

# Unity Lodge #58, A.F. & A.M.

Thorndike, Maine



<<First Name>> <<Last Name>>

<<Address 1>>

<<Address 2>>

<<Town>> <<State>> <<Zip>>

February 12, 2021

Our next Stated Communication is February 17th, 2021. 7:00 pm No meal.

Early opening time as the Grand Master wanted members to get home early to conform to the governor's COVID edicts.

To the Brethren of Unity Lodge #58:

Brethren, the future of Masonry in Thorndike is in your hands.

I like many of you have been ducking this pandemic. Do you remember one of the first questions you were asked when you joined? "In Whom do you put your trust?"

I know all of you are proud to call yourselves Masons. I realize our hall is not pristine, but our hearts are in the right place. We do not want to see our fraternity fail. I have seen other lodges come back from near extinction. We had a surge in the 90s and our membership hit the 50+ mark. We have since dropped back to 43.

Leaders can only lead if they have someone to lead. We have several lodges in our district with members affiliating with us, trying to breathe life into our lack of participation so that Grand Lodge doesn't pull our charter. How long can this last without our members attempting the same.

Maybe you don't remember the signs, passwords, and lectures, but don't you remember the friendship?

Yes, this is a plea for assistance not by money, that will not save our lodge, only by participation can it happen.

It's been a year the COVID hit, The masks and social distancing has proven to be effective, and honestly convinced of that, can we hide behind closed doors forever? Remember in Whom you put your trust.

We have an E.A. who wishes to receive his next degree. Josh Suitor has been an E.A. for a while and has expressed interest in continuing his Masonic journey. I trust you will help me with his advancement.

Stay safe and remember we meet on the 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. No, this is not a misprint, GL has given permission to meet at 7 if we prefer. I hope to see you there. We will be opening in the E.A. degree.

Mayo Cookson, Jr., Master

Please read the proposal in the minutes regarding affiliations without cost between Unity Lodge and Star in the West Lodge. We should discuss and vote on it this month. Star in the West Lodge approved it at their Feb. meeting.,

<<Raised this month wording>>

*Thank you to those who have paid their dues.*

Please notify the secretary if your address changes.

Stated meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 with a 6:30 supper

Bruce Hutchins, Secretary, 1053 Halldale Rd, Montville ME 04941. tel/fax 382-6226, email [bruce@hutchinsbrothers.com](mailto:bruce@hutchinsbrothers.com)

Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1998256393798057/>

Grand Lodge has started "Our Lodge Page™": <https://58-me.ourlodgepage.com/>

District Calendar <http://east.our.calendars.net/glme/glmedist12>

<http://unitylodge.hutchinsbrothers.com/>

### The Origin of Freemasonry—Does It Really Matter?

Robert G. Davis

August 9, 2018 · Reading Time: 4 minutes

In my own Masonic experience, I have heard only a few speeches postulating the source of origin of our fraternity. Most Masons I have met seem comfortable with the rather simple but improbable possibility that we evolved from the operative guilds of the Middle Ages. There is a persistent and attractive attachment to the building trades since so much of our symbolism seems connected to the tools and mathematics of construction.

Yet, the city guild system of 16th century England and Scotland was very different from what survived into the 18th century. It was a system specifically designed to prevent travel and to exclude craftsmen from out of town to break into a closed shop. Our ritual emphasis on travel rights comes from a much earlier era, when craft guilds were tied to religious houses, a tie which gave men the right to travel because they were sponsored by the church. To look into origins, one may well need to look well before the English transition era.

Besides, there are a number of other possibilities which seem equally compelling and deserve our attention.

In addition to those who subscribe to the suggestion that we are a product of the operative guilds of Scotland, which can date us to the 1500's, and from which our catechisms and obligations seem to derive; there are those who just as firmly believe we descend from the merchants guilds of London through the London Mason's company—a sort of transitional group that rescued the operatives after the economic breakdown of the English guilds. Sadly, its records were lost in 1621 so we can't really say for sure.

Then there is the chivalric 13th century Knights Templar theory, which contributed significantly to our hierarchical form and added knightly virtues to our heritage. But a three hundred year gap between the last templar records and early speculative Freemasonry makes a shared adventure seem romantic at best.

Perhaps we shouldn't totally discount Prince Edwin's famous Articles of Fraternity. He was the son of the tenth century Saxon king Athelstan, and assembled the first general meeting of Masons. If it is true that his constitutions were approved by the aristocracy as law for lodges from that time hence (and there is not a shred of evidence that it is), we can add another 300 years to our source of origin; making us a whopping 1,000 years old!

Then we have the German College of architects who claim an association with continental lodges as early as 1745. But the historic problem of kingly sanction between Germany and England yields an unlikely provable association. Of course, there is the much older Roman College of architects who supposedly were the original source of all guilds, and in which a lineage can hypothetically be traced up through the speculative Masonry period. The problem with this association is that the organization was forced out of business in the 5th century so it may be difficult to prove an unbroken chain.

Moving into an entirely different arena of origin, we also have the mystical and eccentric esoteric theories which center our beginnings among the alchemists, Rosicrucians, the Illuminati, and the hermeticists; and from which our allegorical forms were undoubtedly sired. But why would groups whose adherents swore to secrecy and who refused to claim any form of organizational structure suddenly align themselves with an organization which was clearly social and civic in nature?

Perhaps our mystical side grew out of the purported Masonic search of perfection; that the ensuing intellectual aspects of our fraternity date no earlier than the Scottish Masonic reformers of the 17th century. Those fellows rather liked the Rosicrucian form of universal education and could well have wanted to duplicate this Renaissance theme in the Mason lodges.

What about the confraternities, such as the Star and Garter, the Golden Buckle, the Hanseatic League of Eagle, all medieval fraternities which can be traced from the 12th to the 17th centuries, providing charitable benefits to their members? And while we're on the topic of confraternities, it can rather convincingly be suggested we are the product of a monastic order of the Protestant Reformation, organized in secret defiance to established church authority. There is little doubt that many of our Masonic emblems can also be found in early medieval church iconography. All of these pertain to saints who lived prior to 1300. Most Masonic/Biblical historians can show the legend of the third degree itself represents a confluence of two Biblical stories which were well known during the Middle Ages.

However, setting these earlier traditions aside to collect archival dust, and moving forward in time, let us not discount the possibility that we are really not so ancient after all; that we may have derived from the gentlemen's clubs of London—a group of good ole boys who wanted to secure economic connections through the legal obligations of fraternity. Such an ambition certainly sounds like a useful and practical fraternal idea.

Finally, who's to say that we really have any origins at all which were not always Masonic? Why can't we accept the possibility that the fraternal government invented by Drs' Anderson and Desaguliers in 1723 had a purpose not attached to any prior group. That our connection to the guilds was all myth after all; as these two men just happened to have as their hobby the study of the medieval guilds? If one is authoring a constitution, he can pretty well choose whatever antiquarian interest he dreams up and attach it to his new form of government.

The bottom line is that we may never know from whence we came. And it may not be important.

It is enough to know that we have existed as a fraternity for at least [303] years. That's long enough to say we have a legacy and a tradition which predates anything American. Our tenacious survivability attests to the truth of our endeavors. And, at least in my judgment, the fact that we have been around to serve more than 20 generations of men proves we have an appeal which transcends all generations.

Besides, every Mason knows that how we were established is not nearly as significant as why we came to be. Maybe this is the real reason there haven't been many books penned about Masonic origins.

The Chairman of the Lodge Committee who, by tradition, happens to be the Senior Warden in my lodge, was hospitalised and unable to attend the committee meeting. In the morning he was pleased to receive a get-well message from the secretary, which read: 'The committee took a decision to express their sincere good wishes for a speedy and complete recovery.

Six in favour, three against, one abstention.

### The Empty Hall The Music of Three Thousand Years

Jerry Leighton, PGM, Maine

The hush — the still — the empty hall;  
Hear the echoed voices strong  
From the hours past recall  
Of lodge room brothers clasping throng  
In the plaintive lays of Brotherhood.

Each tried, polite, restrained or soft,  
And squared themselves for just that time —  
Fraternal tone abound in loft  
And shared the gentle 'clime  
In the plaintive lays of Brotherhood.

But now this solitary room  
With emblems sturdy and in place  
Where readied lessons gently loom  
For those unhurried or in haste  
A wondrous echo stirs.

Its sound and warmth surrounds the all  
And lands so light upon the place  
To fold its wings within the hall.  
For gifts to those who know its grace  
The wondrous echo stirs.

The plaintive lays of brotherhood  
Its wondrous echoes stir.  
For those who know, it's understood  
Softly, sweetly, they concur  
Filling their delighted ears.