



## *The Lamplight*

The Quarterly Newsletter  
of the Chancellor Robert R Livingston  
Masonic Library of the Grand Lodge of New York  
[nymasoniclibrary.org](http://nymasoniclibrary.org)  
(212) 337-6620

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### **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 Trustees of the Library**

Brothers and friends of the Livingston Masonic Library,

Once again, welcome to *The Lamplight*, the Livingston Library's quarterly newsletter. My report this issue centers on fraternalism across grand jurisdictions and an artifact in your Library's collection: an emblazoned cloth banner with the words, "The Grand Lodge of the Republic of Texas". The Republic of Texas existed from 1836, following its victory in the War of Independence from Mexico, to 1845, when Texas became the 25th State in the Union. We estimate the date of the banner to be circa 1840.

At the request of the Brethren of Texas, your Library Trustees agreed to make this banner available to the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M of Texas for display at its annual communications and other statewide events. I was able to convey the banner to San Antonio in time for the Grand Lodge's Alamo Commemoration Ceremony on March 5th, an occasion when Texas Masons annually pay tribute to the valiant defenders. The four commanders of the Alamo—William Travis, James Bowie, David Crockett, and James Bonham—were all Freemasons. It was a great blessing and experience to share with our Texan Brethren and friends the Texas banner, which is a marvelous symbol of their Masonic lineage and heritage. I would like to thank the Livingston Library staff for their assistance—especially our curator, Ratirat Osiri—for her expertise with packaging artifacts.

I hope to provide a fuller report on this memorable weekend in a future addition of the *Empire State Mason* magazine.

Until then, thanks for visiting *The Lamplight*. I will see you around the jurisdiction.

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

### From the Executive Director

Over the last few months, the staff has enhanced access and resources to the [Reading Course](#). This free scholarly outlet is comprised of 17 courses that is comprised of publicly published books - ranging from the historic to the esoteric. All Brethren in good standing are encouraged to access the Reading Course. Some Reading Course materials can be accessed conveniently through Odilo, our digital reading platform. Hard copies of readings can still be obtained through our mailing system.

An additional service that is popular among the Brethren is our [Masonic genealogy](#) research. This ancestral research is a free services for Masons from this Grand Jurisdiction (There is a \$35 fee for requests submitted by non-NYS Masons). The Library's genealogy services is an important resource when retrieving fraternal history for the Lewis Jewel or for joining the Order of the Eastern Star. Often, the family members seek out the Library's genealogy services to provide closure on the fraternal life of loved ones who now reside in the Celestial Lodge.

In addition to the above, your Livingston Masonic Library contributed to the highly publicized time capsule for the George Washington Masonic Memorial in Alexandria, VA. Specifically, under the direction of the Grand Lodge of New York, the Library staff produced a high resolution facsimile of the coveted [Washington Letter](#) on acid free archival paper. This invaluable Masonic and presidential artifact will be forever memorialized as a contribution by your Grand Lodge and Library

Guided by the expertise of Ratirat Osiri, Curator, and Alexander Vastola, Director of Collections Services, it has been my honor to present artifacts that are intimately connected to individual lodges. It is my responsibility to bring the Library and Museum to the Brethren. I welcome invitations to present at every lodge within our Grand Jurisdiction. Similarly, if there are insights on how the Chancellor Robert R Livingston Library can better serve the Craft, I am only an email ([mlarocco@nymasoniclibrary.org](mailto:mlarocco@nymasoniclibrary.org)) or phone call away (212.337.6620).

Brethren, my job is to bring the Library and Museum out to you. Contact me on how I can provide an interesting and exciting event for your lodge. Stay tuned for our next issue of The Lamplight in the summer.

Fraternally Yours,

V. : W. : Michael LaRocco, Executive Director, Livingston Masonic Library

## Simon Bolivar's Scottish Rite Regalia

By Alexander Vastola, Director of Collections Service

The Museum collection of the Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library of Grand Lodge in New York City contains the prima facie Scottish Rite regalia of Simon Bolivar, consisting of a 32nd Degree Scottish Rite apron and collar. This regalia is one of the highlights of the Library's collection. The apron and collar were recently exhibited from January 23-30, 2023, for the International Grand Lecturer's Convention at the Grand Lodge of New York.

Though there is no clear evidence on Bolivar's initiation into the Craft, on November 11, 1805, Simon Bolivar passed to the degree of Fellow-Craft according to the records of the "Respectable Mother Scottish Lodge of St. Alexander of Scotland". By May of 1806, Simon Bolivar was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason. Simon Bolivar then proceeded to attain the Scottish Rite degrees. He received the Scottish Rite degrees as far as the 30th Degree in Paris in 1807. On April 21, 1824, The Illustrious Joseph Cerneau, High Dignitary of the Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree for the United States, conferred the maximum Masonic Honors to those Freemasons who had distinguished themselves in the struggle for the freedom of "The Grand Colombia". Bolivar was apparently one of 84 Masons who were conferred this Degree by Cerneau. By 1829, Bolivar was supposedly conferred by the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry with the most exalted Philosophical Degrees of the Rite and was invested with the regalia of "Inspector General Honorary", the 33rd Degree of The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry.



*The Scottish Rite Apron and Collar of Simon Bolivar*

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Simon Bolivar's Scottish Rite regalia has been part of the Library's collection for many decades. The regalia was accessioned into the collection on July 18, 1934. Simon Bolivar's apron and collar was presented to RW Frank Reiguera by the Grand Secretary of the Supreme Council 33rd degree of Spain, Br. Luis Massip, courtesy of RW Frank Mayans. RW Frank Reiguera was a member of La Union Lodge no. 9 in Madrid, Spain. Bro. Luis Massip was the Grand Secretary of the Supreme Council of the 33rd degree in Spain. RW Frank Mayans was a member of La Universal Lodge No. 751 in Brooklyn, NY. As a New York Mason, he was appointed District Deputy Grand Master of the 10th Manhattan District from 1925-27, and a Grand Representative from 1935-40. Frank Mayans worked for the Masonic Refugees from 1942-45 and for the Boards of Relief and the Employment Bureau from 1945-57.

On July 18, 1934, the donor of the apron and collar, Francisco Reiguera, who was a Spanish merchant of "selected sherries and brandies" by profession, wrote a letter to the Board of General Activities of the Grand Lodge of New York (which ran the Library & Museum at the time). He stated in the letter:

Brethren: Permit me to present to the Grand Lodge Library and Museum the accompanying Apron and Collar which were worn by General Brother Simon Bolivar, the great South American Liberator. In the design will be found five flags of the "Gran Columbia," composed of the five Republics: Columbia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia, Bolivar being the only man who could wear a combination of the five flags. The Apron and Collar were presented to me by the Grand Secretary of the Supreme Council of Spain, 33°, Bro. Luis Massip.

Fraternally yours,

Alexander Vastola, Director of Collections Services

**New Acquisitions**  
**By Alexander Vastola, Director of Collections Services**

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In January of 2023, the Library received a book donation from Piers Vaughan. Brother Vaughan's contribution to the Library collection entails several recently-published titles from Rose Circle Publications:

*Freemasonry as a Way of Awakening* – by Rémi Boyer, trans. Michael Sanborn

*Mask, Cloak, Silence* – by Rémi Boyer, trans. Michael Sanborn

*Beneath the Veil of Elias Artista* – by Rémi Boyer, trans. Michael Sanborn

*Rhymes and Reason* – by Éliphas Lévi, trans. Stewart Clelland

*Son of Perdition* – by M. R. Osborne

*The Brazen Serpent* – by M. R. Osborne

*The Most Holy Trinosophia* – by Alessandro Cagliostro with introduction by M. R. Osborne

*Enlightenment Man & Mason* – by Piers Vaughan



**The Mark Medal and Mark Apron of Levi Andrews, by Ratirat Osiri**

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I recently came across the pair of artifacts owned by Levi Andrews Jr. His apron and medal are among the very first artifacts that entered the Grand Lodge of New York collection since the establishment of the Grand Lodge's Committee of Antiquities in 1886. They were donated by Levi's grand-nephew, William H. Andrews of Sagamore Lodge No. 371, and the first Chairman of the Committee of Antiquities.

Levi Andrews Jr., born in 1771, was a residence of New Bern, North Carolina. He was a member of St. John's Lodge No. 2 (Now St. John's Lodge No. 3). Levi Andrews Jr. leather apron was beautifully decorated, with hand-drawn Masonic symbols and his mark drawn on the flap.



Despite being identified as Past Master medal, Levi Andrews had never been Master of the Lodge. He instead received the Mark Master and Past Master Degrees from his lodge. The Past Master title and his name was engraved on the quadrant part of his 'Past Master' medal, with his engraved mark suspended from the compass in place of a commonly seen sunburst.



The Mark Master Degree and Past Master Degree are the first two degree conferred in Royal Arch Masonry. Before the Royal Arch Chapter, as the governing body, was properly established, the member who pursued the higher degree would receive the Capitular Degrees from their lodge. Levi Andrews Jr. artifacts could be one of the earliest evidence of the Royal Arch Degree in North Carolina



When examine closely, it appears that the two artifacts share the same mark: the phrase ‘Pro Patria’, and American flag with its pole resting on a heart. The medal has an additional engraving of the phrase ‘Pro Patria Bono’, which translates from Latin as ‘For the Homeland’. An eagle also appears on the flag in the mark. While details on Levi's personal life, political activities and military services are scant, the American flag and the motto being chosen as his mark, it is safe to assume that he was quite a passionate patriot of his country



Interestingly, the eagle in canton flag as appears in the mark medal is now an extremely rare version of historical American flag. While a handful of surviving flags of this kind were made during American Civil War, it is best known as the Indian Peace flag. It was used as a peace offering to the friendly Indian nations in the early 1800s, believed to be used for the first time in Lewis and Clark Expedition. This mark medal predates both the expedition and the Civil War, which indicates that the eagle in canton flag had already existed ten years after the bald eagle had been established as the national emblem. It would be an exciting quest to trace back to the origin of this variant of American flag.

Tragically, young Levi passed away from illness in 1795 when he was only 24, only two years after he received the apron and medal. His Masonic regalia, however, have helped his Masonic legacy to live on centuries later.

Reference: *Collection Made by Committee on Antiquities of the Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons, of the State of New York. 1905.*

Photographer: Ratirat Osiri

Image courtesy of National Museum of American History.

Sincerely,

Ratirat Osiri, Curator, Livingston Masonic Library

### **Notice About the Library's Odilo E-Resources Platform**

The Livingston Masonic Library offers several Masonic books and periodicals through Odilo, our e-resource platform: <http://nymasoniclibrary.odilo.us/>.  
To set up an Odilo account, email Alexander Vastola at: [Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org](mailto:Avastola@nymasoniclibrary.org)

### **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/>



**To Our Loyal Patrons**

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We hope you continue to support our mission to advance the understanding of, 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. Second is through the Brotherhood Fund Campaign portal on the Grand Lodge webpage (<https://www.nymasons.org/>).

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