

**“A system of morality veiled in allegory”: The Private Rituals and
Public Performances of Freemasons in Winnipeg, 1864-1900**

by

Gillian Covernton

**A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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Freemasons in Winnipeg, 1864-1900**

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**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of
Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree**

Of

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**“A System of Morality Veiled in Allegory”: The Private Rituals and Public Performances of
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Submitted by

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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Abstract

The influential role of the Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons in the development of the province of Manitoba and city of Winnipeg represents a gap in historiography. Between 1864 and 1900 Masonry in Manitoba evolved from a small fraternal organisation to a large group on the precipice of establishing significant influence in Winnipeg. A mainly British, business elite politically and economically dominated Winnipeg and many of these men held membership in the Masons. Masonry had already been established as a respectable and exclusive institution in the rest of Canada, England and in the United States but Masonry in Manitoba was unique because of its faux secrecy. The commercial elite strove to establish themselves as a social elite and legitimated their claim to respectable status by privately and publicly performing the rituals of Masonry. Masonry in Manitoba was used as a tool for negotiating status and respectability at a moment in Winnipeg's history where both were not assured and the culture of professionalism was beginning to inform the values that would define the middle class. An analysis of Masonry as a system of moral and ethical instruction in Manitoba is necessary to an understanding of the construction of Victorian culture in early Winnipeg.

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Preface

The exact history of the Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons is complex, fragmented and cloaked in mystery. Their influential role in the development of the province of Manitoba and city of Winnipeg is almost uncharted territory. The area that became Winnipeg in 1873 was, between 1864 and 1900, a territory influenced and politically dominated by a business elite which was mainly of Anglo-Saxon origin and Protestant religion. An investigation into Masonry in Manitoba reveals that many of these aspiring businessmen shared membership in this fraternal organisation. Masonry had already been established as a respectable and exclusive institution in the rest of Canada, England and in the United States but Masonry in Manitoba was unique in purpose. The commercial elite strove to establish themselves as a social elite and legitimated their claim to respectable status by privately and publicly performing the rituals of Masonry. The commercial elite in Manitoba negotiated their status as respectable Victorian men using the language and symbolism of Masonic rites and the nature of Masonic identity. Masonry in Manitoba was used as a tool for negotiating status and respectability at a moment in Winnipeg's history where both were not assured and the culture of professionalism was beginning to inform the values that would define the middle class. Therefore an analysis of Masonry as a system of moral and ethical instruction in Manitoba is necessary to an understanding of the construction of Victorian culture in early Winnipeg.

In Nineteenth Century Winnipeg, the term 'commercial elite' or 'business elite', can be used to designate a specific group of men that were generally affluent professionals who made their fortunes in Winnipeg, shared a generally British background and leisure activities, were responsible for the majority of public policies and

strove to embody Victorian manliness.¹ Due to their many commonalities, the business elite in Winnipeg formed a “cohesive enclave”². Richard A. Willie suggests that this enclave was informed by a growing culture of professionalism that was informed by changing Victorian mindsets that surrounded appropriate business and career choices.³ Willie argues that the evolving culture of professionalism was intrinsically tied to the emergence of the middle class in late Twentieth Century Winnipeg and that a professional culture was in place by 1900.⁴ Andrew C. Holman asserts that Victorian notions of respectability, private and public spheres, morality and appropriate gender behaviour, informed the social and cultural definitions of appropriate masculinity in this period.⁵ These Victorian ideals spoke to the notion that to be respectable a man must be industrious, sober, religious, morally upright, responsible for his family and aspire to be upwardly socially mobile. The commercial elite in Winnipeg made their fortunes mainly through real estate deals, in particular rental properties for commercial ventures, and entrepreneurial ventures. These affluent men were involved in the process of defining what would be the culture of professionalism and the values held by the middle class. Inherent in this process was the emergence of a professional consciousness that was informed by a sense of duty.

¹ This definition is based on the work of Don Nerbas who studied Winnipeg’s business community and uses the term business and commercial elite as synonymous with each other as well as the term professional. Don Nerbas “Wealth and Privilege: An Analysis of Winnipeg’s Early Business Elite”, in *Manitoba History* Spring/Summer 2004, 47, pg.42-65.

² Nerbas, 2.

³ Richard A. Willie, “‘A Proper Ideal During Action’: Fraternity, Leadership and Lifestyle in Winnipeg Lawyers’ Professional Culture, 1878-1900”, in *Journal of Canadian Studies* 27, no.1 (Spring, 1992), 58-72.

⁴ Willie, 59.

⁵ Andrew C. Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns* (Montreal, 2000), Christopher J. Anstead, *Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario: Secret Societies and Cultural Hegemony*, (Toronto, 1992) and Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto, 1991).

The origins of this politically cohesive business community, formed independently of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), began with the introduction of 'free traders' in Red River who formed relationships with American merchants and paved the way for the development of commerce in Winnipeg. The year 1849 marked a turning point in the economy of the Red River community when Metis free trader, P.G. Sayer, was accused of breaking the fur trade monopoly held by the HBC and trading illegally with Native Peoples.⁶ Sayer was never sentenced for his crime but was found guilty and this event marked the beginning of the decline of the HBC's monopoly on trade. The 1860s saw the introduction of goods manufactured in Canada to Red River as the small community began to attract the notice of central Canadians. The men who formed the commercial elite took advantage of this opportunity to amass their fortunes.

The selection of the Masons for analysis is crucial. Manitoba was home to a variety of other leisure and community organisations, which were also gender exclusive and constituted by the elite. For example, the St. Charles Club and the Manitoba Club were founded in close temporal proximity to Masonry in Manitoba and were both havens for the masculine elite. Masonry, however, was not only a club but also an association that socialised members into specific world and moral views through demonstrations of public and private cohesion. These demonstrations involved public parades in Masonic costume, private recitations of rituals that emphasised Victorian values and exclusive social gatherings. Other fraternal organisations, for example the Loyal Orange Order, were established in Manitoba in the same period but these did not often carry the political and social weight that the Masons did. Although membership in the Masons and the Orange Order did overlap and several of the founding members of the Manitoba

⁶ Alan F.J Artibise, *Winnipeg: a social history of urban growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal, 1975), 7.

Club and the St. Charles were Masons, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to delve into these groups in great detail.

By 1840 ideas such as “race, respectability and progress” had begun to be deep-rooted and when the first Masonic lodge, the Northern Light Lodge, was established in 1864, the foundations of a European capitalist economy were in place.⁷ Masonry advanced these notions and contributed to the socialisation of members in Manitoba to Victorian views concerning masculinity and appropriate gender roles. Prior to the Red River uprising, Masons in Red River were a relatively small group of the commercial elite, consisting of not more than thirty men. During the 1870s and 80s, the small province of Manitoba transitioned from a Metis settlement to a British-Ontarian community and this propelled the growth of Masonry. Masonry flourished in the post 1870 era, directly following the entrance of Manitoba into Confederation. As this institution espoused the doctrine of Victorian values, the infusion of settlers from Ontario fuelled the growth of Masonry.

The Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons are generally labelled as a “secret society”. The term “secret societies”, in England, was used literally because membership, rituals and activities of the lodges were secrets kept by the elite who belonged. It is relevant here to make the distinction between ‘secret societies’ and ‘friendly societies’. ‘Friendly societies’ in England and in Canada grew out of a need for the collective self-help of the working people and not out of a desire to belong to an elite club for gentlemen.⁸ Friendly societies, for example the Ancient Order of Foresters and the Independent Order of Oddfellows, existed for the purpose of providing services such

⁷ Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto, 1987), 91.

⁸ See Simon Cordery for a history of friendly societies and the differences inherent to them. Simon Cordery, *British Friendly Societies, 1750-1914* (New York, 2003), 1-18.

as help during times of illness, death or loss of employment.⁹ Friendly societies were active in political movements, for example pension and insurance plans, and are generally seen as the forerunner to the welfare state in Canada. While friendly societies often did have ritual performances much like the Masons, their purpose and functions were different. The Masons did provide aid to their brethren in times of need but this was not consistent or guaranteed through membership alone. Christopher J. Anstead argues that by the 1870s in Ontario, the benefit of aid provided through membership in friendly societies in Ontario caused Masonry to be replaced by friendly societies as the largest growing organisation.¹⁰ While the term 'secret society' in England actually meant that an organisation was secret, the same organisation to fall under this designation in Manitoba was anything but.

Masonry is a science of symbolism and each emblem, whether in the lodge room or used to adorn a costume, had a specific meaning and was meant to direct attention to a certain value. Masonic Symbols, mainly based on Ancient Egyptian ones, were used to construct the mysterious image of this society. The majority of symbols were interpreted as to impress a system of morality on members and became more elaborate during the early to mid Nineteenth Century.¹¹ Some Masonic symbols, for example the square and compass, had been present much earlier than this, around the beginning of the Eighteenth Century but were not yet convention. Masonry was constructed as mysterious through the use of Ancient Egyptian symbols. The decision to use Egyptian symbols, such as the eye of Isis, coincided with Eighteenth Century and early to mid Nineteenth Century European fascination with the perceived culture of the Ancient

⁹ Cordery, 18.

¹⁰ Anstead, 22.

¹¹ The most prominent Masonic symbols are discussed in chapters three and four.

Egyptians and the aura of mystery surrounding it. This air of mystery was negotiated to Europeans through travel narratives, exploration literature and accounts from scholars of oriental studies that collectively imagined or studied the Orient and consequently created an image of the Orient and the Oriental other.¹² This “exotic other” was invented mainly by the British and created a binary distinction between west and east in the minds of Europeans. Masonic lodges used Ancient Egyptian symbols not only to create a mysterious image but also to connect themselves to a suitable historical past. Eric Hobsbawm refers to the use of history to lend legitimacy to groups as invented tradition and he asserts that during the Nineteenth Century this practice was particularly relevant.¹³ In the context of the desire of Masons to connect themselves to a legitimate historical past and the British construction of the exotic other, Ancient Egyptian symbols were used to link Masonry to a suitable history and surround it in mystery.

Historians have traditionally argued that the foundations of Masonry were forged in England.¹⁴ In recent years it has come to light that this is not the case. David Stevenson has uncovered evidence in Scotland, which predates the installation of Masonry in England.¹⁵ Stevenson argues that in the Sixteenth Century in Scotland, lodges were formed to regulate the working lives of stonemasons but ritual, fraternal and

¹² See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (New York, 1979), Billie Melman, *Women's Orient: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Michigan, 1995) and John Barrell, “Death on the Nile: fantasy, and the literature of tourism, 1840-60”, in *Cultures of Empire: A Reader* ed. Catherine Hall (New York, 2000), 187-206.

¹³ Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Tradition”, in *The Invention of Tradition* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, 1983), 1-2.

¹⁴ While this is true of academics it is often not the case with “Grand Historians”, or the designated historian of a Masonic lodge, who usually argue the foundations of ritualised and modern Masonry date back to the building of King Solomon’s Temple. See, for example, the work of Albert G. Mackey, himself a Mason. Albert G. Mackey, *Symbolism of Freemasonry: Illustrating and Explaining its Science and Philosophy, its Legends, Myths, and Symbols* (Chicago, 1975), 30.

¹⁵ David Stevenson, *The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's century, 1590-1710* (Cambridge, 1988), 7.

social functions had an integral role. Towards the close of the Sixteenth Century, lodges had begun to function using written records and statutes, and this suggests a departure from other craft guilds where the primary function was the regulation of work. Also, non-stonemasons in significant numbers were admitted.¹⁶ Masonry in the modern and more elaborate sense came into being in early Eighteenth Century England although the recorded history is incomplete at best. During this period, lodges became elite men's clubs and it was not deemed necessary to have members who were actual stonemasons. Lodges in England were segregated as gentlemen gravitated to their own lodges and this move coincided with the rise of the middle class and its supplanting of a feudal aristocracy.

Although Masonry is usually discussed as an exclusively male club, there is evidence that women were admitted to lodges in France. In Eighteenth Century France, women were initiated into Lodges of Adoption but the general consensus of male masons was that women were impulsive, emotional and given to uncontrollable chatter.¹⁷ Consequently, women were only admitted in small numbers and when initiated, their mouths were symbolically padlocked and plastered shut with a Masonic trowel. Gentlemen who belonged to Masonic lodges and who were not stonemasons were admitted upon the payment of fees rather than through an association to a trade.¹⁸ The payment of fees and collection of regular dues enforced the rule that Masonic lodges in England were primarily clubs for gentlemen, a class that possessed the means for payment and was considered respectable. The creation of the Grand Lodge of

¹⁶ See Stevenson for a more detailed discussion of the origins of Masonry in Scotland and the functions of lodges, 1-5.

¹⁷ See the work of Mary Ann Clawson for a discussion of Lodges of Adoption. Clawson, 183.

¹⁸ The use of fee payments and costume expenses as barriers to the working class are discussed in chapter three and four.

England in 1717 solidified Masonry as an institution.¹⁹ This represented the first move made by Masons to organise on a national scale. An increased emphasis on elaborate rituals committed to memory and costumes characterised the Eighteenth Century rise of Masonry in England.

The original members of the Northern Light Lodge received some of their degrees from an American lodge in Minnesota and received permission to open a lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota and consequently it is likely that they adhered to American Rite Masonry before 1869. There are two major forms of Masonry, Ancient York Rite and Scottish Rite. The major difference between the two is the association of auxiliary degrees in Scottish Rite Masonry over and above the initial three Blue Lodge degrees. Blue Lodge Masonry, sometimes referred to as Craft Masonry, is comprised of the three main degrees of Masonry; Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason. All candidates intending to become a Master Mason, irrespective of Rite, must progress through the first two degrees in the order listed above. Each degree is composed of a series of stories, questions and answers that the prospective initiate must memorize and recite in front of the entire lodge. These stories and questions are comparable to a play that each candidate must participate in to advance to the next stage. Ancient York Rite is recognised by Masons as the oldest and purest form of Masonry. There is also American Rite Masonry, which is an altered form of York Rite that evolved in the American colonies into a slightly changed system with slightly different and less formal wording chosen for the Blue Lodge degrees. In Canada, most lodges practiced York Rite Masonry, sometimes referred to as Canadian, and this form is slightly altered from Ancient York Rite. The highest degree that can be

¹⁹ The Grand Lodge of England was created through the amalgamation of four smaller lodges. Stevenson, 4.

achieved is that of the Master Mason. Further degrees are not considered higher but do represent the quest for additional knowledge. Similarly, Ancient York and American Rite Masonry both include Royal Arch Masonry, which was formerly part of the third degree in York Rite and part of the fourth in American Rite.²⁰ After it disbanded, many members of the Northern Light Lodge that had practised American Rite Masonry joined the newly formed Lisgar Lodge in 1871 leading, in part, to what Masons refer to as the schism of 1878.²¹

This thesis relies mainly on three historical literatures and a body of primary sources written by Masons in Manitoba and in the United States. Gender history provides a context for which to understand the performance of masculinity. Consequently, it allows for an understanding of the constructions of gender in the private and public rituals of Masonry. Cultural history and certain anthropological theories provide frameworks for which to understand the science of symbolism and power of ritual and their implications to group cohesion.²² Masonry is essentially a system of symbols chosen specifically to draw attention to certain values and ideas and so cultural history and anthropological theory are crucial to this investigation. From histories of class originates the supposition that class does not exist in a vacuum and classes can only be recognised in opposition to one another.²³ This opposition was manifested in terms of background, economic status, social and business relationships and choice of

²⁰ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 44.

²¹ This disagreement is discussed in detail in chapter two.

²² See primarily the studies done by anthropologist Victor Turner for an anthropological examination of the effects of symbol and ritual on group cohesion and behavior. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, (Chicago, 1969).

²³ Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900*, (Cambridge, 1989).

leisure activities. This knowledge allows for an investigation into the way in which Masons in Manitoba strove to define themselves. By defining themselves as respectable bourgeois men, and acting accordingly to the way they wished to be viewed, they simultaneously defined who did not belong to their group.

In terms of primary sources this thesis relies most heavily on the written work of Masons themselves. Most Masonic lodges in Canada, England and in the United States designated "Grand Historians" to chronicle the history of Masonry as well as their respective lodges. William Douglas was the only Grand Historian to write a fairly complete history of Masonry in Manitoba, *Freemasonry in Manitoba, 1864-1925*.²⁴ This work has been an immeasurably helpful publication because many documents, minutes of meetings and letters have been reprinted by Douglas. These minutes and letters would not have been included otherwise due to the fact that in order to view Masonic minute books, one must be a Mason in good standing and consequently male. Also, due to a series of unfortunate events in the history of Masonry, many records prior to 1900 were lost to fire and the collapse of a building, discussed in chapter two. Douglas came to Winnipeg from Scotland in 1904 and was a Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, a Grand Master of the St. John's Lodge in Winnipeg and a President of the Manitoba Historical Society. Douglas was also a founding member of the First Presbyterian Church and an Alderman for the City of Winnipeg from 1921 to 1922. Douglas died on December 11, 1963 and was buried at Kildonan Cemetery. The histories of Masonry that were written by Grand Historians and other Masons were most often concerned with documenting notable figures that were Masons and examining the origins of their organisation. By examining the language used in the two most prominent

²⁴ William Douglas, *Freemasonry in Manitoba, 1864-1925*, (Winnipeg: 1925) and Douglas, *The Story of Number Four: Being a brief summary of the happenings in St. John's Lodge 1875-1950*, (Winnipeg, 1950).

ritual books of the Manitoba Masons, *Ecce Orienti* and *The Work* and William Douglas's *Freemasonry in Manitoba* it is possible to determine the construction of the Masonic character. The collective writings of the Masons and their choice of ritual offer a glimpse into this Nineteenth Century group and their desire to be considered as respectable bourgeois men.

In the 1980s, American historians began to examine the relevance of the performance of organised group ritual to cultural hegemony. American scholars have investigated the performance of rituals and membership in Masonry in terms of gender, class and culture. Lynn Dumenil's, *Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880-1930*, was first to recognise the significance of Masonic ritual to American culture.²⁵ Mark C. Carnes's, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*, and Mary Ann Clawson's, *Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender, and Fraternalism*, expanded on this seminal work to include analyses of gender and class.²⁶ British scholars, for example David Stevenson's *The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's century, 1590-1710* and Peter Clark's *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World*, have produced the majority of information concerning the origins and evolution of early Masonry. These historians created a theoretical framework that can be relied upon to examine secret societies in Canada. The only relevant and comparable work done by a Canadian historian is Christopher Anstead's *Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario: Secret Societies and Cultural Hegemony*. This title is misleading as the majority of this dissertation is concerned with secret societies in two small towns and it does not adequately access the implications of rituals or the language of performance to the

²⁵ Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880-1930*, (New Jersey, 1984).

²⁶ See Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America*, (New York, 1989) and Mary Ann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender, and Fraternalism*, (New Jersey, 1989).

culture of respectability. However, Anstead's work was groundbreaking in the sense that he was the first non-Mason Canadian scholar to attempt to delve into secret societies and their impact on cultural hegemony.

This work is separated into four chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. The first chapter is mainly concerned with the beginning and early stages of Masonry in Canada and in Manitoba. It details the earliest known installation of Masonry in what is now Canada as well as the first lodge in Manitoba. This chapter also gives a context for the relatively non-contested emergence of Masonry in Manitoba in contrast to its development in Ontario. Masonry in Manitoba between 1864 and 1900 can roughly be divided into two periods, pre and post 1870. Prior to 1870 the Northern Light Lodge in Manitoba was the only Masonic Lodge and it went quietly out of existence just before the upheaval. The dissolution of the Northern Light Lodge was in part attributable to the events in Red River. There were members in the lodge who supported Riel, when the Grand Master, John Christian Schultz, did not.

The second chapter, and remainder of the thesis, focuses on the post 1870 era. It examines the rise of Masonry in Manitoba until 1900 through the development of four separate lodges and the Grand Lodge of Manitoba. The membership of these first four lodges was composed primarily of the commercial elite. This research was particularly challenging due to the number of times lodge records were destroyed by fire and aged, collapsed buildings. What is commonly referred to by Masons in Manitoba as the 'Schism of 1878' will be investigated in this chapter in regards to the decision about ritual use in the temples. Finally, this chapter will discuss the uniqueness of Manitoba Masonry. Masonry was an institution used to construct, enforce and demonstrate the respectable status of the commercial elite in Manitoba. This made Manitoban Masonry unique because membership was used to advertise respectable status.

Chapter three discusses the private functions and ceremonies held within the temples. Through the recitation of rituals, which were chosen to draw attention to certain values, Masons were privately socialised into specific world and moral views. This chapter is concerned with the language used in ritual as well as the physical surroundings of the temple, the private voting ceremonies that decided prospective members' acceptance and the private versus public views of the Masons on temperance in Red River. The ritual language used by the Masons was chosen to emphasise respectability and masculinity. The Order of the Eastern Star (OES), the women's auxiliary to the Masons, will also be discussed in brief in order to provide a context to the gender exclusive nature of Masonry. Even though the OES in Manitoba was not instituted until 1922 and thus is outside the parameters of this thesis, the strictness of the reification of Victorian gender roles through ritual and the structure of these organisations must be viewed in contrast.

Chapter four examines the public activities of the Masons in Manitoba as they strove to advertise themselves as belonging to a respectable institution and thus be regarded as respectable Victorian men. This was achieved through public demonstrations of group unity. This chapter will investigate the social activities put on by lodges and their Victorian nature. Lists of members and their families who attended the balls, evenings of entertainment and dinners put on by lodges were published in the *Nor'Wester* and read like a veritable who's who of Manitoba in the late Nineteenth Century. Chapter four will also analyse the public appearances of Masons, such as the marches to lay cornerstones in Winnipeg and funeral parades, which were done in full Masonic costume. This public advertisement of respectability and belonging was extended to the grave and some Masons even had the square and compass engraved on their tombstones. The square and compass are the most commonly used symbols of Masonry and are discussed in chapter three.

The conclusion briefly reviews the persistence of Masonry to the present day. In recent years, membership numbers have declined and the average age of Masons in Manitoba has increased significantly. Masonry as an institution has not evolved with time. The values that Masons placed emphasis on in the late Nineteenth Century and the exclusive gender roles inherent to the rituals and organisation have also remained stagnant throughout the Twentieth Century. The lack of academic documentation regarding Masonry and the history of other secret societies in Canada requires remedy. This thesis is not meant to be representative of the evolution of Masonry in other provinces and territories but simply a beginning to understanding its complexity in Manitoba.

Chapter One

“The most moral human institution that ever existed” comes to Red River

Masonry in Manitoba can be roughly divided into two distinct eras. Prior to the uprising in Red River, the Northern Light Lodge was the only lodge in Manitoba and received its charter from the Grand Lodge of Minnesota. Although small in numbers, the character of membership in the Northern Light Lodge foreshadowed the development of Masonry as a vehicle for demonstrating respectability after 1869. All of the members of the Manitoba Masons can be classified as Accepted Masons. The term Accepted Mason designated a member who was not a literal stonemason. Stonemasons, a few of which held membership in early British lodges, were referred to as Freemasons. Masons proclaim their organisation to be the most moral institution in the history of humanity. Their professed values were consistent with and reinforced Victorian values and the secret rites, public activities of lodges and character of membership reified their respectable status. Consequently, membership in the Manitoba Masons became an avenue for the commercial elite to, publicly and privately, negotiate their status as part of the social elite.

After 1870, Masonry grew rapidly in Manitoba and the installation of four lodges that received charters from the Grand Lodge of Canada and the Grand Lodge of Manitoba was testament to its popularity as a haven for men to celebrate and publicly demonstrate their masculinity and respectable status. The main body of this thesis is concerned with the post 1870 development of Masonry but it is necessary to give a brief overview of the origins of Masonry as well as the circumstances under which the Northern Light Lodge went quietly out of existence.

Red River, in the 1850s and 60s has been described by historians as a community divided and on the verge of collapse owing to either the pressures of

possible annexation or disputes that pitted colonists against one another. Frits Pannekoek argued that the conventions and shared attitudes of European women and the Church Missionary Society strengthened the growing divide between Europeans and the Metis population in Red River.¹ Through a discussion of court cases Pannekoek paints a picture of Red River as a divided community that thrived on gossip. However, the most important part of this analysis is that Red River was a settlement in the process of change in terms of attitudes towards concepts of race and appropriate gender behavior. Gerald Friesen, while recognising the value of this assertion, suggests that the evolution of political interest groups and daily life in the settlement should also be taken into account to create a more holistic image.² By the time Masonry was introduced to the settlement, the trade monopoly of the HBC had been undermined and the death of Sir George Simpson in 1860 marked the end of an era. The Metis were indeed a community in transition and some had begun to adopt the values of an entrepreneurial class.³ To assert that the citizens of Red River were concerned over the possibility of annexation and property rights is accurate, however, this was not a weak community on the verge of disintegration and to assess it as such is simplistic. Red River was an emerging community in terms of trade relationships and had become an attractive environment to settlers who had begun to arrive in significant numbers.

There are many histories of Masonry but the majority were written by Masons and are more concerned with symbolism and the recording of notable, male figures in history who were Masons. The histories written by Masons and non-Mason historians

¹ See Frits Pannekoek, *A Snug Little Flock: The Social Origins of the Riel Resistance of 1869-70* (Winnipeg, 1991).

² Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto, 1987), 113.

³ Friesen, 113.

often disagree over the date that Masonry was introduced to Canada. As well, there is little written history addressing the fraternal character of lodges or their contributions to cultural hegemony. Christopher J. Anstead is the only historian who focuses on the fraternal and cultural aspects of Masonry in Canada, particularly in Ontario, and he argues that evidence of Masonic lodges and activity in Canada dates to Eighteenth Century Upper Canada. Anstead asserts that Masonry was instituted in Canada directly following the battle for Quebec and was brought to Canada by the British.⁴ Some of the earliest known evidence of Masons being present in Upper Canada was in the late Eighteenth Century during the first meeting of the Legislative Assembly. Anstead states that this first meeting, in Niagra, was held in the hall of a Masonic lodge, and therefore Masonry predated the Legislative Assembly in Upper Canada.⁵ The fact that men of political influence used the Masonic lodge is indicative of the character and background of the men who were Masons. At that time it would only have been possible for men to utilise a Masonic hall if a percentage of them were Masons. Consequently, there were men in the Upper Canada Legislative Assembly that were Masons and a percentage of Masons were involved in politics. The earliest evidence of Masonry in what is now Manitoba was discovered at the mouth of the Churchill River. In 1733, J. Robson and a contingent of Scottish Masons were commissioned by the Hudson's Bay Company to construct Fort Prince of Wales. At this location the Masonic square and compass are engraved, see figure 1.1, but it is not clear if they are grave markers or simply carvings.⁶

⁴ Christopher J. Anstead, *Fraternalism in Victorian Ontario: Secret Societies and Cultural Hegemony* (Ontario, 1992), 104-5.

⁵ Anstead, 104-5.

⁶ Robert E. Emmett, "One Hundred Years of Freemasonry in Manitoba", in *Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba Transactions* series III, no. 31 (1974-5), 53.

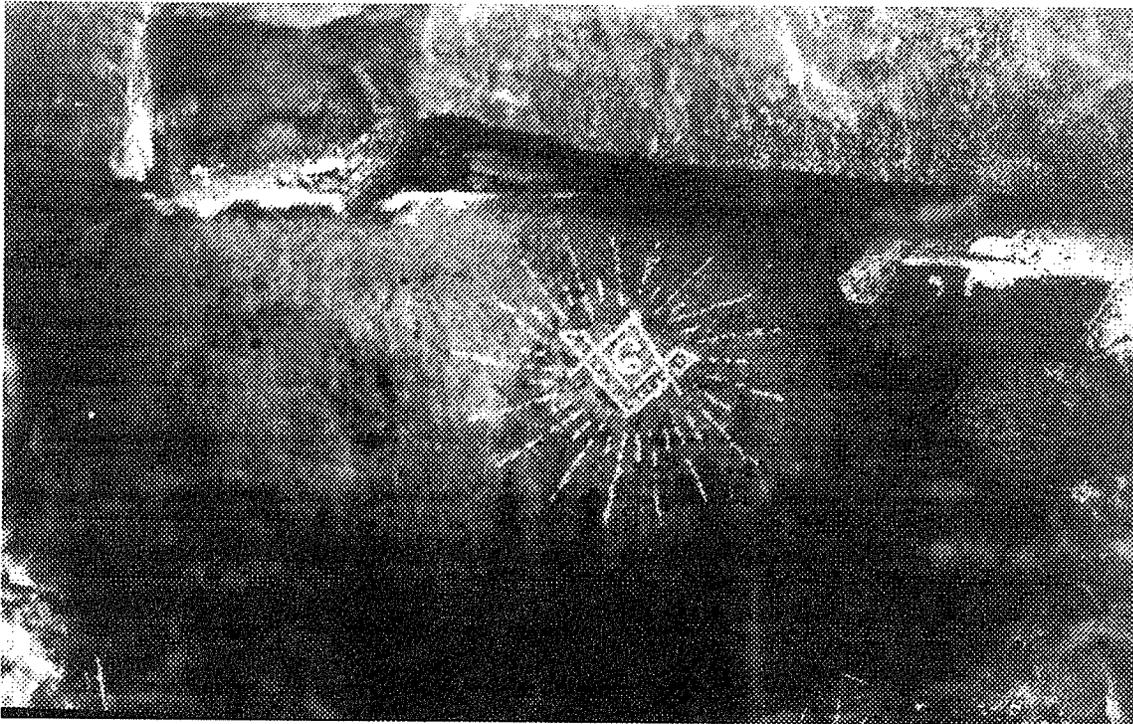


Figure 1.1

7

The majority of Canadian histories of Masonry, which were written by Masons, argue that the first evidence of Masonry in Canada was a full century earlier. The 'Masonic Stone' or 'Nova Scotia Stone' was discovered on the shore of Goat Island in the Annapolis Basin in Nova Scotia. On this stone was carved the most widely recognised Masonic symbol, the square and compass, as well as the date 1606.⁸ The square and compass are part of the Three Great Lights of Masonry, which are discussed in detail in chapter three. The Masons generally posit that this stone was a grave marker as it was found near a burial site, which was marked on a map belonging to

⁷ Courtesy of Parks Canada.

⁸ Myron Lusk, "The History and Development of Freemasonry in Canada", http://www.4masonry.com/education/files/artjul02/history_and_dev..., 2.

Champlain. The 'Nova Scotia Stone' was donated to the Canadian Institute of Toronto, a museum on the corner of Richmond and Berti Streets, to be set in the wall of their new building but unfortunately after the construction of the building, the stone was accidentally plastered over.⁹ To this date the exact location of the stone in this building is unknown. There are, however, pictures of the stone taken previously and a record of the donation held at the Institute.¹⁰

William Douglas wrote the only history of Masonry in Manitoba and the details are at times fragmented.¹¹ Douglas asserts that the first warrant for the lodge to be named Northern Light came from the Grand Lodge of Minnesota in 1863 and was given to Masons to begin a lodge at Fort Pembina, Dakotah Territory.¹² The soldiers who were granted permission to open the lodge at Fort Pembina were a contingent of cavalry who, under Major Hatch, had been dispensed in pursuit of members of the Sioux they intended to arrest. These men arrived at Fort Pembina late in the fall and had no means of securing ample supplies for the coming winter.¹³ Consequently, soldiers were sent to Red River to obtain supplies. Douglas argues that the soldiers who came to Red River most likely fraternised with the settlers and sparked an interest in Masonry.¹⁴ This assertion is substantiated by a passage in the Nor'Wester, Red River's newspaper, which reads:

A party from this settlement proceeded to Pembina a few weeks since to join the Masonic Order, through the Lodge established there. They took the necessary

⁹ R.W. Bro. Reginald V. Harris, "The Masonic Stone of 1606", in *The Builder Magazine* v.X, no. 10 (Nova Scotia, 1924).

¹⁰ Lusk, 2.

¹¹ William Douglas, *Freemasonry in Manitoba, 1864-1925* (Winnipeg, 1925).

¹² Douglas, 6.

¹³ Douglas, 8.

¹⁴ Douglas, 10.

degrees to qualify them to open a Lodge here, which it is their intention to do on receipt of a dispensation from the Grand Lodge, application for which had already been made.

We will be glad to see Masonry established in our midst, for in its organization and teaching it is admirably adapted to do good in every community...¹⁵

This positive outlook on Masonry is attributable primarily to the fact that John Christian Schultz and William Coldwell who, at the time, jointly owned the *Nor'Wester*, were respectively the new Worshipful Master and Secretary in Red River.

This positive attitude towards Masonry is further supported in Joseph James Hargrave's *Red River* when he chronicles the earliest development of Masonry in Manitoba:

Several of the officers of Major Hatch's Battalion were connected with the Order of Freemasons, and it was probably during their frequent visits to the colony that they succeeded in exciting in the minds of the settlers the desire to enter the brotherhood of the Mystic Tie.

Early in March, 1864, a party from the Settlement proceeded to Pembina... Having taken the requisite degrees to qualify them for opening a lodge of their own, they returned home, looking very much solemnized, and very wise.¹⁶

This statement supports the assertion of Douglas but more importantly demonstrates the perception of Masonry as a respectable institution whose degrees emphasise specific values. Hargrave's *Red River* and passages from the *Nor'Wester*, were Douglas's main sources used to support his assertions. Also, Douglas's work was published in 1925 and a considerable portion of the history came from speaking with Masons who were alive at the time or had heard oral histories from other members. Douglas's oral histories generally come from a group of men who had a vested interest in Masonry being seen as a respectable institution and this affects the extremely positive tone of the

¹⁵ The *Nor'Wester* (March 17, 1864).

¹⁶ Joseph James Hargrave, *Red River* (Altona, 1871), 322.

text. Before the members of the Northern Light Lodge at Fort Pembina departed, a petition was received from A.G.B. Bannatyne, a Mason from Red River, requesting permission to form a Lodge at Red River to also be called the Northern Light Lodge.¹⁷ The Worshipful Master of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota granted their petition and the Masons in Red River opened a lodge.

The Northern Light Lodge only existed briefly and consequently spent the majority of its time conferring degrees on new members. This lengthy process is discussed in greater detail in chapter three. However, it is necessary to briefly describe the invented tradition that the Northern Light Lodge was following. Masonry, since the segregation of English lodges, has reflected a fascination with Ancient Egypt but the elements incorporated into the rituals were based on inaccurate knowledge dating from the Renaissance. Because Ancient Egypt was the oldest civilisation known to any certain degree to the British during the Renaissance, intellectuals of the period perceived that the understanding of man and the universe possessed by the Egyptians was greater than any other. Travel narratives and published orientalist studies served as the basis of this western perception and served to create an image of the exotic and mysterious east which Masons used to construct an image of their society as mysterious. Many Masonic symbols are taken from Ancient Egypt, for example the eye of Isis, which is interchangeably used by Masons with the letter "G", designating the eye of God. It was also believed that Hermes Trismegistus, an Egyptian, was the embodiment of all Egyptian knowledge. Trismegistus means thrice great, and consequently the number three is consistent throughout Masonry. For example, the meeting rooms of Masons must have three pillars, there are Three Great Lights of Masonry and three vices

¹⁷ Douglas, 16.

Masons were to avoid.¹⁸ Hermes reportedly lived during the second century AD and was reputed to have been privy to the secrets of the universe. Around 1460, Cosimo di Medici purchased a manuscript, wrongly attributed to Hermes, and this became known as the *Hermetica*. This manuscript became the basis for Renaissance Hermeticism.¹⁹ Hermetic thought was based on a philosophy of intense piety and spiritual quests where man sought to become filled with divine power and virtue. Spiritual questing and the search for knowledge, power and truth are emphasised in the three main rituals of Masonry. The adoption of this philosophy gave Masonry a mysterious character and historical legitimacy.

When the group of men who became the first members of the Northern Light Lodge in Manitoba received their charter from the Grand Lodge of Minnesota in 1864 and elected their first officers in 1865 they published their names and stations in the *Nor'Wester*. This action was the first of many public announcements by this secret society in Manitoba, which was anything but secret. The advertisement in the *Nor'Wester* reads as follows:

W.M.-----Dr. Schultz
 S.W.-----Mr. Bannatyne
 J.W.-----Mr. W. Inkster
 Secy-----Mr. Coldwell
 Treas-----Mr. Sheal
 Chaplain-----Ven. Archdeacon Hunter
 S.D.-----Mr. Hall
 J.D.-----Mr. Curtis
 Stewards-----Dr. Bird and Rev. W. Taylor

¹⁸ The three vices are ignorance, selfishness and sensuality and the Three Great Lights of Masonry are the square, the compass and the Bible. These are discussed in greater detail in chapter three.

¹⁹ Marsilio Ficino translated this manuscript. W. Kirk MacNulty, *Freemasonry: A Journey Through Ritual and Symbol* (London, 1991), 12.

Tyler-----Mr. Morgan²⁰

By using William Douglas and Alan Artibise's work in combination with J.M. Bumsted's *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography* it is possible to trace the occupations of the majority of these men and they were primarily professional businessmen, involved in politics at some point in their lives and were a percentage of the commercial elite in Red River. Directly following the establishment of the Northern Light Lodge in Red River, other prominent men in the colony were initiated. The other members of the Lodge were: Rev T.T. Smith, Thomas Bunn, John Bunn, E.L. Barber, E.H.G.G. Hay, Hector McKenzie, William McMurray, Ewen McDonald, Samuel Pritchard, Rollin Meade, Thomas Taylor, Matthew Connor, Philip Kennedy, George Davis and Donald Ross.²¹ These men were the first in Red River to publicly demonstrate their membership in the Masonic fraternity and use it to establish and advertise their respectable status.

Between the years 1864 and 1900 there is evidence of only one potential denial of a petition for admittance to any Manitoba lodge. In November of 1865, Pierre Larson petitioned the Northern Light Lodge for admittance and was never initiated.²² This is the only recorded instance where a petition was received and degrees were not conferred. Although it is possible that Larson revoked his application or that he left the colony, it is also possible that he was denied admittance based on religion. Historically, members of Masonry have openly denied petitions based on their perceptions of race but not in terms of religious faith. For example, in the United States, African American men were

²⁰ Officers were elected for a term of one year. W.M. – Worshipful Master, S.W. – Senior Warden, J.W. – Junior Warden, Secy – Secretary, Treas – Treasurer, S.D. – Senior Deacon, J.D. – Junior Deacon. Nor'Wester, (January 23, 1865).

²¹ All of these men were initiated in the years 1864 and 1865 with the exceptions of Rollin Meade and Thomas Taylor who received the degrees in 1866. Douglas, 46.

²² Douglas, 46.

forced to create their own segregated lodges, as established Masons who identified as white refused to recognise them. However, due to pressure from the Vatican it was not likely that many Catholics were Masons. Also, even if Pierre Larson was Metis, there already were at least two men who belonged to the lodge who were Metis; William Inskster, the Junior Warden of the Northern Light Lodge, was Metis and Thomas Bunn's mother was Metis.²³ In the small community of Winnipeg the Masons would have been aware of a prospective candidate's familial background and consequently even if a man chose to identify as "white" and not Metis, it most likely would have been known if he were even part Metis. Therefore it is more likely that Larson was denied membership based on religion as other Metis men were accepted.

Officially, Masons only required an individual to profess a belief in a supreme being to gain admittance. However, Catholics did not belong to Masonry in Manitoba in large numbers. The Vatican forbade joining and the only group in Red River to adamantly oppose the formation of a lodge here was the Catholic clergy.²⁴ Masonry was first banned by the Papacy in 1738 when Pope Clement XII issued a Papal Bull excommunicating Catholics who were members and reserving the right to absolve them to him alone.²⁵ This was not the only secret society to be targeted by the Papacy. In the same year, and in conjunction with Philip the Fair of France, Pope Clement XII ordered

²³ This information is based on the research of J.M. Bumsted. J.M. Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography* (Winnipeg, 1999), 39 and 119.

²⁴ Hargrave attests to the fact that the Roman Catholic clergy publicly condemned the arrival of Masonry in Red River and asserts that they were the only ones to do so. Hargrave, 323.

²⁵ J.M. Roberts, *The Mythology of the Secret Societies* (New York, 1972), 68.

the dissolution of the Order of Knight Templars.²⁶ Following in the footsteps of Pope Clement XII, Pope Pius VII, in 1814, forbid the meetings of all secret societies, renewed the Papal Bull of 1738 and made it known that those Catholics who persisted with Masonry could be punished by death.²⁷ The position of the Vatican was that Masonry, being secretive, endangered the practice of confession and consequently, of absolution.²⁸ Even though the penalty officially was excommunication, there is little evidence to suggest that many Catholics were excommunicated and there were Catholic Masons in the United States.²⁹

J.M. Bumsted argues that Masonry preached anti-Catholicism in its secret rites and therefore attracted men who were hostile to the Roman Catholic Church.³⁰ If Pierre Larson was Catholic and if Masonry did preach anti-Catholicism, this could have been the reason behind the denial of his application. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the Worshipful Master of the Northern Light Lodge, John Christian Schultz, was also a member of the Loyal Orange Order, a group of militantly Protestant men who did preach anti-Catholicism. The Loyal Orange Order originated in 1795 in a rural village in the province of Ulster, Ireland. The Orange Order was named for the Prince of Orange, King William III who defeated James II at the Battle of Boyne River on July 12th 1690.

²⁶ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 26.

²⁷ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 29.

²⁸ J.M. Roberts, 70.

²⁹ Mary Ann Clawson asserts that there were less Catholic Masons due to the Papal threats, but many joined anyway. Clawson, 130.

³⁰ J.M. Bumsted, *Thomas Scott's Body: And Other Essays on Early Manitoba History* (Winnipeg, 2000), 165.

This battle represented the victory of Protestantism and constitutional monarchy, to the Orange Order.³¹ The Orange Order was introduced into Canada early in the Nineteenth Century, by Irish, Protestant soldiers and emigrants, and to Manitoba in 1870. The spread of Orangeism in Manitoba was directly related to the execution of Thomas Scott who was an Orangeman, at the command of Louis Riel, as well as the appeal of the death sentence on Ambroise Lepine, Riel's lieutenant.³² The Orange Lodge issued a statement in their 1946 *75th Anniversary* publication and asserted that these events:

aroused the Protestants beyond measure. They, then and there, realized that organization was their only hope to secure justice and preserve their own liberty. They organized. Lodges sprang up all over the Province, and the rebels and disloyal elements hid to their hidden holes like rats from a sinking ship.³³

The aim of the Orange Order was the defence of Protestantism and members believed that because the primary allegiance of Catholics was to the Pope, that they could not possibly be loyal subjects in a Protestant state.³⁴ The exact date that John Schultz became a member of the Orange Order is not clear but his membership indicates sympathy towards the professions of Orangeism. All of this is made problematic by the fact that John Schultz, despite being a Mason and an Orangeman, married Agnes Campbell Farquharson in 1867 according to Roman Catholic rite.³⁵

The development of Masonry in Manitoba was unique because, although opposed by the Roman Catholic clergy, the anti-Masonic excitement of the 1820s and

³¹ Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smith, *The Sash Canada Wore: A Historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada* (Toronto, 1980), 3.

³² Grand Orange Lodge of Manitoba, *75th Anniversary, 1871-1946*, 1.

³³ Grand Orange Lodge of Manitoba, 1. The research done by Houston and Smith concurs with the assertion of the Orange Lodge regarding their motives for expanding into Manitoba. Houston and Smith, 58.

³⁴ See Houston and Smith for a detailed history of the Order in Canada. Houston and Smith, 4-6.

³⁵ Bumsted, *Thomas Scott's Body*, 164-5.

30s in the United States and Ontario had quieted considerably. Historian Clarence N. Roberts argues that the anti-Masonic movement originated with the abduction of William Morgan in 1826 in New York.³⁶ It was popular belief at the time that Morgan was abducted and murdered by Masons just after his release from jail where he had allegedly written an expose on the secrets of Masonry.³⁷ By the end of the year 1826, the anti-Masonic movement in the United States was national in scope and led by Jonathan Blanchard, the founder of the National Christian Association (NCA).³⁸ The NCA used the alleged Morgan murder in their crusade and went so far as to erect monuments in Morgan's honour.³⁹ In the Masonic Edition of the King James Bible the Masons refuted the accusation and claimed that the whole affair "was characterized by false charges, political virulence, and hypocritical vindictiveness. It was soon completely defeated and annihilated by liberty-loving, freedom devoted Americans".⁴⁰

Anti-Masonic activity was characterised by the appeal of the NCA to churches to disallow anyone associated with Masonry and the publication of anti-Masonic literature in the *Cynosure*, the magazine of the NCA.⁴¹ Women were central to the crusade of the NCA and this is reflective of women's activities during the Second Great Awakening. In the first half of the Nineteenth Century, the Second Great Awakening saw women's

³⁶ Clarence N. Roberts, "The Crusade Against Secret Societies and the National Christian Association", in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 64 (1971), 382.

³⁷ William Morgan spent time in prison for his failure to pay a debt of \$2.69. William Preston Vaughn, *The Antimasonic Party in the United States, 1826-1843* (Kentucky, 1983), 1.

³⁸ Clarence N. Roberts, 382.

³⁹ See "The Morgan Monument", in *New York Times*, September 15, 1882 and "An Old Tragedy Revived", in *New York Times*, September 14, 1882.

⁴⁰ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 24.

⁴¹ The *Cynosure* also attacked other "social evils" of the time such as saloons. Clarence N. Roberts, 384-7.

membership in churches dramatically increase, also their participation in church activities such as revivals and generally an altered experience of American Protestantism for women. The NCA held anti-secret society conventions across the United States asserting that Masonry in particular was “sinful...in flat contradiction with the teachings of the Bible...and a refuge for criminals”.⁴² The effects of the attacks on Masonry by the NCA were far reaching in the beginning. Christopher J. Anstead argues that the Morgan affair in the United States corresponded with a considerable drop in membership to Masonic lodges in Ontario.⁴³ As Masonry in Manitoba was not instituted until 1864, the anti-Masonic excitement that affected membership in Ontario did not act as a deterrent in Red River.

The first official meeting of the Northern Light Lodge was held on November 8 in 1864 in a room over the store of merchant, A.G.B. Bannatyne.⁴⁴ This store was at the corner of Post Office Street and Main Street, which is now the corner of Main Street and Lombard Avenue, see figure 1.2. The Lodge met every Monday night in order to confer degrees and deal with other business. The Lodge always advertised the dates of their meetings in the *Nor'Wester*. In a community the size of Red River, roughly only 12,000 by 1869, and in consideration of the fact that the lodge met regularly on Monday nights, this was hardly necessary. It is more likely that the meetings were advertised in order to demonstrate who belonged to the Lodge, as names of who was holding the meeting and who called it, for example, were always included. The meetings in Red River attracted enough attention from other settlers that Joseph James Hargrave chronicled the

⁴² “Anti-Secret Society Convention”, in *New York Times*, June 3, 1874.

⁴³ See Anstead.

⁴⁴ See the *Nor'Wester* for advertisement of the meeting. *Nor'Wester*, November 2, 1864 and Douglas, 18.

activities of the Lodge regularly in his *Red River*. It is apparent from the lists of recorded members of the Lodge, all of which are possible to identify, that Hargrave was never a member of the Northern Light Lodge in Manitoba. On one occasion, speaking of members of the Lodge he wrote that "Many of the wealthier people in the colony had joined the lodge, and the number included a highly respectable proportion of the resident Anglican clergy".⁴⁵ This statement supports the argument that



POST OFFICE STREET, RED RIVER SETTLEMENT, 1864
BARRACKS BUILDING (WITH FLAG POLE) WHERE NORTHERN LIGHT LODGE MET

46

Figure 1.2

⁴⁵ There are multiple instances in *Red River* when Hargrave discusses the activities and characters of the men who joined. Hargrave, 345.

⁴⁶ Post Office Street, Douglas, 37.

Masons in Red River were primarily of the commercial elite because the men who made up the commercial elite were generally the wealthier men in the community and sheds light on who was considered respectable.⁴⁷

The strength of the fraternal bond shared between members of the Northern Light Lodge is exemplified in the events surrounding the arrest of John Schultz in 1868. After the dissolution of Schultz's business partnership with Henry McKenney, Mr. F. E. Kew, who had been a creditor of their business, received legal recourse to claim an old debt.⁴⁸ McKenney was the sheriff at the time and was required to enforce this judgement. When Schultz refused to comply with the order, McKenney attempted to confiscate goods from Schultz's store in a comparable amount to the payment.⁴⁹ A struggle ensued with the sheriff and his deputies and Schultz was arrested and taken to Upper Fort Garry. Agness Campbell Farquharson Schultz, wife of John Schultz, and a party of about fifteen men rescued Schultz on January 18, 1868.⁵⁰ In a special edition of the *Nor'Wester*, John Schultz recounted his tale and described the men who accompanied his wife as non "disreputable characters".⁵¹ It is not clear as to whether any of the men who aided Schultz in his jailbreak were members of the Northern Light Lodge as no names are mentioned. However, this event is referenced in a letter written from A.G.B. Bannatyne to Schultz in the same year. Bannatyne writes:

...even though I think you are wrong just now and may get in trouble... I was until that time perfectly unaware of any intention on the part of the Sheriff to take any steps against you. I have seen many and know the opinions of many settlers in the matter. Let me know if I can assist you. This I do for on our Masonic vows...

⁴⁷ Robert E. Emmett, 55.

⁴⁸ See Bumsted for a full description of these events. Bumsted, *Thomas Scott's Body* 166-9.

⁴⁹ Bumsted, 167.

⁵⁰ Bumsted, 167.

⁵¹ Bumsted, 167.

From fraternally and sincerely
A.G.B. Bannatyne⁵²

This letter demonstrates the cohesiveness and unity of the Northern Light Lodge as well as the general power of Masonic vows over members. Even though Bannatyne viewed the behaviour of Schultz as wrong, he offered him assistance based on their fraternal bond.

The circumstance under which the Northern Light Lodge disbanded, just before the Red River uprising, are unclear. Some Masonic historians, for example Osborne Sheppard in his edited history of Masonry in Canada, attribute the dissolution of the lodge to the scattering of the members.⁵³ This assertion is problematic due to the fact that the majority of members of the Lodge remained in Red River after the events of 1869. William McMurray was deceased and William Coldwell departed in 1865 but returned in 1869.⁵⁴ The only other evidence of member's departure concerns T. Bunn. In the minutes of an 1866 meeting it was decided that T. Bunn would take a petition of the Northern Light Lodge to the Grand Lodge of Canada to seek a charter to operate from them. Bunn was selected because he was "going to Canada anyway".⁵⁵ This implies that Bunn had business in Canada and was intent on returning with the desired charter. More importantly, these minutes indicate that the Northern Light Lodge had no intentions of disbanding. Members wished to operate under Canadian jurisdiction and the idea that members were scattered overstates the case. The fact that the members wished to operate under the Grand Lodge of Canada rather than Minnesota is indicative

⁵² J.C. Schultz Collection, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, MG 12 E1.

⁵³ Osborne Sheppard, ed. *A Concise History of Freemasonry in Canada* (Hamilton, 1915), 130.

⁵⁴ Bumsted, *Dictionary*, 53.

⁵⁵ Douglas, 32.

of the feelings of the men and their desire to separate themselves from the Minnesota Lodge and operate under the Canadian Grand Lodge.

A letter written to Mason and historian William Douglas from Charles Mair, a Mason who came to Red River as part of the first Dominion Government Expedition, tells a different story. Mair, writing on the dissolution of the Northern Light Lodge, asserted that the:

Northern Light Lodge, which was formed under a charter issued by the Grand Lodge of Minnesota, ceased to exist before I came to Red River. It was formed, I believe, to heal the fierce antagonisms of the time and place, but failed in its object, and fell to pieces.⁵⁶

This suggests that these men, who were aware that an upheaval of some kind was imminent, formed the fraternity to create a united front. Also, by publicly attempting to elevate the commercial elite and enforce group cohesion, through an institution already established as respectable, this group desired to be seen as a powerful and united force. Studying the records of the Red River settlement, Douglas concurs that the Masons would have been aware that upheaval was forthcoming long before it occurred.⁵⁷

The fraternal bonds of Masonry were strong enough between members for them to offer support in times of trouble but not strong enough to withstand dissension in the ranks. In 1868 the Rupert's Land Act was passed and negotiations began with the Hudson's Bay Company to transfer the lands to the Dominion of Canada. John Schultz believed, as did many others, that the west was part of Canada's "manifest destiny".⁵⁸ Louis Riel represented the concerns of the Roman Catholic clergy, a portion of the French speaking Metis population, the American merchants and some HBC officers who

⁵⁶ Douglas reprinted a portion of this letter in his work. Douglas, 47-8.

⁵⁷ Douglas, 48.

⁵⁸ Bumsted, *Thomas Scott's Body*, 164.

believed, that English-Canadian rule in Red River would elevate men like Schultz. The fear regarding the elevation of English-Canadians centred on the uncertainty of Metis rights, the land they farmed, ability to sit in government and have jobs in the civil service.⁵⁹

The situation was exasperated when J.S. Dennis arrived as the chief of a survey party for the Canadian government, allegedly to prepare for the rush of forthcoming settlers and stayed at the house of John Schultz.⁶⁰ At the time, A.G.B. Bannatyne had been elected as the Worshipful Master of the Northern Light Lodge.⁶¹ Bannatyne also served as postmaster in the Provisional Government of Louis Riel, although it was on the understanding that Riel sought conditions of entry from Canada.⁶² Even though Bannatyne's role was as a conciliator, this action would have met with criticism from John Schultz. After the uprising in Red River, Bannatyne also sought to aid in the release of Ambroise Lepine.⁶³ As mentioned above, the potential release of Lepine as well as the murder of Thomas Scott was a major part of the reason that the Orangemen from Ontario migrated to Manitoba. The fact that Schultz encouraged these men is indicative of his stance regarding Lepine and Scott. The events surrounding the uprising pitted Bannatyne and Schultz against each other. This explanation is more consistent with the letter written by Mair to Douglas for the dissolution of the Northern Light Lodge. Also, when Masonry was rekindled in Manitoba with the arrival of the Wolseley

⁵⁹ For a fuller description of the events surrounding the events in Red River see Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto, 1984), 117.

⁶⁰ Friesen, 117.

⁶¹ See Douglas for a listing of the newly elected officers. Douglas, 37.

⁶² Bumsted, *Dictionary*, 14.

⁶³ Bumsted, *Dictionary*, 14.

Expedition, John Schultz was again a member of one of the newly formed lodges, while A.G.B. Bannatyne was not.

The character of membership in the Northern Light Lodge foreshadowed the later development of Manitoba Masonry in the post 1870 period. Men who belonged were generally the more affluent members of society and shared similar lifestyles, attitudes and the communal desire to communicate to others that they were respectable. The Northern Light Lodge only existed for approximately six years and in that time spent the majority of their meetings conferring degrees on new members. It is possible that the circumstances under which the Lodge went out of existence were linked to the events in Red River and caused the Lodge to be divided in principle. The fact that Bannatyne had supported Schultz in the past, due to their "Masonic vows", was testament to the strength of Masonic fraternal commitment, however, this commitment did not last. Masonry was used by the Northern Light Lodge members as an avenue for publicly and privately demonstrating their cohesion and Victorian manliness but it was later that Masonry became a much more prominent and forceful institution in the settlement.

Chapter Two

“The Mystic Chain of brotherhood”: Winnipeg’s Masonic Connection.

Immediately following the Red River Rebellion and the dissolution of the Northern Light Lodge, Masonry in Manitoba was re-installed through the formation of the Prince Rupert, or Winnipeg, Lodge in 1870. Historically, membership in most secret societies has never been representative of a random sampling of a given population and Prince Rupert Lodge was no different.¹ Membership in the Masons allowed men access to a network of business connections and a physical space in which masculine standing was appraised and gender privilege was reified, as well as the opportunity to influence their immediate social and commercial world. The Manitoba Masons generally were members of the commercial elite and Masonry became an avenue for demonstrating class at a time when class boundaries were somewhat unclear. Early Winnipeg was a place where the ideals of respectability and class were in the process of negotiation and Masonry provided an avenue for men to demonstrate identity. The commercial elite measured success in terms of progress, material acquisition and upward mobility. Masonry mirrored and reinforced this notion of progress through the systems of degrees and participation in a definable, collective identity. The ideals of Masonry represented ‘old-world values’ and when Masons used this term they meant what can be termed Victorian values and attitudes. The connection to these ‘old world values’ allowed Masons to consciously connect themselves to Europe and legitimate themselves as a social elite with a connection to a respectable past.

¹ Anstead makes this assertion regarding the selection of members in Ontario and is supported by evidence found by American historians such as Lynn Dumenil, Mark C. Carnes and Mary Ann Clawson. Anstead, 184.

The re-introduction of Masonry to Manitoba came at a time of change in the prairies. The period between 1870 and 1900 saw Winnipeg's rapid rise as a commercial centre and the establishment of the ethnically and religiously homogeneous business class. Growth in the area that was designated as Winnipeg in 1873 was characterised by thriving real estate businesses as well as finance ventures.² Winnipeg was a city created by and for the business elite. The institutions of capitalism were forged there and notions of race, respectability and progress were entrenched there.³ Appropriate gender roles became the norm as did the ideal of the domestic versus the public sphere. Women were increasingly relegated to the home and were confined by the notion of 'the proper lady' while the ideal of masculinity was dependent on a man's role in the public domain. Masonry reflected these societal values and attitudes as well as those concerning a developing class-consciousness.

Winnipeg grew from a mere village of two hundred persons in 1870 to a city of over four thousand by 1879. Don Nerbas has shown that most of the business class, many of whom were Masons, were tied by blood and commerce to central Canadian capital, and did not often simply make their way unaided in Winnipeg.⁴ By 1891, Winnipeg boasted a population of over twenty-five thousand but the rise of the commercial elite was never this steady or constant. Men in Winnipeg followed the boom and bust economics of the period where a fortune could be quickly made but also just as quickly lost. The concern in Winnipeg at the time was not for the welfare of all citizens but instead for the promotion of enterprise and the commercial elite generally agreed

² Alan F.J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal, 1975), 12.

³ Friesen, 91.

⁴ Don Nerbas, 2.

that this should be the main focus of local government.⁵ Luckily for these men, the commercial elite generally composed the majority of local government in Winnipeg. The men who fostered the economic growth of Winnipeg and their own fortunes were at once members of the commercial elite as well as the social elite in this city. Respectability was in a process of negotiation and Masonry was an avenue for demonstrating this. Consequently, the commercial elite strove to establish themselves as respectable in public and in private. Membership in the Masonic Lodges of Manitoba aided in both respects.

The effort to compile comprehensive lists of Masons belonging to each lodge in Manitoba is problematic. Prior to 1900, the majority of records kept by lodges in Red River and Winnipeg were destroyed. In 1883, the roof of Harris Block, which was located behind what is now the Playhouse Theatre, on the south east corner of Main Street and Market Avenue, collapsed, see figure 2.1. This space acted as a meeting place for Masons and a repository for records, minute books and other paper documents and when it collapsed the majority of the papers were destroyed.⁶ In 1894, the top floor of the Western Canada Loan and Savings Company Building, located on the north west corner of Portage Avenue and Main Street, caught fire and again the records were destroyed.⁷ What has survived is fragmented and only provides partial insight into the operations of Masonry in Manitoba and the identity of the men who belonged.

⁵ Artibise, 23.

⁶ Robert E. Emmett, "One Hundred Years of Freemasonry in Manitoba" in *Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba Transactions* ed. Linda McDowell, series III, no. 31 (1974-5), 55-6.

⁷ Emmett, 55-6.

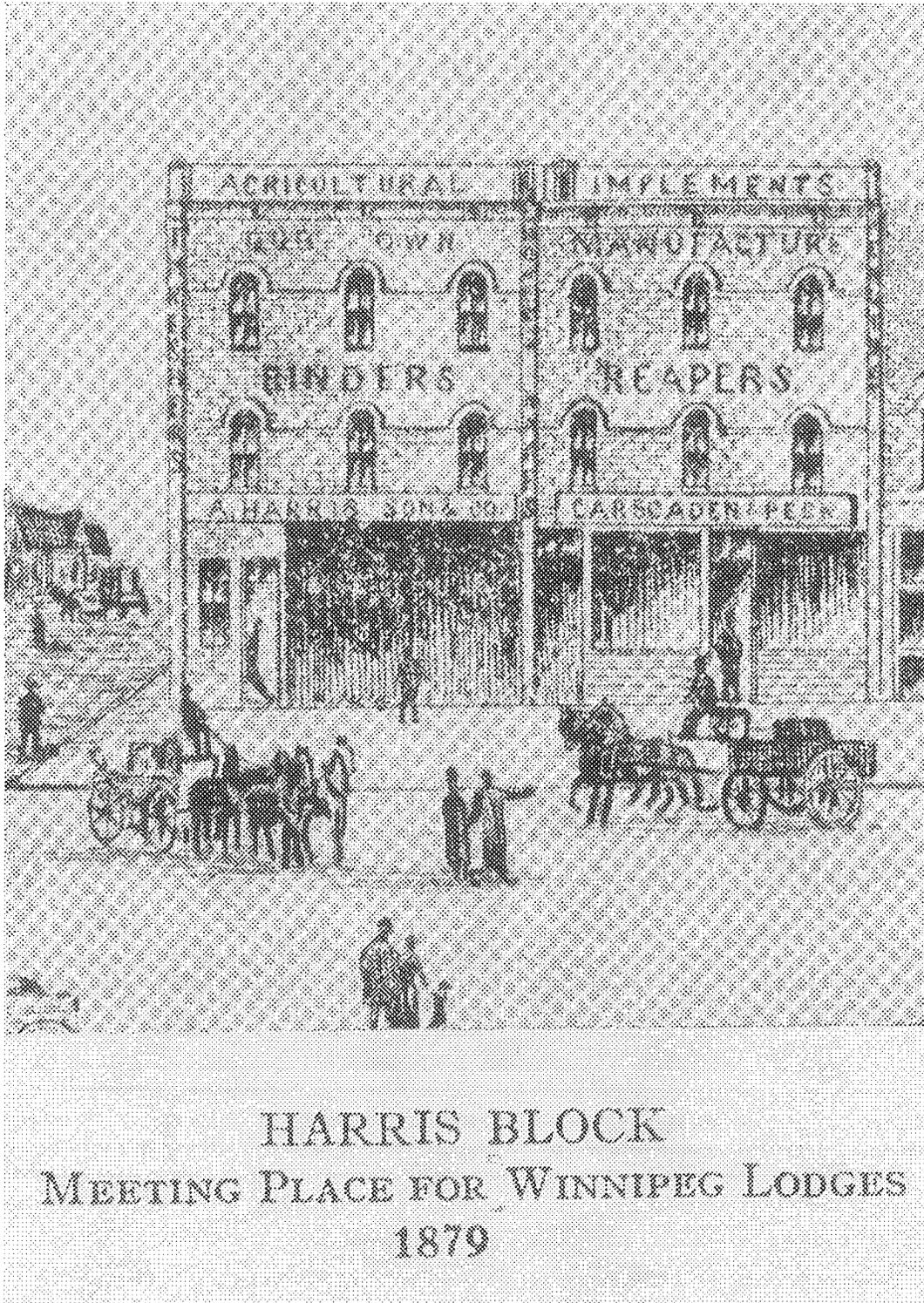


Figure 2.1

⁸ Harris Block, Douglas, 141.

Three months after the arrival of the Wolseley Expedition, a new lodge was formed in Manitoba upon the request of the members of the expedition. Originally this lodge was to be known as the Winnipeg Lodge but in January of 1871 members decided that the lodge would be instead known as Prince Rupert's Lodge.⁹ The change may have been due to a desire to connect the Masons to the British monarchy thus strengthening their ties to 'old-world values' and to Europe but there is no recorded evidence for the name change. Prince Rupert Lodge remains to the present day and was the first lodge in Manitoba that was Canadian and not governed by American Masons. The first public advertisement concerning the opening of the Prince Rupert Lodge was on February 4, 1871 in *The Weekly Manitoban* and it noted that now "the Province at large may benefit in some future day by manifestations of that charity and brotherly love which Masonry...endeavours to instil into the hearts of the brethren".¹⁰ The men who requested permission from the Grand Lodge of Canada regarding the formation of this lodge were all members of the Wolseley Expedition and are listed on the charter as follows:

Robert Stuart Patterson	E. Armstrong
William N. Kennedy	David M. Walker
Matthew Coyne	A.R. McDonald
Norman Dingman	James T.B. Morrice
Henry Thomson Champion ¹¹	

Immediately following the installation of Prince Rupert Lodge, other men already residing in Red River petitioned for membership. The men who joined this new Lodge were all affluent members of Red River and a portion of the commercial elite. They were:

Fred T. Bradley
G.B. Spencer

⁹ Douglas, 60.

¹⁰ *The Weekly Manitoban*, February 4, 1871.

¹¹ Douglas, 58.

W.J. Piton
J.F. Graham
A.M. Brown
B.R. Ross
J.G. Milne
E.L. Barber
Thomas Howard
William Drever
James H. Ashdown
Dawson
Dr. Alfred Codd
R.B. Albertson
J.M. Swetson
Bayne¹²

It is not possible to determine whether or not this list is complete but it is necessary to reprint the list in full in order to investigate the character of men who were Masons.

Douglas writes that by the end of 1871 there were forty men who belonged to the Prince Rupert Lodge, but it is only possible to positively identify thirty-four of them. All of the men who were not from the Wolseley Expedition were affluent members of society in Red River and the area that would be Winnipeg. Only one, E.L. Barber, was a member of the old Northern Light Lodge and most of the former members had gravitated towards the Lisgar Lodge.

Christopher J. Anstead argues that men were defined in terms of occupation and consequently that a man's occupation denoted societal position, but did not alone define social status.¹³ The fifteen men who joined the Prince Rupert Lodge after the charter members, without exception, can be identified as belonging to the more affluent portion of society in Red River, see figure 2.2. For example, James H. Ashdown arrived in Red River in 1868 and by 1875 owned two retail and wholesale establishments and

¹² Douglas, 59.

¹³ This is not to say that occupation alone defines social status. Anstead, 27-8.



McKINNEY BUILDING
PRINCE RUPERT'S FIRST LODGE ROOM
1870

14

Figure 2.2

¹⁴ Prince Rupert Lodge, Douglas, 141.

undertook large contract work.¹⁵ Of the rest of the men who immediately joined the Prince Rupert Lodge, four were businessmen and eleven were professionals. These professions included customs officials, employees of the Department of Public Works, solicitors and a doctor. It is difficult to categorise the men in this way as many of them had a number of careers and business ventures throughout their lives in Winnipeg. For instance, although E.L. Barber was a professional in the real estate business, he also owned a general store.¹⁶ However, this thesis tries whenever possible to classify men based on their means at the time near or after they became Masons.

Historian Andrew C. Holman cites the emergence of class, in the Victorian sense, around the 1850s and 60s during Canada's "Age of Industry".¹⁷ By the later 1800s in Canada, society recognised three distinct classes: the working class, the middle class and the wealthy. Some American historians, for example Mary Ann Clawson, argue that Masonry denied the significance of class differences and instead promoted restrictions based on race and gender.¹⁸ While Masonry did exclude people based on gender and race, more particularly in terms of race in the United States, the Masons in Red River did anything but deny the significance of class as a category of evaluation. Masons are known as the elite of the fraternal world due to their own construction as upper class, respectable men as well as the fact that most other secret societies based their

¹⁵ Artibise, 12.

¹⁶ Douglas, 58-9.

¹⁷ Holman argues that up until this period, "class" was referred to as "rank" or "sort". Andrew C. Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns* (Montreal, 2000), 6-7.

¹⁸ Clawson, 15.

organisation on Masonry to some extent.¹⁹ The Masons described themselves as follows:

It is contended by Freemasons themselves that the Institution has been “honorable” from time immemorial... It is almost universally recognized that men have been, and are, advanced in morals, elevated in the nobler virtues of life, induced to better living, and indeed with higher spiritual qualities...²⁰

There were fraternal organisations that denied class difference, such as the Red Men and in the early years of the Independent Order of Oddfellows, but the Masons were not one of them.²¹ Mark C. Carnes argues that Masons in the United States were predominantly white and middle class even in cities with a population that was primarily working class.²²

Classes share similar attitudes, beliefs, economic status, collective consciousness and a common style of life.²³ This speaks to the notion of class awareness and the fact that for members of a class to define themselves as such, there must be the collective recognition of a definable other and of themselves as a group. Classes can only exist in consciousness of one another. Since classes are recognised in relation to one another, it was crucial for the commercial elite in Red River to be seen as respectable. Through the performance of behaviour that was recognised as respectable, these men were not only engaging in a process of self-definition but also the definition of an other. Holman and Anstead both assert that classes define

¹⁹ Clawson, 96.

²⁰ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 9.

²¹ The Independent Order of Oddfellows only denied class difference significantly in their earlier years and after about 1900 they became an organisation geared towards the working class.

²² It is important to note that in addition to these defining characteristics, Masons in the United States were predominantly Episcopalian. Carnes, 3.

²³ Blumin and Holman agree on this point. Blumin, 192 and Holman, 14.

themselves occupationally, culturally and socially. For example, to be middle class in 19th Century Canada meant that an individual worked for a living, but not with their hands, and if a man worked he owned the means of production.²⁴ The social and cultural definitions of what it was to be middle class in this period are tied in with what became the Victorian notions of respectability, private versus public spheres, morality and appropriate gender behaviour.²⁵ These Victorian ideals were informed by the notion that to be respectable a man must be industrious, sober, religious, morally upright, responsible to his family and aspire to upward social mobility.²⁶ Since the commercial and professional elite in Red River were the social elite and not properly a definable class, it is problematic to refer to them specifically as middle class. Therefore they will be referred to as the "respectable class". Membership in the Masons allowed men to demonstrate public and private respectability because Masonry espoused and reinforced respectable Victorian virtues.²⁷ In this context, Masonic lodges increasingly became havens for masculinity and were acceptable retreats for men because the Masons presented themselves as an unquestionably respectable institution.

In 1871, a second Masonic lodge opened in Red River, the Lisgar Lodge. Several men who were members in the Northern Light Lodge gravitated to this new lodge. The charter members who requested the dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Canada are as follows:

John Fraser
George Black

Robert Stuart Patterson
William N. Kennedy

²⁴ Holman, ix-x.

²⁵ These ideals are cited as integral to the Victorian middle, or respectable, class by Holman, Anstead and Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto, 1991).

²⁶ Anstead, 74.

²⁷ Chapters three and four demonstrate specifically how men used Masonry to demonstrate their respectable statuses in public and in private.

Thomas Bunn
John Schultz

Alexander McArthur
Frederick T. Bradley²⁸

Two of the men on this list, John Schultz and Thomas Bunn, were members of the Northern Light Lodge and two men who petitioned for membership directly after the opening of the lodge were also original Northern Light members. It is possible to identify a further twelve men who were members of Lisgar Lodge:

S.L. Bedson
B.R. Ross
Rich H. Hunter
Thomas Taylor
Henry M. Robinson
H. Martineau
David Young
David Arnit
G.H. Kellond
W.J. Piton
E. Abbell
Philip Kennedy²⁹

A number of these men were also members of the Prince Rupert Lodge. This is due to the fact that in order to petition the Grand Lodge of Canada for a dispensation to open a new lodge, some of the men requesting the charter to operate had to already be Masons.

Masonry in Manitoba continued to grow and by 1872 the Ancient Landmark Lodge received its dispensation from the Lodge of Canada. This lodge was particularly active in supporting the petitions of other lodges to open. Ancient Landmark sponsored the opening of St. John's Lodge in 1875, Hiram Lodge and Assiniboine Lodge, located in Portage la Prairie.³⁰ By 1875 the membership of the Ancient Landmark lodge totalled seventy-nine. The charter members were as follows:

²⁸ Douglas, 78.

²⁹ Douglas.

³⁰ Douglas, 112.

James Henderson	Herbert Swinford
Arthur H. Holland	Charles H. House
Walter F. Hyman	L.M.A. Roy
Linis R. Bentley	John Johnston
W.F. Luxton	Harry M. Robinson
J.H. Pearson ³¹	

It is possible to identify another three men who belonged: Hon. H.J. Clarke, John Norquay and J.M. McGregor. Unfortunately, due to the destruction of the records it is not possible to make a more complete list of members. Ancient Landmark Lodge is of particular interest as one of the charter members, Walter F. Hyman, was Jewish. Hyman's membership in the lodge indicates that Masons in Winnipeg based admittance more on social status than religion or perceived race.³² Also, John Norquay, a former premier of Manitoba, was Metis. The Manitoba Masons encompass a group of men who are not wholly of one religion or perceived race but the absence of general labourers in the ranks of the Masons speaks more to the character of the Manitoba Masons than does the inclusion of identifiable members of the middle class.

Masonry provided men the opportunity to forge social, political and business contacts. Mary Ann Clawson argues that historically, fraternal organisations have been a common bond in political groups. Mark C. Carnes supports this assertion in a discussion regarding the reason men joined fraternities. Carnes states that one of the reasons men joined organisations such as the Masons was to gain access to an association of business networks and contacts.³³ By 1905 there were over forty-four hundred Masons in Manitoba and this was the largest fraternal organisation in Manitoba at the time.

³¹ Douglas, 111.

³² Hyman's membership in the Ancient Landmark Lodge is discussed further in chapter four with reference to the laying of a cornerstone at a Winnipeg synagogue.

³³ Carnes, 2.

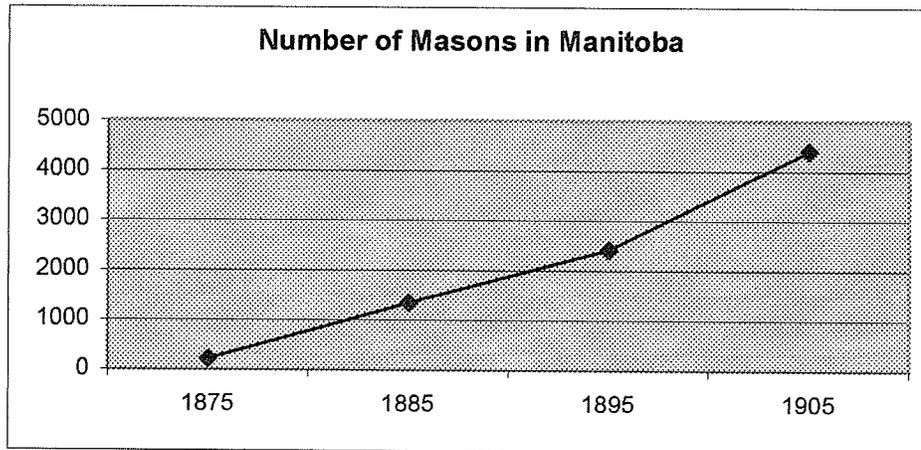


Figure 2.3

Due to the large number of Masons in Manitoba and their affluent status and business connections, they collectively represented a vast pool of resources and a force with the potential to mobilise for their own interests. Alan Artibise suggests that most of the men involved in politics in Winnipeg were merchants and businessmen who were involved in real estate and finance ventures.³⁵

While it is not surprising that most of the men involved in politics and who for example, sat on the City Council, were also members of the respectable business class and of Anglo-Saxon origin and Protestant religion, it is more than coincidental that all but one Premier from 1872 to 1968 was a Mason. The only exception to this was the brief period in 1874 when Marc-Amable Girard who was Roman Catholic was Premier. The following list of Manitoba Premiers is also a list of Masons and is thus important to

³⁴ This chart is based on information from Douglas. Douglas, 141.

³⁵ Artibise, 26.

reprint in full. However, in consideration of the fact that the majority of them held office after 1900, they are beyond the scope of this thesis:

H.J. Clarke 1872-4 (chief minister)
 R.A. Davis 1874-8
 J. Norquay 1878-87
 D.H. Harrison 1887-88
 T. Greenway 1888-1900
 Sir H.J. Macdonald 1900
 Sir R.D. Roblin 1900-15
 T.C. Norris 1915-22
 J. Bracken 1922-43
 S.S. Garson 1943-8
 D.L. Campbell 1948-58
 D. Roblin 1958-67

It is unknown whether or not the Premiers following the term of D. Roblin were Masons, but regardless of this, when the Masons state that:

So far as recorded history has been preserved, it is a well established fact that men of the highest eminence, monarchs, patriots, statesmen,...recognized leaders in every movement...for the progress of civilization have counted it both an honor and a privilege to have a place in Freemasonry...³⁶

they are ultimately correct.³⁷ Although this quote is broad, it captures the perceived character of Masons in Canada and Manitoba. Regardless of the various political affiliations the common bond shared between these men is Masonry.

In 1875 a fourth lodge was formed. St. John's Lodge was similar in composition to the first three lodges and also remains in operation to the present day. Earlier, that same year, Masons formed the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, which claimed jurisdiction over what is now Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Yukon.³⁸ This lodge met in the Higgins and Young Building, see figure 2.3. The Grand Lodge was composed of members

³⁶ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 9.

³⁷ It is interesting to note as well that the majority of the Presidents of the United States have been Masons or members of other secret societies such as Lock and Key or Skull and Bones.

³⁸ Douglas, 121.

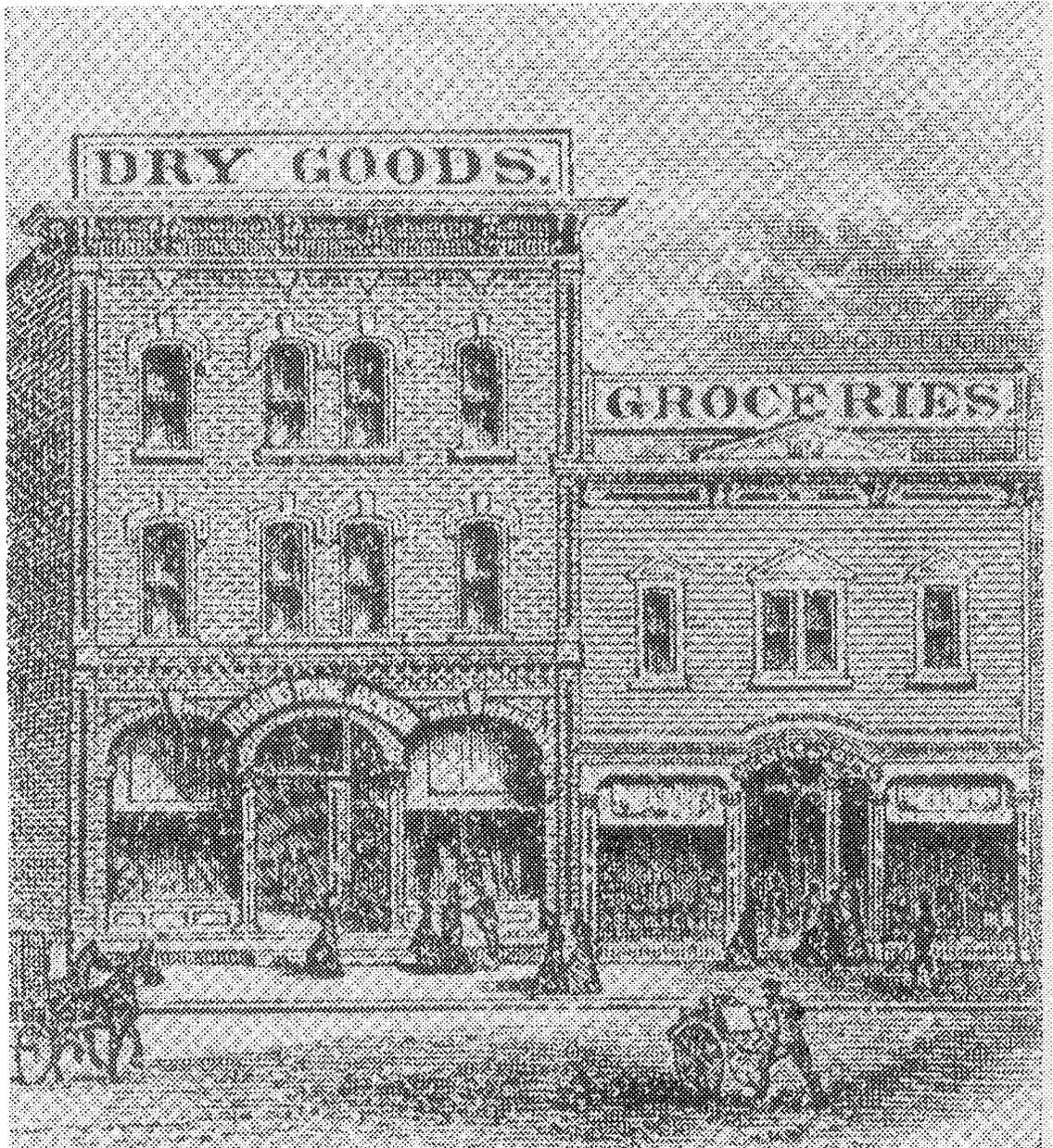
from the Prince Rupert, Lisgar and Ancient Landmark Lodges. The first officers of the Grand Lodge were as follows:

Rev. Dr. W.C. Clarke	Grand Master	Anglican
W.N. Kennedy	Deputy Grand Master	Wolesley expedition
Jas. Henderson	Grand Senior Warden	
S.L. Bedson	Grand Junior Warden	Wolesley expedition, aide-de-camp to governor general and penitentiary warden
Rev. Canon O'Meara	Grand Chaplain	Anglican priest, Professor at St. John's College and Dean of Rupert's Land
Henry T. Champion	Grand Registrar	Wolesley expedition, Banker, real estate financier
John Kennedy	Grand Treasurer	
John H. Bell	Grand Secretary	politician
Thos. H. Barton	Grand Tyler ³⁹	

The positively identifiable men in this list were original members of the Wolesley Expedition, bankers, financiers and politicians and this list is typical of the occupational categories of the Masons discussed in this thesis. The formation of the Grand Lodge officially severed the ties that bound the three original lodges to the authority of the Grand Lodge of Canada. The Grand Lodge of Manitoba possessed the right to grant charters to lodges in the province and also to direct the evolution of Masonry in Manitoba as they saw fit.

This break from the Grand Lodge of Canada and the formation of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba did not occur without opposition from within the ranks. On the 28th of

³⁹ Douglas, 126.



HIGGINS AND YOUNG BUILDING
WHERE GRAND LODGE WAS FORMED
1875

40

Figure 2.4

⁴⁰ Grand Lodge of Manitoba's first meeting spot, Douglas, 141.

April and again on the 12th of May, 1875, Masons in Manitoba gathered to discuss the future of the Craft in Manitoba. George Black, himself a Past Grand Master most likely of Lisgar Lodge, opposed the formation of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba.⁴¹ The exact reasoning behind his decision is unknown but in a letter written to the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada, Black wrote:

From the beginning, I opposed the formation of a Grand Lodge for many reasons, amongst them, deeming it my duty to the Grand Lodge which I had the honor to represent; but, finding it to be so earnestly and unanimously the desire of the members of the Craft of this Province, to form a Grand Lodge, and my objections being met with good and reasonable arguments... I withdrew my opposition.⁴²

Black defends his opposition by stating that he was protecting the authority of the Grand Lodge of Canada. However, what Masons in Manitoba refer to as the "Schism of '78" was the result of ongoing tension between lodges that predated the formation of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba and contributed to the dissension regarding the authority of a possible Grand Lodge in Manitoba.

The tension between lodges, which came to a head in 1878, was also concerned with the specific rituals used by lodges in Manitoba. Douglas asserts that this period in Masonic history is not often spoken of and what is known is fragmented and uncertain. It appears that there were in fact two Grand Lodges in Manitoba that fought for supremacy. Douglas refers to the second Grand Lodge simply as the "Schismatics" or "Irregular body".⁴³ When the Grand Lodge of Manitoba was formed, the question of ritual was already under scrutiny. A reference was made in the first annual communication of the Grand Lodge to the "most perfect work", believed to be York

⁴¹ Douglas, 128-9.

⁴² Douglas, 129.

⁴³ Douglas, 145-7.

Rite.⁴⁴ The Grand Lodge of Manitoba practised Ancient York Rite because that was the practise of the Grand Lodge of Canada. Douglas glosses over the exact details of the schism, but stated that the only lodge in operation that did not have members who were part of the “Schismatics” was the Ancient Landmark Lodge. Some members from the other three lodges, as well as the lodge in Emerson, were part of the “Schismatics”. Peace was restored in 1879 and it was decided in a series of meetings, that the regular Grand Lodge would absorb the funds and authority of the renegade Grand Lodge.

It is uncertain whether ritual was the main focus of the schism, but upon examination of Ancient York Rite and American Rite Masonry, it is clear that the rituals are not explicitly different. The degrees of the Blue Lodge, which were the degrees disagreed upon in Manitoba, are similar in content but differ in language. The major difference is that American Rite Masonry goes into more explicit detail regarding the biblical stories on which the rituals are based. The Grand Lodge of Manitoba did decree that Canadian Rite, which was based on York Rite, would be used in Manitoba. However, American Rite would be tolerated by the Grand Lodge of Manitoba if lodges were already operating using it.⁴⁵

The rituals of Masonry, irrespective of Rite, were closely guarded. Mary Ann Clawson argues that the evolution of the original Masonic rituals was completed around 1740 but these were committed to memory and not written down as to keep the exact ceremonies a mystery.⁴⁶ Mark C. Carnes adds to this by stating that by the late 1870s and early 1880s ceremonies were stabilised and ceased to be in a process of rework.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Douglas, 146.

⁴⁵ Douglas, 194.

⁴⁶ Clawson, 229.

⁴⁷ Carnes, 28-9.

This argument is based on Carnes' research that uncovers a period in the 1840s and 1850s where Masonic ritual underwent a period of rework. This is consistent with the fact that American and Canadian Masonry were both based upon Ancient York Rite and evolved accordingly. However, after ceremonies were stabilised and written down, only the three most senior officers in a lodge could possess a copy of the ritual book and everyone else recited from memory, with help from a sponsor. The limited amount of published copies of Masonic ritual was supposed to serve as a barrier to any member who might divulge the exact ceremonies or any other secret society who might be inclined to copy them.

This desire for secrecy was never fully achieved. Many other secret societies, such as the Loyal Orange Order, base some of their ceremonies on those of the Masons. Masonic rituals ceased to be rewritten and emerged in their present form during the late 19th Century. It is interesting to note that the rituals of the Order of the Eastern Star (OES) were never as closely guarded. In an instruction manual written for members of the, the claim was made that:

It is believed that a work as noble as that of the Order of the Eastern Star cannot be hindered by the publication of its ceremonies and rituals... Secret societies have always held an attraction for women... in spite of the common belief that women cannot keep a secret.⁴⁸

The lack of concern regarding OES ritual, seen in the context of the lengths that Masons went to, to protect their rituals, reveals the gender perceptions of the period. The gendered assumption that women were unable to keep a secret, is reflected also in the Lodge of Adoption Rituals in France, mentioned in Chapter One, where a woman's

⁴⁸ Bell, F.A. (arranged by). *Order of the Eastern Star: An Instructive Manual on the Organization and Government of Chapters of the Order with Ritual and Ceremonies*. (Chicago, 1948), 10-11.

mouth was symbolically plastered shut with a Masonic trowel. There is no equivalent to this lack of faith in Masonic ritual.

Irrespective of Rite, Masons consistently used the King James version of the Bible as their altar bible. The King James Bible was commissioned in 1604 and was published in 1611 under the authority of King James VI and I.⁴⁹ Adam Nicolson asserts that although the Bishops' Bible was the official bible of the period, it was too linguistically elevated for the average person and that the Geneva Bible, the other common version, was disliked by the King, due to the marginal notes.⁵⁰ The Geneva Bible was the more popular because of these notes and appendices. In 1616 King James decreed that the new King James Bible would be known as the authorised version and was to be the only English bible in use.⁵¹ After the Restoration in 1660, in which Charles I and the Stuart family were restored to the throne, the King James Bible came to symbolise monarchy and antiquity and was the most common bible in use.⁵² Masons in England, after their national consolidation in 1717, consistently made use of this bible and it was referred to as the sacred volume of law, one of the Three Great Lights of Masonry. The other two Great Lights being the square and compass mentioned in brief in the previous chapter. The Revised Version of the King James Bible was published in 1885 as it became known that the manuscripts the previously

⁴⁹ Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: 2003), xi.

⁵⁰ The Geneva Bible was published in 1560 by English Calvinist exiles in Geneva. Nicolson, 73.

⁵¹ Nicolson, 228.

⁵² Nicolson, 229.

Authorised Version were based upon were not the most reliable.⁵³ This Version was used by Masons in the late 19th Century and is still in use to the present day.

By the mid 1880s, the most desirable area in Winnipeg was the Hudson's Bay Reserve near the Assiniboine River, on the south edge of the city.⁵⁴ However, the city was not highly separated along lines of class and men had to find other avenues to demonstrate their respectable status at times when neighbourhood was not certain. Daniel Hiebert's "Class, ethnicity and residential structure: the social geography of Winnipeg, 1901-1921" suggests that segregation based on ethnicity became pronounced after the turn of the century and this move informed the evolution of class consciousness.⁵⁵ John Tosh argues that a man's home was an indicator of social position and domestic circumstance was often public knowledge.⁵⁶ Don Nerbas re-enforced this point in his analysis of Winnipeg's early business elite. Nerbas argues that Winnipeg's elite lived in the same areas and frequented the same clubs.

However, before 1900 Winnipeg was not physically divided along class lines. The home can be considered as a fairly reliable indicator of income and social status when area does not denote class, especially in the Victorian period when success was measured so consistently in terms of material progress. The home was used to create an image and the area the home was built in also could denote class. Tosh asserts that a man's income was a measure of not only his success but was seen by the public as an

⁵³ Nicolson, 233.

⁵⁴ Friesen, 210.

⁵⁵ Daniel Hiebert, "Class, ethnicity and residential structure: the social geography of Winnipeg, 1901-1920" in *Journal of Historical Geography* 17, 1 (1991), 56.

⁵⁶ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (London, 1999), 24.

indication of his moral character.⁵⁷ However, in Winnipeg this form of categorisation is problematic due to the relative newness and level of development of the city. Prior to 1874, most of the residences were built between the area of Main Street and the Red River.⁵⁸ Point Douglas was located in this area and before the completion of the railroad was one of the most desirable locations in Winnipeg.⁵⁹ Members of the Masons such as J.H. Ashdown and John Schultz were counted among the affluent residents who had houses in this popular area.⁶⁰ After 1877 and up until 1883 the Hudson's Bay Company sold a large number of lots in its Reserve that was bordered by Notre Dame Avenue, Main Street and the Assiniboine River. This area quickly developed and became the most desirable area in the city. Prominent businessmen moved from Point Douglas to the Reserve as did government officials and officers of the Hudson's Bay Company.⁶¹ The houses and lots in this area were larger and the land values were higher. Prior to the real estate boom of 1881 and 1882, there was no pronounced separation of classes. David Burley argues that the proprietors of the real estate boom of 1881-1882 influenced the inequality of property ownership in Winnipeg and discusses the link between the ownership of the means of production and the control of physical space.⁶² At the turn of the century there began to be pronounced ethnic divisions but physical separation based on class was not as prominent. However, members of the middle class tended to reside

⁵⁷ Tosh, 24.

⁵⁸ Artibise, 149.

⁵⁹ Artibise, 149.

⁶⁰ Artibise, 149.

⁶¹ Artibise, 150.

⁶² David G. Burley, "The Keepers of the Gate: The Inequality of Property Ownership During the Winnipeg Real Estate Boom of 1881-82", in *Urban History Review* vol. XVII, no.2 (October 1988), 63-72.

north of Notre Dame where the lots were smaller and the houses more modest.⁶³ As Winnipeg was not highly segregated until the development of the south end of the city, mainly after 1900, the houses of the Manitoba Masons were scattered in different areas of the developing city. This made the public performance of belonging to a respectable institution like the Masons more important. The development of more highly segregated

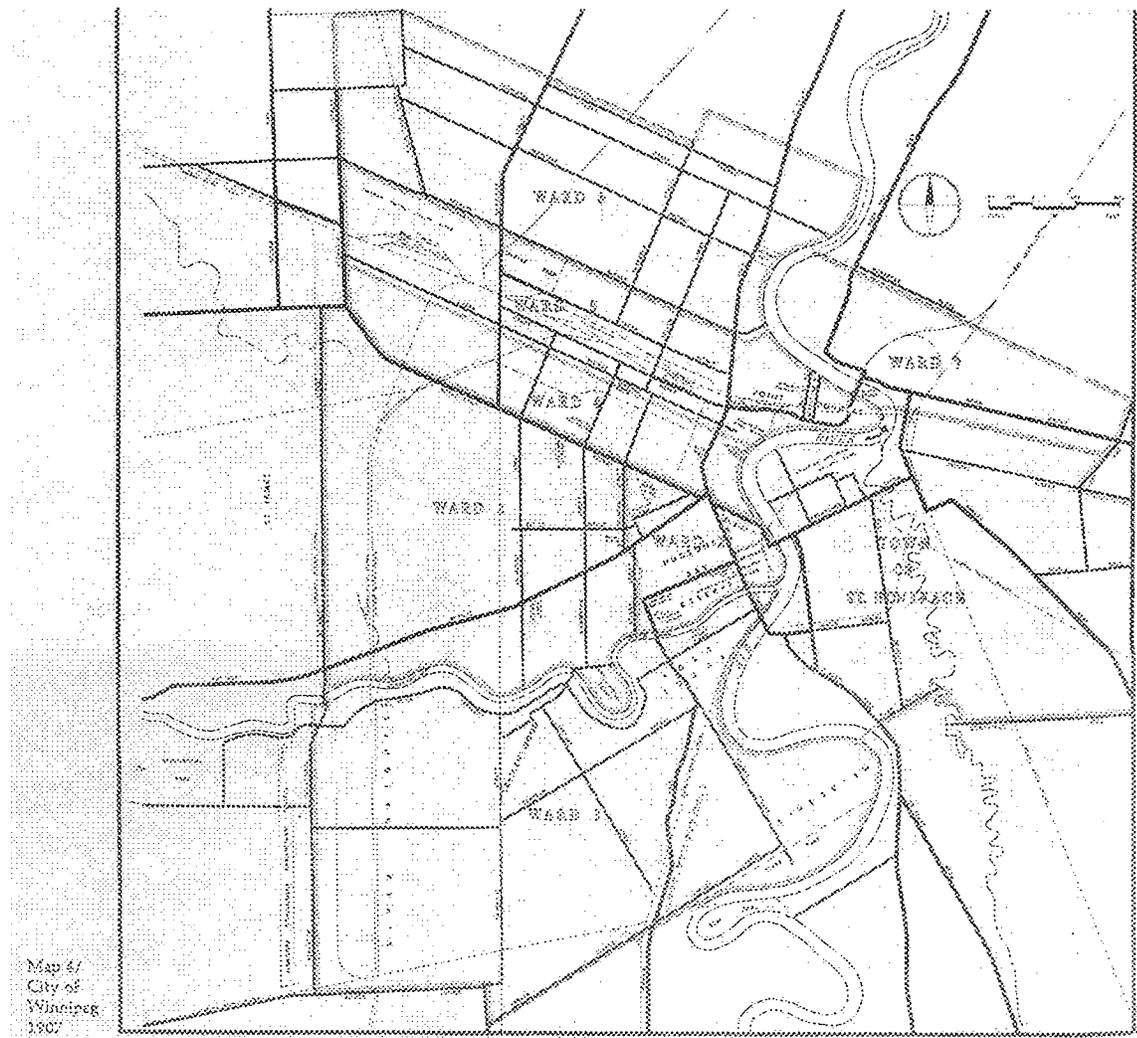


Figure 2.5 ⁶⁴

⁶³ Artibise, 150.

⁶⁴ Artibise, insert after page 150.

neighbourhoods in Winnipeg became pronounced after the Canadian Pacific was routed directly through Point Douglas and industry had been built-up.

Between the years 1873 and 1900, Winnipeg was in a state of growth and neighbourhoods that were considered desirable evolved considerably with the increasing development of industry, the introduction of the railroad and the flow of immigrants to the city. In 1882, Winnipeg's boundaries were expanded and the city was divided into six wards, see figure 2.4. During this period, separation in terms of class, ethnicity and the distribution of municipal services became more pronounced.⁶⁵ Wards two and four, roughly the Hudson's Bay Reserve and the area around Portage Avenue and Main Street, increasingly became Winnipeg's commercial district.⁶⁶ This area was dominated by persons of British-Ontarian background but was not homogeneously so. Both wards were centres of commercial activity in terms of retail and wholesale development as well as administrative establishments such as the Manitoba Club. Before 1900, the Hudson's Bay Reserve remained home to a portion of the elite but the encroachment of railway lines spurred the move of the cities elite towards the Assiniboine River and away from the Red. By 1904, this move had made the division between north and south in Winnipeg more pronounced, with the more affluent residents gravitating to neighbourhoods in the south. Beginning around 1880 and up until 1920 the areas known as East Gate, West Gate and Middle Gate were established as exclusive and housed some of the cities most affluent residents. The stone gates, which can be seen today at the foot of the Sherbrook Street Bridge, across from the Misericordia Hospital, were constructed in 1902. The gates created an image of exclusivity and served as a reminder to those who did not belong that they were not welcome in that area of the

⁶⁵ Artibise, 151.

⁶⁶ Artibise, 152.

city. The gates were not erected to act as a physical barrier, they do not actually close, but their imposing stature and image of exclusivity acted as a deterrent. Point Douglas, formerly home to the elite of Winnipeg, was part of ward five and after the routing of the railroad directly through this area, by 1895 it had become part of the north end which became dominated by the working class and foreign born non-British immigrants.⁶⁷ The south and west ends of Winnipeg did not begin to grow substantially until after 1890. To the elite, areas such as River Heights and Crescentwood became more desirable spaces in which to locate after the railroad had been routed through Point Douglas and the influx of immigrants to the cities core and northern residences. Masonry presented an avenue for men to privately and publicly demonstrate their respectable status and affiliation with a respectable institution at a time when the class divide between north and south in Winnipeg was not so pronounced.

⁶⁷ Artibise, 158.

Chapter Three

In King Solomon's Temple: The Private Space of the Lodge

By the time Masonry had been established in Manitoba, the Victorian ideals of respectability and appropriate gender behaviour were already well entrenched. Within the lodge rooms of the Masons, men performed respectability and socialised members into specific world and moral views behind closed doors. Lodges provided a space in which masculinity and the Victorian ideal of progress were idealised through the system of Blue Lodge degrees. This system of degrees emphasised upward mobility and represents one of the only aspects of Masonry in Winnipeg that was not for public consumption. In their private sanctuaries, Masons validated men as a category and excluded women while practising a system of moral and ethical instruction. This is especially significant in consideration of the fact that the Masonic degrees presented men as morally self-sufficient at a time when women were beginning to assert themselves in the public sphere as the moral guardians of home and family. The private performance of ritual established social unity among men who belonged and served to construct a common past through deliberate ceremonial choices.

Mary Ann Clawson suggests that when an individual assumes the identity of a specific group they take on group consciousness and simultaneously engage in defining an other. Lynn Dumenil was the first historian of Masonry to formally recognise the importance of ritual to the demonstration of communal attitudes and values. Dumenil's statement assumes, as does this thesis, that ritual served a particular function in the creation and enforcement of a group consciousness. Ceremonies were not chosen randomly and members of the Masons did not belong solely to further their commercial status. Although access to a network of business connections was a benefit of Masonry, Christopher Anstead asserts that Masonic lodges also served as an instrument for

“creating and managing cultural consent”.¹ Anstead asserts that by choosing to identify with the rituals and adhere to the principles inherent to Masonry, men who were members engaged in a process of self-definition and were allowed to influence their immediate social sphere. Also, participation in ritual speaks directly to the desire to communicate a message of belonging and sameness.² Ritual in this period directed attention to specific Victorian, masculine values and was chosen to “establish continuity with a suitable historical past”, specifically ancient biblical history.³ Eric Hobsbawm refers to the use of history to lend legitimacy to groups as “invented tradition” and asserts that this practice was common during this period and continuing until World War I.⁴ The repetition of ritual served to automatically instil continuity. Masons argue their connection to ancient history blatantly in their ritual books when they assert that “F...ry (Freemasonry), however, is not only the most ancient, but the most moral human institution that ever existed”.⁵ This respectable and ancient historical past is discussed in chapter one with reference to Masonry’s self-proclaimed connection with Ancient Egypt and biblical tales. It is crucial to examine the rituals that were privately performed by the Masons as they mirrored and enforced Victorian values and attitudes and therefore also contributed to the Victorian hegemony of respectability.⁶

¹ Although this argument is correct, Anstead adds that Victorian men changed the lodge into an instrument of cultural consent. In the past, especially in England, lodges already functioned to this end. Anstead, iii.

² Gerd Baumann, “Ritual implicates ‘Others’: rereading Durkheim in a plural society”, in *Understanding rituals* ed. Daniel de Coppet (London, 1992), 98.

³ Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Tradition”, in *The Invention of Tradition* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, 1983), 1-2.

⁴ Hobsbawm, 263.

⁵ *The Work*, 50.

⁶ Anstead, iii.

By examining the ritual language of the Masons and comparing it to the ritual language used by the Order of the Eastern Star it is possible to unpack collective perceptions of gender. Private initiation ceremonies for both societies involved the recitation of an oath of commitment. Generally, Masonic oaths were characterised by extremely grisly and graphic language. The oath of the Master Mason, the highest degree in Masonry and the third of the Blue Lodge required candidates to recite this oath:

no less penalty than that of having my body severed in two, my bowels taken from thence and burned to ashes, the ashes scattered before the four winds of heaven, that no more remembrance might be had of so vile and wicked a wretch as I would be⁷

Victorian notions of gender appropriateness dictated that grisly language and complicated rituals were unsuitable for women and thus the oath of initiation for OES members was more subdued. Women recited “Woe unto those who seek to take upon themselves burdens which they cannot bear. Woe unto the faithless and insincere, who assume obligations lightly and forthwith forget them.”⁸ While the Masons oath of commitment emphasises violence the OES oath emphasises duty. These variations in language are indicative of the nature of both organisations and representative of the gender roles that were reified through ceremony. From examining these oaths, Masonic assumptions of manliness and womanliness can be inferred. Also, the beliefs of the women who belonged to the OES who complied with these regulations.

The oath of initiation was not to be taken lightly and the rituals performed in the private lodges of Masons in Winnipeg were one of the only parts of the organisation that

⁷ *Ecce Orienti*, 96.

⁸ *Ritual of the Order of the Eastern Star*, 47.

remained for private consumption. Joseph Hargrave, in *Red River*, describes the secretive nature of Masonic ritual as follows:

Though laudable efforts were made to extract information relative to the ceremonies of initiation...the most inviolable secrecy was maintained, not a little to the surprise of friends who knew the weak points of some of the novices. Such of whom as spoke on the subject of their proceedings at all, limited themselves to the general assurance: 'they were very pleased' or 'it was more impressive than any other religious ceremony they had ever witnessed'⁹

Statements such as these were made publicly and served to increase the mystery surrounding Masonry. There were many public demonstrations of belonging to lodges in Manitoba, discussed in chapter four, but the exact rituals were not divulged. However, Mark C. Carnes asserts that many organisations did plagiarise the rituals of other and this led some to copyright their ceremonies.¹⁰ The secrecy of ceremonies could also have been compromised by the fact that men often did not belong to just one society and therefore ceremonial overlap was not always a deliberate case of plagiarism.

The Blue Lodge degrees, Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason all represent, in language and symbolism, the Victorian values of progressive upward mobility and masculinity. The degrees themselves are representative of the Victorian notion of progress and each degree represents individual advancement. Therefore it is important to examine the degrees in terms of their cultural and social implications. Also, because the ceremonies were fairly lengthy, Masons spent the majority of their meeting time engaged in this endeavour. Morality, industriousness, sobriety, self-control, religious commitment and responsibility to the family were all core Victorian values and

⁹ Hargrave, 322.

¹⁰ Carnes, 6.

these were all present in the Blue Lodge degrees and other principles of Masonry.¹¹

Masonry can be seen as a system of moral and ethical instruction for members. The Entered Apprentice degree is intended to prepare initiates for their “search for Light, the light of divine Truth” and in order to achieve this the candidate is “entrusted with certain secrets of the Order, all of them moral, ethical, and wholesome”.¹² The initiate must profess a belief in a supreme being and then move throughout the lodge room and is indoctrinated into the basics of Masonry, for example the Three Great Lights of Masonry, the square, compasses and volume of sacred law, or bible. The candidate is made to understand that the compasses represent emblems of virtue and “are symbolic of the required circumscribed passions for right conduct... that true standard of rectitude which alone can assure purity of character and happiness”.¹³ The square is meant to symbolise morality. To the Entered Apprentice, these are part of the Three Great Lights, to the Fellow Craft Mason they are the working tools and to the Master Mason they serve as an official emblem, see next page.¹⁴ However the Three Great Lights are considered, the symbols served to make members aware of their moral and social unity.¹⁵

All three degrees in Blue Lodge Masonry enforce industriousness as a key component of Masonry and respectable manliness. Masonry is built upon the story of the building of King Solomon’s Temple, discussed below, and all degrees discuss the

¹¹ See Anstead for a description of the ideal Victorian man. Anstead, 74.

¹² Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 10.

¹³ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 26.

¹⁴ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 59.

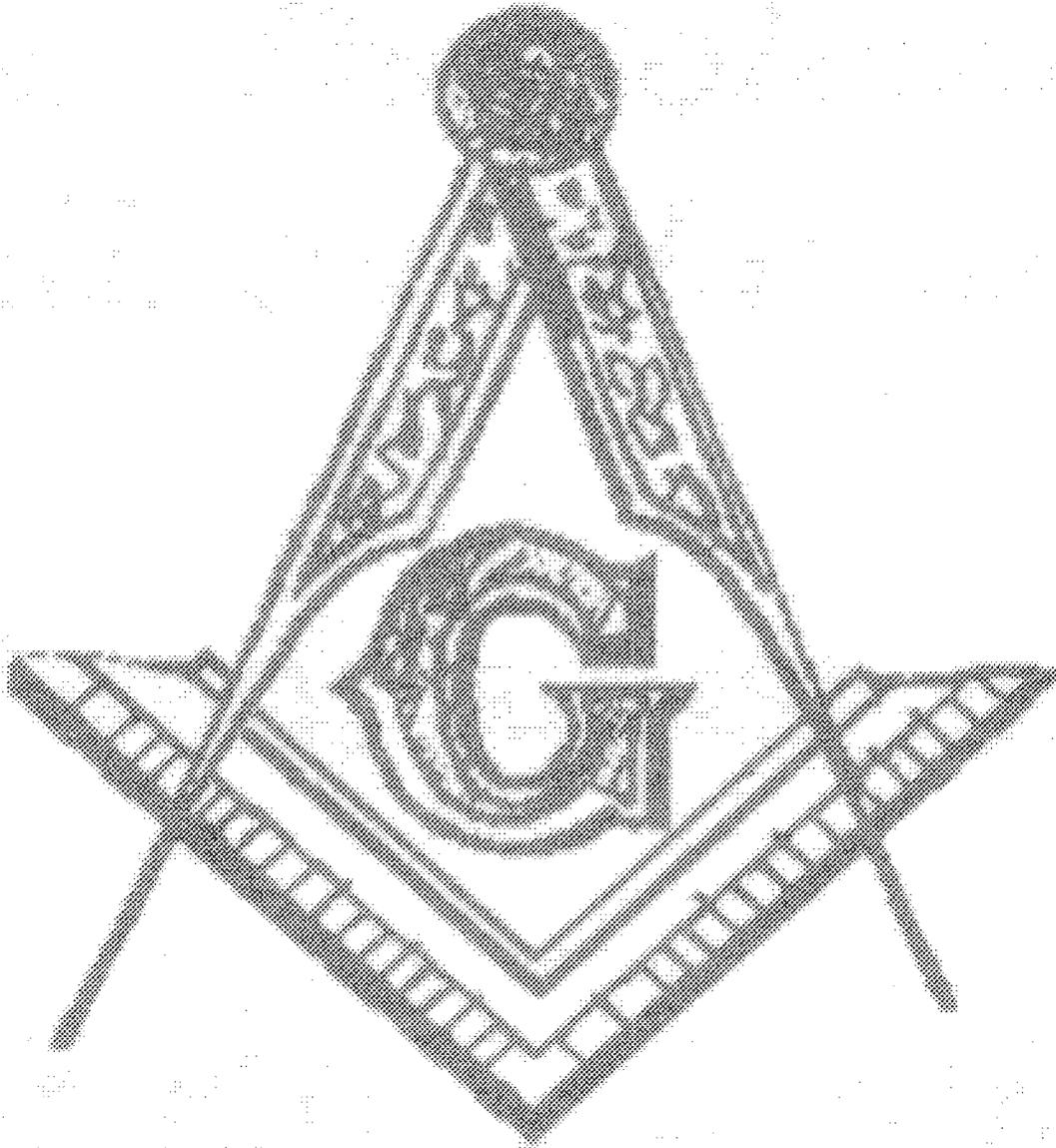
¹⁵ See Durkheim for information regarding the importance of symbols to social unity. Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* trns. Carol Cosman (Oxford, 2001), 175.

building of the temple in some form. The climax of this is the Master Mason's degree where the candidate for initiation is symbolically murdered for revealing the secrets of Masonry, which are of course trade secrets. At its core Masonry supports industriousness and commitment to professionalism. Each degree uses specific tools symbolic of those purportedly used in the building of the temple. The Apprentice degree uses a gauge and gavel to give materials a proper shape, the Fellow Craft degree a plumb, level and square for placement and the Master Mason's speculative tool was the trowel used to spread the cement which fused the materials together.¹⁶ Each degree enforces diligence and devotion to the profession of Masonry and the mental connection between industriousness and upward social mobility. By progressing through the Blue Lodge degrees, Masons created an environment where men were rewarded for symbolic industriousness by symbolic upward mobility.

During all other degrees and in public ceremonies, the candidates wore elaborate costumes (discussed further in chapter four with regards to public performances), but in the Entered Apprentice degree the candidate removed all of their clothing in the preparation room. This symbolised the Masonic argument that, in the first degree, clothing shuts in the body as prejudice shuts in the mind and therefore clothing must initially be removed in the quest for Truth.¹⁷ This practice would also have served as a barrier to any woman who might try to infiltrate the masculine bastion of the lodge. The

¹⁶ Masons Bible, 61.

¹⁷ Although the degrees progressively seek to enlighten the candidate in the quest for Truth, the Masons believed that Truth was only ever really realised in death.



18

Figure 3.1

Entered Apprentice degree emphasises the beginning of a man's journey in the quest for ultimate Truth. The language used in the Entered Apprentice recitations speaks to Victorian notions of self-control, morality and virtue and candidates are imparted to

¹⁸ *Ecce Orienti*, 1.

“regulate their desires and keep their passions within due bounds”.¹⁹ The first degree is ultimately concerned with the regulation of bodies, minds and the protection of the Craft. It is recited that:

T. (temperance) is that due restraint upon our affections and passions which renders the body tame and governable, and frees the mind from the allurements of vice. This virtue should be the constant practice of ever M...n (Mason), as he is thereby taught to avoid excess, or contracting any licentious or vicious habit, the indulgence of which might lead him to disclose... those valuable S.s (secrets)..which would consequently subject him to the contempt and detestation of all good M...ns (Masons)²⁰

The Entered Apprentice degree mirrors and reflects Victorian values and is meant to inculcate them in the mind of the candidate. By participating in this ceremony, Masons in Manitoba were enforcing their sameness, their shared values and performing respectability in private spaces.

Temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice are the Four Cardinal Virtues of Masonry, which are made known in the Entered Apprentice degree.²¹ The Masons publicly supported temperance campaigns and this support functioned as a demonstration of respectability and social responsibility. The demonstration of the self as virtuous was particularly important due to the temperance campaigns in Canada that were modelled on similar movements in Great Britain and the United States beginning in the mid nineteenth century. In this context, organisations such as the Masons provided a haven for men to socialise when, for example, meeting in a tavern was not respectable. Masons advocated temperance but there is no evidence to suggest that they advocated abstinence. Lodges in Canada did not bar members from drinking, only from habitual or problem drinking and these instances were dealt with by individual

¹⁹ *Ecce Orienti*, 48.

²⁰ *Ecce Orienti*, 52-3.

²¹ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 36.

lodges. Between 1864 and 1900 there is evidence of the expulsion of only one Mason. In 1872 Lisgar Lodge held two trials and one member was expelled for the performance of "grossly unmasonic conduct".²² Jan Noel in *Canada Dry: Temperance Campaigns before Confederation* states that when temperance campaigns were sweeping Canada, interest in Red River was less prominent.²³ Noel argues that businessmen and professionals as well as clergymen generally advocated temperance campaigns.²⁴ Considering that Masons were generally businessmen, professionals and clergymen and that Masonry was used as a vehicle to demonstrate respectability, it is not surprising that publicly the Masons advocated temperance campaigns. However, in private some Masons were the reason that Red River was so well supplied with alcohol. For example, by 1868 A.G.B. Bannatyne with Alexander Begg ran three hundred carts per year to St. Paul in the liquor trade.²⁵ It is unknown as to whether the expulsion of the mason for "grossly unmasonic conduct" involved intemperance. If a Mason were to have exhibited "grossly unmasonic conduct" in public in terms of excessive drunkenness, then he could have been expelled but if the conduct were in the privacy of the lodge rooms it would probably have been less of a concern. In the Masonic Edition of the King James Bible the Masons describe their views as follows:

Neither the obligation nor the tenets of Freemasonry, however, require total abstinence; but rather moderation and avoidance of intemperate indulgencies (*sic*)... Intemperance is regarded by the Masonic Fraternity as a vice wholly incompatible with a true Masonic character, and habitual indulgence in strong drink subjects the offender to the penalty of expulsion²⁶

²² Douglas, 90.

²³ Jan Noel, *Canada Dry: Temperance Crusades before Confederation*, (Toronto, 1995), 3.

²⁴ Noel, 7.

²⁵ Noel, 211.

²⁶ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 45 and 60.

The expelled member of Lisgar Lodge could have been made to stand trial due to intemperance because the only specific reason listed in the Masons bible for the expulsion of a member regards habitual indulgence in drink.

Masonic indulgence or non-indulgence in drink is difficult to quantify since drinking was generally done in private spaces such as the home or lodge room. However, all of the rituals of the Blue Lodge include breaks for refreshment. None of the sources specify exactly the meaning of "refreshment" but Masons did not prohibit drink altogether. Publicly the Masons served as social regulators of temperance but privately and in moderation, drinking was permissible. This is particularly reflective of gender norms in consideration of the fact that it was not acceptable for women to drink and the Masons stressed self-control more adamantly. The Order of the Eastern Star had regulations not only against drink but even made the assertion that "a woman who has money invested in the liquor business is not received".²⁷ Women were deemed unacceptable as members of the OES if they drank or if they had money invested in a business that sold liquor. The regulation of liquor was significant because it served as a mechanism for the social control of members and simultaneously demonstrated respectability through association.

The Fellow Craft degree, second in the progression of the Blue Lodge, was based on preparation for the highest degree, Master Mason. The designation Fellow Craft originates with operative Masonry, or literal stonemasons, where there were two classes: Masters and Fellows. The major difference was that Fellows were less skilled in stonework than Masters. In speculative Masonry, the system of ritual degrees, the Fellow is likewise prepared for higher degrees, or learning. Masons agree that in the

²⁷ This is just an example of the regulations imposed on women in terms of alcohol. Regulations varied geographically. Rev. Willis D Engle. *The History of the Order of the Eastern Star*. (Indianapolis, 1901), 276.

Entered Apprentice degree the “purification of the heart” is central and in the Fellow Craft degree “the cultivation of the reasoning faculties and the improvement of the intellectual powers” are most important.²⁸ The Fellow Craft degree, as per Victorian notions of progress and upward mobility, provide candidates with the chance to advance in the fraternity and gain recognition through the hierarchical system of degrees. In this degree the meaning of the Three Great Lights as tools that Masons use for a “noble and glorious purpose” is impressed upon the candidate as he makes his way through the lodge room.²⁹ The Fellow Craft degree also emphasises religious commitment, describing the building of King Solomon’s Temple and stressing the fact that man should take inspiration from “the perfections of his divine Creator”.³⁰

Masonic rituals consistently emphasise the connection of Masonry, particularly the degree of Master Mason, to the building of King Solomon’s Temple, described below. This serves two main purposes. By tracing their origins back to the building of the Temple, Masons connected themselves with a suitable historical past and this served to create legitimacy. Also, by emphasising a specifically biblical origin, Masons enforced both their religious commitment and the character of Masonry. Originally the Masons in Scotland were operative masons and so this particular link to the building of the Temple was appropriate. The lodge rooms in which all degrees are conferred are constructed to represent King Solomon’s Temple. The multitude of symbolism represented in each part of the lodge is too complicated and lengthy for the purposes of

²⁸ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 41.

²⁹ *Ecce Orienti*, 66.

³⁰ *Ecce Orienti*, 68.

this thesis but a brief description is useful. At the basic level a Temple was required to have one oblong room to confer degrees, a preparation room for candidates and an ante-room where members entered. In the centre of the oblong room there was an altar upon which the volume of sacred law sat and usually the compasses and square were placed over top. Upon initiation to a given degree candidates were required to move throughout the room stopping at stations to give responses to questions, were taught the special handshakes to recognise each degree and were impressed upon with the values emphasised in each degree. The presence of the Master, Senior and Junior Wardens represented three columns, said to have supported King Solomon's Temple, and their positions stood for wisdom, strength and beauty.³¹ Beauty refers to the architecture of King Solomon's Temple.

Frank Albo, a Mason and student of theology, and Victor G. Popow, also a Mason, argue that the Legislative Building in Winnipeg is a model of King Solomon's Temple. The current Legislative Building opened on July 15, 1920 and was the third Legislative Building in Manitoba. Albo asserts that the floor plan, which consists of an outer chamber, an inner chamber and a Sanctum Sanctorum, which was said to house the Ark of the Covenant, represent the same elements of King Solomon's Temple as do the Masonic lodges that are modelled accordingly. In the entrance to the Legislative Building is the hall where the grand staircase represents the outer chamber of the Temple and possesses three sets of thirteen stairs. The number three, consistent throughout Masonic symbolism, represents the Masonic belief that Hermes Trismegistus, meaning thrice great, was the embodiment of all Egyptian knowledge. This point is also discussed in Chapter One. Popow and Albo state that after ascending the sets of stairs, the Rotunda chamber is representative of the middle chamber and the

³¹ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 10.

Lieutenant Governor's office, located directly east of the Rotunda, represented the Sanctum Sanctorum. Any model of King Solomon's Temple should contain a representation of the Ark of the Covenant. Both agree that two stone carvings of warriors protecting a "large oblong box" outside the building, above the Lieutenant Governor's office and facing east were meant to represent the Ark of the Covenant.³² Tour guides at the Legislative Building refer to the oblong box as a war chest. This is not inconsistent considering that the Ark of the Covenant was carried into battle in a war chest and was considered to be the most deadly weapon. Another interesting feature is the eight-pointed black star, which is located directly below the Golden Boy. The Golden Boy was created by Charles Gardet, cast in Paris and arrived in Winnipeg in August of 1919. This five ton statue that sits two hundred and fifty-five feet above the ground on which the Legislative Building stands and is thirteen feet, six inches in height. The Golden Boy carries a torch in his right hand, is posed as a runner and under his left arm he holds a sheaf of wheat. This symbol is said to represent "The Spirit of Enterprise". However, Albo suggests an additional meaning. The black star, directly underneath his perch, is not unlike many of the altar symbols found in the centre of Masonic lodges and represents sacrificial altars from ancient Egypt. As per Hermeticism, where the phrase "as above so below" originates from, the black star is argued to represent the underworld of Ishtar, or Cybele or Isis the black virgin who was exposed to the sun of the east. The four directions, north, east, south and west are explained in chapter four with reference to the laying of cornerstones of public buildings. Albo and Popow assert that the Golden Boy, then is a metaphor for Hermes, above. The Manitoba Legislative Building went three times over budget before it was finished and there are a multitude of other Masonic

³² Frank Albo and W. Bro. Victor G. Popow, "A Report on the Manitoba Legislature – Metaphor for Occult Thought? (September 2002) <http://sric-canada.org/Legislature.htm>, 1.

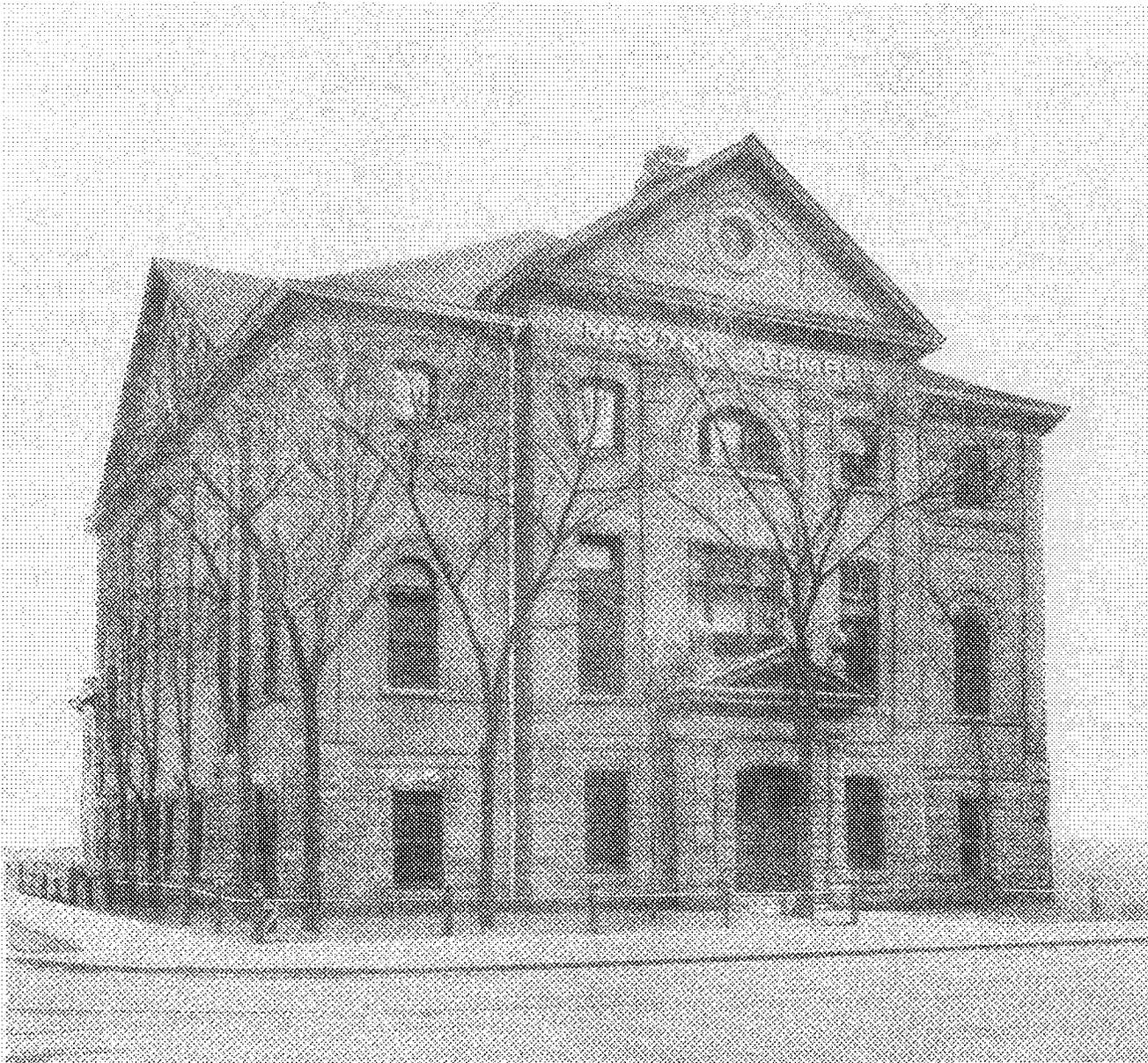
symbols present in and outside of its walls but there are too many to describe them all within the confines of this thesis. However, the fact that the Manitoba Legislative Building was constructed in the image of King Solomon's Temple and Masonic symbols are present throughout is indicative of the influence of the Masons in Winnipeg and their status in the city.

Ritual evolved from the mundane recitation of ceremonies to the spectacular in the later nineteenth century. Masons in Canada and in the United States spent millions on the building of elaborate temples to practice in. This coincided with the building of the Masonic Temple in Winnipeg in 1895, on the corner of Donald Street and Ellice Avenue, see illustration. The ceremonies held in these new and elaborate temples came to involve aspects of the theatrical such as lighting changes, fire, elaborate sets and sensational effects.³³ Participation in these staged dramas served to enforce group cohesion and a sense of shared identity.

The ritual of the Master Mason, third in the Blue Lodge degrees, most exemplified the spectacular. During this ritual, Hiram Abif, played by the candidate, is sent by the King of Tyre to King Solomon to serve as the principal architect and builder of King Solomon's Temple. Abif was called the "widow's son" and was a skilled artist and mechanic. He was the son of an Israelite women and was said to be the first Grand Master of an order of Speculative Masons.³⁴ The re-enactment of the events surrounding the building of King Solomon's Temple and the emphasis on Masonic involvement served to legitimise Masonry by connecting it to religion and history. The

³³ C. Lance Brockman, ed. *Theatre of the Fraternity: Staging the Ritual Space of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry* (Minnesota, 1996), 64.

³⁴ Masonic Bible, 44.



MASONIC TEMPLE, WINNIPEG—ERECTED 1895

Figure 3.2³⁵

story of King Solomon's Temple is located in Kings six and seven and Chronicles three and four. Hiram is "murdered" after his arrival when he reportedly refuses to divulge the

³⁵ Douglas, 261.

secrets of Masonry to three men.³⁶ Mary Ann Clawson argues that this degree in particular exemplifies the defence of individual property, the secrets, and consequently capitalism and so is consistent with the later nineteenth century when the degree was finalised.³⁷ The murder is portrayed through a swift blow to the head of the candidate by the three “murderers”. There have been instances in Winnipeg where candidates were accidentally knocked unconscious during this re-enactment due to overzealous “murderers”.³⁸ The “murderers” are played by three members of the lodge and represent “ignorance, selfishness, and sensuality”.³⁹ This is reflective of Victorian notions of sin and immorality that were so prevalent in the nineteenth century. The discovery of the body is played out and the execution of the three perpetrators. Hiram is “buried” and later “resurrected”. Hiram is lauded as the moral hero who lost his life in order to safeguard the secrets of Masonry. All three degrees serve as symbolic, communal expressions of hierarchical progression and emphasise Victorian attitudes towards appropriate masculine behaviour. The violent murderers represent Victorian vices and consequently the Master Masons degree speaks to notions of inappropriate masculine behaviour by modelling violence.

It is relevant to examine the degrees of the Order of the Eastern Star, of which there are five, in order to demonstrate just how exactly both groups conformed and enforced appropriate notions of gender even though the OES did not come to Manitoba until the early twentieth century. The Grand Chapter of the OES in Manitoba was organised in 1922, however, there were already fourteen chapters operating in the

³⁶ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 44.

³⁷ Clawson, 81.

³⁸ Communication with a Mason.

³⁹ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 44.

Province at the time. The degrees of the OES are markedly different, far less theatrical and based purely on Biblical recitation rather than a quest for knowledge or an hierarchical progression. An examination of why specific passages were chosen for the performance of ritual and were readily accepted in Manitoba allows for an understanding of the social world to which the OES arrived. The emblem of the OES is a five-pointed star and each point represents the five degrees, or roles, in which women can expect “Masonic care and protection”.⁴⁰ The degrees are Adah, the daughter, Ruth, the widow, Esther, the wife, Martha, the sister and Electa, the martyr.⁴¹ Each degree is marked by a different ritual and these exemplify what was considered appropriate roles and behaviour for women. Through recitation, the dependence of women on men for their identity was re-inscribed at a moment when women were beginning to challenge such linkages. The OES degrees emphasise the matrimonial and familial roles and duties of women and this is consistent with Victorian assumptions regarding women and family. There is no degree in the OES that presents women as independent from patriarchal authority. Like the Masons, the shared experience of membership in the OES and identification with the values described in the rituals privately demonstrated those who belonged as moral and respectable.

The degree referred to as “Adah” is meant to inculcate in members the importance of loyalty and devotion to fathers. This degree is based on passages from the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Book of Judges.⁴² Jephthah, Adah’s father, leaves his daughter to lead the Israelites to war against the Ammonites. Before leaving

⁴⁰ Allan Cabaniss, “Rob Morris in Mississippi, 1842-1852”, in *Journal of Mississippi History* 39 (1977), 296.

⁴¹ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 22.

⁴² Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 22.

he vowed, "If thou wilt deliver the children of Ammon into my hands, then it shall be that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me... shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering".⁴³ Jephthah was successful in his venture and upon his return home Adah stepped first out of the door to his house to greet her returning father. Adah's purported adherence to her father's vow represents loyalty to her father and the ultimate devotion of a daughter.

The Masonic Bible states that there are various interpretations of this tale; one is that Adah was literally offered as a human sacrifice. The Masons disagree with this, argue that human sacrifice was against the word of God, and make the assertion that:

Others interpret the vow as requiring the dedication of his only daughter to a life of perpetual virginity, by which she was forbidden marriage and the bearing of children... Such an interpretation does not detract from the beauty of her character... No higher virtue of genuine womanhood or of greater devotion on the part of a daughter to her father has ever been exemplified in this history of mankind.⁴⁴

Independent of Masonic interpretations of this story, the degree of Adah is meant simply to stress the virtue of the role of the daughter to members of the OES and enforce women's familial duty. This degree is a fairly close recitation of the Biblical account but that is all that it involves. None of the elaborate theatrics of Masonry were included as they were deemed inappropriate for women.

Ruth, the second degree, is structured to exhibit the devotion of a widow. In the book of Ruth, Ruth is widowed and chooses to devote her life to her mother-in-law, Naomi. The ritual places emphasis on the journey of Ruth and Naomi to Bethlehem where Ruth "industriously labors" to support them.⁴⁵ The story explains that by virtue of

⁴³ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 22.

⁴⁴ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 22.

⁴⁵ *Ritual of the Order of the Eastern Star*, 56-9.

her charm, industrious nature, frugality and devotion to Naomi, Ruth wins the admiration of a wealthy landlord and a “lovely romance follows”.⁴⁶ Justice, honour and the reward of a romance with a wealthy man are the central themes of this degree. Esther, the third degree, shows the devotion of a wife and is located in chapter five of the book of Esther.⁴⁷ Esther was a maiden of “rare beauty and nobility of character” who married Ahasuerus, King of Persia and Media.⁴⁸ In the recitation, Esther is a woman of profound piety, faith and obedience to her husband. A part that would be problematic to appropriate gender roles concerns Esther purportedly preventing a decree for the destruction of all Jewish people in Persia through a series of “astute and dangerous maneuvers”.⁴⁹ This is reconciled in the ritual by emphasising not her deeds, but instead her beauty, which “allowed” her to accomplish the deeds. The emphasis on virtue and beauty versus bravery or mental faculty is common to all of the OES degrees and is characteristic of Victorian perceptions of womanhood.

The fourth and fifth degrees, Martha and Electa, both place emphasis on the sacredness of the family. However, the degree Electa asserts that religion takes precedence over family in a situation where a choice must be made. The narration of the degree of Martha illustrates the role of the sister and states that “she was a true sister in caring for the home and in caring for the comfort and happiness of the other members of the family”.⁵⁰ Electa, the martyr, is the name given to “The Elect Lady and

⁴⁶ *Ritual of the Order of the Eastern Star*, 58.

⁴⁷ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 23.

⁴⁸ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 23.

⁴⁹ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 23.

⁵⁰ The degree of Martha is based on chapter eleven from the book of John. Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 23.

her children” in chapter one of the second book of John.⁵¹ The Elect Lady represents patience and submission to the will of God under persecution. When Electa was forced to choose between her family and her God, the ritual recognises that she “joyously rendered up home, husband, children...and life that she might testify to her Christian love by a martyr’s death”.⁵² All of the degrees highlight the importance of family and this is indicative of the dominant perceptions of womanhood, the domestic sphere and the family in this period. However, the Electa degree indicates that the only thing more important than familial duty was adherence to religion, even at the expense of family. Consequently, above all else the Masons considered the piety of women to be of the utmost importance. The narration of these tales by members of the OES served to reinforce common attitudes towards the role of women and provides a sharp contrast concerning the distinctly gendered nature of appropriate female versus masculine ritual.

Recently, Cathy Burns, in *Hidden Secrets of the Eastern Star: The Masonic Connection*, criticised the rituals of Masonry and the OES and claims that both organisations are invalid because the ceremonies do not strictly adhere to the scriptures.⁵³ Burns is a Doctor of Philosophy and is the only academic to have studied the OES in any degree of depth and is not a member. Her criticism is a Christian critique that speaks to the idea that the Masons and the OES have somehow misused the bible in the process of composing their ceremonies. Burns does not consider the period in which the rituals were written or the context in which they were used and argues that “it should be evident by now that the degrees are not only not Scriptural, but

⁵¹ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 23.

⁵² Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 23.

⁵³ Cathy Burns, *Hidden Secrets of the Eastern Star: The Masonic Connection* (Pennsylvania, 2000), 40-1.

they also contain outright lies, exaggerations, and misstatements”.⁵⁴ In 1948, “Grand Historian” F.A. Bell, a member of the OES and writer of one of the manuals of instruction addresses the issue of exact scriptural adherence when he asserts that “the ceremonies...bear certain improvements in keeping with the trend of the times”.⁵⁵ Burns misses the point as neither OES nor Masonic ritual has ever purported to adhere to the Scriptures and instead specific stories are chosen and then shaped in keeping with their individual purposes. Each ritual served to emphasise specific moral and ethical instructions for members and is reflective of the period in which they were finally written down. It is crucial then to examine the rituals not for their direct adherence to biblical passages but to analyse the language used in order to garner an understanding of the cultural and social spaces in which both organisations operated.

By virtue of various membership conditions, Masonry in Manitoba remained exclusive. The payment of various fees, costume expenses (discussed further in chapter four) and voting ceremonies served to restrict membership to men who the Masons viewed as desirable. Sponsorship was not a tool for the exclusion of candidates. Men were never recruited to join the Masons and a potential initiate had to petition a lodge himself or make inquiries through another Mason. If a candidate was accepted he then obtained a sponsor to instruct him on the rituals. There are no specific criteria listed for the voting ceremonies in any of the ritual books or the Masonic Bible. However, William Douglas briefly mentions the existence of a *Credentials Committee*, which investigated character.⁵⁶ This aspect is not further elaborated on in any other Masonic text. When a man desired to join the Masons he had to first obtain a sponsor

⁵⁴ Burns, 40-1.

⁵⁵ Bell, 10.

⁵⁶ Douglas, 162.

and then the candidate's name, address and professional information were posted within the lodge for at least four weeks and until the time when members met for the voting ceremony. This time period was allotted so that Masons could investigate a proposed candidates "moral character".⁵⁷ William Coldwell, a member of the Northern Light Lodge, commented on the influence of gossip and judgement in Red River characterising the settlement as "rife with gossip and slander, in which every man, whatever his rank, was intimately known and censoriously judged".⁵⁸ This is particularly ironic in light of the voting ceremonies Coldwell participated in where every man was not only investigated but critically judged on his perceived rank in the community.

Evidence of these voting ceremonies in Manitoba is contained in lodge agendas sent to each member and contained lists of business to be discussed as well as proposed candidates for initiation.⁵⁹ By allowing the personal information of candidates to be posted for voting purposes, lodges enabled their members to privately define the character of Masons as well as an other. During the voting ceremony, each Masons was given one black ball and one white. By placing either the white ball, which signified a 'yes' vote, or the black ball, a 'no' vote, into a closed container, Masons controlled who was allowed into their exclusive space. If just one black ball was present in the container after the voting ceremony, the candidate was not granted admission to the lodge. In a letter from John Schultz addressed to Thomas Tweed, a past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba, there is evidence that Masons in Manitoba made use of

⁵⁷ Robert Macoy, *General History, cyclopedia, and dictionary of freemasonry* (New York: 1897), 447.

⁵⁸ Quoted in Bumstead, *Trials and Tribulations*, 84.

⁵⁹ William Douglas Collection, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, MG 14 c3.

this practice. The letter contains a list of items that were ordered for use in the lodge and included in the list are black and white beads.⁶⁰

It is interesting to note that while a Mason had only to find a sponsor to be considered for admission, membership to the OES required a male relation who was a Mason in good standing and had progressed to the level of Master Mason. The manual of the Eastern Star states:

Any affiliated Master Mason, his wife, daughter, legally adopted daughter, mother, sister, and half sister; also the widow, daughter, legally adopted daughter, mother, sister, and half sister of any Master Mason who was affiliated at the time of his death, is eligible to membership in this Order...⁶¹

Women participated in the same type of voting ceremony as their Masonic counterparts but were subject to a host of additional conditions. If a woman who belonged to the Order married a non-Mason she was subject to expulsion.⁶² Also, if a man was expelled from his lodge his female relation would suffer the same fate.⁶³ OES regulations stated that there must be a Master Mason present to confer any and all degrees. These membership restrictions all served to reaffirm women's dependence on men for their identity and admission to the regulated space of the Order. Women's standing was relational to the men in their lives and they had no legitimacy in their own right in terms of the OES.

The expenses associated with membership to Masonry served as a barrier to men who did not possess the means for payment. These expenses generally included costumes, payment for each degree that was conferred, activities, initial admission and dues. Mary Ann Clawson asserts that the amount spent on these necessities would

⁶⁰ Douglas, 34.

⁶¹ *Ritual of the Order of the Eastern Star*, 157.

⁶² Carnes, 86.

⁶³ *Ritual of the Order of the Eastern Star*, 161.

have exceeded the majority of working class budgets in the United States.⁶⁴ This served to enforce the notion that Masonry was not an association for the working class. On average, Masons would have spent around two hundred and fifty dollars on initiations for degrees, costumes and annual dues.⁶⁵ Initial admission to the lodges in Manitoba was set at five pounds sterling and then candidates expenses depended on how many degrees they took over and above the initial Blue Lodge degrees. Exact numbers concerning expenses in Manitoba are unknown but they would have been similar to those in the United States as the requirements for costumes and lodge furnishings were the same. There are a possible thirty-three degrees which represent additional knowledge outside of the Blue Lodge. These degrees do not represent the hierarchical structure that is found in Blue Lodge Masonry as the Master Mason is considered the highest degree but would have cost a considerable amount to partake in them. Most men in Manitoba in the later nineteenth century probably only took the Blue Lodge degrees but even these were costly. Lynn Dumenil is in agreement with Clawson and suggests that fees in the United States for the first three Blue Lodge degrees would have been between seventy-five and two hundred and thirty dollars, not counting lodge dues.⁶⁶ As the number of Masons in Manitoba was significant and the lodges grew rapidly, enough of the commercial class did not consider the price too high to pay for the ability to demonstrate belonging to a respectable institution. This demonstrates a moment in pre-twentieth century Winnipeg, where class was fluid to an extent that men who could afford to purchase respectability did. The money invested in costumes served as an indicator of societal position because the Masons, a group that could afford

⁶⁴ Clawson, 4.

⁶⁵ Clawson, 4.

⁶⁶ Dumenil, 17.

the extravagancies, publicly paraded in them through the streets of Winnipeg. Masonry was particularly significant in this period because the boundaries of class were unclear.

Through the performance of private rituals in the lodge room, Masons enforced their cohesion as a group and communicated to each other their sameness in terms of values, attitudes and common beliefs. By deliberately choosing certain ceremonies that established continuity with biblical tales and the symbolism of Ancient Egypt, Masons practised the invention of tradition and connected themselves with a suitable, historical past and this served to give them legitimacy. These private rituals, the only really private aspect of Masonry in Manitoba, allowed Masons to influence their immediate social sphere and use Masonry as a tool for managing cultural hegemony. The masculine space of the lodge and the language chosen for ritual exemplified gender appropriate behaviour and reified the roles of women and men in later nineteenth century Winnipeg.

Chapter Four

“...unstained by vice and unspotted by sin...”: Masonry as a Public Spectacle

Masons in Winnipeg demonstrated their respectable status and celebrated their masculinity in public spaces through spectacles of belonging. Men who were members paraded through the streets of Winnipeg in full costume to attend the funerals of former Masons or to commemorate the erection of buildings by laying the cornerstones. These events were no small affair and it would have been difficult for residents of Winnipeg not to notice men parading down the street often to the music of a brass band. Participation in these marches was indicative of the communal desire to demonstrate a specific social identity and speaks to the idea that public performance reinforced group oneness as did the private rituals, although in a different way. The costumes worn were styled to attract attention to specific values and symbolically represented Victorian attitudes and shared beliefs. The social activities of Masons were published in leaflets that were sent to members and lists of new members, officers and meeting times were often published in Winnipeg newspapers. Lists of men and women who attended Masonic events and advertisements for them were often published in *The Manitoban*, *The Weekly Manitoban* and the *Canadian Craftsman*, a Masonic publication. The types of activities put on by lodges can be classified as acceptable for the consumption of respectable individuals and families, for example, poetry readings and balls. The majority of these activities and performances served to display to the public who was a member and who was an outsider to the Masons.

The nature and choice of social activities organised by lodges in Manitoba was not random but served to inculcate in members what was and was not respectable in terms of socializing. By choosing to arrange specific events, Masons engaged in a process of definition regarding respectable cultural functions. In 1872, Prince Rupert

Lodge held a grand ball and evening supper. This type of event is consistent with Victorian notions of acceptable evenings of entertainment and was advertised in the *Manitoban*. The advertisement in *The Manitoban* included lists of Masons who organized the event as well as the instruction for Masons to “appear in full regalia”.¹ Many of the Masons arrived in full costume and in the report of the ball it is written that “there were displayed some of the emblems of the Masonic fraternity, gracefully entwined with flags”.² This is indicative of the imperial nature of Masonry, its British origins and as well the fact that participants were made constantly aware of their shared attitudes through the use of symbols. The list of attendees at the ball reads as a veritable who’s who of Manitoba with the inclusion of well known Winnipeg names such as Ashdown, Norquay, Hargrave, Inkster and Henderson.³ Douglas, a Mason, credits these men and their families for their part in “the development of a higher citizenship”.⁴ This statement is demonstrative of who the Masons believed was desirable, respectable and contributed to the development of the character of the City of Winnipeg. This particular event included members not only from Prince Rupert Lodge and was attended by around three hundred persons.⁵ An event of this size would have been public knowledge and therefore served to privately socialise Masons and their families in terms of appropriate activities and publicly demonstrate who was respectable and of the social elite in Winnipeg.

As discussed previously, the Masons often published the results of their elections

¹ *The Manitoban*, December 2 and 9, 1871.

² *The Canadian Craftsman*, January 1872, 113.

³ *Canadian Craftsman*, January 1872, 113.

⁴ Douglas, 76.

⁵ Douglas, 76.

as well as meeting schedules and notices of upcoming events. This public display enforced who belonged, and was respectable and consequently who was not. Many of the events sponsored by the Masons were published and are currently housed in the Provincial Archives of Manitoba as programs for participants. Through the study of these printed programs sent by lodges to their members it becomes apparent that all of the evenings of entertainment organised by lodges reflected Victorian perceptions of respectable amusement. All lodges in Manitoba sponsored events such as the River's Lodge Grand Patriotic Ball for all members and their wives.⁶ The evenings were characterised by what was considered to be respectable entertainment. For example, at this particular function members were treated to musical interludes and readings of authors such as Rudyard Kipling.

Men and women were invited to attend these balls but there were also Masons banquets where women were prohibited from attending. Men were expected to appear in proper attire and this included, for example, the mandatory white gloves.⁷ In this context, Masons and their wives confirmed and constructed their respectable status by attending lodge functions that enforced boundaries in terms of who was not a Mason and therefore not welcome. Boundaries to members of society with little disposable income were compounded and further enforced by the fact that events such as this were not a complimentary evening sponsored by the lodge. Besides paying initiation dues and fees for degrees to be conferred, mentioned in the previous chapter, Masons also

⁶ There are numerous programs detailing banquets and balls held by a variety of lodges in the J.C. Mitchell Collection at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, MG 14 c108.

⁷ Masons were forbidden to even enter the temple at this time to take part in ceremonies without proper attire and part of this was their white gloves.

had to purchase tickets to these events.⁸ Mary Ann Clawson argues that Masons perpetuated systems of inequality in the United States⁹ and this was no different in Winnipeg. The publication of attendees to balls and banquets was not the practice in England where membership in the Masons was more secretive. Announcements of upcoming banquets and balls and reports on events in local papers served as advertisements of members' respectable status.

Lodge functions in Manitoba were consistent with Victorian notions regarding the family in the later nineteenth century. A respectable male, in the Victorian sense, was supposed to be responsible for his family as well as industrious, sober and morally upright.¹⁰ Lodges frequently held picnics and dinners where the entire family of a Mason was welcome to attend. At one of these family dinners, as reported in *The Weekly Manitoban*, a member of the Prince Rupert Lodge addressed the single ladies, Masons daughters and "became quite fatherly...urged upon the fair ones who were looking for husbands to be particular in inquiring of any man who might propose if he was Mason, and, if so, they need not hesitate...".¹¹ This statement denotes the perceived character of men who were Masons as well as the masculine role of the father in his responsibility to a daughter. The Masonic Edition of the Bible also makes reference to the need for Masons to protect women and the "chastity of womanhood".¹² The Masons describe the

⁸ Specific prices are not often mentioned in the programs but the frequency of nine and ten course banquets and balls was high and individual lodges sold tickets to members and did not often sponsor these functions. Therefore it can be assumed that these events, due to their frequency and elaborate nature, exceeded the budgets of working class families.

⁹ Clawson, 14.

¹⁰ Anstead, 74.

¹¹ *The Weekly Manitoban*, Vol.1, No. 38, July 1st, 1871.

¹² Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 37.

role of the male in the family in terms of the “good Mason” who, “In his family... is high without severity; his commands are gentle... To his wife he is the tender husband, not the usurping lord; to his children he is the kind, the providential father”.¹³ This statement is meant to be instructive to Masons regarding the expected role of the father as responsible to the family. Masonic notions regarding illegitimate children were also consistent with Victorian notions of the family. It was not possible for a man if he “had the misfortune to be born out of wedlock” to gain admission to a lodge.¹⁴ This rule is not currently in effect but there is no information regarding the exact date of change.

Masons in Winnipeg acted out deliberate demonstrations of unity and belonging by marching in parades through the streets in full costume. Evidence of Masonic parades in Manitoba primarily indicates that Masons paraded to lay the cornerstones of buildings, see below, and to funerals of fellow Masons, detailed below.¹⁵ Mary Ryan argues that by choosing to participate in a parade, the marchers acted out a certain social vocabulary and simultaneously verified their group identity to the public.¹⁶ Although Ryan’s study details American parades in nineteenth century America, this work can be utilised to assess parading in Manitoba. Ryan asserts that the parade is the “cultural equivalent” of what Hanna Pithin calls “descriptive representation”, wherein social groups present themselves, rather than abstract symbols, to the public.¹⁷ Parading done by the Masons was the cultural equal to descriptive representation but

¹³ Macoy, 522.

¹⁴ Masonic Edition of the King James Bible, 25.

¹⁵ Evidence of parades has been found by Douglas in Masonic records or through oral histories and indicates that in Manitoba, parades were most often for cornerstone ceremonies or funerals. Douglas, 202-16.

¹⁶ Mary Ryan, “The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order”, in *New Cultural History* (Berkeley, 1989), 139.

¹⁷ Ryan, 137.

the costumes worn displayed abstract symbols as well. Ryan continues on to argue that parading in general in America began to lose the marks suggestiveness of class around 1850. Masonic parades, however, were by nature and membership, consistently suggestive of class.¹⁸ The Masons in Winnipeg were not the only secret society to publicly demonstrate their group identity by parading. In 1872, Winnipeg saw its first parade by the Loyal Orange Order to commemorate the Battle of Boyne in 1690. Over two hundred and fifty people attended this parade and the members of the Orange Order also marched in full costume.¹⁹

Masons demonstrated membership in public spaces by parading in full costume to lay the cornerstones of newly erected buildings. This practice is common to Masons from all parts of the world and is meant to pay homage to their operative roots as stonemasons. Operative Masons considered the cornerstone to be the most important stone in the building. The cornerstone was required to be perfectly square, a symbol of morality, and the contents a perfect cube, symbolising truth.²⁰ This stone was supposed to represent a:

permanent and durable quality than any other part of the building, lasting beyond the decay and ruin of the building, and therefore reminding the Mason that when this earthly tabernacle of his shall have passed away, he has within him a sure foundation of eternal life²¹

Through this symbolism, Masons constructed and enforced their belief in the immortality of the soul after the tabernacle, or body, decayed. Through the cornerstone, Masons

¹⁸ Ryan, 142.

¹⁹ Houston and Smith, 3 and 59.

²⁰ Masonic Bible, 38.

²¹ Masonic Bible, 38.

celebrated immortality and associated themselves with Jesus Christ who was said to be "the foundation stone of the corner".²²

In Manitoba, Masons gathered to parade to the location of the building and lay the stone. Over fifty-four cornerstones have been laid in Manitoba and the majority of these ceremonies would have begun with a parade. For example, Masons laid the cornerstone of St. John's Cathedral, St. Matthew's Anglican Church, the Traffic Bridge in St. Boniface, Winnipeg's City Hall and the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue.²³ Douglas writes that when Masons laid the cornerstone of the Traffic Bridge they "marched to the banks of the historic Red River".²⁴ This ceremony often included a march around the circumference of the site and then the consecration of the stone in water.²⁵ Masons then offered a prayer of dedication and the overseer of the building placed his hand upon the stone and as well the ropes which were to pull it to its place in the building.²⁶ Following the cementing of the stone in place were "certain appropriate ceremonies fitting for the type of building".²⁷

When Masons laid the cornerstone of a building, the North East corner was always used. Some of the cornerstones laid by Masons in Winnipeg can still be seen today. At Shaarey Zedek Synagoge, on the corner of Wellington Crescent and the foot

²² Masonic Bible, 38.

²³ See Emmett, 54 and Douglas, 204.

²⁴ Douglas, 202-3.

²⁵ Masonic Bible, 38.

²⁶ There is no reliable information regarding what sort of prayer was said or if the prayer was more a speech of dedication.

²⁷ It is unknown what type of ceremony was considered to be appropriate for what type of building but ceremonies generally followed this pattern, beginning with the parade and ending with the cementing of the stone and "certain ceremonies".

of the Sherbrook Street Bridge, there is a stone on the North East corner of the building marked with Hebrew symbols. The original Shaarey Zedek synagogue, on Dagmar Street in the City's north end, was dedicated in 1889 and the cornerstone laid by the Masons as well. Walter F. Hyman, the man William Douglas claims was the first man to identify as Jewish in Winnipeg, is not recorded as a member of this temple or ever buried in its cemeteries. Also, upon communication with the archivist at the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada, it becomes clear that Walter F. Hyman was probably not one of the first Jewish citizens in Winnipeg. Douglas never claimed that Hyman was involved in the cornerstone laying but did argue that he was the first Jewish man in Winnipeg and a Mason. Hyman may have been a Mason but he was not instrumental in orchestrating the Shaarey Zedek ceremony as a member of the temple. In Masonic symbolism north represents darkness, the south represents beauty, east is wisdom and west is strength. East is the source of material light, and to Masons represents the pure light of truth, and north is the place of darkness, not yet penetrated by the Masonic light of truth.²⁸ Consequently, the placing of the cornerstone on the North East corner symbolises the illumination of the darkness, or ignorance, by the light of truth. This symbolism is carried over into the lodge room. In the replica of the inside of King Solomon's Temple, the light in the main room is not always permitted to enter the northern part of the lodge. Masonic ritual emphasises the North East corner of the lodge room in terms of the commencement of an initiate on his "moral and intellectual task of erecting a spiritual temple in his heart".²⁹ In the corner, the newly admitted candidate is instructed to lead a life of truthfulness and uprightness of character. The cornerstones

²⁸ Albert G. Mackey, *Symbolism of Freemasonry: Illustrating and Explaining its Science and Philosophy, its Legends, Myths, and Symbols* (Chicago, 1975), 166.

²⁹ Masonic Bible, 52.

laid by Masons in Winnipeg served to enforce values shared by the Masons and to promote the custom of operative masons constructing the foundations of buildings, which had been the tradition in England.

Members of the Masons performed respectability in public even in death and funeral services and grave markers communicated group belonging to outsiders. In 1877 the Ancient Landmark Lodge performed the last rites for deceased Mason, William McMurray.³⁰ When a Mason passed away, his fellow lodge members requested permission from the family to have their own ceremony with the corpse, or if a Mason had requested fraternal internment the lodge made all the arrangements.³¹ The only regulation imposed in order to request a Masonic burial was that a man must have been a Master Mason. Paid or partially funded funeral expenses motivated men to join other fraternal organisations such as the Independent Order of Oddfellows but the Masons were not involved in insurance for funerals.³² Masonic funerals involved parading, often with the accompaniment of a brass band, in full costume to the burial site where services were held.³³ There are recorded instances in Ontario of church services being interrupted and complaints registered on account of the noise created by the Masons funeral parades.³⁴ By parading through the streets in costume, Masons were creating a spectacle for public consumption and this functioned as a marker of social status, a demonstration of who belonged to this organisation that was made up of members of the self-constructed social elite in Winnipeg.

³⁰ Douglas, 44-5.

³¹ Carnes, 57.

³² Anstead, 19.

³³ Anstead, 170.

³⁴ Anstead, 170.

At the burial site during a Masonic interment, Masons practised the “Mystic Chain”. This was the formation of the lodge members in a circle around the grave, holding hands with arms crossed so each man gave his right hand to the man standing on his left.³⁵ This served to symbolise the close connection of Masons in a shared bond. Most of the grave markers of Masons who were buried between 1864 and 1900 in Winnipeg are worn to the point that they are unreadable. However, at St. John’s Cathedral, at 135 Anderson Street, some remain that are distinguishable. St. John’s Cathedral is one of the many buildings in Winnipeg and in the Province of Manitoba that the Masons paraded to in order to lay the cornerstone. This particular church stands just south of the site of what was the Selkirk settlers burial ground, begun in 1812. In 1822



Figure 4.1 – Masonic grave marker in St. John’s cemetery

³⁵ Masons Bible, 25.

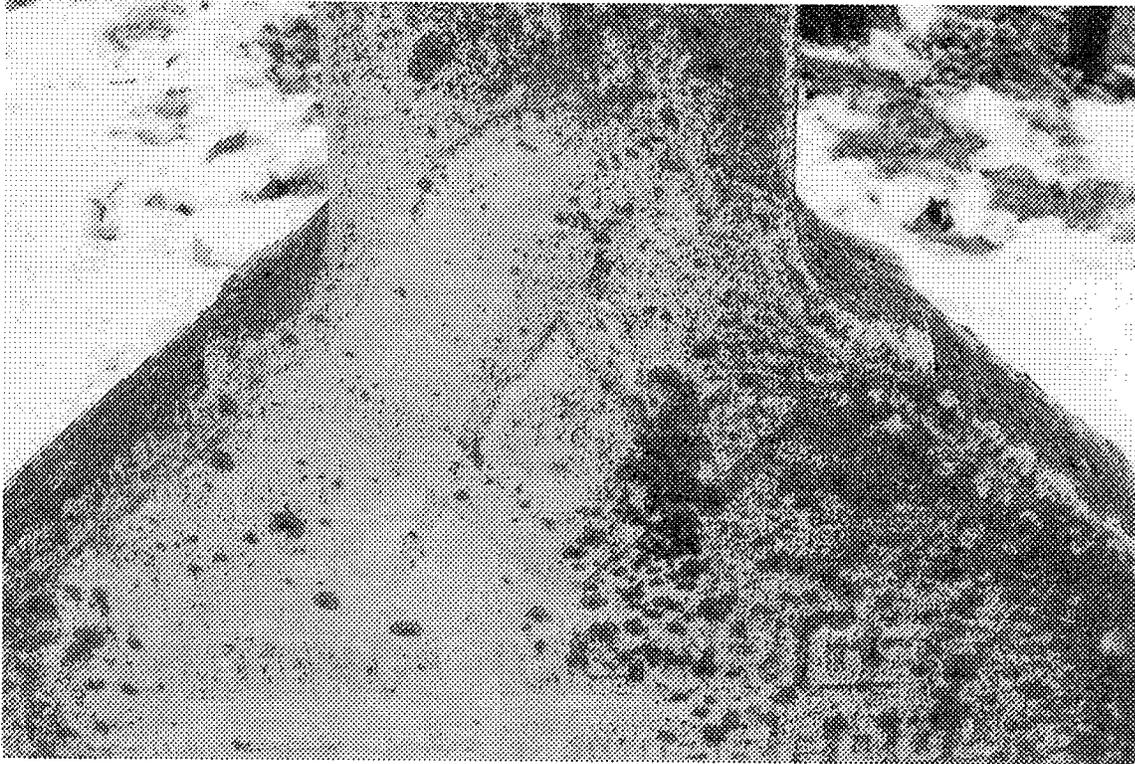


Figure 4.2 – Masonic grave marker in St. John’s cemetery

Reverend John West constructed a church mission house on the south east corner of the present cemetery and in 1833 this was replaced by a second church on the same site in the lot as the present building stands. In 1862 a stone church was built upon the same spot and in 1926 the present building was erected using stone from the 1862 church. The cemetery, which surrounds the church on all sides, houses the grave stones of former Masons. These markers bear the Masonic compass, letter “G” and the square, the Three Great Lights of Masonry, discussed in Chapter Three. The decision to mark a grave with Masonic symbols was the decision of the lodge member and functioned as a constant reminder of the fact that the deceased was a Mason. This speaks to the desire to communicate, even from the grave, that an individual was part of an organisation with an identifiable set of respectable values and a common social identity.

The costumes worn by the Masons during cornerstone ceremonies and funerals were the same costumes worn in the lodge room and were chosen specifically to direct attention to certain shared beliefs. These clothes enforced values privately and publicly, during the initiation of candidates as well as during public spectacles of belonging. Masons wore a white apron as part of their costume and this dates to the origins of Masonry in Scotland when operative masons wore them for protection from rock splinters. The donning of this apron in late 19th century Canada represented much more than a need for physical protection but was symbolic of protection from sin. The apron,

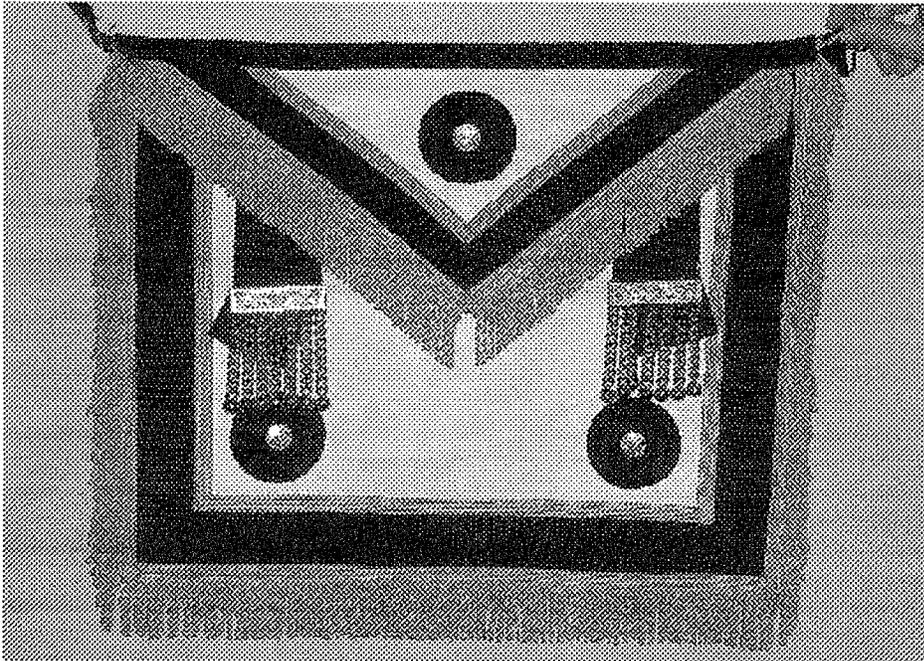


Figure 4.3

36

³⁶ Although this apron was not worn in the period before 1900, it is similar to the aprons worn by Masons in Manitoba then.

arguably the most important part of the costume, which was made out of white leather or lambskin was:

symbolic of that worn by operative M...ns (Masons), to protect their garments from spot or stain; but we, as F. (Free) and A. M...ns (Accepted Masons) make use of it for a more noble purpose. From its whiteness and the innocence of the animal from which it is procured, we are constantly admonished to observe that blameless purity of life and conduct which will enable us hereafter to stand before the Great Almighty...unstained by vice and unspotted by sin.³⁷

The symbolism of white, denoting purity, served to demonstrate a members' belief that they embodied respectable manliness. The colour white was also central to the costumes worn by members of the Order of the Eastern Star. Women wore a long white gown and a coloured badge to symbolise their degree. The colour white, in a dress or an apron, demonstrated the shared value of respectability and consequently morality. This is consistent with beliefs of the period elsewhere in Canada regarding the symbolism of the colour white and its association to purity and morality.³⁸

Masons declared their membership and group consciousness by wearing similar costumes, participating in cornerstone and funeral ceremonies and attending Masonic events. All of this was done in public spaces and served to demonstrate to other citizens of Winnipeg, who was part of the temple and who was not. The publication of these events in local newspapers reinforced the identity of Masons as men who belonged to an exclusive organisation. The Manitoba Masons used public space and Masonry to negotiate their respectable status in the community.

³⁷ *Ecce Orienti*, 43.

³⁸ Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada* (Toronto:1991).

Conclusion

The Nineteenth Century rituals and practices of the Masons in Winnipeg and in Canada remain the same today. However, the average age of Masons today is significantly higher than when Masonry was at the zenith of its political and commercial might. The publications of the Masons today reflect their past in terms of demonstrated respectability and values. In a recent work written by the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America, *Your Family Can Play an Important Role*, this becomes clear. On the cover of the pamphlet is the most important symbol of the shared values of Masonry. There are two distinguished looking gentlemen in tailored suits. The fact that the men are wearing suits and not for example, jeans or a work uniform is testament to the type of men who are Masons, who the Masons regard as desirable and the image that the publishers deem suitable. This pamphlet is meant for distribution to prospective Masons and to men who are already Masons to encourage their families to take an active role. The text of this publication emphasizes morality, the ethical instruction that Masonry could provide and the family as a unit. The Committee writes that:

Men who are Masons get a lot out of their Fraternity. They get a chance to make new friends, do worthwhile things in their community and improve themselves as human beings. They have opportunities for ethical, moral and spiritual growth... We know that a Mason's family is the most important thing in his life. We wouldn't respect him as a Brother if it weren't... all lodges share a common commitment to the family. It's good for everyone for families to do things together... When the drug dealers are on the streets or around the play-ground, it's good to know that there are Masonic organizations promoting healthy ideals and goals.¹

This language demonstrates the evolution of Masonry to the present and the consistent emphasis on moral, wholesome values. Although, in the late nineteenth century, a pamphlet such as this would have been concerned with other social evils of the period,

¹ *Your Family Can Play an Important Role*, Masonic Renewal Committee of North America. No date given.

the emphasis on family and morality has not changed. Masonry is still symbolic of the same core values.

In another pamphlet by the same organization, *When Your Husband or Father is a Mason*, family values are combined with masculinity and the experience of male bonding. The Committee writes "In our fast paced world, where pressures on time become greater and greater, there are all too-few times when fathers can share quality time with their sons".² This is at once an advertisement for family values and male bonding but also a plea for fresh men to join the order. The Masons continue the pamphlet by stating

Perhaps your father taught you to drive, hunt, or fish...As boys grow into men, unfortunately the sharing opportunities grow even more rare...But there's one thing you can always share with your father...Freemasonry...it's a rare Mason who does not hope in his heart that his sons will join the Craft.³

The Committee continues in this manner to laud the virtues of Masonry as a father-son bonding experience. However, considering the first familial relationship mentioned in the title is "Husband" the pamphlet deals sparingly with wives. It is mentioned briefly on the back page that there are organizations for women too. Masons today are mainly involved in charitable work and fundraising for various societies, groups and causes. In Winnipeg they are involved with Cancer Care Manitoba and the Children's Burn Fund to name a couple. This too is consistent with past activities as Masons in Manitoba, Canada and across the world have always been involved in charitable work.

Between 1864 and 1900 men in Manitoba used Masonry as a vehicle for creating an image of respectability. Through participation in private rituals Masons demonstrated their shared attitudes and values to each other. The majority of time spent in lodges was

² *When Your Husband or Father is a Mason*, Masonic Renewal Committee of North America. No date given.

³ *When Your Husband*.

concerned with conferring degrees. Consequently, the lodge room before 1900 was more about business than leisure and socialising. Masons spent a great deal of time socializing with one another outside of the lodge during Masonic functions but inside the lodge ceremonies consumed their meeting times. The Masonic organisation known as the Shriners grew out of a desire by Masons to belong to a more social organisation than a business one. To become a Shriner a man must have taken the Master Masons degree. By the mid-Twentieth Century the Shriners had evolved into an organisation more concerned with the administration of charitable events as well as the pursuit of more leisurely activities. In public Masons showed their communities that they were part of the respectable portion of society by parading in the streets in full costume, holding gala events and picnics where members attended in full costume. Elected officers and meeting times were advertised in community newspapers and consequently belonging was made public knowledge. This moment in Winnipeg history was one in which class was fluid, social status was up for negotiation to a certain degree and respectability could be purchased. Masonry was a system of moral and ethical instruction and it became significant because it was an established institution with a connection, however precarious, to a legitimate historical past that could be used to demonstrate respectable masculinity. Masonry in Manitoba was a tool used to negotiate respectability at a moment in Winnipeg's history where both were not assured and the culture of professionalism, which would inform the values that would define the middle class was in a state of flux. The heyday of Masonry continued well past 1900 and it was one of the only secret societies in Canada to survive the Depression of the 1930s.

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