



THE OCCASIONAL BULLETIN

TEXAS LODGE OF RESEARCH, A.F. & A.M.

June 2016

Number 1

Next Stated Communication

Saturday, June 18, 2016
Houston, Texas

Host Lodge

Holland Lodge No. 1

Location

4911 Montrose Blvd.
Houston, TX 77006

Stated meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Hotel

Accommodations have been arranged with **Crown Plaza River Oaks**, located at 2712 Southwest Freeway, Houston, Texas 77098, (713) 523-8448.



From the Master's Desk



Another Masonic year is underway for Texas Lodge of Research and I hope this message finds all of you well and ready to charge forward.

We had a great turn out in Plano for the March meeting. We gave Immediate Past Master Billings a proper send off with our sincere thanks for a job well done. I have not checked the records of TLR, but I would venture to say that more papers were presented during his year than have surfaced in many years.

Our TLR weekend in Plano was very well attended. The Friday evening dinner event a Maggiano's Italian restaurant saw a crowd of 43 hungry individuals. We had planned for only 30 but the restaurant came to our aid and stuffed in some additional seating. It was cozy, but cozy is good. After dinner, we were entertained by the Grand Musician of The Grand Lodge of Texas, Michael Cote. It was a wonderful evening.

The stated meeting Saturday morning began on time at 10 a.m. with 51 members in attendance. Worshipful Master Billings did a masterful job of conducting the session and we completed in time to retire to the North Texas Museum and Library on the lower floor of the Lodge building, where the stewards of Plano Lodge served an excellent noon meal. Once again, the crowd was larger than expected, but with a few more tables and chairs we had a cozy lunch.

While the men were conducting the morning meeting, the ladies were entertained in the Museum and Library. They were first conducted on a tour of the first floor venue and afterwards attend a program on flower arrangements. We are reviving the ladies programs for our TLR ladies, so brethren, bring your mates to this year's meetings and they will have a great time.

In the afternoon open session, papers were presented by Past Grand Master and TLR Junior Warden David Dibrell and Worshipful Master Brad Billings. After the papers, the new officers were installed by Past Grand Masters Reese Harrison (Installing Master) and Leonard Harvey (Installing Marshal).

I would encourage each of you to make an attempt to attend at least one of our meetings this year and jog your memory as to how much fun a Texas Lodge of Research weekend can be.

See you soon.

Charles

Texas Lodge of Research
Officers 2016— 2017

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Secretary Emeritus	Plez A, Transou, PM, FMR

Anson Jones Lecture in Houston

The annual Anson Jones Lecture meeting of Texas Lodge of Research will be held June 17-18 in Houston.

The host hotel for the meeting is the Crown Plaza River Oaks, located at 2712 Southwest Freeway in Houston. A block of rooms has been reserved under Texas Lodge of Research. The room rate is \$79.00 plus tax. Self-Parking overnight is available for \$5.00 per vehicle per day with in and out privileges. The cut-off date for the TLR rate is June 3, 2016. After that the special rate cannot be guaranteed.

The meeting on Saturday will be at Holland Lodge No. 1 and will begin at 10:00 a.m. The Lodge is located at 4911 Montrose Boulevard in Houston. Lunch will be served by Holland Lodge with the usual donation requested.

This year's Anson Jones Lecturer is Joe Wages. Brother Wages was the Truman lecturer for the Missouri Lodge of Research in the spring of 2014 and lectured for the Michigan Lodge of Research in October of that same year.

Brother Wages currently has two books in print: *The Secret School of Wisdom: The Authentic Ritual and Doctrines of the Illuminati* and *Rituels et doctrines authentiques des Illuminati : Une école secrète de sagesse*. He is currently preparing the following forthcoming books: *The Columbian Illuminati*, *Reforming the Illuminati*, and *On Materialism and Idealism*.

In 2015 he attended the Committee on the Francken Manuscripts at the Grand Orient de France. The event was sponsored by the International think tank of the Policy and Studies Organization Group. At this event, his book received their Regulus Award for Distinguished Service.

He has also lectured at the Bibliotheque Nationale de France, for the International Masonic Conference hosted by the PSO Group, the 2015 WCFFH conference, and has lectured at many Lodges in America and in Europe as well.

I hope you will make arrangements to attend this special meeting of Texas Lodge of Research.

Future Stated Meetings

Coming stated meetings of Texas Lodge of Research will be held:

June 18, 2016

Holland Lodge No. 1, Houston

September 17, 2016

San Gabriel Lodge No. 89, Georgetown

From the Senior Warden —

At our TLR meeting in Houston on June 18th a proposed change in the By-laws will be presented to change the meetings of TLR from “March, June, September, and January” to “March, June, September, and December.” Since Grand Lodge has changed from December to January, it opens up December and makes for a more uniform schedule. Also, competing with Grand Lodge in January will hurt our attendance. The TLR tradition of meeting on the third Saturday in these months is just that, a TRADITION, and not part of our By-laws.

Most likely the December meeting will be held on the first or second weekend in December rather than the third to avoid conflict with Christmas parties. With Grand Lodge NOT meeting the first weekend, that usually makes that weekend available. Again, meeting in any college town, consideration must be given to potential football weekends.

Because of our unique structure, By-laws changes approved in June must be voted on again in September. The changes are then submitted to the Masonic Education & Service and By-Laws Committees of Grand Lodge. Eventual implementation of the change will not occur until December 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

David B. Dibrell



Did You Know?

With regard to the ancients, Mackey writes: “And the sun, under the symbol of a point within a circle, was the great object of worship amongst the Dionysian artists who built the Temple of Solomon. The Monad further signified Chaos, the father of life, substance, the cause of Truth, reason, and the receptacle of all things. Also, in greater and lesser it signified equal; in intention and remission, middle; in multitude, mean; in time, now, the present, because it consists in one part of time which is always present.”

Mackey's History of Freemasonry, rev. and enl. by Robert Ingham Clegg, 7: 2108.



Request for Occasional Bulletin Articles

The format of *The Occasional Bulletin (OB)* has changed and is returning to more of an article format. In future editions there will be opportunities for members of Texas Lodge of Research to submit short articles relating to Masonic topics for publication in the *OB*. Publication of an article does not make a member eligible for full membership in Texas Lodge of Research.

We will also use articles previously published in the *OB* and short papers from *The Transactions* as there are many current members who have not benefited from the wisdom of the early members of Texas Lodge of Research, those founding members who contributed so much to our success.

Please submit your article to the secretary in Microsoft Word format as either as an attachment to an email, on CD/DVD, or flash drive. While the editorial guidelines will not be as strict as for submitting a paper, please cite your sources where necessary and attribute any quoted material to the proper author.

Richard E. Schlaudroff, Editor

THE POINT IN A CIRCLE

by Jerome Weilmeunster

As has been said, Masonry is a system of morals taught through symbols and allegories. One ancient symbol that has found its way into our system is the point in a circle. Since this is a discussion of a symbol, it would be prudent to clarify what constitutes a symbol.

Generically, a symbol is a drawing or pictograph whose meaning is easily understood within a given culture. So, for most people in the US, the octagon is a symbol meaning “to stop.” This does not hold true outside our culture, however. While the swastika, or twisted cross, may immediately bring Nazi Germany to many minds, it is a symbol of good luck to many Native Americans.

Besides having a meaning (such as directions), a symbol may also evoke an emotion. Thus a symbol such as the American flag may arouse a feeling of patriotism.

Albert Pike held that a symbol conceals some great cardinal truth of morality, philosophy, or religion. This would apply especially to our Masonic symbols: the square and compasses, the plumb, the level, and the point within a circle. A moment’s reflection would also show that each Masonic degree is a symbol in oral form. Yet, where did the point in a circle originate, and how has it gotten into Masonic symbolism?

The circle was certainly used as a religious symbol in the distant past. Brother Carl Claudy has written that the closed circle was used anciently as a symbol for deity. This fact is easily understood, considering the sun worship of the ancient Egyptians. To this circle the Egyptians added two upright, perpendicular, parallel serpents, representing the power and wisdom of the Creator. Here we see a parallel to our Masonic use of the symbol. In some ancient religions, the point represented the sun and the circle represented the universe.

In respect to Masonry, in the monitor of the Grand Lodge of Texas we find that the point represents the individual and the circle is his duty to God and man. In Webb-Preston we find “Lodges ... are dedicated to Saint John the Baptist and Saint John the Evangelist ... and since their time, there is, or should be, represented in every regular lodge a certain point within a circle – the point representing an individual brother, and the circle the boundary line of his conduct, beyond which he should never suffer his passions, his prejudices, or his interests to betray him. This circle is supported by two perpendicular parallel lines, representing Saint John the Baptist and Saint John the Evangelist...” In Jones’ *Freemasons’ Guide and Compendium* it will be seen that the two parallel lines at one time were said to refer to Moses and King Solomon. It seems that some ritualist(s) had a symbol without an acceptable explanation, but there is a connection to our operative brothers.

It is well-nigh impossible to underestimate the importance of the accuracy of the square, the plumb, and the level in the construction of a building. Remembering that these tools were used with stone, and quite

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often in rough circumstances, it was mandatory to check their accuracy regularly, perhaps even on a daily basis. Therefore, the knowledge of how to make a perfect square or check the accuracy of an existing square must have been a great Masonic secret known only to Masters and passed along to their successors. This was most likely one of the great secrets of the operative craft.

While we often take the accuracy of the square for granted in today's world, I can tell you from personal experience that not all the squares at your local hardware store are really accurate. For our operative brothers in ancient times, the circle served as a sort of talisman, because it could be used to create the perfect square and to check the accuracy of several of his working tools. It is not difficult to assume that our ancient brothers undertook this assignment with wonder and awe, since it was held as something approaching a sacred mystery. No longer a mystery, the method for doing this is explained and illustrated below.

Quite simply, draw a circle with a straight line across the diameter, as shown in Figure 1. When the point of the square is placed at any point on the circumference (farther away from the intersection of the diameter with the circumference is better) the legs of the square should rest on the points where the diameter intersects the circumference, as shown in Figure 2. If the square is shown to be accurate, it can then be used to test the accuracy of the level and the plumb.

By placing one leg of the square on a flat surface, the accuracy of the plumb and level can be checked as shown in Figures 3 & 4.

So the operative masons should have been well acquainted with the point within a circle as one of their "working tools," making it easily swept into the symbolism of the operative and speculative craft. The operative masons might not recognize today's interpretation, though.

The addition of two parallel lines and the reference to the Holy Saints John, as well as the summer and winter solstices, could be considered as "modern" innovations. According to Coil, this symbol does not appear, nor is it referred to in the *Gothic Constitutions*, and was probably introduced sometime after 1730. Although the two straight parallel lines may have been adopted from some Egyptian hieroglyphics, the origin of the reference to the Saints John is problematical. As mentioned above, this reference to the Saints John has not always been the case.

Coil's assessment of the value of the symbol as typically seen today seems to agree with Albert Pike's. Coil cannot agree with the addition of the Saints John (or the Bible added to the top of the circle), and Pike says this design is "a heterogeneous jumble of new additions which utterly destroy ... [and] absolutely omits the meaning of the original symbol." Here Pike is referring to the "original symbol" as simply the point within the circle. Coil goes further to state that the reference to the Saints John makes today's version a Christian symbol inappropriate in craft Masonry.

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If I may be so bold as to add my own interpretation. My feeling is that the point within the circle represents the Mason, and the circle encompasses his entire life experience: his knowledge, his experience, his skill set, his emotions, and indeed his psychological makeup. While we have the freedom to move anywhere within the circle, we should never allow our zeal to tempt us outside the circle without the aid of a true and trusty friend in whom we can safely confide.

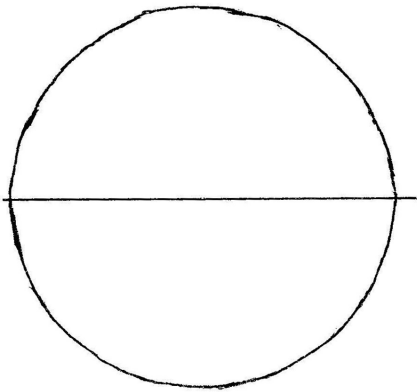


Figure 1.

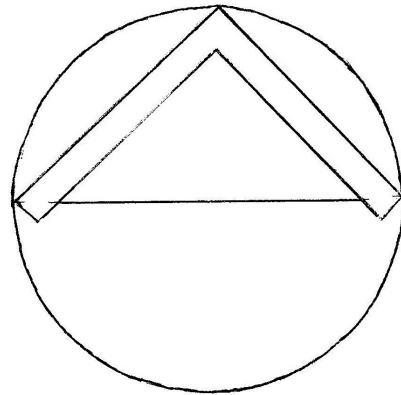


Figure 2.

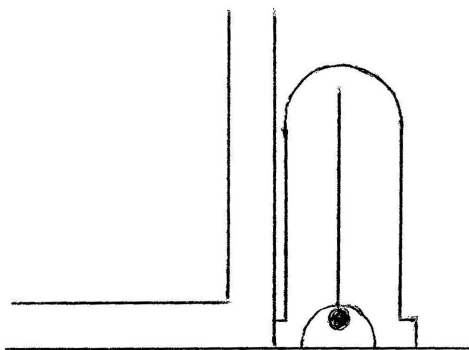


Figure 3.

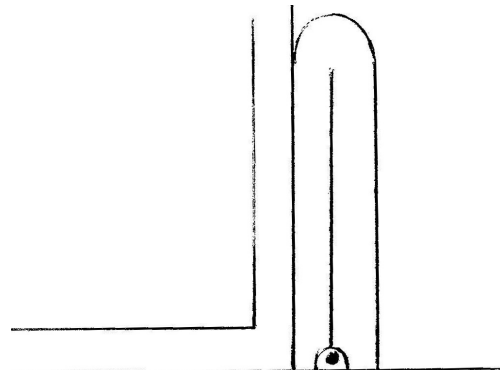


Figure 4.

References

- Albert Pike, *Esoterika*.
- Carl H. Claudy, "Short Talk Bulletin," Volume 8, 1930.
- Carl H. Claudy, "Short Talk Bulletin," Volume 9, 1931.
- Grand Lodge of Texas, *Monitor of the Lodge*.
- Henry Wilson Coil, *Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia*.
- Albert Pike, *Lectures on Masonic Symbolism*.
- Bernard E. Jones, *Freemasons' Guide and Compendium*.

Memories of the March Meeting



**Texas Lodge of Research
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From the Secretary

I have had numerous requests for Texas Lodge of Research name badges over the past two and a half years, but I did not have a confirmed source. Texas Lodge of Research members can now order directly from Eternity Creations at sales@eternitycreations.com. The cost for a name badge is \$26.50 each.

If you have had a change of address and have not let me know, please email me at secretary.texaslodgeofresearch@gmail.com or to the lodge mailing address at P.O. Box 1057, Georgetown TX, 78627-1057, as soon as possible, so I will have a correct mailing address for you.

*Truitt L Bradly, PM, Secretary
Fiat Lux*

