

20°

MASTER AD VITAM

20-374

TWENTIETH DEGREE

**Master ad Vitam**

1994

TWENTIETH DEGREE

# Master ad Vitam

THE TWENTIETH DEGREE OF THE  
ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE  
OF FREEMASONRY, AND THE  
SECOND CONFERRED IN  
A CONSISTORY OF  
SUBLIME PRINCES  
OF THE  
ROYAL SECRET

This book is the property of the SUPREME COUNCIL OF SOVEREIGN GRAND INSPECTORS GENERAL OF THE THIRTY-THIRD AND LAST DEGREE OF THE ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY FOR THE NORTHERN MASONIC JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

When no longer needed for the exemplification of the degree, it must be returned to the Secretary

If the holder loses possession by death or otherwise, the finder will please return to

GRAND SECRETARY GENERAL  
Supreme Council, 33°  
P O Box 519  
Lexington, Massachusetts 02173

## HISTORICAL NOTES

### 1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE RITUAL

1. There is a well authenticated tradition that, in the early part of the 18th century, Masters of Symbolic Lodges in France held office for life. This was modified later, but the old tradition was preserved in the 20° of the Rite of Perfection dating from 1758 and the self-styled Emperors of the East and West — a Masonic council which, in 1761, issued a patent to Stephen Morin to carry the Rite of Perfection of 25 degrees “beyond the seas and in America.”

2. The earliest ritual of the 20° of the Rite of Perfection, in the Archives of this Jurisdiction, is in a collection of manuscript rituals in the handwriting of Henry Andrew Francken and dated 1783. Francken received these rituals from Stephen Morin of Kingston, Jamaica, who deputized him to establish bodies of the Rite of Perfection in the United States. The original Francken manuscript is in the archives of the Supreme Council 33° in Lexington.

3. The title of the 20° in the Francken rituals is “Venerable Master of all Symbolick Lodges, Sovereign Prince of Masonry, or Master ad Vitam.” Part of this title, the nine symbolic lights, the secret work, a fragment of the obligation and certain scattered phrases have been preserved in all the rituals of the 20° of the Ancient Accept Scottish Rite in this Jurisdiction. The Francken ritual concludes with a long lecture in question-and-answer form which reviews the symbols of Freemasonry. It was assumed that the mastery of this lecture would qualify the neophyte to be a Master ad Vitam — a Master of All Symbolic Lodges for life. This title had only a ritualistic, not a factual, significance.

4. There was little ritualistic content in the rituals of the 20°

in the formative years of the Rite, but all followed the Francken pattern: Billeaud (1803), Anonymous (1804), Doszedardski (1805-09), Killian H. Van Rensselaer (1845), Laffon-Ladebat (1856).

5. Albert Pike (1809-91), Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, A. A. S. R. for the Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., from 1859 to 1891, rebuilt the entire ritualistic structure of the Scottish Rite but conserved the tradition of each ritual. The title of the 20° in the Pike ritual (1855) is “Venerable Master of All Symbolic Lodges.” The virtues represented by the nine symbolic lights are interpreted, the examination of the neophyte at the door defines the type of Mason welcomed in the 20° and the obligation emphasizes the qualities of a Master ad Vitam — urbanity, gentleness and courtesy. The lecture is a scholarly analysis of the qualities of effective leadership.

6. In 1864, the Hays-Raymond ritual was an abridged and improved version of the Pike ritual. In 1866, the addition of a symbolic presentation of the gavel recaptured the spirit of the Francken ritual. This 1866 ritual set the pattern for the ceremonial section of the 20°.

The ritual of 1866 included what is called an “Argument,” a statement which interpreted the meaning of the ceremonial section of the 20°, and which defined the privileges and responsibilities of a Master ad Vitam. This “Argument” which perpetuated the oldest tradition of the degree, and published in all rituals since 1866, is an important part of this historical summary:

The right to instruct in a Lodge is not only acquired through formal selection by the brethren and subsequent installation, but by the power of Masonic intelligence, which is attained by patient labor and the study of Masonic law, and by the true understanding of the tenets,

doctrines, and symbolic legends of the Fraternity. Exemplification herein is given in brief, but the candidate is charged, as a Master of all Symbolic Lodges, to preserve Masonry in its primitive purity.

7. In 1896, the ritual of the 20° was enriched by a colorful drama commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Masonic career of Frederick II of Prussia. Historical characters were used in the cast but there was no historical basis for the action. The drama records a visit of Frederick, his entourage and distinguished guests, to a Lodge meeting — on August 14, 1763. In an exchange of Masonic reminiscences, a dramatic story was told of a spy who had gained entrance to a Masonic lodge with a patent which was, in fact, a map of the fortress. The spy escaped, but General Wallraven — a trusted Prussian engineer — was imprisoned for life for complicity in the plot. Wallraven, brought from his dungeon, exposed Prince de Kaunitz as the spy; Francis I of Austria, friend and sponsor of the Prince, renounced his friendship; the Prince was banished and Wallraven's sentence was commuted to expatriation.

Before closing the lodge, Frederick promulgated the Ordinances of 1762, presented the Double-headed Eagle as the symbol of imperial power in Masonry, established the Hospitaler's Fund and proclaimed all present to be Masters of All Symbolic Lodges with full powers of visitation and supervision.

8. As an emotional aftermath of World War I, the reaction against Germany brought the Prussian drama of the 20° under critical review by the Supreme Council of this Jurisdiction. In 1922, after two years of study, a new ritual was issued, with a patriotic drama in an American setting. The author, J. Frank Davis, 32°, K.C.C.H., a former newspaper editor in Boston, living in San Antonio, Texas, followed the exact pattern of the Prussian degree and

used much of the text. In this revised drama, General George Washington, substituted for Frederick, and several officers of the Continental Army are portrayed as guests of a Masonic lodge in Richmond, Virginia, assembled to welcome the Marquis de Lafayette who was the guest of the Nation in 1784. Col. Francis Cranstons of the British Army, an honorable man and Mason, is substituted for Francis I; Col. Beltower, his secretary, for Prince de Kaunitz, and Benedict Arnold for General Wallraven. The plot is the same. Arnold denounces Beltower as a spy but his own plea for mercy is rejected and the privilege of return to the country he betrayed is denied. The incident is not historical, but the lesson taught in the drama is always timely: "Treason is a crime over which Masonry casts no mantle of charity."

NOTE In 1936, the Prologue and Epilogue of the 20°, portraying the drama as a dream, were approved for experimental use but were not adopted as an integral part of the ritual. (1936 N.M.J. 98) Three years later, formal adoption was rejected but, on reconsideration, permission for optional use was granted. (1939 N.M.J. 123) Prologue and Epilogue were withdrawn by action of the Supreme Council, September 26, 1951.

9. The ritual of 1939, issued in a limited edition, was not generally distributed. To conserve the emotional climax of the drama and to close the degree soon after the exit of Arnold, the presentation of the flag of 1777 was moved forward to a point soon after the opening of the drama.

10. The ritual of 1951 is a reprint of the 1939 ritual —with several important changes. It includes historical notes on the development of the 20°, brief biographical sketches of the historical characters in the drama, and a Manual of Pronunciation. There is a clarifying distinction between a meeting of a Lodge of Masters conferring the Scottish Rite degree of Master ad Vitam in a

ceremonial section, and the non-historical drama with its setting in Richmond, Virginia, in late November 1784. The ceremonial section has been abridged by the deletion of repetitive material. There are a few textual changes in both sections and provision has been made for closing the drama immediately after the climax.

11. The Ritual of 1994 is a reprint of the 1951 ritual with changes made in the interest of historical accuracy, including those recommended in 1981. General Israel Putnam of Connecticut was substituted for General Nathaniel Greene of Rhode Island and General John Sullivan of New Hampshire for Colonel Alexander Hamilton of New York. This substitution was to make certain that these two characters were portrayed by officers known to be Masons.

The recent discovery of creditable evidence indicating Lafayette was made a Mason in France before he came to America required minor revisions to the applicable script.

In addition it confirms the accuracy of John Hancock's attending the Tenth Continental Congress at Trenton as stated in the 1951 ritual.

In conformity with the long established policy of the Supreme Council, the degree now provides: "If the Consistory has been officially opened and the cover obligation has been administered, the Opening and Obligation of of this degree may be omitted and the Prologue followed by the Allegory presented."

## DECORATIONS & PROPERTIES

The 20° is exemplified in one apartment, on the floor or stage. Only a slight readjustment is required for the dramatic section.

The traditional hangings are blue and gold. Over the East, lighting the lodge, is a "glory" — rays of gold surrounding a triangle, in the center of which are the words: *Fiat Lux*.

The setting, including the stations of the Officers, follows the pattern of a Symbolic Lodge. In the center is an altar, an open Bible, square and compasses. A gavel on the altar near the Bible. Three columns around the altar form a triangle. On the column in the East is the word TRUTH, in the West, JUSTICE, in the South, TOLERATION

At the station of each Officer, except the Tiler, there is a pedestal.

**GAVELS** Upright gavel (maul) on the Master's pedestal; regular gavel on altar. Omit candles.

**APRON** Yellow, bordered and lined with blue. In the center of the area are three equilateral triangles, one within the other, with the initial letters of the nine great lights, arranged as follows:

At the apex of the outer triangle, the letter C (*Charity*). At the right hand corner below, G (*Generosity*); at the left hand corner, V (*Veneration*).

At the apex of the middle triangle, H (*Heroism*); and at the right and left hand corners, P (*Patriotism*), and H (*Honor*).

At the apex of the inner triangle, T (*Toleration*); and at the right and left hand corners, T (*Truth*) and J (*Justice*). In the center of the inner triangle is the Tetragrammaton and across it, from below upward, the words: *Fiat Lux*.

**CORDON** A broad sash of yellow and blue, passing from the

left shoulder to the right hip.

**JEWEL.** Of gold. Upon it, the triangles, letters and words as upon the area of the Apron.

**BATTERY** ★★ ★

*Note:* The ritualistic use of Apron, Cordon, Jewel and Battery is optional.

### Ceremonial Section

#### OFFICERS

There are ten (10) Officers of the Lodge of Masters ad Vitam, stationed as in a Symbolic Lodge. Each Consistory will arrange its own setting to meet local conditions.

VENERABLE MASTER	SECRETARY
SENIOR WARDEN	SENIOR DEACON
JUNIOR WARDEN	JUNIOR DEACON
ORATOR	HOSPITALER
TREASURER	TILER

#### COSTUMES

1. If there is a special cast for the Ceremonial Section which is not to appear in the drama, the Officers may wear tuxedo or dark business suits. Black shoes. Cordon and Apron of the 20°. (Optional.) At the option of the Consistory, officers may be robed in black. No wigs, if robes are worn over Colonial costumes.

2. If the cast for the Ceremonial Section is to be used in the drama, all Officers should appear in various Colonial costumes appropriate for the year 1784. Avoid any delay in opening the drama. Explanation of the obvious costume inconsistency is made in the ritual.

### Dramatic Section

#### CAST OF CHARACTERS

##### HISTORICAL

JAMES MERCER	Grand Master of Masons in Virginia
EDMUND RANDOLPH	Deputy Grand Master, Virginia
GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON	Virginia
MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE	France
GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM	Connecticut
GENERAL HENRY KNOX	Massachusetts
GENERAL MORDECAI GIST	South Carolina
GENERAL JOHN SULLIVAN	New Hampshire
BENEDICT ARNOLD	

##### NON-HISTORICAL

SIR FRANCIS CRANSTON	England
COLONEL GILBERT BELTOWER	England
THOMAS GERRY	Virginia
COLONEL SAMUEL CRISP	Escort from the Coast

##### AGE — AS OF 1784

Mercer 48	Putnam 66	Cranston 50
Randolph 31	Knox 34	Beltower 45
Washington 52	Gist 42	Crisp 40
Lafayette 27	Sullivan 44	Gerry 40
Arnold 43		

## WHO'S WHO IN THE 20°

GEORGE WASHINGTON (1732-1799). Surveyor, 1748-49; Command of Virginia troops, 1754-58; House of Burgesses, 1759-74; Continental Congress, 1774-75; Commander-in-Chief, 1775-83; Constitutional Convention 1787; President of the United States, 1789-97.

*Masonic:* Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4 (1752-53). Worshipful Master, Alexandria Lodge No. 22 (1788, 1797-99).

JAMES MERCER (1736-1793). House of Burgesses, 1762-76; Continental Congress, 1779-80; Judge, General Court, 1779-89; Court of Appeals, 1789-93.

*Masonic:* Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4. President of council to organize a Grand Lodge, 1777. Grand Master, 1784-86.

EDMUND RANDOLPH (1753-1813). Aide to Washington, 1775-76; Attorney General, Virginia, 1776; Continental Congress, 1779-82; Governor of Virginia, 1786-88; Constitutional Convention, 1787; U.S. Attorney General, 1789-94; Secretary of State, 1794-95. Private law practice, 1795-1813.

*Masonic:* Williamsburg Lodge No. 6, 1774, Deputy Grand Master, 1784; Grand Master, 1786-88.

MORDECAI GIST (1742-1792). Citizen of Baltimore. Commanded Maryland troops. Brigadier General, 1779. With Gates in South Carolina, 1780; remained as permanent citizen and planter.

*Masonic:* Lodge No. 16, Baltimore, 1775. Probably Master. Army Lodge No. 27, 1780. President, Convention of Army Lodges, Morristown, New Jersey, which suggested the election of Washington as General Grand Master. Deputy Grand Master, South Carolina, 1787. Grand Master, 1789-92.

ISRAEL PUTNAM. Major General, Continental Army, Revolution-

ary War; born Jan. 7, 1718, Salem, Mass.; one of four original Major Generals of the Continentals and only one to serve the entire length of the war; served under Massachusetts Grand Master Joseph Warren, Chief Commander at New York, just prior to General Washington's arrival during the Battle of Long Island; commanded at Philadelphia in 1776 and in the highlands of the Hudson in 1777.

*Masonic:* Credited with being a member of a British Military Lodge at Crown Point, N.Y., and made a Mason there on June 7, 1758. This has never been truly authenticated, but he is credited with being a member of Hiram Lodge No. 1 of New Haven, Conn., and the record shows that he did attend Hiram Lodge on many occasions and was also a frequent visitor at the lodge in Hartford, Conn., and at Redding, Conn. He was the guest of honor on occasions when American Union Lodge held special events.

HENRY KNOX (1750-1806). Bookseller in Boston; intimate friend of Washington; Brigadier General, 1776; on Andre's court martial, 1780; Major General, 1781; commanded West Point, 1782. Planned Military Academy. Founded Society of The Cincinnati, 1783; U.S. Secretary of War, 1789-94.

*Masonic:* Probably St. John's Military Lodge, warranted 1775. Helped to constitute Washington Lodge (Military), West Point, 1779. Visitor: St. John's, Boston; Amity No. 6, Camden, Maine; Orient No. 15, Thomaston, Maine.

JOHN SULLIVAN. Born 1740 at Somersworth, New Hampshire. Major General, American Revolution. Governor of New Hampshire 1786-89. Commissioned Major in Militia, 1772; Colonel, 1773. Attended First Continental Congress as a Delegate from New Hampshire. Became a prisoner of war in the Battle of Long Island; after exchange of prisoners he served at Trenton, Prince-



ton, Brandywine and Germantown; wintered at Valley Forge.

*Masonic:* Received the degrees in St. John's Lodge No. 1, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, March 19, 1767, and December 28, 1768. Chosen as Grand Master of New Hampshire in July, 1789. He had never served as Master of a lodge. St. John's Lodge elected him Master on December 3, 1789, and he was installed three weeks later. He was finally seated in the Grand East on April 8, 1790, but due to poor health was obliged to resign on September 5, 1790.

MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE (1757-1834). Full name — Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette. The du Motier family, titled and influential. In 1776, came to America, offered services at age 19. Honored as symbol of French Alliance, Congress appointed him Major General, 1777. Entrusted with important commands, fought gallantly; devoted to Washington. After Yorktown, returned to France; influenced French Revolution; wrote "Declaration of Rights" on American pattern. Imprisoned, 1792-97 because of his protest against the tyranny of the Revolution. Property confiscated. Guest of the United States in 1784 and 1824. American gift of \$200,000 relieved his financial distress.

*Masonic:* From excerpts of the proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee dated May 4 and 5, 1825, page 135, it appears that he was made a Mason in France before he came to America and offered his services in the Revolutionary War.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (1741-1801). Born Norwich, Connecticut, prominent Colonial family. New Haven, 1762, sold drugs and books near Yale campus; ship-owner and master in West Indian trade. Entered military service; with Ethan Allen, captured

Ticonderoga, 1775; led ill-fated Quebec expedition, 1775; valiant service at Saratoga, 1777. In command at Philadelphia, 1778-79; court-martialed and reprimanded for business irregularities, 1779; initiated treasonable correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton, 1779; plot to betray West Point, 1780.

As Brigadier General, led British attack on Richmond, Virginia and New London, Connecticut, 1780-81. Retired to England, generous pension, comfortable home, titled friends. Unprofitable business ventures in West Indies, 1786, and Saint John, New Brunswick, 1787-91. Returned to London, accepted British gift of 13,400 acres in Canada. Died in his Gloucester Place home, June 17, 1801, buried in crypt of St. Mary's, Battersea.

No factual basis for legends of poverty, ostracism, longing for America, and death in an attic. Arnold's sons, respected and successful. Before her death in 1804, Mrs. Arnold paid debts of 6000 pounds in full.

*Masonic:* Symbolic Degrees probably in West Indies — like many sea captains of that period. Affiliated with Hiram Lodge No. 1 of New Haven, 1765.

## FOR OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF WORK

The "Historical Notes" and "Who's Who In The 20°," included in this ritual, will answer many questions and will furnish source material for students of ritual and for speakers.

Non-essential repetitions and ritualistic matter not relevant to the initiation of a Master ad Vitam have been deleted from the ceremonial section. The "Opening" and "Closing," used for many years, have been withdrawn. The Scottish Rite section of the 20° is now compact, dignified and impressive. No additional cuts or changes in sequence are approved.

Techniques of exemplification prescribed in this ritual should be adapted to local conditions in each Consistory. Stage settings and stage "business" are the concern of the Officers and Directors of Work. No permission is required for any divergence from ritual in this respect.

The drama of the 20° is developed within the framework of a tiled meeting of a Symbolic Lodge. Innovations which would be out of place in such a meeting are not permitted. For this reason, "The Spirit of '76," in the ritual of 1939, has been deleted. The introduction of a color guard and over-emphasis of Arnold's lameness or facial scar detract from the dignity of the drama. Undue uneasiness manifested by Beltower, calling attention to himself, destroys the dramatic suspense and betrays prematurely that culprit's guilt.

Restraint is urged in the interpretation of Lafayette. A tall, red-haired, wealthy young aristocrat, Lafayette had the polished manners of the French court and the democratic spirit of America. In 1784, he could speak English rather fluently, though with a slight accent. It is better to use the English text. No one should attempt an imitation unless he is a master of French idiom and accent.

## MANUAL OF PRONUNCIATION

Phonetic spelling, with accented syllables in small capitals.

Andre	AN-dray
Beltower	BELL-tower or Belter. (English)
beneficent	bee-NEF-is-ent
cabal	kay-BAL
court-martial	KORT-mar-shal
ermine	UR-min
espionage	ES-pee-o-nazh
exigencies	EK-si-jen-sees
Fiat Lux	Fy-at LUCKS or Fee-at LOOKS
Gerry	G as in 'good'
Gist	G as in 'good'
imaginative	i-MAJ-i-na-tiv
Lafayette	LAH-fay-YET
Marquis	MAHR-kwis or Mar-KEE
precursor	pre-CUR-sor
prerogative	pre-ROG-a-tiv
Schuyler	SKY-ler
suborner	sub-OR-ner
Vitam	VY-tam

## THE OPENING OF THE CONSISTORY

The members of the Class are admitted and seated under the direction of the Class Marshal. At the appointed hour, the Commander-in-chief, or one deputized by him, enters and proceeds to the East.

If the Consistory has not been opened officially at that session, the Brethren are called to order for the Official Declaration.

The setting, on stage or floor, follows the pattern of a Symbolic Lodge in Colonial times. The Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens are in their respective stations and the Worshipful Master could give the official Declaration. Senior Deacon and Exemplar are also seated in the lodge room.

*Commander-in-Chief or Worshipful Master* — ★★★ To order, Brethren on the Sign of Fidelity. (*All rise*)

To the glory of the Grand Architect of the Universe; in the name and under the auspices of the Supreme Council of Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the Thirty-third and Last Degree of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States of America, and by virtue of the authority upon me conferred, I declare the works of ..... Consistory opened.

★ (*All seated*)

Senior Deacon conducts Exemplar to West side of altar. They remain standing.

*Senior Deacon* — Worshipful Master, I present a Grand Pontiff who desires to advance. He has worked diligently to prepare himself to be qualified to preside over a Symbolic Lodge. He has contributed to the welfare of his Brethren and performed the duties prescribed in previous degrees.

*Junior Warden* — (*Rises at station, Senior Deacon and Exemplar turn to face him.*) My Brother, this lodge is supported by the broad principles of Toleration, Justice and Truth.

No man has a right to dictate to another on matters of belief or faith; no man can claim that he is infallible and the sole possessor of truth. When a man persecutes for opinions' sake, he usurps the prerogative of God.

*Senior Warden* — (*Rises at station, Senior Deacon and Exemplar turn to face him*) Man should judge others as he judges himself; find for their actions the excuses he readily finds for his own; and always look for a good rather than an evil motive.

*Worshipful Master* — (*Rises at station, Senior Deacon and Exemplar turn to face him*) No falsehood can be other than evil; it is the act of a coward, base and dishonorable. Without Truth, there can be no virtue. Every misrepresentation or concealment of Truth is an offense against God.

Do you, my Brother, agree to these principles?

*Exemplar* — I do. (*Worshipful Master advances to altar*).

### OBLIGATION

*Worshipful Master* — Kneel, then, at the altar and assume the obligation of the rank and degree which you desire to receive. (*Exemplar assisted by the Senior Deacon kneels and places both hands on the Bible. Worshipful Master continues*) The Members of the Class will rise and stand under the Sign of Fidelity, say "I," pronounce your name in full, and listen until I bid you speak —

I, ....., in the presence of the God of Truth, Justice and Toleration and appealing to Him for the uprightness of my intentions, do hereby solemnly and sincerely promise and vow that I will be guided and directed by the obligations of a Worshipful Master of a Symbolic Lodge.

That I will not govern any Masonic Lodge, or other body over which I may be called to preside, in a haughty or arbitrary

manner, but with gentleness, urbanity and courtesy.

That I will use my best endeavors to preserve peace and harmony among its members and among all Masons everywhere. You will all repeat after me, So help me, God, and keep me steadfast to perform the same. Amen.

Members of the Class may be seated. (*To Exemplar*) My Brother, you will arise and resume your seat.

Worshipful Master returns to station and is seated.

*Worshipful Master* — You will now give your attention to the Prologue.

### PROLOGUE

May be given by one in Colonial dress or uniform of Consistory.

*Prologuist* — The Twentieth Degree is presented as a drama of the American spirit confronting the challenge of disloyalty and treason. Masonic principles and leadership are subjected to a crucial test. Well-known historical characters are accurately portrayed but the action is not historically accurate.

What you will witness did not actually happen in Richmond, Virginia, in November, 1784, but it does interpret the Masonic attitude toward all who conspire against the security of the nation. It will rekindle the flames of honor and patriotism on the altar of every American heart.

All members of the Consistory and you, the members of the Class, will disregard the gavels until the end of the drama. The gavel will govern only those actually engaged in the work.

You will now witness the Allegory of the Twentieth Degree.

Prologuist retires or is seated in the lodge room.

### ALLEGORY

Place: Richmond, Virginia

Occasion: A Meeting of a Symbolic Lodge

Date: In late November 1784

Setting: On floor or stage. Follow general pattern of a Symbolic Lodge room in Colonial period. Altar: open Bible, square and compasses — Third Degree. Three lights Pedestal and upright gavel (maul) in East Base for flag. Seats for five in East. Chairs for regular Officers and Visitors Sword belt and sword for Escort from the Coast.

It is desirable, though not mandatory, for all Officers, Members and Visitors to wear the Apron of the Symbolic Lodge. These will be laid aside when the Lodge is called from labor to refreshment.

The flag, presented to the Lodge is the flag designated by an act of the Continental Congress on June 14, 1777 — 13 red and white stripes and 13 stars in a circle on a blue field.

Curtain rises and discloses Officers and Members of a Symbolic Lodge at their stations. If action is on the floor, they may enter informally or in a processional.

When all is in readiness, the Worshipful Master raps ★ for attention

*Worshipful Master* — (*Rises at station*) You are aware, my brethren, that the eminent Freemason, General George Washington, is sojourning in this city. He has, as his guest, that beloved brother, General Lafayette, who came from France to join us in our struggle for liberty. Accompanying them are other distinguished patriots — Freemasons from several States — honored by us not only for their services to the Revolution but also for their sincere devotion to the principles of our Craft.

The Grand Master of Masons in Virginia and his Deputy Grand Master are escorting them. Let our welcome be as cordial as our affection for them is warm and genuine.

Worshipful Master is seated. There is an alarm at the door.

★★★

*Junior Deacon* — An alarm, Worshipful Master.

*Worshipful Master* — Attend the alarm and ascertain its cause.

*Junior Deacon* — (*Announces*) Brothers Israel Putnam of Connecticut, Henry Knox of Massachusetts, Mordecai Gist of Maryland and now of South Carolina, John Sullivan of New Hampshire, and Brother Gerry of this lodge, all of whom are properly vouched for.

*Worshipful Master* — Admit them.

Senior Deacon goes to door and conducts Gist, Sullivan, Knox, Putnam and Gerry to the altar. They salute with M.M. sign, and step back.

Without further alarm as soon as the sign is given, the Junior Deacon announces other Visitors. The (!) suggests special emphasis.

*Junior Deacon* — The Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Virginia! The Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master! Brother George Washington! Brother Lafayette!

Master raps ★★★ (*Members of Lodge stand*)

Senior Deacon conducts Washington and Mercer, followed by Randolph and Lafayette. They pass between Gist and the others and the altar. The visitors at the West of the altar now stand, facing East, thus.

EAST.

Randolph.	Lafayette	Washington	Mercer		
Gerry.	Putnam.	Knox.	Sullivan	Gist.	

The four new arrivals give the M.M. sign Master of Symbolic Lodge advances towards altar

*Worshipful Master* — Most Worshipful Grand Master, and beloved brethren. such poor words as I can muster are utterly inadequate to express the delight it gives us to welcome you. Every brother here present will hold this occasion in grateful remembrance to the end of his days. Allow me, Most Worship-

ful Grand Master, to place the gavel in your hands, and request you to take over the rule and government of the Lodge.

Conducts Mercer, Washington and Lafayette to East where they remain standing, facing West

*Mercer* — Worshipful Master and Brethren: Although I chance to hold the position of Grand Master, let it not be forgotten that when, in 1777, an independent American Grand Lodge in Virginia was decided upon, the Masonic brethren there present voted, with perfect unanimity, to tender the position of Grand Master to him whom we most especially honor tonight — our Brother, George Washington. You know that he declined the office, not because he did not appreciate it and the spirit in which it was tendered, but because, as a Mason who for many years had cherished the ancient rules of the Craft, he believed it improper for one to be seated as Grand Master who had never filled the office of Master of a subordinate lodge.

I feel, my brethren, that tonight should mark an exception to the ordinary rule, and insofar as the program which I propose differs from ordinary Masonic usage, I hereby legalize it by special dispensation.

Addresses Washington directly.

Beloved Brother Washington — and you, dear Brother Lafayette — Virginia Masonry welcomes you, and welcomes these other distinguished Masons who have assembled in our State. It is my request that you, Brother Washington, accept this gavel for the time, that you assume charge of the Lodge, taking a place in the East together with Brother Lafayette, and that you be pleased to fill the various stations of the Lodge with these distinguished comrades-in-arms, to whom the regular Officers will yield their places.

Mercer hands Washington the gavel. Takes place on his right. Lafayette to left. Brethren applaud.

*Washington* — Most Worshipful Grand Master, I am deeply moved by this signal honor. I should hesitate to accept it were it not for the obvious sincerity of your words and the approval of your act manifested by the brethren. In accordance with your suggestion, I will ask General Putnam to assume the West,

Randolph conducts him to West and sits on his right As Washington calls their names, the visitors are escorted to their stations by the Officers of the Symbolic Lodge whom they supplant.

General Knox to assume the South, General Gist the position of Orator and General Sullivan that of Senior Deacon.

He pauses until they are all in their places; then seats the Lodge.

★ Washington seated. Continues Rises when Apron is presented

It is with peculiar pleasure, brethren, that I, for the first time, wield the gavel in a Masonic lodge here in Virginia, where for thirty-one years I have endeavored to assist in building the structure of Freemasonry. I was initiated an Entered Apprentice in the Lodge at Fredericksburg in November, 1752, was passed to the degree of Fellowcraft in March of '53, and in August of that year was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. During the years preceding the war I was prevented by other labors from being as active in the fraternity as inclination would have urged, Fredericksburg being the nearest lodge to my home at Mt. Vernon, and that fifty miles distant. But with the outbreak of war — and the honor of my fellow-countrymen then conferred upon me — I was able to come into closer touch with my Masonic brethren. What share Masonry had in the conflict that is now so happily past is familiar history to all of you.

Our meeting here tonight is due to the visit to this country by our dear brother, General Lafayette. Since his arrival in America in August, he has visited many cities in our country, and his reception has been one round of grateful ovations. Now, on the eve of his return to France, he will spend a few days at my home, and these fellow-soldiers and brother Masons have

traveled from distant States and accompanied him here as a mark of their affection and esteem. I present to you our good brother whom all America delights to honor — General Lafayette



*Lafayette* — It is with a heart overflowing, my brethren, that I respond to the words spoken by this great and good man toward whom my feelings are not those of a fellow-soldier, not those of a subordinate officer, but those of a son. It was my good fortune to serve with him through many weary years. I have seen him when victory was with our armies, and I have seen him when the sadness of defeat enshrouded us and when one who put less trust in the justice of heaven, might have abandoned the cause. Throughout all these years he was the wise commander, the generous friend and the sincere Mason.

Only those who were close to him can appreciate the trials through which he passed. Not all Americans were loyal; many were faint-hearted, and many became lukewarm and discouraged. You know how he met this. Insofar as lay in his power, he placed only Masons on guard His especially trusted officers were selected from our fraternity. Thus Freemasonry did more than its share toward winning America's freedom.

In a month, brethren, I shall have left your shores. Perhaps I may never return. But America and Americans shall always have my esteem, my love and my admiration. And more especially shall I love and revere George Washington, great man and Mason.

I have brought with me from France this Masonic Apron, made by me dear wife, the Marquise de Lafayette, and sent with her grateful thanks and loving greeting to my Brother in Masonry, George Washington. Let me, my Brother, clothe you with this symbol of Masonic service. (*Clothes him with replica*

of Lafayette apron.) May you, and all your country, prosper and advance under the guidance of the Great Architect of the Universe! (Applause. Lafayette seated.)

*Washington* — Such words, from one toward whom I feel the affection of a father, fill me with deepest emotion. I shall never forget my delight when General Lafayette came to me and expressed his desire to join in our struggle for freedom, nor my pleasure on learning that he was a member of our Craft. This Apron shall ever be treasured among my dearest possessions, a memorial to our Masonic unity in service. I shall hold in grateful remembrance the kindness of the gracious lady whose hands wrought it.

I now have a very pleasant duty to perform. Brother Gerry, will you produce that which you brought for this happy occasion

Gerry goes to anteroom and returns with the official U S flag of 1777 Places flag in base All members of the cast rise and stand at attention Washington continues —

I present you our country's banner, with the recommendation that it be displayed at each meeting of the Lodge.

Masons have died for this flag. Masons have striven for the new country that this flag represents. Masons, I doubt not, will ever prove loyal and devoted to it, and to the Freedom for which it stands.

We are still a young and struggling people. I dream of a day when we shall be a *Nation*, rather than a mere confederation of States. A Nation, one and indivisible, whose duty and delight it shall be, through all the centuries, to exemplify to the world the blessings of true and perfect liberty. In the coming years the poor and oppressed from many alien peoples will flock to this free land. It is possible that ignorance, vice and shameful greed may seek to assail our Institutions, to destroy our Liberties and to poison the fountain of Justice and Equity. But so

long as Freemasonry stands united in bonds of Brotherhood, the stalwart defender of Liberty in Law, this Republic shall endure in honor. "So mote it be!"

(Pause) — Brethren, be seated. ★

Washington seated Continues

Brother Lafayette refers to days that were dark. None were darker than those at Valley Forge, and during those days our young friend was a tower of strength at my right hand. But these are bright days for our new country, let us not dwell upon the dark ones. General Putnam, the brethren would be glad to hear from you.

*Putnam* — I bring to the fraternity in Virginia the greetings of the Freemasons of Connecticut. As your great citizen, Patrick Henry, said to the First Continental Congress "Where are your landmarks, your boundaries of colonies? . . . The distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers and New Englanders are no more: I am not a Virginian, but an American." (Applause)

*Washington* — General Knox.

*Knox* — During my tour with General Lafayette, I often regretted that more distinguished representatives of my state could not have been present to represent the fraternity. Massachusetts Masons and Masonry have an honorable record in the earliest days of the late conflict, under the guidance of our lamented Past Grand Master, General Joseph Warren, who, at the time of his tragic but heroic death at Bunker Hill, was Provincial Grand Master.

Our good brother, John Hancock, would have been with us tonight could he have left his duties as member of the Tenth Continental Congress, now in session at Trenton. It was also a source of deepest regret to Brother Paul Revere that a combination of

events prevented his leaving Boston at this time, and he asked me to give all Masons his most affectionate greetings.

It may not be amiss for me to indulge in a slight but perhaps significant Masonic reminiscence. No man has ever divulged the names of the participants in the exploit of '73, when the tea was thrown overboard in Boston Harbor, and you never *will* know from the lips of any man that participated in that adventure. This, however, it may be proper for me to say: that, for the first time in its history, although the regular meeting night, there was no quorum present that evening at the Lodge of St. Andrew, of which General Warren was a Past Master, and Brother Paul Revere a zealous and active member (*Laughter and applause*)

*Putnam* — I think it would be of interest and profit to some of the younger brethren were an account to be given of our Military Lodges, in which, during the eight years of our struggle, many of our best-loved and most distinguished brethren received Masonic Light, and our Craft was enabled to do much service for the country I recall, for instance, that scarcely had we gathered for the siege of Boston before an army Lodge was opened at Roxbury by Colonel Gridley, who was Deputy Grand Master of Massachusetts. You honored that Lodge with your presence, General Washington, accompanied, I think, by two of your aides, although their identity has slipped my mind.

*Washington* — I recall that meeting very well And one of those aides who was in attendance with me, now sits near you — Colonel Randolph, now Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master.

Putnam turns in some surprise to Randolph Both smile Shake hands

At the outer door ★★★

*Sullivan* — An alarm, Worshipful Master.

*Washington* — Attend the alarm and ascertain its cause.

*Sullivan* — (*Goes to door. Returns.*) In the anteroom, Worshipful Master, are two persons who say they are Masons, but for whom the Tiler cannot vouch. One of them is Sir Francis Cranston, late Colonel in the British army, the other is Colonel Beltower, his secretary. Sir Francis Cranston says he has sat in American Lodges before the war, and hopes there may be some brother here who can vouch for him. If not, he asks that a committee be appointed to inquire into his qualifications.

*Washington* — The name of Colonel Francis Cranston is well known to me as that of a good and true Mason, but it has never been my fortune to sit with him in a Masonic lodge.

*Randolph* — I am quite certain, Worshipful Master, that I sat with the English brother in 1774. With your permission, I will retire and see whether or not I can identify and vouch for him. (*Washington indicates assent*)

Exit Randolph, who returns immediately, accompanied by Cranston and Beltower They salute at altar with M M sign

*Randolph* — Worshipful Master, it gives me pleasure to introduce to you and to this lodge Worshipful Brother Cranston of England, and Brother Beltower, for whom he vouches.

*Washington* — Your Masonic record — at least in part — is known to us, Worshipful Brother Cranston, and we give you welcome. Although it was the fate of war that two years ago we were enemies, I assure you, you are tonight in the company of friends.

*Cranston* — I thank you, sir, for those sentiments, which are such as I should expect from your lips. Colonel Beltower and I arrived in this city today, on business for the Crown, and but an hour ago heard of your presence in this Lodge, so we hastened hither.



*Washington* — You honor us by your presence. We shall be pleased if you will take a seat in the East.

Mercer escorts Cranston to a seat on his right

We welcome you, too, Brother Beltower, and ask you to be seated among the brethren.

General Knox escorts Beltower to a seat on his right (Gerry seated at left of Knox)

*Washington* — (*Turning to Cranston*) Worshipful Brother Cranston, we shall be very happy to hear from you.

*Cranston* — (*Speaking from the East*) I have long desired, Most Eminent General and Brother, to extend to you in person my appreciation of the courteous and fraternal act you performed soon after the evacuation of Philadelphia, in June, '78. On the evening prior to the evacuation a meeting was held of the British lodge of which I was then Master, and of which Colonel Beltower was Senior Warden. While the Lodge was still at labor, word came to leave the city. In the haste and confusion that followed, the paraphernalia and records of our Lodge were left behind. Before I discovered their absence, we were miles from Philadelphia and I felt that they were forever lost. I do not need to tell you, honored sir, what followed, but your brethren may not be so well informed. When your forces entered Philadelphia, the records of our Lodge fell into their hands. They were handed over to you, and you had them placed with your baggage train and, after the campaign in New Jersey, when our army had reached New York, you sent them to me from White Plains, under a flag of truce, with the truly Masonic message that "the American army did not war against works of benevolence and charity."

Since the war, I have had the honor of writing my acknowledgment of this act, but letters cannot express the warmth of spoken words and I determined, if fate ever made it possible,

to thank you in person, not only for myself, but for Masonry in England which I assure you appreciates so fraternal a courtesy.

Cranston seated

*Washington* — It was a small thing, Worshipful Brother; nevertheless, I am glad the spirit that prompted me found a response in your heart.

As you entered, we were about to hear a few words regarding the Military Lodges in our armies during the late war. General Gist, as Master of a Military Lodge, you were one of our most active brethren throughout the struggle. Will you speak of some of your experiences during that time?

*Gist* — Among the Masonic events that stand out most distinctly in my memory is the meeting of American Union Lodge, held at Morristown, late in December, '79, to observe the festival of St. John the Evangelist. As one of those present, you will recall the occasion. The exercises were filled with a spirit of patriotism and devotion to the cause of liberty. After you and General Lafayette had retired on that evening, I was appointed chairman of a committee to communicate with all the American Grand Lodges and propose to them — notwithstanding your former declination to accept the position of Grand Master of Virginia — that you be invited to become National Grand Master of the United States. The exigencies of war and the unsettled conditions of those times prevented the matter from being acted upon by all the States.

As a matter of interesting information, I might say there were present at that Lodge meeting no less than sixty-eight officers of the Continental Army. I recall, in addition to a number here present tonight, our good brethren General Philip Schuyler of New York, General John Glover of Massachusetts, Colonel James Monroe of Virginia — and that forsworn and unhappy

man whose name is nevermore uttered in a Masonic Lodge.

*Lafayette* — Well as I recollect that happy occasion, my memory finds more to thrill it in the struggles of our fraternity during that awful, soul-searching winter which we spent at Valley Forge. Ah, brethren! Those were the moments that tested men and proved them, whether they were of gold or dross.

Picture the hardships that befell the Continental Army, which at the beginning of that winter had 11,000 men, and at the end hardly more than 5,000. The soldiers lived in little huts, and they had no floors but bare ground to sleep upon. Few had shoes. Many were without adequate clothing. There was little food, no horses, no wagons, no money. The army could pay for supplies, only with certificates, which Congress had not voted to redeem. One man out of three in those days was a sympathizer with the King, and the farmers in the vicinity often preferred to take their food to Philadelphia, twenty-four miles away, where it would be paid for in British gold. It was a true word that General Washington wrote to the President of the Continental Congress, then sitting at York, when he said: "Nothing, sir, can equal their sufferings, except the patience and fortitude with which the faithful part of the army endure them."

The faithful part of the army! That is a phrase to remember, brethren. The tribulations of his soldiers and the seeming hopelessness of the war were always distressing to our Commander-in-chief, and often he did not know where to look for loyalty and support. It was at this time that a cabal was instigated in Congress to remove him from the command of the army, and officers whom he had believed he could depend upon were discovered to be plotting against him.

*Washington* — Not you, my friend. Well do I remember that when my enemies offered you the command of a new invasion

of Canada, you replied to them you would accept it — provided you should report only to me and receive orders only from me.

*Lafayette* — It was a time when one hardly knew whom to trust, but we felt assured of one firm foundation — that in Masonry there would be no treachery and guile. And then came that night, when we discovered that a Mason — a British Mason — was taking advantage of his membership in the Craft to spy on us.

*Cranston* — I recall that you got me word of this matter at the time, Brother Washington, but I replied to you that I was convinced no member of any of our lodges was guilty. I hope Brother Lafayette is very sure of his facts. This is a serious charge to make against British Masonry.

*Lafayette* — In the warmth of my feelings, I had quite forgotten that British Masons were also guests, and I most earnestly crave their pardon for having referred to a matter that tact would have left unmentioned.

*Cranston* — On the contrary, I am as desirous as any man of having so grave a charge investigated, and would be grateful if you or some other brother can now inform me as to the exact evidence that appeared to prove so serious an accusation.

*Beltower* — Worshipful Master, I find that I have forgotten an important matter which should have been attended to much earlier. May I be excused for a time? I shall endeavor to return.

*Cranston* — Stay, brother. It seems to me no errand could be so important as the solution of the charge made by Brother Washington in '77 regarding the Masonic spy discovered at Valley Forge. As my Senior Warden at that time, I deputed to you the investigation within our ranks, which I asked you to make full and complete.

*Beltower* — And such investigation was made, and produced no evidence whatever that the charges were true. From that day I put the matter out of my mind, confident that it had no basis in fact, and in truth at this moment I scarcely recall any of the details.

*Cranston* — Then be seated and we will hear them, if our American brethren will be so courteous.

*Beltower* resumes his seat.

*Washington* — You, General Putnam, were present at the Lodge on the occasion referred to. Can you tell us of the occurrence?

*Putnam* — Not of my own sight and hearing, as I was within the Lodge when the exposure of the knave took place in the anteroom. But it chanced that one is here who is better able than anyone else to tell the tale. I had great pleasure in renewing my acquaintance with him only this evening. Brother Gerry, now a member of this Lodge, was Tiler at Valley Forge and into his hands fell the documents that proved the impostor's guilt.

*Gerry* — Worshipful Master and Brethren: It will be remembered that we met, at Valley Forge, in a barn, and upon the threshing floor a Lodge was set up. The anteroom, in which I tiled, was a small harness room at the corner.

On the evening referred to, the Lodge had already opened, when several brethren appeared simultaneously. Three or four of them were known to me; but one was a stranger. I suppose he had been waiting outside to enter with a company, hoping the Lodge might be carelessly tiled.

He wore such clothing as a farmer of the neighborhood might be expected to wear and I might not have especially noted him during my questionings (which proved that he was a Mason well-versed in the secrets of the Craft) but for the fact that his

accent was that of an educated Englishman, rather than that of his apparent class and occupation. I asked to see his patent, and he hastily drew from his clothing a folded paper. I had no more than begun to unfold it when, with a cry, he attempted to seize it, exclaiming that he had made a mistake and that *this* — he held out another paper — was the patent. I took the second paper from his hand, but my suspicions were aroused and I continued to unfold the first. With an imprecation, he again attempted to seize it, then, as the other brethren turned at the disturbance, he leaped through the window at my side. I shouted to the guards outside the building, but a heavy fog prevailed, into which he disappeared.

The first paper, which he inadvertently gave me, was a rough but accurate map of our fortifications on the east side of our camp. The other was a genuine Masonic patent, issued to one Thomas Murdock of Pennsylvania.

*Putnam* — The matter was at once investigated. We learned that Thomas Murdock had been a Mason in good standing, a member of Miles' Pennsylvania Battalion; but he had long ceased to possess, or need, that patent. He was captured in August, '76, when General Howe seized New York, and was confined for some months aboard the prison ship "Jersey." When finally released, he had so wasted that he soon after died. Before his death, however, he informed his Masonic brethren that upon the day of his capture he was brought before an officer — a captain in the British army — who conversed with him Masonically, took his patent from him, and assured him that by means of it he would secure his speedy freedom. He never again saw either the patent or the British officer.

*Cranston* — This seems almost incredible.

*Beltower* — It is incredible. You have recalled, Sir Francis,

that when General Washington sent to you, in Philadelphia, a brief account of these charges, you instructed me to ascertain what truth was in them. I was unable to learn that they had any foundation. The scope of my investigation now comes back to me. No British Mason who was in New York in August, '76, and in or near Philadelphia in the winter of '77 — and we knew them all, you and I, for we were in both places — was likely to have done such an act, nor could I find that any Mason was then engaged in espionage for our army . . . And now that we have heard the story, permit me to depart. In leaving our inn, I left certain papers and despatches where they might be found by ill-intentioned persons and . . .

*Cranston* — That risk is very small, Brother Beltower, and to leave so soon would be hardly courteous. As you came with me, pray wait and depart in my company.

Beltower resumes seat.

*(To Washington)* — It is humiliating to think that any British Mason could so demean himself even in the stress and bitterness of war, as to use his connection with our Craft to such an end.

*Putnam* — Investigation proved this false Thomas Murdock had gained entrance to camp by exhibiting his patent to a Mason, a rather simple fellow, who was on guard at the outer fortifications with Morgan's Virginia Riflemen, and had told him he was a discharged American soldier desirous of visiting the Lodge. This was early in the day, and that unsophisticated Mason entertained him — and gave him full opportunity to gain the information shown by the map that he left in the Tiler's hands.

★★★

*Sullivan* — An alarm, Worshipful Master.

*Sullivan* — *(Returning from door)* There is, in the anteroom, a brother for whom the Tiler can vouch, accompanied by a profane. The well-trying and worthy brother asks that this communication be handed you at once.

Gives Washington folded paper. Washington reads.

*Washington* — Alas! that on what should be wholly a happy occasion, we cannot leave behind us the unsavory memories of treachery. It is most strange that this messenger arrives at a time when this Lodge is in session and just when we have been discussing unfit and forsworn Masons.

Our English brother has been grieved to think that in all the body of British Masonry there was a man so vile as to do the thing that was done that day at Valley Forge. But he is aware, as are all the others here, that we Americans also have had our unworthy ones.

There is a man — he was once an honored Mason — who fell from honor. His crime was black and dastardly. He no longer lives within the borders of our country, and Freemasons have endeavored to forget him. But he does not wish to be forgotten.

Several months ago I received a letter from this unhappy man. He said he wished to return to America; that he sought to make his peace with his former brethren. He appealed to me to use my influence as man and Mason. He asked only a hearing.

I would have ignored the letter, but in the closing sentence he said: "I demand this in the name of Justice, of Toleration and of Masonic Charity." Thus demanded, I felt I could not refuse. I replied to him that if he desired to come to America, I would have him met at the shore, and, so far as lay in my power, would see that he received safe conduct to come before a Masonic tribunal, and to return unharmed.

The Masonic brother whom I sent to meet him has arrived

and has brought him instantly to this Lodge. By what seems a Providential dispensation, there chance to be assembled in this room the very men before whom his plea should come. If there be no objection, I will have him in and let him say his say. However abhorrent his offense, I conceive it to be our duty to let no man go unheard who bases his plea on Masonic Justice, Toleration and Charity.

Pauses All show interest. There is no reply.

During his appearance the Lodge will be at refreshment, for he is unworthy to witness even the semblance of a Lodge. But I further direct that Lodge formation and order be continued, the altar and Great Lights only being displaced. You are at refreshment until reconvened upon the order of the Worshipful Master.

Bible is closed Altar and three lights moved to one side Flag remains Each officer and visitor folds his apron and places it on the back of his chair.

Brother Sullivan, you will direct the Tiler to admit the brother for whom he can vouch, and the profane who accompanies him.

- Sullivan goes to anteroom. Returns with the two Arnold is muffled in a cloak, which he holds across the lower half of his face, so that he is unrecognizable. They advance to the West, where they halt, Arnold facing East

*Colonel Crisp* — Pursuant to your instructions, General Washington, I have escorted this visitor safely from the shore. (*Takes seat near door or near East*)

- Arnold drops the cloak from his face All stare at him. None speak except Cranston, who starts to his feet ———

*Cranston* — General . . .

Mercer holds out his hand sharply to check Cranston's speech, and at the same moment ———

*Washington* — (★) Stop! There is a name that is not spoken where Masons are assembled together.

- *Arnold* — (*Directly to Cranston; then addressing all.*) Yes.

General. General Arnold. Benedict Arnold. Benedict Arnold the Mason, seeking justice from those who have pledged themselves always to give justice.

He pauses. There is no reply.

From the moment when Arnold uncovers his face, Beltower sits with averted face but does not call attention to his uneasiness.

- The war is over. There is peace between Great Britain and America. The wounds that were made during the conflict are being healed. Let my wound be healed, also. That is my petition.

Pauses No reply.

- In this country were men of both beliefs — Loyalists and Revolutionists — so that in many respects it was a civil war. Some were Tories. Some were for the Revolution. But that day is past. You are forgiving the Tories. You are accepting them as good citizens of the States, even though during the conflict they were good subjects of King George. Why should I be accepted from such amnesty? (*Pause*)

*Washington* — Go on. We listen.

- *Arnold* — And listen coldly! Is this your vaunted Masonic Charity, to receive a brother's plea with the ear only, and not with the heart? I may have erred. I *did* err. But now I ask you to let the dead past bury its dead. I know how I am hated on these shores, but I also know that were you, as Masons, to reach out your hands to me, in time my fault would be forgiven if not quite forgotten. I appeal — I demand — that exception shall not be made of me. Other Tories, former enemies, British officers, are welcomed here today. Let me, too, return to America and become as one of you. My services, my abilities, even in an humble capacity, are at your disposal.

*Washington* — What these, my friends, may feel, I do not know, but this I say: In my heart there is a vast and unbridge-

able gulf between the British subject who honestly opposed the Colonies and the American who deserted his flag and became a servant of the enemy.

◦ *Arnold* — Hard, hard as always! Never, General Washington, did you recognize me as I deserved — and perhaps in that lies some explanation of my conduct. At a moment when I was serving the Colonies with all my heart and soul you rebuked me publicly.

*Washington* — Not from any wish of mine but by order of the court-martial which had tried and sentenced you to that rebuke.

◦ *Arnold* — But has it never entered your thoughts that there might be more than one story to the unfortunate happening at West Point —

*Washington* — Hold! What happened at West Point was reviewed by a court-martial of fourteen generals — the court-martial that tried the unhappy Major John Andre. You have spoken here of justice. Was it justice to allow that brave young man to die, when you could have saved his life?

◦ *Arnold* — How, except at the risk of my own?

*Washington* — There speaks the man you ever were. Selfish, filled with pride of opinion, driven by overweening ambition, impatient of counsel, admonition or restraint, consumed with a hot and unreasoning jealousy. But enough! There sit here tonight several members of that court-martial which tried Andre, including General Putnam who was its president. I ask them to speak.

*Putnam* — We were forced, under the rules of war, to condemn to death a youth whose fault was that he had recklessly served his king — and trusted in the protection of this false

American. Had this man been willing to give the order to the boatman to return him to his ship, Andre would have reached his own lines in safety, although at what a cost to us! But his selfishness forbade it, and Andre had to depart by land. Further, it was by this man's demand that Andre changed his uniform to civilian clothing, but for which he would not have suffered the extreme penalty.

*Sullivan* — How well I remember that morning when our Commander-in-Chief, arriving at West Point from Hartford, learned of this plot against us. Andre had been captured but the traitor had escaped and was safely within the British lines. Turning to General Knox and me, who were with him as he scanned the damning papers, he cried, in agony of soul: "Our Masonic brother! Whom can we trust now!" Can mercy, for him, be spoken of in the same breath with Justice?

*Knox* — I, too, was a member of that court-martial, and when this suppliant asks to have his conduct placed on the same plane as the honest loyalty of British subjects and faithful Tories, he asks us to forget — or rather to ignore — that he received for his services in offering to give up West Point, a commission as Brigadier-General in the British army and gold to the amount of more than six thousand pounds sterling.

◦ *Arnold* — I admit I have sinned, and my passion has often controlled my better nature. But all is not told. I was tempted — tempted by an accursed, smooth-tongued Masonic brother. He still is honored and respected. But six months ago I met him on the streets of London — and he passed me without a word or look of recognition. Shall the tempted pay more penalty than the tempter? . . . Will you hear the story?

Washington bows assent

◦ You recall the battle at Quebec, in December, in the first

year of the war. You know that the attack was led by General Montgomery, also a Masonic brother, and myself. Montgomery was killed at the first fire, and I was seriously wounded while leading my men over the first barricade. As I fell, a British officer leaped toward me, through the whirling snow, to put me to the sword. In my desperation I cried aloud the Grand Masonic Words that are to be spoken only in times of deadly pain or peril. He diverted his sword, dragged me away from the barricade, and, after whispering his name and hearing mine, turned back into the fight. Soon after, I was carried to the rear by my men.

• There came a later time when he reminded me of this. It is a longer story than I need tell or you would care to hear, but two years afterwards, while the army was wintering at Valley Forge, he met me outside our lines and we held Masonic conversation. At the time I debated whether I ought to expose him to our Craft, for I knew he <sup>held</sup> had an American patent with which he was gaining admission to Army Lodges — the patent of some Pennsylvania Mason named Merton — or Murdock — or some such name, which he had come by I know not how. But he had <sup>saved</sup> saved my life.

• When I was in command at West Point, he began the conversations that finally seduced me. The things he said would hardly interest you, but they were the very words needed to unsettle my loyalty. He pointed out to me that my courage and ability had never been appreciated in the Continental Army. And they had not! I, more than anyone else, won the Battle of Saratoga, and Gates was given all the honor. I had been court-martialed and rebuked for what was no fault of mine. I had been subordinated to officers not as able or as brave as I. He reminded me of this, and many other things he said — words that inflamed my already surging heart. And he whispered that

only among cultured men, such as the leaders of the British, could I find the recognition I deserved. And that in British Masonry I would be honored and elevated in recognition of my true worth and talents . . . Why need I recount all these details? I yielded. The meetings with Andre followed.

Pause No reply

• But, hear this! My punishment is greater than I reckoned on, and more than I deserve. I am a Brigadier-General in the British Army. When orders are to be given to me, my superiors give them. When orders are to be taken from me, my officers receive them. But neither superiors nor subordinates exchange one word with me, except officially. I have no friends, no intimates, no associates. I am ostracized. Sneers follow me. Men point and whisper as I pass. Masonic Lodges will not admit me, and Masons will not take my hand. Yet this tempter — this vile and forsworn Mason who led me to do what I did — this man who felt himself too good to speak to me upon the public street — he is an honored officer of the Crown, as he was an honored Senior Warden of a British Army Lodge — And his name —

*Beltower* — (*Leaping to his feet*) It is a lie!

• *Arnold* — Ha! *Beltower!* Now, when I see you here, whom I thought in England, do I really believe there is a divinity that shapes our ends! It is *not* a lie, and in the workings of your face these men and Masons can see it is the *truth!* As deep a truth as e'er was spoken in Masonic Lodge. (*To all.*) There stands the man!

*Beltower* — If I but had a sword —

• *Arnold* — It will overjoy me to meet you, sword in hand, at any time and place. You thief of honor, suborner of perjury and treason —

*Washington* — Enough of this. You shall not quarrel here.

*Gerry* — (*Rises, looks closely at Beltower*) Now I see, General, that this man (*pointing to Beltower*) is truly that spy who visited the Lodge at Valley Forge. Until this moment, I had not seen him clearly.

*Beltower* — These charges are arrant nonsense. I —

*Cranston* — Even if there were no sufficient evidence to prove their truth, your countenance convicts you.

*Beltower attempts to speak*

Silence!

*Beltower hangs his head. Pause*

*Beltower*, you are no longer an associate of mine, nor will you be in the service of His Majesty our King longer than it takes me to send the necessary despatches. Also I shall make it my duty to see that this matter comes before our British Masonic superiors — with what outcome you can judge as well as I. If I were you, I should not return to England; nor should I remain in America. Perhaps, in some distant island of the sea, you may find time and place to expiate your treachery to our Craft, although I would suggest that your pistol and your own hand would bring to a speedier end a misdirected life.

*Beltower* — You threaten me with —

*Cranston* — I *promise* you the ostracism that has been awarded *this* man, whose name is not spoken where Masons congregate. You are a false man and Mason, *Beltower*, a liar, a scoundrel and a knave!

*Beltower* — For that insult my seconds shall wait upon you.

*Cranston* — Any challenge from you will receive no reply. I fight only with gentlemen . . . If our hosts are willing, you may go.

*Washington* nods agreement. *Beltower* hesitates, shrugs his shoulders and starts toward door. His rage overcomes him and he turns and shakes his fist at *Arnold*.

*Beltower* — You will receive *your* reward, *Arnold*, for this hour's work, and quickly. The war may be over and the law may be able to do little to you for your treachery but I shall find you. (*Starts to go, returns.*) If the people of Richmond knew you were here no power this side of heaven could save you. They would gather and hang you from the nearest tree. (*Again starts, returns.*) By heaven they shall know, I will point you out, and they will tear you limb from limb.

*Turns hurriedly to exit.*

*Washington* — (*Sharply*) Tiler, guard well the door! *Beltower*, approach.

*Beltower* hesitates, then does so

You are still a Mason in name, *Beltower*, whatever you may be when Sir Francis has had opportunity to inform your brethren of your conduct. Colonel Crisp, your sword.

Colonel Crisp extends his sword — hilt forward — to *Washington*. Takes it from *Washington* after the vow of secrecy.

Before you go — the vow of secrecy!

*Beltower* — (*Hesitates. Then, sullenly places hand on the hilt of the sword.*) I vow.

*Washington* — And you will bear in mind that the penalties of your vows are very real and very sure.

I have given my word that this man (*points to Arnold*) shall reach his vessel unhurt. Masons everywhere will see to it that the word of *Washington* shall not be set at naught. Begone!

*Beltower* leaves with an air of bravado. Tiler assures himself of his departure and returns to the room.

(*To Arnold:*)

I have as yet heard nothing in your plea that entitles you to



mercy. The tempter, it is true, is to be condemned, but not less the weak and sinful man who welcomes the temptation. And Treason is a crime over which Masonry casts no mantle of Charity.

◊ *Arnold* — But hear me, General and men — formerly my brothers. I must speak the truth. I am overcome with shame and remorse. I am heartbroken and disconsolate. I languish in a foreign land, among people who are not my people. I yearn for home. More than ever, since landing upon these shores, I am wishful never again to leave them. Be kind! Be generous! Let me come again to my own country.

*Washington* — (*Rising*) You have no country. You had one, a fair land where you were born and honorably reared. You had a flag, you had friends, and fellow-patriots, and brother Masons. All these you chose to lose — to wreck the life that had been given you on the rocks of desperate ambition. You yourself have done what has been done, and this is the price you pay — that you are a man without a country. The soil of England is not yours. The soil of America spurns your feet. You will live, perhaps, for many years, for you are still in the earliest reaches of middle age, and through all those years you will pay the price. You may serve beneath the Cross of St. George, but it is not your flag. Across some rampart, or flying beyond a stretch of sunlit sea, your eyes may fall upon the Stars and Stripes of America — and *that* is not your flag. No home. No country. No emblem to honor or revere, toward which you can look with devoted eyes and cry: "The banner of my Nation!" Your feet are fated to tread a dreary path until they lead you to the grave; and through all your journey your name will be hissing and a byword, for in all the lands beneath the sun there is no place where honest men do not despise a traitor. Your name will be forgotten by Masons, or if not for-

gotten, will be remembered only to be execrated. It is a great, a terrible price — but it is not too much. Brethren, do you approve my words?

All raise right hands. Arnold stands bowed, overwhelmed

I have kept my pledge to you. I have given you safe conduct here, and you will be returned safely to your ship. You shall never again visit the land which you endeavored to betray. We shall never look upon your face again!

• Arnold moves slowly toward the door — a broken man He pauses, looks back as if to renew his plea Near the door, stops, offers his hand to the nearest General who folds his arms and turns his back Arnold goes out in silence, followed by Colonel Crisp who is to escort him back to his ship

As the door closes, Washington speaks —

*Washington* — (*Sadly*) How great was that man's opportunity for service! How tragic was his fall from honor! How bitter, and yet how just, is his humiliation and remorse. Let me say again what must never be forgotten: Treason is a crime over which Masonry casts no mantle of Charity!

*Note* Each Consistory is free to develop its own recessional The following is a suggestion —

*Washington* — (*Turning to Mercer*) And now, Most Worshipful Sir, I return to you this gavel and, with it, my most sincere thanks for the high honor you have this night conferred upon me.

Washington hands the gavel to Mercer who bows to Washington and he returns it to the Master Master calls up the Lodge ★★★, Washington and Lafayette shake hands with the Master and accompanied by Mercer and Cranston retire. Those who accompanied them retire with them Without any additional ceremony, after the visitors have retired, the Officers and members of the Lodge quickly retire

CURTAIN

**CLOSING THE CONSISTORY**

If this is the final degree given at this session the Commander-in-Chief or one deputized by him, will close the Consistory with the Official declaration

To the glory of the Grand Architect of the Universe; in the name and under the auspices of the Supreme Council of Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the Thirty-third and Last Degree of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States of America, and by virtue of the authority upon me conferred, I declare the works of.....Consistory closed.