzo Corsini, and became Pope in 1720. In Florence in July 1999 I had the privilege of befriending Count Giovanni Corsini, a direct descendant of Clement XII, and our fascinating exchanges on his views of his own ancestry and its connotations to Freemasonry continue to date. He is not a Freemason.

of a list, in order of importance, of the communications emanating from the Vatican. Lesser matters are communicated by briefs, regulations and edicts, *inter alia*.

The Bull was initially hand-written in Latin on vellum parchment in elaborate calligraphy, using convoluted terminology. The folding and formal sealing of the document would involve a painstaking ceremony, at the end of which the Papal seal was applied to a metal ingot, the *Bulla*. The Papal Bull was now authenticated. The Bull, often accompanied by a translation to facilitate its understanding, was then printed in Rome and distributed to all the local dioceses. The publication entailed a formal ceremony in which the Bishop officially proclaimed the Bull, which was then read at several church services. Thereafter, the printed version was appended to the door of the Church—until it was torn down, or discarded after a suitable period of time. The evidence for this procedure can be found on many of the documents themselves.

As mentioned above, the first Papal Bull relevant to Freemasonry was the well documented *In Eminenti* issued by Pope Clement XII on 28 April 1738. It was given in Rome at the Basilica of St Mary the Greater. The very last lines of the printed document state:

... *Publicata fuit ad valvas Basilicae Principis
Apostolorum ac aliis locis solitis consuetis, &c.*

which translates as: ‘*Published on the doors of St Peter’s and other usual places.*’ The first English version of *In Eminenti* was published in the 1754 edition of Scott’s *Pocket Companion*. The second Bull of Benedict XIV in 1751, *Providas*, is even more detailed in the requirements of its dissemination. The last paragraph, following the signature and seal, freely translated, states *inter alia*:

... the above mentioned Constitution was affixed and published on the doors of the Lateran Basilica and of the Chief of the Apostles, etc etc; and in other customary and usual places by me, Franciscus Bartolotti, Apost. Pursuivant.

The legality of this mode of publication, by posting the printed document onto church doors and ‘other usual places’, is further stressed in contemporary ephemeral documents issued by various civic authorities. An example is the Italian Proclamation in Rome, dated 14 January 1739, repeating the Vatican’s prohibitions on Freemasonry and ending with the statement:

... *the present proclamation, when affixed in the usual places in Rome, do oblige and bind Rome and its District ... in the same manner as if they had been personally notified to each of them ...*

The considerable and dramatic changes in world affairs, between the publication of *Providas* in 1751 and the next Papal Bull of relevance to Freemasonry in 1821, appears to have made no difference at all to the Vatican. The contrary seems to be the case. Freemasonry and the *Carbonari* are now identified with each other in the two Bulls by Pope Pius VII, *Ecclesiam a Jesu Christo* in 1821, and *Quo Graviora* 1825. The latter incorporates and quotes in full all three previous Papal Bulls condemning Freemasonry. As to the authority by which it is published, its legality and distribution, Section 20 of the document, the penultimate paragraph, states:

... exactly the same credit will be given to printed copies of these our Letters subscribed by the hand of some Public Notary, and fortified by the seal of someone invested with ecclesiastical dignity, as would be given to the very original letter exhibited or produced.

This was the method of communicating officially, and with authority, the word of the Holy See to the faithful across the nation. The most expressive manifestation of the importance and power of the Papal Bulls is the existence of exceedingly rare examples of forgeries. They were issued in printed form only to support and enforce illegal, or at least unofficial, rules and regulations applied by some authorities or other. They are considered priceless documents today, often exceeding the religious—

historic value of the original documents. The hostility of the Vatican toward Freemasonry, however, should be placed within its true context. It would be misleading to suggest that the Papal Bulls were, from the beginning, directed at Freemasonry worldwide. The implications appear to be the fear of the Vatican early in the 18th century, at a time when secular and religious power lay with the Pope, at the appearance in Italy—in Florence—of Masonic lodges and their implied secrecies. This is further confirmed by the later Papal Bulls which make specific reference to the *Carbonari*, with whom Freemasonry was indiscriminately, and quite erroneously, identified.

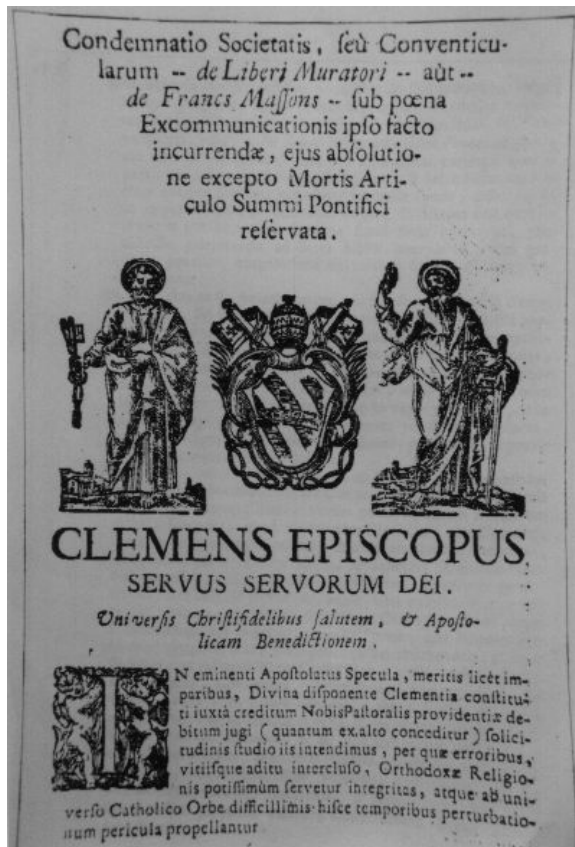


Illustration 1

In Eminenti, the first Papal Bull to condemn Freemasonry, was issued by Clement XII and is dated 1738. The heading forbids Catholics from becoming Freemasons under the penalty of excommunication. The title of the bull is derived from the first two words of the body of the text.

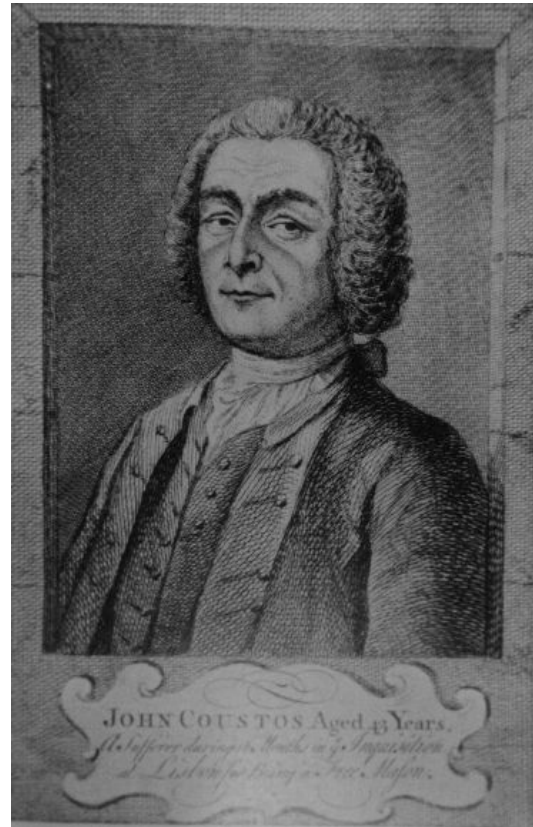


Illustration 2

John Coustos: Swiss jeweller, initiated in London, founder of the Paris Lodge that carried his name, and in 1743 a Masonic victim of the Portuguese Inquisition.

There were practical repercussions to the Papal Bulls. In Italy, Tommaso Crudeli, the famous jurist, poet and teacher, had been initiated into the first English lodge in Florence in 1735. In May 1739 he was arrested by the Inquisition for nothing more than his involvement with Freemasonry. His involvement with the English lodge is reflected in the minutes of the Grand Lodge of England where it is recorded that £20.00 was voted, in 1739, for the relief of Crudeli, then imprisoned. He remained in prison for 16 months and was later under house arrest, where many of his poems were written, describing the tortuous circumstances of his unjust imprisonment.

In 1738 a royal edict supporting the Papal Bull was issued in Portugal banning Freemasonry, and the case of John Coustos, a British subject and another victim of the Inquisition, is a well known incident of the period.

He was initiated in London and continued his Masonic activities in Paris—where a lodge is today named after him—before settling in Lisbon in 1742. Notwithstanding the ban on Freemasonry, he was the founding member and first Master of a lodge in the City. Due to some internal friction, the activities of the lodge were reported to the Portuguese Inquisition and Coustos and some other brethren were arrested in 1743. Although sentenced to imprisonment for four years, and supposedly tortured to reveal the secrets of Freemasonry, he was soon released due to the intervention of the Duke of Newcastle, then the Secretary of State. On his return to England, Coustos published his book *The Sufferings of John Coustos*, which saw the light of day in 1746, the year of his death.

For the record, John Coustos' version of events and claims in his book of having suffered heavy torture (even illustrating some of the torture instruments used) were repudiated when the official documents of the records of the Inquisition were released. Details of these documents have been published in the transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, in *AQC* volumes 81 & 92. Nevertheless, John Coustos' book has allowed the modern historian to have an important insight into the activities of expatriate Freemasons during this early period of Freemasonry in Europe.

Masonic Exposures

Many early publications of this kind have been an important source of reference to the modern student. None, however, have been as useful as the series of works known as exposures. An exposure may be defined as a publication—normally in the form of a catechism—disclosing the supposed secrets of the Freemasons.

Let us accept the maxim that for all practical purposes there are only two secrets in Freemasonry: the words and the signs of recognition leading from one degree to the next. It will be appreciated, therefore, that the spelling in full of such words or the illustration or description of the signs, may be seen as a breach of our secrets and thus be considered an attack on the Craft.

In this context the earliest exposure detailing our ceremony of initiation was published in a London newspaper, the *Flying Post*, in April of 1723. It was intended to coincide with the publication of James Anderson's first *Book of Constitutions*, and did so within weeks. A number of additional exposures appeared and the most important of these by far was Samuel Prichard's *Masonry Dissected*, published in October 1730. There is no doubt or argument on the intent of the author and publisher in having the booklet printed: monetary gain and the satisfaction of the curiosity of the general public.

But could there be such outstanding curiosity on the part of the general public to justify three editions of *Masonry Dissected* within just eleven days? Advertisements in the local press, offering *Masonry Dissected* for sale, show a second edition published the day after the first, and a third edition ten days later. At the time of this publication London was saturated with Societies and Fraternities of every kind, of which Freemasonry was only one. The majority of the population who would have been interested in the activities of such societies were still illiterate. The only conclusion, therefore, as to great popularity of *Masonry Dissected* at the time of its publication, is that Freemasons themselves were buying the pamphlet as an *aide-mémoire*.

The great importance of Masonry Dissected lies in that here for the very first time we see the Hiramic Legend as a separate third degree and as practised today. A publication detailing the ritual working following on the very recent introduction of the degree must have come as a blessing to many of the brethren eager to learn and practice this new aspect of Freemasonry. Masonry Dissected was such a successful publication that no other exposures were published in England until 1760.

The premier Grand Lodge, under pressure at this time with Freemasonry on the decline, became concerned with the publication of *Masonry Dissected*, particularly the danger now that non-Masons gaining access to lodges might also benefit from charitable aspects of the fraternity.

In their misguided wisdom, it would appear that Grand Lodge decided as a preventive measure to change the first and second degree words and signs in an effort to detect impostors. This action by Grand Lodge was to have major consequences.

By now a new and competing Grand Lodge had been formed. In 1751 a number of brethren of Irish descent formed themselves into a Grand Lodge claiming, as an excuse, the deviation of the premier Grand Lodge from the landmarks of the order. These landmarks included the transposition of the first and second degree words and signs, as already described above, as well as various other factors such as the non-recognition of the Royal Arch as part of ancient Freemasonry.

The new Grand Lodge, which soon became known as the *Antients*, was almost immediately under the effective control of a most formidable Freemason, Laurence Dermott, who became its Grand Secretary within a year of its foundation. They successfully dubbed the earlier premier Grand Lodge of 1717 as the *Moderns* and the term has remained in use to date. Although independent, quite clearly the new Grand Lodge was strongly influenced in all its aspects by the Grand Lodge of Ireland. This was also manifest in its ritual workings. From the start there was great animosity between the two English Grand Lodges, which effectively continued until the Union of 1813.

Now that two different and competing Grand Lodges existed in England, the opportunity arose for anonymous authors to publish new exposures detailing the different working of the two Grand Lodges. In 1760 the first edition of *Three Distinct Knocks* was published. The introduction stated that the content was the working of the three degrees of the *Antients* Grand Lodge. Two years later, in 1762, *Jachin and Boaz* was published, relating to the working of the *Moderns*, claiming (no doubt in an attempt to increase sales) that the ritual described applied to both Grand Lodges. Both these books went into many editions, as indeed did Samuel Prichard's *Masonry Dissected*.

The final reconciliation between the two Grand Lodges, which led to the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England in December of 1813, did not put a stop to further publications of Masonic exposures. The differences between the two Grand Lodges were not easily reconciled. Not least was the problem arising from the fact that the older premier Grand Lodge, the *Moderns*, advocated the practice of three and only three degrees under its jurisdiction. The *Antients*, on the other hand, permitted lodges to practice any of the additional Orders beyond the Craft under the authority of their Craft warrants. This was a major point of contention and a problem that the Duke of Sussex, the new Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, had to resolve at the time of the Union in 1813. The problems were resolved in a Solomonic fashion by the second article of the *Constitutions* of the United Grand Lodge of England, which stated that: '*pure Antient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, viz., those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch*'.

This disposed of the Royal Arch, undoubtedly a most important aspect and the major point of contention between the *Antients* and the *Moderns*. The matter of the remaining Orders, of which a great number were now flourishing among a large number of brethren, were dealt with by the additional statement in the Article:

But this article is not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a Meeting in any of the degrees of the Orders of Chivalry, according to the constitutions of the said Orders.

This was a compromise the Duke of Sussex was not happy with. He had too much on his plate in his efforts to secure a successful Union to have to worry and bother with a handful of additional Orders. His attitude was to ignore and effectively suppress all additional Orders. The Union was considered to be a tragedy to the adherents of the many smaller Orders. A number continued to practice and attend meetings but the overall picture is one of diminishing activity and popularity.

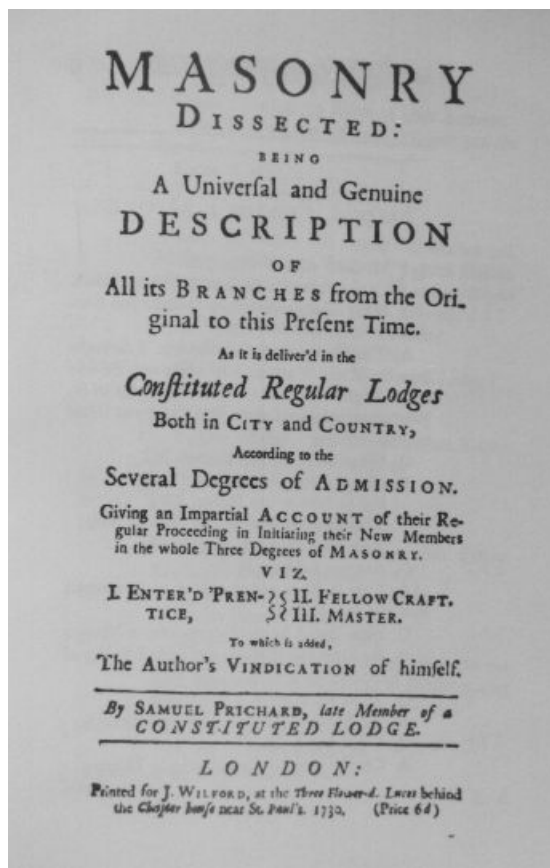


Illustration 3

Samuel Prichard's *Masonry Dissected*, first published in October 1730, went into three editions within two weeks and was thereafter reprinted with surprising frequency—most probably because Freemasons were using the exposure as a ritual book!

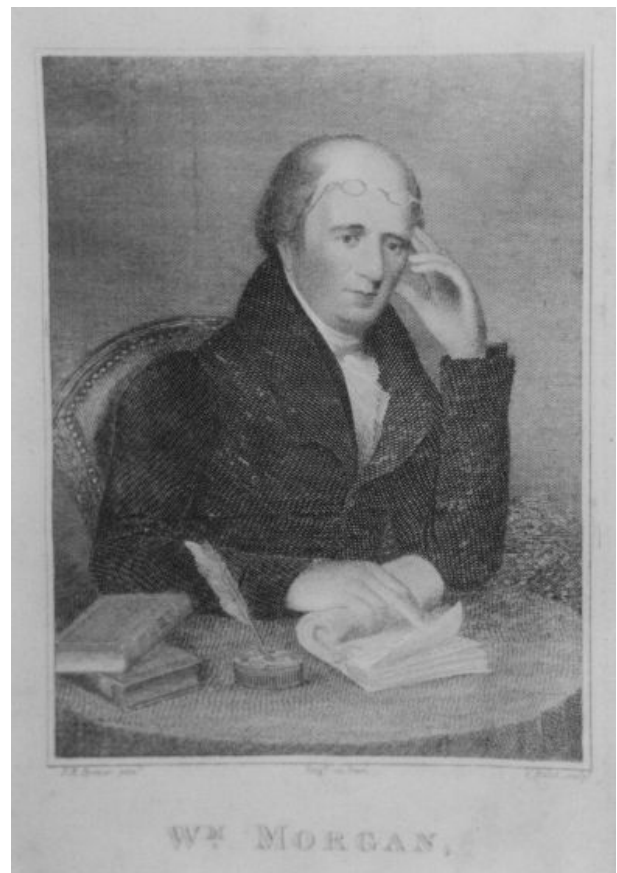


Illustration 4

William Morgan symbolises the extremes that an anti-Masonic movement can reach. The *Morgan Affair* of 1826 has no parallel in American—or even in world—Masonic history and the repercussions continue to this day.

And yet, in 1826 we have the publication in England of a new exposure titled *The Ritual of Freemasonry* by an established and well known spokesman for the freedom of speech. Richard Carlile was in prison when he began his attack on the Freemasons by publishing aspects of the ritual in his newspaper the *Republican*. The articles were incorporated into his book detailing now the ritual working of all the available degrees and Orders beyond the Craft. What a blessing to the dwindling number of Masons who were now able to keep their Orders alive until better times. It is somewhat ironic that a publication intended as a major attack on the Freemasons should prove to be the cause of the survival of the many additional Orders. These came into their own with the passing of the Duke of Sussex in 1843, while still in office as Grand Master, and his replacement by the more liberal 2nd Earl of Zetland.

William Morgan and Politics

There are, and have been throughout history, political movements that have made a point of targeting Freemasonry. These began, as stated earlier, with the Church in the 18th century, when much secular power lay in its hands and the State was influenced by the Church. It has continued in a long line of repression of Freemasonry by many Governments—not least in the Middle East and, until recently, in most of the Eastern European countries. A number of politicians and Governments may have some historical justification for their concerns. We may consider that the South American sub-continent was liberated from the Spanish yoke by Freemasons. All the South American heroes of the early 19th

century were Freemasons and many lodges today bear their names: Simón Bolívar, Antonio José de Sucre, Ambrose Higgins and José de San Martín, amongst them.

The most overt example, however, of the influence of politics on Freemasonry remains the extraordinary case in America, the mother of democracy and liberty. It is the famous case known as the William Morgan Affair, which took place in 1826, when the whole nation, through its political arm, turned violently against the Craft. Freemasonry suffered for the best part of a quarter-century and was only back on the road to recovery in the 1860s. The case remains extraordinary for several reasons. The whereabouts of Morgan himself is still a mystery, and the near hysterical over-reaction of the populace, on what was in effect a minor incident, has still to be explained.

William Morgan, for reasons that are not apparent, was refused entry to a lodge in Batavia, New York, and decided to take his revenge by colluding with the editor of the *Republican Advocate*, one David Miller, to disclose the secrets of Freemasonry in a book. Shortly after this collusion became known, in September 1826, Morgan disappeared, and the Freemasons were effectively accused of his murder. A political party relying entirely on an Anti-Masonic ticket was formed, relying totally on the theory that Morgan was abducted by force by the Freemasons and was assassinated. The attacks on Freemasonry that followed are without precedent. The facts and statistics show a devastating picture:

- In 1828 a Mason and an anti-Mason ran for the office of Governor of New York; the former, Martin van Buren, had some 136,000 votes in his favour, whilst the anti-Mason, Solomon Southwick, received only 33,000 votes. In 1830 in the same elections the anti-Masonic candidate gained 120,000 votes against only 128,000 for the winning candidate. Although this was still a victory for the Mason, the antagonism toward Freemasonry becomes apparent with the vote for the opposition tripling in just two years!
- By 1832 there were a total of 141 anti-Masonic newspapers published throughout the United States.
- In 1826 the Grand Lodge of New York had just over 500 lodges under its jurisdiction. These dwindled to only 65 in 1846.
- Its membership of 20,000 Freemasons in 1825 was reduced to a mere 3000 in 1830.

Fortunately recovery was rapid after 1862 and the statistics were healthy again with 430 lodges in New York boasting a revived membership of some 25,000 Freemasons. New York was typical of many of the other states in America. This American experience, which led to untold crisis in the personal lives of many families, has no precedent in Masonic history. It is an example of political bigotry and public enticement at its worst extreme.

Morgan's book was published as an illustrated exposure titled *Illustrations of Masonry*. His case is still used today when Freemasonry is attacked, with little reference to the facts and figures of this black period in American Masonic history.

Plus ça change . . .

How much change has there been in attitudes toward Freemasonry in the last hundred years? I would suggest very little indeed. England remains the mother Grand Lodge of all nations and we can look at recent events in London as a reflection of attitudes toward our Craft. It is not all good news. In February 1997 the Home Affairs Committee of the House of Commons decided to look into the question of Freemasonry in the police and the judiciary. The final report was overwhelmingly favourable toward Freemasonry. A long list of judges, magistrates and other members of the judiciary (which included Lord Mackay, the Lord High Chancellor) and high ranking policemen were called as witnesses and unequivocally stated that they found nothing in Freemasonry that adversely affected the judiciary or the police. The one exception was a Chief Police Officer who felt that *membership* (by policemen) *of organisations such as Freemasonry was undesirable*. Paragraph 32 of the report stated:

Para. 32: The Committee conclude that, when the oaths are read in context, there is nothing in them that would appear sinister, and nothing in the evidence that we have heard that would show a conflict between the oath taken by a judge or policeman and that by a Freemason.

We do not believe that there is anything sinister about Freemasonry, properly observed, and are confident that Freemasonry itself does not encourage malpractice.

Notwithstanding the positive aspects of the report, the inquiry recommended that a register should be made available to the public of all those involved in the administration of criminal justice and Freemasons should be identified on the register! The final and concluding report of the Committee reads as follows:

Para 56: It is obvious that there is a great deal of unjustified paranoia about Freemasonry and we have no wish to add to it. We believe that there would be practical difficulties in requiring a register of Freemasons in all areas of the criminal justice system, but it would certainly be possible to establish one. We also note that the Prime Minister himself has said that he was in favour of a requirement for public officials to declare whether they are Freemasons or not, and that the Shadow Home Secretary believes that membership of the Freemasons should be a declarable and registered interest. We believe however that nothing so much undermines public confidence in public institutions as the knowledge that some public servants are members of a secret society one of whose aims is mutual self-advancement – or a column of mutual support to use the Masonic phrase. We note the claim by United Grand Lodge that Freemasons are not a secret society but a society with secrets. We believe, however, that this distinction is lost on most non-Masons. The solution is not bans or proscriptions or any form of intolerance. We acknowledge that a lot of honest people derive innocent social pleasure from membership of Freemasonry and we have no wish to deprive them of such pleasure. The solution is disclosure. We recommend that police officers, magistrates, judges and crown prosecutors should be required to register membership of any secret society and that the record should be available publicly. However, it is our firm belief that the better solution lies in the hands of Freemasonry itself. By openness and disclosure, all suspicion would be removed and we would welcome the taking of such steps by the United Grand Lodge.

The United Grand Lodge of England issued a seven point news release on 25 March 1997, signed by the Grand Secretary, repudiating this final conclusion of the Committee as set out in Paragraph 56 of the report. There was no further action taken on the matter until after the election of May 1997 when the new Labour Government came into power and pursued the matter further.

A new Home Affairs Committee, under the Chairmanship of Christopher Mullin MP, was appointed in February 1998 and consisted entirely of new members, who had not been involved in the Committee a year earlier, with the sole exception of the Chairman himself. This time there were specific allegations of a Masonic conspiracy involving police corruption.

The United Grand Lodge of England was represented at the open and fully televised sessions by the then Grand Secretary, Commander Michael Higham (who retired in May 1998) and by John Hamill, Director of Communications at Grand Lodge. The Committee produced three lists, containing 199 names, and Grand Lodge was required to identify those on the lists who were Freemasons. The initial refusal of the Grand Secretary to disclose such information in the absence of any specific allegations against the named individuals was to no avail.

At the end, only 17 of the 199 names proved to be members of the Craft. These were handed to the Committee under protest. The Home Affairs Committee did not pursue the matter further. The United Grand Lodge of England issued the following communication on 25 May 1999:

HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CLEARS FREEMASONS

Freemasons will be pleased, but not surprised, that the Home Affairs Select Committee has reached the following conclusions:

- “Freemasonry was not a primary cause of the difficulties within the West Midlands Serious Crime Squad”
- “Freemasonry was not a significant factor in the Birmingham pub bombings case”

- “We cannot conclude Freemasonry played a significant part in the Stalker Affair”

Despite a lengthy investigation, Mr Mullin, MP and his committee have produced no evidence that Freemasons were involved in any possible miscarriage of justice in these three high profile cases.

The committee acknowledges there is “a great deal of unjustified paranoia about Freemasonry.” Freemasons heartily agree.

Today, in England, every member of the judiciary has to sign a form indicating his membership of the Craft, if he is a Freemason. An amazing and quite disconcerting political requirement. As I said at the beginning, envy, spite, greed and ambition have been the determining and constant factors affecting the attitudes of those who have been malignant toward us through the years.

Is it a consoling thought, that only successful organisations are attacked? That another more dangerous trait than hatred toward us would be indifference? It seems to me that as long as there is no indifference toward Freemasonry, we will enter the new Millennium and go through it with the same success, the same high moral standards that have distinguished our organisation from the many other similar institutions through the past centuries.

Bibliography

BRODSKY, Michel L: ‘The Reality of Anti-Masonry’ in *Heredom*, vol 2 (transactions of the Scottish Rite Research Society) Washington 1993.

CRAWLEY, W J Chetwode: ‘The Old Charges and Papal Bulls’ in (1911) *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* 24:

HAMILL, John: ‘Contemporary anti-Masonry in England’ in *Masonic Perspectives*, Australian Masonic Research Council, Victoria 1992.

JACKSON, A C F: *English Masonic Exposures 1760-1769*, Middx 1986.

KNOOP, Douglas; JONES, G P; & HAMER, Douglas: *The Early Masonic Catechisms*, QC, London 1975.

——— *Early Masonic Pamphlets*, QC, London 1978.

MCLEOD, Wallace: ‘Responding to Criticism’ in *The Quest for Light*, Australian & New Zealand Masonic Research Council, Melbourne 1997.

READ, Will: ‘The Church of Rome and Freemasonry’ in (1991) *AQC* 104:

ROBBINS, Alfred F: ‘The Earliest Years of English Organised Freemasonry’ in (1909) *AQC* 22:

TATSCH, J H: ‘American Masonic crisis, the Morgan incident of 1826’ in (1921) *AQC* 34:

United Grand Lodge News—various. (Newsletters freely distributed following on the Quarterly Communications of the United Grand Lodge of England Press Information. Issued from the Office of the Director of Communications.)

VATCHER, Dr S: ‘John Coustos and the Portuguese Inquisition’ in (1968) *AQC* 81: