

The Lamplight

The Quarterly Newsletter
of the Chancellor Robert R Livingston
Masonic Library of the Grand Lodge of New York
nymasoniclibrary.org
(212) 337-6619

Summer 2022

Mission Statement

The Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library serves as the central research library of the Grand Lodge of New York. The Mission of the Library is to collect, preserve, interpret, and support the research and education for a community of scholars, including Freemasons, academics, undergraduate and graduate students, and the general public. Our institution features the foremost collections of the history, philosophy, culture and organization of American and International Freemasonry, with an emphasis on Freemasonry in New York State.

From the Director

The Library & Museum continues to operate with limited on-site hours of operation and specific guidelines in place for visitors and researchers. These guidelines are found at, nymasoniclibrary.org/re-opening/

In the weeks leading up to Grand Lodge Week, the Library & Museum staff continued to work on several important projects. Ratirat Osiri, Museum Technician, worked on conservation treatment for our collection of New York Royal Arch Masonry Chapter pennies. Joseph Patzner, Librarian, worked on gathering research materials to help the Finland Freemasons with a planned program and exhibition for the Centennial of the Grand Lodge of Finland.

We are pleased to report the rehousing project of the Grand Lodge Correspondence Collection is complete. Furthermore, exhibited were several letters signed by prominent New York Freemasons during Grand Lodge Week (additional details and photo on page 3). This summer, I plan to reach out to Masonic lodges in New York to schedule presentations discussing the Reading Course program and the Library & Museum collections. If your lodge is interested in these presentations, please email me at: Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org.

Stay tuned for the next issue of *The Lamplight*, which will be circulated in the Fall.

Fraternally yours,

Bro. Alexander Vastola, Director

From the Library Trustees

Dear Friends of the Livingston Library,

It is a pleasure to greet you as we begin our second year of publication of *The Lamplight*. As we have moved through the course of the last year, we have kept you abreast of the work that has been going on to improve both the Library's collection and your ease of access to it. We enjoy receiving your comments and suggestions for improvement. The development of a library is a task that can never belong exclusively to those of us who manage and maintain it. It must truly be a collaboration between those of us on the inside and the much larger universe of our patrons, researchers and readers.

Our mission is much larger than simply managing collections and bringing those collections to your computers and mobile devices. The artifacts, books, and irreplaceable artistic treasures gathered in the Library have the power to expand and enhance lives. They display the intellectual, historical, and cultural legacy that has bound our great fraternal family for centuries. Becoming more familiar with that legacy is the best way we know to reflect on our ideals and accomplishments, and to remind ourselves who we are and what we have achieved. The lessons we take from that contemplation are the essential points of departure for assuring the Craft continues to reflect our highest aspirations. Please drop in either in person or over our virtual doorstep and join us in that never ending journey of introspection, growth, and enlightenment.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

Fraternally yours,

R□W□ Stephen S. King
President, Livingston Masonic Library Board of Trustees

The Grand Lodge of New York Correspondence Collection Exhibit By Alexander Vastola, Director



The Grand Lodge Correspondence Collection Exhibition

At the end of April 2022, the rehousing project of the Grand Lodge Collection was complete. In the process of completing the Collection, I drafted a basic finding aid of the Collection. This finding aid will be used for staff reference, but when it is revised, it will be uploaded to the Library's website for patrons' reference.

Upon completion of the Grand Lodge Correspondence Collection, many new and interesting letters were discovered. For example, discovered were correspondences relating to the schismatic New York Grand Lodges of the 1840s and 1850s, including rare letters from the St. John's Grand Lodge and many letters relating to the Phillips Grand Lodge. Furthermore, there were letters in the Collection that documented the Grand Lodge of New York's establishment of lodges in Columbia, Cuba, Haiti, and Panama. These letters were not in the exhibit for Grand Lodge Week but are filed in the Grand Lodge Correspondence Collection.

For Grand Lodge Week, an exhibit was created of some of the letters from this Collection that were signed by noteworthy New York Masons who all served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New York. The first three letters in the exhibit were signed by Chancellor Robert R Livingston and document his acceptance of his election as Grand Master in 1784, his appointment of his new Grand Secretary in 1799, and the letter of appreciation to the New York Freemasons for the gift of a Masonic jewel. There were four letters on display signed by New York Governor DeWitt Clinton, documenting his decision to be re-elected as Grand Master and his reception of petitions to form lodges in various parts of New York State. Vice President Daniel D. Tompkins also had a signed letter in this exhibit, which revealed his list of Freemasons who he selected to be his Grand Lodge Officers.

These letters were on display at the Library, throughout the month of May.

Masonic Civil War Tokens in the Grand Lodge of New York's Collection

By Ratirat Osiri, Museum Technician

Civil War tokens were penny-sized coins, produced and used during the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865). These coins substituted government-issued coins, as available currency and materials were scarce. Known as Civil War Store Cards, the tokens were commissioned by private businesses for commercial use with their business name on them. Another kind of Civil War token is the Patriotic Token, commonly made with political messages to support the Union.

Variants of the Masonic square and compasses emblem was sometimes included on the reverse side of the tokens, though not as common as other designs. Civil War tokens eventually ceased from circulation after they were outlawed by the Congress' Coinage Act in 1864.



"No Compromise with Traitors" Union token with Masonic emblem on the reverse

Civil War store card used at J.H. Nolwer Grocer on Elm and Findley, Cincinnati, Ohio



Civil War store card used at W. Alenburg Meat Store located on 622 Central Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio

To see these tokens in the Library's Online Museum, use the links below:

Union token with Masonic emblem

<https://bit.ly/Masonic-CWToken>

Civil War store card used at J.H. Nolwer Grocer

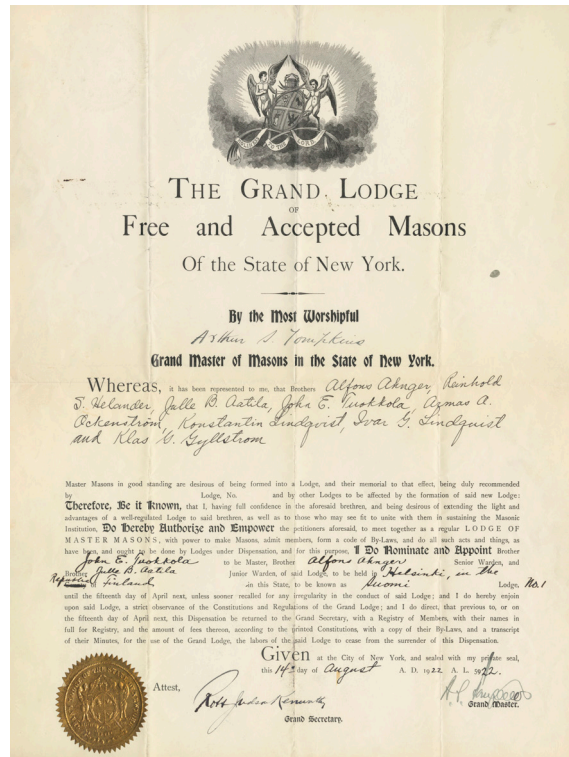
<https://bit.ly/Grocer-CWToken>

Civil War store card used at W. Alenburg Meat Store

<https://bit.ly/Alenburg-CWToken>

A Brief History of Freemasonry in Finland

By Joseph Patzner, Librarian



Charter of Suomi Lodge No. 1 (Helsinki, Finland)
[Series 2: Vol. 30: Finland Lodges]

The origins of Freemasonry in Finland date back to the 18th century, with St. Johannes Lodge chartered in 1756 in Stockholm, Sweden – when Sweden and Finland were a single state. Following the Russo-Swedish War, Finland was absorbed into the Russian Empire, where Freemasonry was outlawed for nearly a century.

While under Russian rule, many Finns immigrated to the United States and found themselves attending lodge in their new homes. In 1917, after gaining independence from Russia, Finnish-born Freemasons living in the United States began discussing their interest in reviving Freemasonry in Finland. Juho Tuokkola, a Finnish-born Freemason, soon contacted RW Toivo Nekton (Greenwood Lodge No. 569 and Morton Lodge No. 63, GLNY), a Finnish-born New York Freemason and lawyer. RW Nekton collaborated with Grand Master Arthur S. Tompkins and Grand Secretary Robert Judson Kenworthy to generate interest in establishing new lodges in Finland.

In 1922, a petition to establish a lodge in Finland, under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of New York, was sent to the Grand Lodge of New York, and on August 14, 1922, a charter was granted to establish Suomi Lodge No. 1. Grand Master Tompkins, Grand Secretary Robert Judson Kenworthy, and Grand Historian Ossian Lang were all in attendance at the inaugural meeting of Sumoi Lodge No. 1 in August, 1922. Subsequent lodges, Suomi Lodge No. 2 and Phoenix Lodge No. 3, were chartered in 1923. On March 26, 1924, the three lodges requested a special charter to leave and form an independent Grand Lodge to be known as the Grand Lodge of Finland.

In 1924, Grand Master Tompkins returned to Helsinki to consecrate the inauguration of the Grand Lodge of Finland, laying the groundwork for a strong relationship between Finnish and American Masons.

The Grand Loge of Finland will begin celebrating their centennial later this year and conclude the celebration with an exhibition and ceremonies in 2024.

2022 Virtual Library Lectures

Thursday, June 30 – “Astro-theology”, Micah Dank

Thursday, September 29 – Curator’s Lecture: “The Masonic Regalia of Simon Bolivar”, Alexander Vastola

Thursday, October 27 – “The History of the 4th Manhattan Masonic District”, Philippe R. Hiolle

Thank you to the 4th Manhattan District Square Club for their sponsorship of the Virtual Library Lectures!

New Acquisitions By Alexander Vastola, Director

Approaching the Middle Chamber: The Seven Liberal Arts in Freemasonry & Western Esoteric Tradition

By Jaimie Paul Lamb
The Laudable Pursuit Press, 2020
452 pages

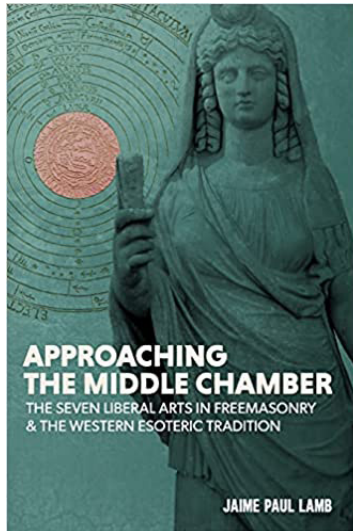


Image Courtesy: The Laudable Pursuit Press

The seven liberal arts and sciences are introduced to Freemasons during the second degree. Jamie Paul Lamb’s book provides an in-depth analysis of the seven liberal arts and sciences. He discusses how the seven liberal arts and sciences relate to Freemasonry and other esoteric subjects, such as numerology and the occult application of the five human senses. *Approaching the Middle Chamber* is a useful guide to those who are seeking a deeper understanding of the seven liberal arts and sciences mentioned in the Fellowcraft degree.

Notice About the Library's Odilo E-Resources Platform

The Livingston Masonic Library offers several Masonic books through Odilo, our new e-resources platform: <http://nymasoniclibrary.odilo.us/>. Email Joseph Patzner (Jpatzner@nymasoniclibrary.org) to set up an Odilo account.

Additional Library Resources

Masonic Reading Course

The Library offers 17 reading courses. Information about the Library's Masonic Reading Course is available at: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/reading-course/>

Genealogy Research

The Library provides Masonic information on Master Masons, within the New York Grand Jurisdiction. Information about the Library's Masonic genealogy research services is available at: <https://nymasoniclibrary.org/research/>

Research Requests

For non-genealogy Masonic research requests, email Librarian, Joseph Patzner at: Jpatzner@nymasoniclibrary.org

To Our Loyal Patrons

We hope you continue to support our mission to advance the understanding and appreciation for, Masonic history and culture in New York State. There are two ways that donations can be made. First, checks can be made out to "Livingston Masonic Library" and sent to our mailing address below. The Second is through the Brotherhood Fund Campaign portal on the Grand Lodge webpage www.nymasons.org.

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