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Masonic networks, material culture and international trade : the participation of Dutch Freemasons in the commercial and cultural exchange with Southeast Asia (1735-1853)

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7. CHINA

DUTCH FREEMASONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL PORCELAIN TRADE

7.1. Freemasonry in China (1757-1813)

While the trade with Japan was an almost exclusively Dutch affair until the middle of the 19th century, the trade with China was a matter of fierce international competition. The early porcelain trade via Malacca and Macao had been in the hands of the Portuguese. They had dominated the market since the middle of the 16th century, only to be surpassed by the VOC during the 17th century.¹ Their British competitors first reached Macao in 1635, but concentrated their trade on India until Canton (now Gouangzhou) was opened up to foreign trade in 1699. The British Honourable East India Company (EIC) founded a trade office in Canton in 1715 and would remain one of the strongest competitors in the market until well into the 19th century.

Almost every European country had a similar enterprise trying to make a profit. The French Compagnie de la Chine joined the trade in 1698. The *Oostendse Compagnie* was active briefly in 1718-1757, while the *Svenska Ostindiska Companiet* made the most of its trade route to Canton via Cadiz (Spain) between 1731 and 1813. The *Danske Asiatisk Kompagni* also established a trade office in Canton in 1730, while the *Könlich-Preussisches Assiatische Compagnie* in Emden was active between 1752 and 1757. Although last to establish a direct trade route with Canton in 1784, the USA soon started to dominate the market. While Europeans traded through company ships, the Americans used privateers.

At first the Dutch did not have direct access to China itself. They were dependent on supplies arriving in Formosa (now: Taiwan) until 1662, after which trade centred on Batavia.² In 1729 a procedure was arranged to trade directly with Canton, while Batavia remained an important stopover for ships *en route*. Dutch ships would leave Europe in the winter in order to arrive in China in August or September. Part of the deal was that VOC ships would stop at Macao, where a Chinese comprador (*loods*) would come on board and lead them up the Pearl River to Whampoa, where taxes (*cumshaw*) had to be paid. From there the supercargoes had to travel in smaller boats to Canton to buy the desired cargo. Deals had to be made quickly, as the return trip to Europe had to be made in January at the latest, before the monsoon season. Any Dutch employees left behind would not be allowed to stay in Canton off-season, but had to retreat to Macao, where the Portuguese were trading.³

The Dutch commercial office or Factory stood alongside those of other European nationalities on the small strip between the city of Canton and the Pearl River (figs. 7.1-7.2). Between 1735 and 1756 the dealing with Canton was overseen by the government in Batavia, but when this proved unsatisfactory to the VOC a Chinese Commission (*Chinasche Commissie*) was formed in Amsterdam. The *Opperhoofd*, supercargoes and captains together formed a Council, dealing with commercial and shipping affairs in sub-councils. The trade mainly consisted of tea, with an underlying layer of porcelain in the cargo hold, in order to weigh the ships down. Buying porcelain for export was a complex matter for the supercargoes. They carried a list of ordered porcelain (*eisch van retour*) drafted by the Chambers and later by the Chinese Commission, which summed up the type of porcelain requested, as well as the desired decorations and numbers of each type.⁴ The majority of goods had to be ordered from officially instated Chinese merchants, the *Co-Hong*, although some business was also conducted with 'unprivileged' merchants.

Porcelain was mainly produced at the factories in Jingdezhen in Jiangxi province, which since the early Ming dynasty had supplied most of the export ware. Orders were initially made for traditional Chinese porcelain, but in the late 17th century orders were also made for the so called *Chine de commande*, made to order for the European market and executed to suit western tastes. European shapes were copied and decorated with family arms, company logos and other personalized decorations. By the second half of the 18th century porcelain with decorations copied after western prints was produced in large quantities. Chinese merchants acted as go-betweens to supply the requested pieces, which were painted either in Jingdezhen or by workshops in Canton itself. In their standard work *China for the West* (1978) David Howard and John Ayers discussed various pieces with masonic decorations within the category of armorial porcelain. Although the existence of masonic porcelain was not ignored (most authors on the subject included one or two examples in their publications), these items were mostly treated as curiosities. For

decades *China for the West* remained the only comprehensive overview of masonic export ware. More recently, in his *Chinese Armorial Porcelain for the Dutch Market*, Jochem Kroes identified at least ten private commissioners among the members of lodges in the Dutch East Indies: Otto Willem Flack, Arend Jacob de Wilde, Harmannus Laurents Discher, Willem Jacob Andriess(e), Pieter Ras, Hendrik van Stockum, Gerlach C.J. van Massow, Nicolaus Engelhard, Albertus W.A.F. van Idsinga and Willem Jacob Cranssen (see chapter 5).⁵ Despite such indications that lodge networks may have been relevant to the porcelain trade, the subject remained uninvestigated.

Just like the freemasons in Japan seized the opportunity to order masonic lacquer ware, those in China wasted no time in ordering porcelain decorated after masonic prints for their home markets. This trend was started by the British, who founded lodges in Asia from the 1730s, long before the Dutch Grand Lodge gained the power to do so (see chapter 3). The first masonic decorations appeared on export porcelain around the middle of the 18th century, mainly on tea services and punch bowls, later followed by mugs (tankards) and jugs (pitchers) produced in bulk. Examples of objects other than tableware, such as decorative statuettes, have not (yet) been discovered. Masonic export porcelain tells a much more complex story than masonic lacquer, as there were more countries involved in the trade in these goods and there was a larger variety of objects and decorations being produced. Similarly to masonic lacquer the porcelain orders were part of the many private commissions. Pieces were transported in the chests allowed as cargo for company employees for such purposes, which meant they were not documented in the company papers.⁶ Consequently very little information on the ordering process, prices and the people involved is known. However, pieces with masonic decorations can contribute to a more precise dating of export porcelain.

◆ *The first Dutch freemasons in China*

As far as we know, no Dutch lodge was founded in China before the 20th century⁷, but absence of proof is not necessarily proof of absence. The communication with the Grand Lodge back home or the Provincial Grand Master in Batavia was difficult, and the case of lodge Decima (see chapter 7) already illustrated how a group of freemasons might act under such circumstances and how relevant documents could be lost with an unfortunate ship. In any case, many freemasons travelling from the Netherlands reached China. No doubt this was already the case shortly after the founding of the first Dutch lodge in the first half of the 18th century when lodges appeared in cities with VOC Chambers, but lodge membership records from this era are fragmentary at best. One of the first recorded names was that of a member of lodge La Charité in Amsterdam, Jan Hendrik Knibbe (born 1738), who travelled as third carga aboard the ship Sloten to Canton in 1757.⁸

How many followed his example? Jörg published a list of directors, supercargoes and assistants who sailed to Canton in service of the VOC between 1729-1794.⁹ Comparison of this list to the membership records of the Grand Lodge archive (available from 1756 onwards) shows a significant overlap. During the years 1757-1794 a total 67 of the high ranking VOC employees (directors, supercargoes, assistants) sailed to Canton and 16 (24%) of them can be identified as members of a masonic lodge in the Netherlands (see Table 7.1. There is a peak in the data in 1760-1772, when the respective numbers are 10 (33%) of 33 officers. Considering these numbers represent the highest ranking officers only, that the surviving membership records of the Grand Lodge are incomplete, and that freemasons on VOC ships were sometimes initiated in other countries, it is clear that the actual percentages must have been higher. The VOC monster rolls are already accessible online and - at the time of printing of this book - the lodge records are being digitalized, so future comparison with the membership and visitor records of lodges in cities with VOC Chambers could provide some interesting insights.

Was the presence of freemasons in the highest positions within the VOC significant for the export trade from Canton? As discussed in chapter 3, freemasons arriving in a trade post could visit lodges of other nationalities, if none of their own was available, a practice facilitating both social and commercial contacts. Masonic literature lists lodges of at least two nationalities in 18th century China that would have admitted Dutch visitors¹⁰:

- The Swedish Prins Carl's lodge, active in Canton 1759-circa 1767,
- an unnamed British lodge, established in Amoy (Xiamen) in 1760,¹¹

- the British lodge Amity no. 407, active in Canton circa 1767-circa 1804,¹²
- the Swedish lodge Elisabeth, active in Canton 1787-1812.

Unfortunately, very little information is available on the two British lodges. However, the Dutch participation in international masonic networks can be illustrated by a case study of the Swedish lodges in Canton. A prosopographic exploration of the membership of these lodges demonstrates the character, frequency and scope of international masonic contacts, as well as their relevance to the export trade and the position of the Dutch among them.¹³ The existence of the Swedish lodges in Canton has been known for some time, but below is a first attempt to identify the international mix of men involved, their masonic affiliations and their position in the trade companies in relation to the porcelain trade.¹⁴ As will become clear later in this chapter, this ‘excursion’ into Swedish freemasonry is by no means unnecessary and will prove useful to the identification of surviving pieces of masonic export porcelain.

◆ *Dutch participation in the Swedish lodges in Canton*

▪ *Previous masonic relations between the Netherlands and Sweden*

From the beginning of Dutch lodge records, there is evidence that Dutch and Swedish lodge members sustained friendly contacts by regular visits and correspondence. For instance, a ‘John Pike’ was initiated in a ‘grand’ or ‘great’ lodge (*stora logen*) in Amsterdam in circa 1746-1748.¹⁵ Presumably this was Joh[a]n Pike Jr (circa 1720-circa 1768), a Swedish merchant of British origins, who would become a supercargo for the SOIC, like his father John Pike Sr (died 1744) before him.¹⁶ From the (re)opening of the Grand Lodge of the Netherlands in 1756 onwards, friendly ties were formally acknowledged between the Dutch and Swedish lodges. In 1757 for instance, the minutes of Lodge La Bien Aimée in Amsterdam recorded:

[...] the Master of the Lodge [told] of how this Lodge had started correspondence with the Very Respectable Grand Lodge L’Auxiliaire de St. Jean in Stockholm, and which signs of true friendship and brotherhood this Grand Lodge has bestowed on our Lodge, by honouring the Lodge with A Gold Medal, requesting to hang it on the chest of the Worshipful Master, as a sign of A Friendly and Brotherly Union between these both Lodges.¹⁷

Lodge member Archibald Mesterton, mentioned earlier for his role in India and Java (see chapters 4-5) was instrumental in the arrangement of this gift.¹⁸ Not surprisingly, the 18th century visitor lists of La Bien Aimée regularly included Swedish men.¹⁹ These included a future professor of mathematics and astronomy, Bengt Ferrner (1724-1802) from Uppsala, and the son of an SOIC director, Jean Lefebure (1736-1804), a member of Salomoniska Logen in Göteborg. Ferrner’s memoirs describe how in 1759 he was taken in by the Grill family in Amsterdam, some of whom we shall meet later in relation to the porcelain trade.

A random check of the membership records of a lodge in a city with a VOC Chamber, De Eendragt in Rotterdam, reveals that a number of merchants, *cargadoors* and captains of Dutch, British, American and Scandinavian backgrounds were affiliated to the lodge between 1769 and 1816. One of them was Charles Klockefeldt, a lieutenant from Stockholm in service of the SOIC, who joined in 1786.²⁰ There he must have met Jean Martineau (died 1810), a ‘porcelain merchant’ and member since 1784²¹, as well as Johannes Floris Eilbracht, a ‘lieutenant at sea’ and probably a relation of Jacob Eilbracht, Provincial Grand Master of the Dutch lodges in India and Ceylon (see chapter 4).²² By 1812 formal ties were affirmed between De Eendragt and Salomoniska Logen.²³ Several Swedish visitors and members to Dutch lodges in Asia are listed in Appendix II.

The participation of Dutchmen in the Swedish lodges in Canton was simply a continuation of the existing tradition of formal relations between lodges of both countries. Although the aforementioned men may not have been directly involved in the shipment of masonic porcelain to the Netherlands, this system based on recognition of friendly ties provided ample opportunity for the (private) export trade in such goods.



Fig. 7.3: Portrait of Anders Gadd (1721-1767), Chinese behind glass painting.
Collection: Göteborg Historiska Museet, inv.no. GM 10.142. Reproduced from: Berg 2000, p. 147.

▪ Daughter lodge of Salomoniska Logen

Freemasonry was established in Sweden around the same time as the SOIC. The import/export broker Henrik König (1686-1736) set up a trading scheme with Niclas Sahlgren (1701-1777), a Swedish trader who had previously lived in Amsterdam and had travelled in service of the VOC. The Scottish merchant Colin Campbell (1686-1757), who had experience with the Oostendse Compagnie, joined their initiative. He acted as supercargo on the first SOIC ship to head East in 1732, the *Fredericus Rex Sueciae*. Aboard was also the aforementioned Pike Sr.²⁴ Although the founders did not yet participate in lodges, many of their relatives and employees became members of the Order from circa 1735 onwards.²⁵

In 1753, count Carl Fredrik Scheffer (1715-1786), who had a keen interest in Sinology, was elected Grand Master of the Swedish Order of Freemasons. Shortly after he came to power the foundation of Salomoniska Logen in Göteborg on 27-6-1755 gave an important push to the expansion of freemasonry to China. (The lodge was later renamed Salomoniska Logen af Trenne Lås and Salomon à Trois Serrures, meaning 'Salomo's lodge of Three Locks', but for convenience of the reader the original name is used here). This lodge was closely linked to the SOIC. Among its founding members was supercargo Friedrich Habicht, who had been initiated in the Prince Clermont Lodge in Paris in 1749 and had now returned on the ship *Götha Leijon* from his first trip to Canton to Sweden on 1-7-1754. Lodge member Charles Chapman (1752-1809), brother of a shipyard owner, sailed to Canton on 1-3-1757 as captain of the ship *Enigheten*. Supercargo Pike jr was also among the first members. By 1759 the lodge had attracted no less than 102 members, 25 of whom were in service of the SOIC.²⁶ In the period 1755-1795 some 60 members can be identified as SOIC employees, while the 14 captains of (other) ships and 153 merchants can also be considered relevant to the SOIC activities.²⁷ Genealogical research has shown that the owners of the big Swedish merchant houses and the high ranking crewmembers of the SOIC ships were all interrelated by marriage.²⁸

Before two SOIC ships left for Canton, some freemasons amongst the crew members applied to Salomoniska Logen on 8-1-1759 for a Constitution for a new, ambulatory lodge.²⁹ From the ship *Stockholms Slott* the applicants were the captain, Carl Gustav Lehman (1714-1777), and the aforementioned

supercargo Habicht. Aboard the Prins Friedrich Adolf, the petitioners were captain Carl Gustaf Ekeberg (1716-1784), captain, supercargoes Andreas [Anders] Gadd (1721-1767, fig. 7.3) and Jacob Hahr (1727-1785), lieutenant Herman Celsing and navigator Livinius Olbers. These men had only very recently become members of Salomoniska Logen³⁰, which could imply that the lodge or the two captains had been 'recruiting' amongst SOIC crew about to embark, in order to ensure the required minimum of seven founding members for the new lodge in Canton would be met. The ships left Sweden in January 1759 and stopped at Cadiz in April of the same year.³¹ The first lodge meeting took place in Cadiz aboard a third Swedish ship, the Prins Carl, as meeting ashore was apparently difficult. The name 'Prins Carl's Lodge' was used, but thereafter the lodge was referred to as 'the eldest daughter [of Salomoniska Logen] voyaging to Canton with the Swedish East India Ships'.³² (For the convenience of the reader, the name Prins Carl's Lodge is used here)

The crew of the Prins Carl included several members of Salomoniska Logen, who must have been glad to see their lodge brethren from Göteborg³³: captain Baltzar Grubb (1725-1766), supercargo Michael Grubb (1728-1808) and assistant Gustaf Tham (1724-1781). Four men on the Swedish warships staying in Cadiz also applied for initiation and were balloted.³⁴ Although the outcome was positive for these men - Magnus Kock, naval priest; Pehr Morén, lieutenant of the ship Svarta Örn; Karl Gustav Adolf Kjellman, secretary; and L. Fahlstedt, captain of the ship Postiljonen -, due to being 'placed amongst Catholics and hindered by other duties and lack of time' the intended initiations did not take place. Instead Kock, Morén and Kjellman became members of Salomoniska Logen after their return home.³⁵ Franz Walter, the supercargo of 'Stockholms Slott', was initiated during a later stage of the ship's journey.³⁶

In his publications on freemasonry in Asia, author Christopher Haffner estimated that the first lodge meeting in China took place in 1759, before the closing of the trade season in 1760.³⁷ The first stop must have been Macao, followed by Whampoa near Canton, where the ship had to wait for its cargo for four months. The crew would have been able to row to Canton in order to visit the Factories of the East India Companies, including the Swedish office.³⁸ But the lodge meetings still continued on board of the ships, perhaps because it was difficult to keep such meetings secret within the buildings of the SOIC, or just because no suitable room offering enough privacy was available.³⁹ At first the Swedish offices were situated in a modest rented space, but from 1748 onwards the SOIC owned its own building, which housed shops, offices and accommodations for employees. The first head of this new Swedish Factory was lodge member Michael Grubb, who would become the head of the Swedish Board of Commerce and director of the SOIC (1766-1769).⁴⁰

Some of the lodge members were involved in the porcelain trade and commissioned private pieces, but so far no individual objects have been linked to the Prins Carl's Lodge. However, in various Grand Lodge collections in France there are parts of a Chinese porcelain tea service with a masonic decor (figs. 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8).⁴¹ All parts of this service are painted in grisaille and gold with a 'miniature tracing board' type decoration, surrounded by flower sprays. The central design is made up of a cartouche with a five pointed star carrying a monogram (either 'JJB' or 'JBJ'), a skull and bones and various masonic tools (pair of compasses, set square, level and trowel). The star is surrounded by what at first glance may look like three trowels, but on closer inspection are clearly three triangular locks, which can only be a reference to Salomoniska Logen af Trenne Lås ('Solomon's lodge of the three locks') in Göteborg.

This becomes clearer, when comparing the porcelain design to the lodge seal (figs. 7.5 and 7.7). The locks only appear to be locked as the hatches are lowered, referring to the lodge device *Sapienti Aperta*, which in this context can be interpreted as 'Opened to the Wise', implying that the locks are open to lodge members only. The number of three locks refers to the Trinity. The name of the lodge can therefore be interpreted as alluding to the notion that the mysteries of the Trinity are open to the initiates of the lodge.⁴² A punch bowl in the collection of Grande Loge de France shows a subtle variation of this décor, where the five pointed star carries the letter 'G' instead of a monogram (fig. 7.9).⁴³ The provenance records date these around 1760, which would correspond with them being ordered during the first years of activity of the Prins Carls lodge in Canton as a fitting tribute to its mother lodge in Göteborg - quite literally a SOIC lodge.⁴⁴



Fig. 7.4a-b: Tea cup and saucer with the 'three locks' type decor, ca. 1760-1770, size not listed. Collection: Musée de la Maison des Maçons, Paris, inv.no. F2-950 and F2-950-01. Reproduced from: glmf-musee.fr.
 Fig. 7.5: Seal of Salomoniska Logen in Göteborg. Reproduced from: Kinnander 1943, p. 157.



Fig. 7.6: Detail of the 'three locks' type decor. Postcard, published by the CMC 'Prins Frederik', The Hague (author's collection).
 Fig. 7.7: Seal of Salomoniska Logen in Göteborg. Reproduced from: Berg 2000, p. 66.



Fig. 7.8: Tea service, consisting of tea pot, sugar bowl, milk and cream jugs, and 6 cups with saucers, with the three locks type decor, ca. 1760. Collection: Musée-Archives-Bibliothèque de la Grande Loge de France, Paris, inv.no. Apo.002.22.1-23. Reproduced from: Cat. exhib. Tours 1997, p. 239, no. 15/14.
 Fig. 7.9: Punch bowl with the 'three locks' type decor, ca. 1760, height 12,5 cm, diam. 29 cm. Collection: Musée-Archives-Bibliothèque de la Grande Loge de France, Paris, inv.no. Apo.015.3000. Reproduced from: 'Freemasonry Museum' 2000, p. 59, no. 50.

▪ *Potential lodge members (1760-1767)*

When comparing the personnel of SOIC ships with the membership list of the Swedish Grand Lodge, it becomes clear that freemasons kept travelling to Canton in the following years (see Table 7.1).⁴⁵ Apart from the many crewmembers already mentioned above, at least two other freemasons were also present in Canton in the 1759-1760 season: Herman Hindric [af] Dittmer (1731-1811), supercargo of the *Prinsessan Sophia Albertina* and member of *Salomoniska Logen*, and Charles [Carl] Bratt, supercargo of *Stockholms Slott* and member of lodge *Adolf Fredric* in Stockholm.⁴⁶

In the following season at least seven Swedish freemasons (the minimum necessary to maintain a proper lodge) can be counted, all previously members of *Salomoniska Logen*. The aforementioned *Baltzar Grubb*, *Tham* and *Chapman* returned, along with some 'newcomers' aboard the *Riksens Ständer*: supercargoes *David [af] Sand[e]berg* (1726-1788) and *Hindric Wilhelm Hahr* (1724-1799, brother of the aforementioned *Jacob Hahr*). They were joined by their brethren aboard the ship *Prince Frederic Adolph*: supercargoes *Friedrich Wilhelm König* (died 1763) and *Jean Abraham Grill* (1736-1792, brother-in-law to *Tham*).⁴⁷ We'll come back to *Grill* later.

The season 1762-1763 saw *Gadd*, *Ekeberg* and *Dittmer* returned, with the season's newcomers aboard the ship *Stockholms Slott* being supercargoes *Johan Fredrik Petterson* (1725-1768), a member of *Salomoniska Logen*; *Dougald (Dugal) Campbell*, a member of lodge *St. Jean Auxiliaire* in Stockholm from 1759 onwards; and *Claude Laurent*, a member of a non-Swedish lodge.⁴⁸ *Grill* had stayed behind in Canton to join *Stockholms Slott* for the home journey, making the total - again - at least seven.

The pattern was repeated once more the following season, when *Tham* and *Jacob Hahr* returned. Aboard the ship *Riksens Ständer* was *König*, as well as supercargo *Ulric Martin Valtinson* (1731-1783), a member of lodge *St. Edvard* in Stockholm. Aboard the ship *Finland* was captain *Simon [Gustaf] Ruuth*, a member of lodge *St. Harald* in Karlskrona. This time their number only amounted to six, but that is excluding any freemasons amongst the lower ranking officers. More clues that masonic activities continued, at the very least in the season 1766-1767, can be found in the personal archives of supercargo *Jean Abraham Grill*, discussed below.

During the same years Dutch freemasons were among the employees of the VOC travelling to Canton. Examples are the assistants *Isaac Guitard* (died 1771), a member of lodge *La Charité* in Amsterdam since 1757 and probably a relation of *Hendrik Isaac Guitard* in Batavia, and *Philip[us] Rocquette* (died 1767), a member of lodge *La Perseverance* in Rotterdam since 1763.⁴⁹ Documents in the *Grill* archive suggest that some of these men were aware of the activities of the Swedish lodge and participated as visitors in the 1766-1767 season.

▪ *The lodge archive of Jean Abraham Grill (1766)*

The *Grill* family originated in Augsburg, Southern Germany.⁵⁰ The family's genealogy is complicated by the frequent recurrence of some first names (fig. 7.10). Three brothers, silver- and goldsmiths by trade, moved to Amsterdam in the early 17th century. While *Anthonie* (1640-1727) and *Johan* (1668-1734) founded a Dutch branch of the *Grill* family, *Abraham Sr* (1674-1725) moved to Sweden. This Swedish branch of the large *Grill* family played an important role in the SOIC, with three of *Abraham's* four sons becoming directors of the Company⁵¹:

- *Claes* (1705-1767) was director of a shipyard in Stockholm (where some of the SOIC's ships were built), director of the SOIC in 1751-1767 and director of the merchant house *Carlos & Claes Grill* in Stockholm;
- *Abraham Jr* (1707-1768) was director of the SOIC in Göteborg in 1746-1768 and a member of *Salomoniska Logen* from 1756 onwards. He allowed the lodge to meet in his house.⁵² The aforementioned *Jean Abraham Grill* was his son;
- *Johan Abraham* (1719-1799) was director of the SOIC in 1767-1799 and also a director of the merchant house *Carlos & Claes Grill*.

The fourth son, *Anthonie jr* (1705-1783, a twin of *Claes*), moved to the Netherlands and settled in Amsterdam in 1722. He set up the banking firm *Anthony Grill & Sons* and lived at *Keizersgracht 123*, now known as '*Het Huys met de Hoofden*' ('The House with the Heads'). *Anthonie Jr's* sons all became

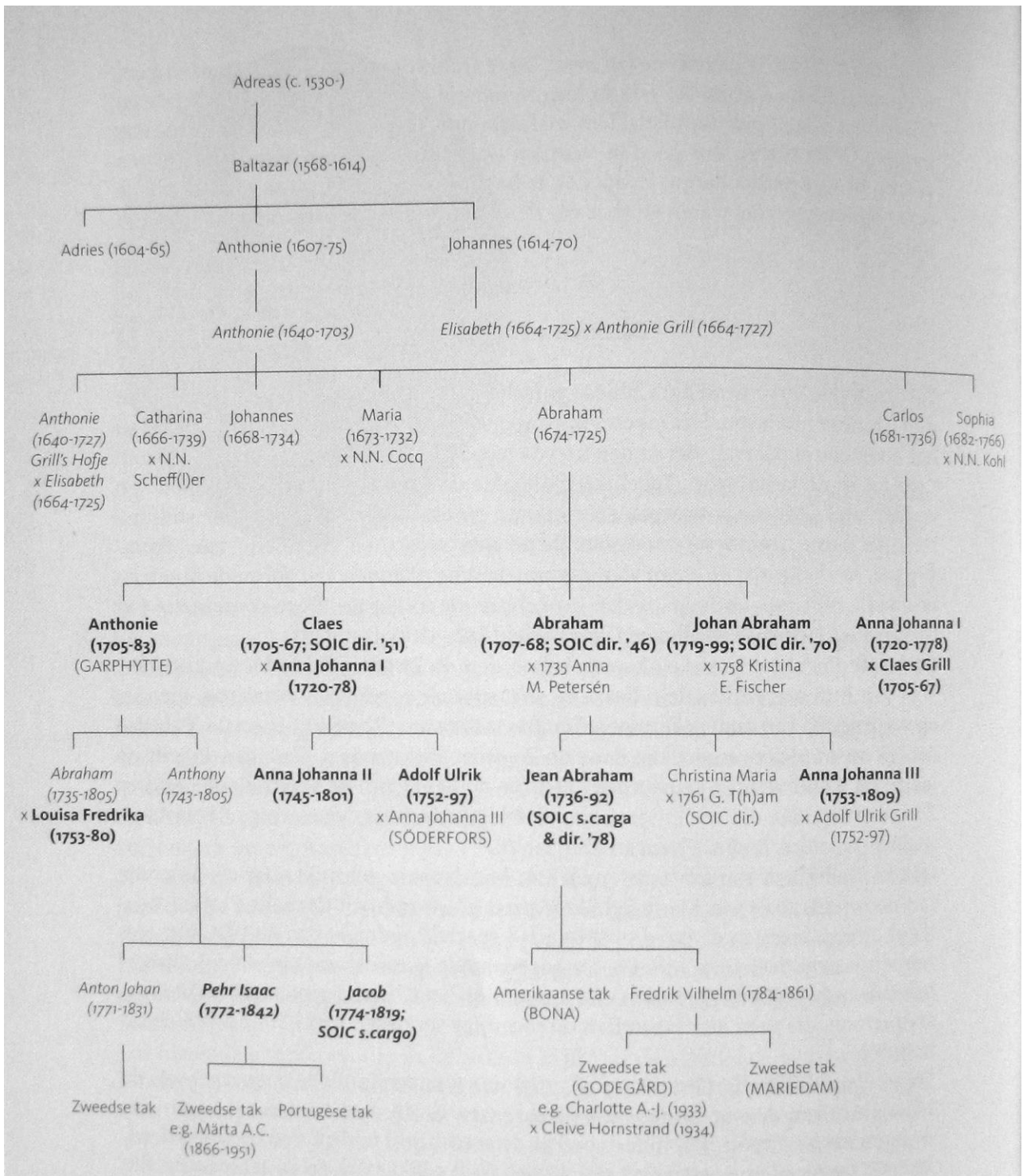


Fig. 7.10: Family tree of the Grill family. The members involved in the order of armorial porcelain are in bold letters. Reproduced from: Kroes 2012, p. 90.

freemasons: Abraham (1735-1805) was a member of the lodges La Bien Aimée and La Charité in Amsterdam around 1756, having previously been initiated elsewhere,⁵³ while Jacob (1734-1797, not listed in fig. 7.10) and Anthoni (1743-1805) were also members of La Bien Aimée⁵⁴, as was grandson Anthoni Johannes (1771-1831).⁵⁵

The aforementioned Jean Abraham Grill was a cousin to the Dutch Grills. He came into service of the SOIC in 1753 and made his first trip to China in 1753. On his return in 1756 he made a *Grand Tour* in France,



Fig. 7.11: Portrait of Jean Abraham Grill. Collection J.W. Grill. Reproduced from: Hornstrand 2013, p. 15.

lived in Montpellier and worked for the firm Mallet & Blancheney in Marseille. In 1760 he was made 3rd supercargo and travelled to and from China until 1769, by which time he was 1st supercargo.

During his stay in Canton Jean Abraham acted as both a business partner and a lodge brother of Michael Grubb and later Jacob Hahr. Together they invested in the trade with Chinese ships to Batavia, Macao, Vietnam and Cambodia and in loans to Canton merchants, which made them huge profits. Jean Abraham's surviving correspondence illustrates their friendship and business dealings, and also includes correspondence with the Dutch branch of the Grill family. Jean Abraham would become a member of the Swedish Academy of Sciences in 1773, writing and lecturing on his experiences of China, and from 1775 lived in Godegård Manor, where the house and the English style landscape garden were decorated with *chinoiseries*. He was director of the SOIC in the years 1778-1792.

The Grill businesses extended to the porcelain trade and at least twelve family members commissioned or owned armorial porcelain from Canton, including eight different services with ten different designs.⁵⁶ Jean Abraham Grill played a key role in these orders, of which remaining documents show some were made through Batavia.⁵⁷ Heraldry expert Jochem Kroes made a study of the various Grill services and suggested that the investment in this porcelain may have been due to the administrative difficulties that Grill, Grubb and Hahr encountered when trying to transfer money from Asia to Europe. It may have been easier for them to transport porcelain and simply turn that into cash on arrival in Europe.⁵⁸ Grill may have been equally heavily involved in the export of masonic porcelain, but so far no documents relating to such orders have been discovered. Here too, absence of proof is no proof of absence. Private trade would normally not be listed in SOIC papers, while even in private papers porcelain orders are given as lists of numbers with only the briefest description of decorations ('blue pattern', 'red flowers', 'coat of arms'). It was common practice to mask any reference to freemasonry in 'profane' dealings, making them easy to overlook.

None of the Grill family porcelain purchases described by Kroes have masonic connotations. There is one surviving object though, that deserves to be mentioned here: a (European) porcelain snuff box, believed to have belonged to the Grill family, is held in the Swedish Grand Lodge collection (fig. 7.12). It is decorated on the inside of the lid with the personification of La Bien Aimée, after the lost painting by



Fig. 7.12: Porcelain snuff box, decorated with enamel painting and a gilded messing rim, mid-18th century, 8.5 x 6.5 x 4 cm. Collection: Svenska Frimurare Ordens Museum, Stockholm. Reproduced from: Cat. Stockholm 1953, p. 31, no. 16.1.

George Robart commissioned in 1755 (see chapter 2, figs. 2.84-2.86).⁵⁹ The box must date after 1755, but unfortunately its provenance remains unclear. According to the provenance record it belonged to an Abraham Grill, described as Worshipful Master of La Bien Aimée before his return to Sweden in 1773.⁶⁰ The box was acquired by the museum in 1925, together with a gilded silver seal of the lodge arms, also belonging to a member of the Grill family.⁶¹ A similar box in the same collection is described as having belonged to Jean Abraham Grill, again listed as Master of the Lodge.⁶² But in fact Anthoni Antz Grill was the only member of the family to have ever held that particular position in this lodge.

The painted decorations on various copies of snuffboxes with this decoration, held in masonic collections worldwide, are executed by different hands. Some details shaped so clumsily, that they resemble the 'mistakes' made by Asian artists when depicting European prints on export lacquer and porcelain. This may be due to cheaper production, but considering the link between the Grill family, the Amsterdam lodge and the Canton trade, it is not unthinkable one of these boxes might in fact be export porcelain, later mounted with a European metal frame. However, it would require physical examination of individual pieces to confirm or exclude this hypothesis on a case by case basis, which was not possible for this project.

The personal archives of Jean Abraham Grill mainly document SOIC matters, but they also include some fragments of a lodge archive (figs. 7.13-7.19).⁶³ In December 1765 Grill left Sweden for Canton on the ship Stockholms Slott, where he stayed behind when the return ships left.⁶⁴ Grill and his colleagues were apparently involved in lodge meetings, held in Macao or Canton in 1766-1767, as the financial records regarding membership contributions, the furnishing of a lodge room and the expenses for eight consecutive table lodges have survived.⁶⁵

Many of the expenses listed for food and furnishings were made on behalf of the lodge by Ava, a Chinese comprador and business contact of Grill.⁶⁶ An undated list of contributions reveals the names of the lodge members, as well as a group of men who were apparently initiated during their stay in China (fig. 7.13). Among the regular lodge members were some familiar names from the crew of Stockholms Slott:

Compte de La Reception de la Loge

	du Frere Nathanael Garland	L'appt: 30.
Robin Cf 30.	Thomas Brevan	30.
Von Bram . 30.	Friedr. Fritz	30.
	Robert Gordon	30.
	Augustus Savage	30.
	John Brelly	30.
	Hans Westergaard	30.
	Mathieu Joyon	30.
	Lars Ivane pour recep ^t de maître	20.
	<i>L'appt</i> 260	

Pike Cf 10.	Joyon — 10
Gadd — 10.	Ivane — 10
Gill — 10.	Dumont — 10
Kampelboom 10	Michel — 10.
Valrinson . 10.	de l'autre Coli' 140
Scharfow . 10	180.
Eheberg . . . 10	Cy despin 260.
Garland . . . 10. bet ^t	Robin 30.
Brevar 10	Von Bram 30.
Fritz 10	Robin Charité 8
Gordon 10	Cf 508.
Savage 10	
Brelly 10. bet ^t	
Westergaard 10	

Fig. 7.13: Overview of contributions and initiation fees of the lodge in Canton, 1766-1767, from the personal archive of Jean Abraham Grill. Collection and photo: Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.

Öfversigt Omkostningar rörande Logen Å. 1766 gjorda genom Årva.

	Tael	mer	1/16	1/2	1/4	Tael	mer
5 St. Horn waxlins blåkattor	2.500					6.800	
189 Cubit svart länst	8.802					150	
2 truhantliga bord	4.440					666	
6 St. Rindlar för lussflakarne	2.960					100	
100 Cubit breda blå band	1.000					090	
200 d. sonalaste d.	990					100	
200 d. af de bredaste d.	5.000					60	
31 d. hvita bord	434					80	
3 St. Tenn Carrissar	1.260					380	
hvita stin	2.960					350	
4 fängning för 1 St. svart länst	166					320	
20 Cattie ordinario, waxlins	8.000					280	
försjning för lussflakarne	1.300					600	
Smickare för 1 darr	1.100					120	
3 St. stora waxlins 3/4 Cattie	3.100					100	
3 - stora matbord	2.590					22	
Chammels Chirampning	450					192	
60 Chantkar	3.000					210	
7 St. Plancher	100					655	
svart litke	100					910	
3 Cattie fjort	220					800	
82 Cubit hvitt länst	1.128					560	
Ständarens arbetsten	250					500	
2 Löss för bordens utgång	250					220	
1 Quaterjatt Jerns vind	10.500					60	
						90	
						250	
						180	
						600	
						Tael	17.333
						150	
						228	
						360	
						10	
						44	
						100	
						60	
						18	
						100	
						350	
						2.000	
						20	
						120	
						60	
						Tael	4.000
							17.333

Fig. 7.14: Overview of expenses for furnishings (left column) as well as food and drink for the table lodge (right column) for the lodge in Canton, 1766-1767, from the personal archive of Jean Abraham Grill. Collection and photo: Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.

Transport. Tael		4.000	17.533.
1	Cattie Lapplock	070	
22	Höns	150	
15	H. Bröd	260	
50	Ägg	125	
3	Sultvor	180	
2	Frappions	200	
8	Waikklar	160	
1	Paul Bränkhöhl	300	5. ANS.
22. mantz			
2	Cattie Lettias	060	
3	Walnötter	150	
15	fruecht	140	
4 1/2	Capun	715	
5	fisk	225	
5	Offron	225	
4 1/2	fläsk	760	
1/4	Champignonier	60	
4	grönd	40	
2	Sallat	44	
3	Höns	180	
5	Wacelins	2.000	
4	H. Dufvor	240	
12	Bröd	240	
50	Ägg	125	
1	Paul Bränkhöhl	300	4. 711.
27. mantz			
3 1/2	Cattie fisk	158	
4 1/2	Capun	715	
3	Höns	180	
2	Walnötter	100	
2	Lettias	60	
6	fläsk	480	
3 1/2	Offron	158	
8	fruecht	80	
1/4	Champignonier	60	
2	Sallat	44	
2	Äbl	100	
1	Lapplock	70	
11	grönd	40	
4	H. Dufvor	240	
6	Waikklar	120	
50	Ägg	125	
12	Bröd	240	
2	Brändlar Seltory	50	
1	Paul Bränkhöhl	300	2. 940
Tael		30.452.	

Fig. 7.15: Overview of expenses for food and drink for the table lodge of the lodge in Canton, 1766-1767, from the personal archive of Jean Abraham Grill. Collection and photo: Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.

Expenser

100	Årslöns	30	1/2 Kub. Galon	80	459
10	Bänor	30	2 1/2 Kub. bord		490
10	Gordans	30	3 1/2 Kub. waskins 6 1/2 0 ⁴ 2A		270
10	Lavage	30	20 Catty waskins 4 mes		6
8	Cellij	30	60 Kub. Svart lufft		100
10	Tojor	30	2 St. blod Mattin		1100
8	Trane	20	Skreddars & drans		1
10	Wæstergaard	30	60 Kub. ornament		270
10	Fritz	30	3 Kub. bord		600
82		260	100 Kub. 2 ⁱⁿ Sort band		1400
			150 smala		690
			1 1/2 brda 150 Kub.		750
			hvit skinn		220
			målning & förgylning		1000
			för dörrar & smussmålar		1000
			3 Besättnings örens		1000
			Jul 10 8 - 600		
	50 Kub. brda bord	100	Inducanen Ayon		590
	50 v. smala	220	42 v. ringlar		400
	1 hvitt skinn	140	9 Silfver lefrar i 8		100
	små 2 1/2 gånger	160	8 d. förgylta i 1 mes		800
	30 Kub. Svart lufft 2 18	550	6 St. ornamentet betalt		270
	Skreddarslöna	100	Svarta papper & silfver till skrifning		270
	1 bord	200	små mörka mari för papper & silfver		555
	Spil	30	små spik, trä & snöre		185
	Svart senklade	200	7 Döskallar		5100
	1 smalt bord	40	Skåben, Bildhuggare & snickare		2770
	10. 20	200	förgylning		1550
	Signills quavering	200	Åpning & måtning		700
			42 Kub. Svart Mattin		760
			3 1/2 Kub. bord för spisning		290
			Snickare lön i rummet		100
			Svartelidde		100
			Spil		210
			hvit bord		130
			82 Kub. lufft		1100
			2 St. Porcellin		3000

Fig. 7.16: Overview of membership fees (upper left column) and expenses for the furnishings of a lodge room in Canton, 1766-1767, from the personal archive of Jean Abraham Grill. Collection and photo: Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.

Compte des depenses faites pour la Loge

	Liel	m.	c.
1 Galon d'Or pour le Dais, au prix d'Europe	9.	59.	2.
2 Pièces de Sattin bleu de 46 Cozes chaque	17.	2.	
6 grands Flambeaux 15 Cattyas à 4 mas	6.	3.	
20 Cattyas de bougies à 4 m	8.		
Broderies pour le dais	5.	9.	2.
42 Canons	4.	6.	2.
8 Ornaments d'Officiers	2.	3.	9.
8 Truilles d'Argent surdorés	8.		
9 Dittes d'Argent	7.		2.
4 Peaux blanches pour tabliers	2.	9.	6.
3 Maillets de bois de Peze	6.		
3 Seratins d'Etain	1.	2.	6.
6 Corniches pour les flambeaux	2.	9.	6.
2 Tables Triangulaires	4.	4.	1.
1 D ^e ordinaire	2.	5.	
3 D ^e pour manger	2.	5.	9.
4 Piens de Rubans larges	5.		
3 — Dittes de seconde	2.	1.	
5 — Dittes de troisième	1.	1.	5.
796 Cozes de Toille noire à 1.8.	14.	3.	2.8
Ditte pour une couverture de table plus fine	2.		
82 Cozes de Toille blanche	1.	1.	4.8
des rubans blancs	4.	3.	
7 Tets de morts	5.	1.	8.
Gravure du Cachot	2.	5.	9.
Sculpture des pierres	2.	7.	7.
Diverses charpenteries, peintures, dorure, coiffures etc.	10.	5.	4.
Calcul & A. v. m. 9 mas	9.		
Transp.	Liel	167.	3.8

Fig. 7.17: Overview of expenses for the furnishings of a lodge room for the lodge in Canton, 1766-1767, from the personal archive of Jean Abraham Grill. Collection and photo: Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.

	Transp. Tael 167.5.8.
4 st. Frankar	3.
7 Planchor	4.
2 lösar. färg för 1 st. Svart läff	4. 1.
1 Quakerkast. Leres vin	18. 5.
Spioning d. 27. Nov.	5. 7. 5.
13 d.	2. 4. 1.
27 d.	17. 3. 3. 3
9 febr.	5. 4. 4. 5.
23 d.	4. 7. 1. 4.
27 mars	2. 9. 4.
	Tael 228. 4. 8. 2
Produade Solen d. 6. circa	6. 5. 1. 8
	Tael 235.

Fig. 7.18: Overview of expenses for the decoration of a lodge room and the food for the table lodge for the lodge in Canton, 1766-1767, from the personal archive of Jean Abraham Grill. Collection and photo: Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.

Compte de La charité recuee pour la maison
 des Orphelin de La Mere Loge à Göteborg
 Au Frere Nathanael Carlund Piaff. 10.

Thomas Berman	10.
Friedr. Fritz	10.
Robert Gordon	10.
August. Savage	10.
John Bzelly	4
Hans Westergaard	10.
Mathieu Joyon	10.
Lars Swan	8.
Compte Neuvain	Piaff. 22.
De Robier	8.

J. Abraham Grill
 Grand Maître de la Loge de la Mere

Fig. 7.19: Overview of donations by members of the lodge in Canton to a charity in Göteborg, 1766-1767, from the personal archive of Jean Abraham Grill. Collection and photo: Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.

captain Ekeberg, supercargoes Pike Jr, Gadd and Valtingson, and of course Grill himself. They seem to have invited some French and Dutch colleagues to join them in order to make up the sufficient number of freemasons to hold a lodge: a *monsieur* Dumont, supercargo and *chef de l'expédition* aboard the ship *La Paix*⁶⁷; *monsieur* Michel, cadet aboard the ship *Le Vilvain*; Jacob Corneliszoon Karsseboom (1703-1774), a member of Lodge *La Bien Aimée* in Amsterdam since 1756 and supercargo of the ship *Jonge Thomas*; and Johan Benedict Schartouw, a supercargo on the same ship.⁶⁸ It is not yet clear where he was first initiated, but after his stay in Canton he was a visitor in *La Bien Aimee* from February 1770 until November 1774.

The lodge members each paid 10 piasters as contribution towards the expenses made for the food and drink served at the table lodge and for the lodge's furnishings. The *Compte de la Reception*, a list of newly initiated members and fees paid, also emphasises the international character of the lodge. In service of the EIC were Nathaniel Garland, supercargo and member of the Council of Canton in 1763-1766⁶⁹; Thomas Bevan, a translator especially commissioned in 1753 to learn the Chinese language, which was prohibited by the Chinese authorities at the time, and member of the Council of Canton 1763-1772⁷⁰; Augustus Savage (died 1782), a supercargo on the ship *Duke of Cumberland*, later to be a captain⁷¹; and John Belly, later an agent for the supply of stores and provisions for the garrison of Fort William in Bengal.⁷² Robert Gordon (also British), was an associate of Grill and Hahr.⁷³ Also listed was Fredr[ich] Jacobsen Fritz, not yet identified but probably a German.⁷⁴ Three Danes were included: Hans Westergaard,⁷⁵ Mathieu Toyon⁷⁶ and captain Lars Svane.⁷⁷ The French supercargo Chevalier Pierre Louis Achille de Robien [de Treullan] (1736-1792), nicknamed 'le Chinois'⁷⁸, appears on the list along with Andreas Everardus Von Braam Houckgeest (1739-1801), Opperhoofd of the Dutch Faktory, having arrived on the ship *Jonge Thomas*.⁷⁹ We will come back to him later. These newcomers all paid a sum of 30 piasters for their initiation plus the 10 piasters contribution. De Robien had his contribution reduced to 8 piasters as he was apparently in need of 'charity'. Swane's payment was only 20 piasters and is explicitly noted as being for the Master's degree. The mix of nationalities illustrates the worldwide network relationships between freemasons, who in daily life were all involved in the export trade from China, including the porcelain trade.

The Swedish Factory extended its building 'for religious purposes', which included installing 'an altar with flowers and a golden figure as well as an altar piece' in the extension.⁸⁰ As every trade ship would have a Chaplain, who'd lead the crew's religious services on board twice a day, and funerals of foreigners were prohibited on Canton ground, there seemed no religious necessity for such an extension. Detailed records were kept of all daily events aboard the ship and on land, while no references are made to any events which took place in the devotion room. The extension was 'repaired' in 1767 by supercargo Grill.⁸¹ The papers in his archive confirm that a lodge room was indeed furnished on the Swedish Factory premises. His accounts include expenses made by the aforementioned Ava on behalf of the lodge for various materials (7.14-7.16, 7.18), which were partially translated in French to allow checking of the books by some of the international members (fig. 7.17). The listings include:

1 gold trimming for the canopy [above the throne] at European price	59. 2. -. -. .
2 pieces of blue satin, of 45 <i>coves</i> each	17. -. 2. -. .
6 large candlesticks 15 cattiees 3/4 à 4 max	6. 3. -. -. .
20 cattiees of candles à 4 m	8. -. -. -. .
Embroideries for the canopy	5. 9. 2. -. .
42 canons [= masonic wine glasses]	4. 6. 2. -. .
8 officers jewels	2. 5. 9. -. .
8 gilded silver trowels	-. 8. -. -. .
8 ditto silver	-. 7. 2. -. .
4 white skins for aprons	2. 9. 6. -. .
3 rosewood gavels	-. 6. -. -. .
3 tin ballot boxes	1. 2. 6. -. .
6 cornices for the candlesticks	2. 9. 6. -. .
2 triangular tables	4. 4. 4. -. .
1 ditto ordinary	-. 2. 5. -. .
3 ditto for dining	2. 5. 2. -. .
4 pieces of large ribbon	5. -. -. -. .
3 ditto of the second [size/quality]	2. 1. -. -. .
3 ditto of the third [size/quality]	1. 1. 5. -. .

786 measurements of black cloth	à 1.8.	14. 3. 2. 8.
	ditto more fine for covering the table	- . 3. - . - .
82 measurements of white cloth		1. 1. 4. - .
white ribbons		- . 4. 3. - .
7 skulls		5. 1. 8. - .
Engraving of the seal		2. 5. 9. - .
Sculpting of the coat of arms		2. 7. 7. - .
Various carpentry, painting, gilding, sewing, etc.		10. 5. 4. - .
Seal and 4 trowels	9 ma	<u>- . 9. - . - .</u>
		157.5.8. - .

Other items include: 'embroidery of the sun', locks and hinges for the tables, nails, black paper with silver for writing and '*Memento mori* [of] black paper with silver'.⁸²

All this adds up to a basic lodge interior. The many cloths and ribbons would have been used for draperies and the decoration of the throne, seats and tables, as well as for aprons and other regalia. These were probably fashioned by the Chinese embroiderer Ayan, for whom a fee is listed. Such expenses would not have been made for use on one or two occasions, and hint at a permanently decorated lodge room. As it was customary for some of the personnel to remain in Canton while the rest of the crew returned home, someone would be left behind to look after the lodge room in between trade seasons. Another indication that the lodge did not meet temporarily, but had a more permanent character, was that a seal was ordered, to be used on formal lodge correspondence and membership certificates.

The number of officer's jewels and trowels used, according to Swedish masonic customs, corresponds with circa eight Master masons (acting as Officers), nine Fellows of the Craft and three Apprentices: 20 in total. This adds up to the number of members listed as paying contribution, while the mention of 42 glasses and the three dining tables suggest enough room for the same number of visitors, as do the consumption bills.⁸³ The mourning colours and *memento mori* are common to the Chamber of Reflexion and the Master's degree, but could also be a reference to the (higher) Andreas degrees of the Swedish rite.⁸⁴

The lodge documents include accounts for the groceries ordered for the table lodge, which on at least one occasion - probably the celebration of St. John - included enough breads, eggs, meats, poultry, fruits, vegetables and Xeres wine (sherry) to feed several dozen people.⁸⁵ Like similar grocery lists from the Dutch lodges on Java illustrate, the lodge stuck to familiar European fare, but as supplies were purchased in Canton these inevitably got a local touch by using ingredients like 'Nankings cabbage'.

The sheer amount of food consumed however, implies that freemasons of other Factories probably joined the lodge meetings as guests. Swedish visitors in 1766-1767 could have included the returning Tham, Sandberg, Petterson and Olbers (the latter now a captain), als well as captain Jacob Habicht of the Prins Carl, a relative of the aforementioned Friedrich Habicht. Also present in Canton that season amongst the Dutchmen were the aforementioned Rocquette, and the assistant Jan Jacob Teschemacher (born circa 1735), initiated shortly before his trip in lodge Concordia Vincit Animos in Amsterdam in 1765, and Nanning Wijnberg, member of lodge La Bien Aimée in Amsterdam.⁸⁶ Another likely Dutch visitor to the lodge^{was} François Helene van Eijmbeek (died 1768), working as assistant for the VOC. The inventory of his estate shows he lived in the trade post in considerable luxury. The list of his possessions includes '8 masonic glasses'.⁸⁷ This is too large a number for personal use only, but enough to cover a small lodge.

The lodge archive further includes a list of donations to a charity, the masonic orphanage in Göteborg, made by Garland, Bevan, Fritz, Gordon, Savage, Belly, Westergaard, Toyon, Svane and De Robien.⁸⁸ The fact that some of the financial records were written by Grill, suggests that he acted as Treasurer for the lodge. An interesting question remains what rituals were performed in this international group of gentlemen. The Swedish Rite was somewhat different from the rites used elsewhere in Europe, and there may also have been a language barrier.

Amongst the papers in the large business archive of Jean Abraham Grill are some sketches. One of these is a faded, rough sketch of a heraldic shield with the initials 'CL' dating from circa 1767 (fig. 7.21). It could have been drawn for or by Carl Lehman as a try-out for a private commission of porcelain. A plate decorated for Lehman survived in a private collection (fig. 7.20). It shows the monogram 'CL' in a crest with a square and pair of compasses, carried by clouds. Above it is a radiant five pointed star. As will be



Fig. 7.20: Plate with the monogram C.L. (Carl Lehman) and masonic symbols, ca. 1767. Private collection. Reproduced from: Berg 2000, p. 158.



Fig. 7.21: Sketch for heraldic shield with Lehman's initials in the personal archive of Jean Abraham Grill, no.3.6/11.6. Collection and photo: Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.

discussed below, it was not uncommon to combine such monograms or family crests with masonic tools on porcelain services to express an affiliation to the Order.

▪ *Transition period (1767-1787)*

It is not clear if and for how long Grill's lodge was active after March 1767, as there are no more records. Haffner assumed that lodge documents were either destroyed on purpose as a result of the high level of secrecy in 18th century Canton, or that documents could have been lost with a ship. The Grand Lodge collection in Göteborg was twice damaged by fire, which could also have affected relevant documents. Unfortunately there is little information available from non-masonic sources.⁸⁹ According to masonic regulations the lodge would not have been allowed to continue meeting with less than seven members, but it could have been inactive (Dutch: 'in ruste') each season until the ships returned to Canton. In 1767 Grill had again stayed behind while the others left for Sweden. When captain Lehman returned, Grill joined him on the Cron Prins Gustaf for the journey home after the 1769 season. As he seemed personally responsible for the upkeep of the lodge room, it is believed that the lodge was now closed, while former lodge members limited their activities to purely social meetings.⁹⁰ But would the leave of a Treasurer really be reason to give up a lodge and its recently furnished temple?

Previous authors on the subject have assumed that Grill's lodge was Swedish, even though only a quarter of the members were of that nationality. It is assumed, but by no means certain, that the lodge functioned under the constitution of the earlier Swedish lodge, and that there was a gap between the closing of Grill's lodge and the founding of a second Swedish lodge, Elisabeth in the 1780s (discussed below).

So far from home, with so many difficulties in establishing a continuity in lodge officers - let alone corresponding and submitting fees to a Grand Lodge - freemasons thought practically. Abroad men of different nationalities sought out the familiarity of a lodge meeting and would have cared less under which constitution or on which premises they met, then when in Europe. The Swedish Factory was located next to the British one. Before Grill left, his duties could have been transferred to someone of another nationality and (as they would not have the same unlimited access to the Swedish Factory) would probably move the lodge furniture to their own factory. In order to maintain secrecy, more members amongst that particular Factory's employees would be initiated and once a majority in members' nationalities was established a switch to a constitution of that particular nationality could be the next logical step. According to Lane's annual overviews of lodges, the British lodge Amity no. 407 was founded under English constitution between 18 and 24-10-1767 in Canton, which fits neatly after the last records of Grill's lodge.⁹¹ The nationalities of Amity's members were recorded as five English men, four French, two Danish, one Swedish and one Dutch, quite similar to those of Grill's lodge.⁹²

While the successive lodges active in Canton are considered separate entities with clear affiliations to Sweden and Britain, they can also be interpreted as the transitional stages of the international masonic community in Canton as a whole.

Again comparison of Swedish Grand Lodge and SOIC company records illustrates that the 'masonic traffic' to and from Sweden steadily continued after Grill's departure, albeit in somewhat smaller numbers for the next 20 years. It is possible to reconstruct who would have been the most likely visitors of lodge Amity during those decades. The aforementioned Ekeberg, Ditmer, Hahr and Chapman all returned during their years of company service (see Table 7.1). There were also several newcomers from lodges in Sweden, likely to seek out other freemasons, who deserve to be mentioned here.

In 1771 captain Gabriel Ström (1740-1785)⁹³ and supercargo Carl Hendric [Hindrich] Forss (born circa 1744) arrived with the ship Adolf Friedrich. Both were members of lodge Adolf Fredric in Stockholm. In 1778 Henric König Petterson, supercargo aboard the ship Terra Nova, arrived in Canton along with Mauritz [Peter Grameen] von Krusenstjerna (circa 1766-1818), captain of the ship Finland. Both these men had recently joined Salomoniska Logen. A 'Captain Savage', probably the aforementioned Augustus Savage, was listed as a member of Amity in Canton in 1778.⁹⁴ They would all keep returning to China in later years. Seven was the minimum number of freemasons required to properly maintain a lodge.

Eric von Stockenström (1749-1788), supercargo aboard the ship Cron Prins Gustav, in 1780 and Johan Adolph Burtz (born 1744), captain of the ship Gustav III, again members of Salomoniska logen, arrived in

1781. From lodge St. Edvard in Stockholm came Johan Adolph Smedberg (1753-1793), a supercargo aboard the ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena. He was also a member of lodges St. Jean Auxiliaire and L'Innocente in Stockholm, as well as lodge De tre Förenade Kronor in Göteborg.⁹⁵ Burtz and Smedberg would both return in later years and Smedberg prove instrumental in getting masonic activities started up again.

Georg Johan Conradi (1752-1808, supercargo aboard the ship Louisa Ulrica) arrived in Canton in 1782, followed in 1783 by Frederic Ulric Peyron (1752-1801), a supercargo of the ship Adolf Friedrich. The next new arrivals included Pehr Tranchell (born 1743), captain of the ship Cron Prins Gustav⁹⁶, and Hans Hindrich Clason (born 1749), the captain of the Adolf Friedrich⁹⁷. In 1786 Jacob Habicht returned along with H. Hahr and Georg (also called Goran or Jöran) Samuel Gegerfelt (1742-1810), a marine officer of noble birth and now captain of the ship Gustav III.

What of the Dutchmen during the meagre years 1767-1786? The aforementioned Guitard, Karsseboom and Van Braam Houckgeest kept returning to China until 1772. In the years 1773-1778, for reasons which remain unexplained, and during the war with the English in 1780-1783, no Dutch members were identified amongst the high ranking VOC employees on the ships to Canton.⁹⁸ In the years 1779 and 1784-1787 the Dutch assistant Adrianus A. Boers, member of the lodges La Vertu in Leiden and La Vertueuse in Batavia, may have been the only eligible visitor (not counting lower ranking VOC employees).⁹⁹

▪ *Lodge Elisabeth in Canton (1787-1812)*

Almost 20 years after the members of Grill's lodge recorded their donation to the masonic orphanage in Göteborg, a donation to the same charity was made by men aboard the ship Adolf Friederich in Canton.¹⁰⁰ These 21 members of what was described as a Swedish 'Masonic Society' recorded their pledges in a document dated 14-10-1785.¹⁰¹ It seems likely that this society was a continuation of the earlier lodge, for practical reasons unable to perform ritual duties, but keeping up a social function. In any case several of these charitable men would be involved in the founding of a new lodge under Swedish constitution: Elisabeth, named after Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta of Holstein-Gotrop (1759-1818), wife of Grand Master Charles, Duke of Södermanland (the later king Charles VIII, 1748-1818).¹⁰²

Berg suggested that the foundation of this lodge was instigated by the Grand Master.¹⁰³ On 20-11-1787 the Grand Lodge provided a formal constitution for the new lodge Elisabeth to the aforementioned supercargo Smedberg, about to depart for Canton on the ship Adolph Friederich.¹⁰⁴ He would be acting as Worshipful Master. It was stipulated that future meetings would take place during the seasons when the European ships were in Canton. The Worshipful Masters would always have to be elected from the Swedish supercargoes, while the Deputy Master and Wardens would have to be chosen from the Swedish captains, making this a true SOIC lodge. Other nationalities were only allowed for the less important lodge officers. It was further decided that the lodge could work 'in any other language in between [the visits of Swedish ships]'¹⁰⁵, so the involvement of employees of various European East India Companies was clearly anticipated.

The formal installation of lodge Elisabeth took place in Canton on 20-9-1788 at 4 p.m. Six applications by would-be members were balloted, including a Danish assistant, an English supercargo and four Swedes.¹⁰⁶ During a second meeting at 7 p.m., several officers were installed and a new member was admitted. Most of the participants had earlier joined Salomoniska Logen in Göteborg. William Chalmers (1748-1811, supercargo and resident representative of the SOIC in Canton since 1783, fig. 7.22) was elected Senior Warden, while the aforementioned Conradi was elected Junior Warden. Eric Nissen jr (1753-1816), a first mate and later captain, acted as Treasurer. Two lower ranking crewmen were chosen as Servants and initiated into the Apprentice degree: Carl Broberg, and Peter Björkman, the latter later listed as 3rd mate. Lars Gotheén (born 1750), a supercargo on the Terra Nova (1782), was living so close to the lodge premises, that working in secret would be impossible without his involvement, so he was initiated that day too.¹⁰⁷ The meeting was followed by a Table Lodge.

Berg cites the financial accounts for 1788, which again include supplies for the table lodge, as well as a new 'lodge seal, officers' jewels, ritual books, etc., all put in a steel box with three locks' (a reference to mother lodge Salomoniska Logen?), and other required equipment such as 'tables, chairs, white gloves, leather aprons, trowels (smaller for the 1st and 2nd degrees and bigger and gold plated for the 3rd degree)' as well as masonic tools and candlesticks.¹⁰⁸ The lodge seal consisted of a 'shield with the Swedish three



Fig. 7.22: Carl Frederik von Breda (1759-1818), portrait of William Chalmers (1748-1811), 1802, oil on canvas, size not listed. Collection: Chalmers Tekniska Högskola, Göteborg. Reproduced from: Berg 2000, p. 56.



Fig. 7.23: Original and later versions of the lacquer seal of the lodge Elisabeth in Canton. Reproduced from: Lagerberg 1904, pp. 37 and 121.

crowns and the Chinese signs for Quang Dong (Canton), a rising sun, masonic tools and the motto *Conjuncta Valent'* (fig. 7.23).¹⁰⁹

A third meeting took place on 30-9-1788, where new members were proposed and initiated.¹¹⁰ Again the choice fell on the ship's crewmembers. The naval lieutenants Mauritz Grameén, probably a relative of captain Von Krusenstjerna, and [Johan Gustav] Adolph Nordenheim (1754-1854), as well as Dav[id] Marshall, probably a Scottish crewmember of a British ship, were already Apprentices of Salomoniska

Logen, and were admitted to receive further degrees later that season.¹¹¹ Vincent Beijer (died 1793), 3rd assistant and earlier a member of Lodge St. Andrew no. 48 in Edinburgh, was made Fellow of the Craft.¹¹² The Danish assistant George Beck and the English supercargo Thomas Freeman, later a member of the Select Committee of the British East India Company, were rejected as candidates, and their ballots postponed for several months. The members then proceeded with the initiation of three other candidates amongst the crews.¹¹³ Carl Eriksson Malm was first assistant (later supercargo), while Axel Willh[elm] Lilljestråle was a lieutenant of noble birth, as was 5th mate Abraham Willhelm Silfverhjelms (1754-1835). Apprentice mate Jacob Alberts also applied for membership.¹¹⁴ With so many rituals in one day, this was a veritable mason-making factory. Assistant Johan Fagraus signed the records and acted as Secretary.¹¹⁵

The lodge archives record later meetings on 14, 24 and 26 October, during which the men proceeded with initiations of existing members in several (higher) degrees, as well as the acceptance of more newcomers. A collection was made to cover the cost of new lodge decorations. An overview of contributions made for 1788 includes the aforementioned Gothéen, Tranchell and Clason (now captain of the ship Cronprins Gustav¹¹⁶), and reveals as additional lodge members: Johan Leonhardt Törngren, supercargo of the ship Göteborg III; Jacob [Lothsack] Kjerrman-Sköld (1745-1813), a naval lieutenant of noble birth and later captain of the ship Gustav III¹¹⁷; and Andr's Andresson, who had the rank of mate. A Jacob Bruce, not yet identified, also applied for membership. The lodge members were asked to voluntarily contribute to the costs of the décor of the lodge room.¹¹⁸

A possible Dutch visitor in the years 1790-1793 was assistant Jan Bekker Teerlinck (1759-1832), the son of a pharmacist and a cousin of the famous Dutch writer Betje Wolff (1738-1804). He became a seed collector and wine maker, and was probably a member of La Bien Aimée in Amsterdam.¹¹⁹ The aforementioned Van Braam Houckgeest was also in Canton again. Surely he would have visited the lodge to pay his respects and enquire after the wellbeing of his former brothers of Grill's lodge?

No information on the lodge is available until 31-10-1791, when the minutes recorded a new season of meetings. Sometimes the lodge meeting was formally opened and closed several times a day, in order to comply with a rule that limited the number of initiations to three persons per meeting. These took place on 1st, 3rd, 4th and 30th October, as well as 18th December. Presented candidates at this time were mostly crew members of the ship Gustav III, including: Gustav [Gudmund] Lorentz Sivertson (born 1758), ships preacher; Fredrik Warming, an assistant; Carl Fredric Gröndahl (1760-1816), chief barber and surgeon, later personal physician to Duke Frederik Adolf¹²⁰; Fredric Winberg (born 1769), 3rd assistant and ships writer; and finally Isaac Toutin (1763-1828), 3rd assistant, who came from a merchant family in Göteborg and later became supercargo. These new candidates were proposed not only by regular members of lodge Elisabeth, but also by visitors from Salomoniska Logen aboard the ship Gustaf III: supercargo Olof Hanqvist (1754-1798), 2nd assistant Gustav Palm (1760-1798) and 1st mate Petter [Per] Maurice (1751-1798).¹²¹

The next season started on 29-10-1792, when a similar pattern of meetings was followed on 30th October, 20th and 21st November, 21st and 23rd December. This time the newly initiated members were: supercargo George Cumin, 'from London'¹²²; 2nd assistant Petter Roempke (1763-1803), later supercargo; naval lieutenant Gabriel Gadd, later captain¹²³; ship's preacher Johan Bru[n]nius (1765-1828); and Joh[an] Holmgren (1763), a farmhand servant to Sir Gustav Palm). Carl Gustaf Treutiger (1748-1808), captain of the ship Götheborg and member of Salomoniska Logen, was mentioned as a proposer only. From the lodge minutes it is clear that initiation procedures were speeded up in comparison to what was customary at home.¹²⁴ The ballot and initiation of a candidate were often scheduled on two separate meetings on the same day, while candidates could receive the 2nd degree as soon as three weeks after their initiation into the 1st degree, and the 3rd degree could be given one day after the 2nd degree. In Europe it was more customary for a year to pass between these initiations. The minutes provided no indication that lodge meetings included activities other than initiation procedures - no lectures, celebrations or administrative meetings were recorded on paper.

The death of Vincent Beijer was mentioned on 29-10-1792. His regalia were handed back to the lodge, which decided that the Treasurer had to deliver them back home to Göteborg. Smedberg, who was still acting as Master of the Lodge, died on 13-12-1793. It is likely that he was temporarily replaced by Nissen. That same year Chalmers had left for Göteborg. The lodge became more or less dormant for several years (at least no minutes of any meetings survived), until activities were again recorded in 1795. Palm,



Fig. 7.24: Anonymous artist, portrait of Roelof Jacob Dozy. Behind glass painting, 46.5 x 33 cm. Private collection. Reproduced from: rkd.nl.

who had stayed in Canton (and would become director of the SOIC office in 1797) was appointed as the new Master of the Lodge. Treutiger returned that same year.

At the first meeting on 9-11-1795 a memorial service was held in honour of Smedberg. His regalia were broken into pieces and the pieces distributed amongst the members. The proposal and initiation of new members continued as before. Newly welcomed candidates were Jacob Gabe [Gabriel] Ullman, a 2nd mate (later supercargo); Jacob Grill [jr] (1774-1819), grandson of the Dutch Anthoni Grill (1705-1783) and ships clerk; and a mister Giffhorn, who remains to be identified. Andreas Fitings was welcomed as visitor.¹²⁵ Johan Dassau (1748-1808), supercargo aboard the Cron Prins Gustaf and member of Salmoniska Logen since 1786, acted as proposer for Grill.¹²⁶ Another potential visitor was the aforementioned Gegerfelt.

Lodge members would now be mostly recruited amongst the English crews of EIC ships, On 30-11-1795 another visitor was welcomed: James Andrew John Lawrence Charles Drummond (1767-1851), a Scottish supercargo working in Canton since 1790. He was earlier a member of Shakespeare's Lodge no. 146 in London.¹²⁷ On the same evening, Henry Barin, supercargo and supervisor of the EIC, was proposed as member. Other meetings were held on 1st and 18th December. Meanwhile Drummond joined the lodge as a formal member. He was to become President of the Select Committee (1801-1807), in which position he privately ordered a porcelain service for the Drummond family.¹²⁸ His house and garden in Macao later became the City Museum.

The raising of a Dutch member as Master was recorded on 18-12-1795: the new head of the Factory Roelof Jacob(us) Dozy (1759-1818) (fig. 7.24).¹²⁹ Dozy was a member of lodge La Vertueuse, having been initiated shortly after his arrival in Batavia in 1784. He worked as supercargo in Canton since, but in 1791 he travelled to Batavia in the company of his brother Reinier on the ship De Erfprins to. Dozy would then serve as Head of the Factory in Canton until 1802.¹³⁰ His introduction into the lodge follows the pattern seen throughout the European settlements: the leaders of the trading posts would be welcomed into the lodge, thereby securing its protection and prosperity. Later that same meeting, two English and two Scottish members were also introduced as candidates: Charles Arthur (born 1762), an inspector for the EIC; Thomas Charles Pattle (1771-1815), who had been appointed supercargo in 1794 and would later become director

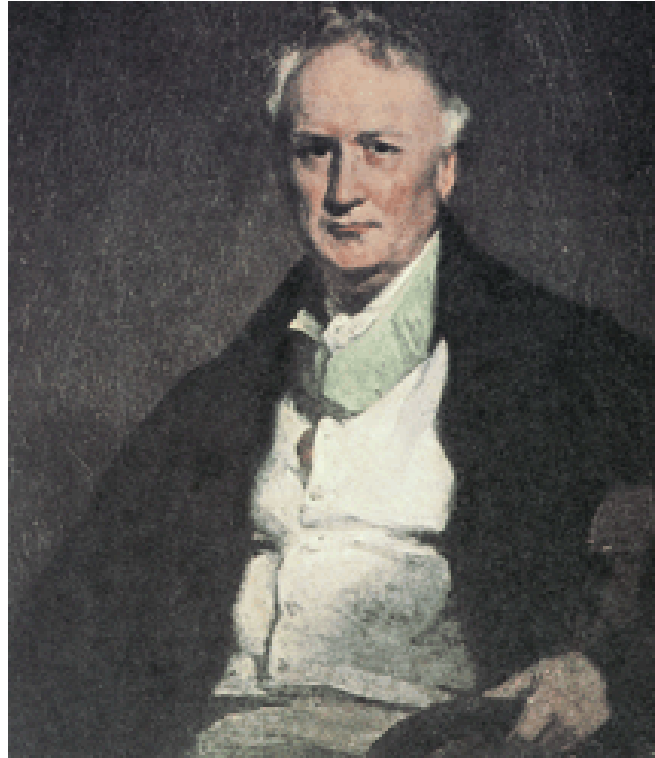


Fig. 7.25: George Chinnery (1774-1852), portrait of Anders Ljungstedt (1759-1835), ca. 1830. Collection: Peabody Essex Museum, Salem. Reproduced from: Berg 2000, p. 132.

of the EIC; David Reid (born 1769) a tradesman, possibly associated to Fairlie, Reid & Co of Calcutta, and a partner in the opium trade; and lastly Geo[rge] Lockart (born 1772), a mate on an EIC ship.

The following day Sven Wennerstrom, already a member of Salomoniska Logen, was appointed as Servant. On 23-11-1795 Henry Brown (born 1753), supercargo and head of the British EIC office in Canton, was accepted as a new member, and on the last day of the year, yet another Company employee, the doctor James Crichton (1766), was accepted. The last two meetings took place very late in the season, on 4-1-1796 and 16-1-1796, when three more British supercargo's were balloted and approved that last day: Samuel Peach (died 1832), later a director of the EIC, George Sparks and J.W. Roberts.¹³¹

The membership lists of 1795-1796 reveals the names of the proposers of new candidates as members of Salomoniska Logen, making them too likely members or at least visitors of lodge Elisabeth: the supercargoes J[ohan] Dassa[n/u] and P[eter/Pehr] Schenling on the ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena, on which Nissen had returned.¹³² By 1796 the ratio of non-Swedish members had significantly risen, and the lodge now counted the heads of the Swedish, British and Dutch Factories in its midst. Perhaps records of these later years are missing, because Haffner does not describe the lodge activities after 1796 in much detail, and does not give names of new members. Berg noted that Dozy became Master of the Lodge on 16-1-1796.¹³³ Table 7.1, however, again gives an indication which existing lodge members kept returning to Canton, including Roempke, who now had the rank of supercargo. In 1797 Olof Hanqvist was appointed Master of the Lodge.¹³⁴

In the season 1798-1799, Dassau returned on the ship Maria Caroline, while his captain, Isaac Ritterberg, was a member of Salomoniska Logen and therefore a likely visitor of the Canton lodge. Also a member of the Göteborg lodge was the newly arrived Anders Ljungstedt (1759-1835), supercargo of the ship Drottningen, who would later be Sweden's first consul-general to China (fig. 7.25).¹³⁵ Gabriel Gadd, now captain of the ship Östergöthland, returned in 1799. Captain Treutiger, supercargo Roempke and potential visitor Gegerfelt all returned one last time in 1800. By the end of the century, the slowing of trade activities of the SOIC must have significantly affected the lodge. In 1801 James Chalmers (1751-1817), a surgeon, supercargo and brother of the aforementioned William, wrote that 'neither we Swedes nor the

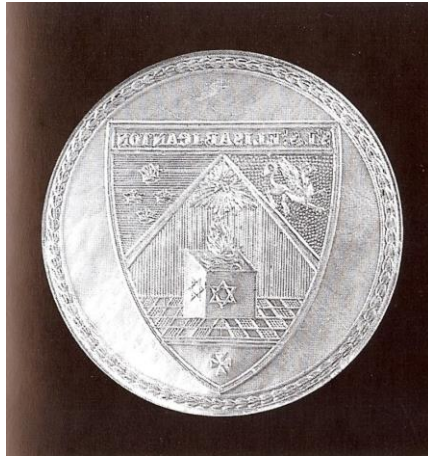


Fig. 7.26: Seal, engraved with coat of Arms of Lodge Elisabeth in Canton, 1806. Collection: Svenska Frimurare Ordens Museum. Reproduced from: *Cat. exhib. Turku 1992*, p. 147.

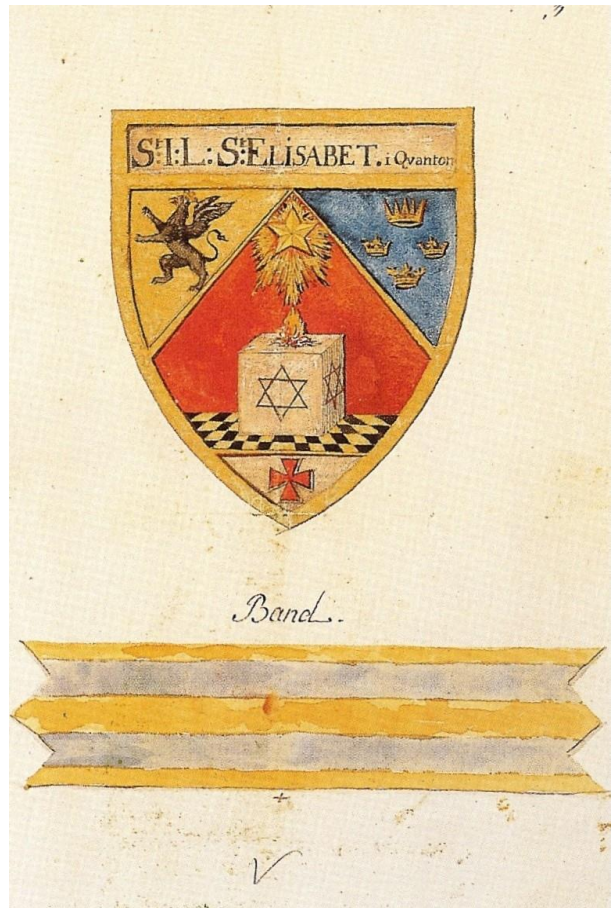


Fig. 7.27: Altar of Lodge Elisabeth in Canton. Collection: Svenska Frimurare Ordens Museum. Reproduced from: *Berg 2000*, p. 72.

Fig. 7.28: Watercolour of the arms and ribbon of Lodge Elisabeth in Canton, 1787, 29.3 x 17.7 cm. Collection: Svenska Frimurare Ordens Archiv, Stockholm. Reproduced from: *Cat. exhib. Turku 1992*, p. 147.

Englishmen had time to do any work in [the masonic] manner during the current year which I heartily regret'.¹³⁶ Things were the same in 1802, due to the short time the ships were present in the harbour. Chalmers was appointed Worshipful Master in 1802, counting on the aforementioned Ljugsted and a mister Ullgren for support, while captains Gadd and Ritterberg, as well as [Johan] Minten (1753-1824), a merchant and - of course - member of Salomoniska Logen, were also on their way to Canton.¹³⁷ Nissen brought

updated rituals and lawbooks from the Grand Lodge in Sweden. In 1803, Anders Siberg (1768-1846) and Fredric Adolph Shierman (born 1755), supercargo and captain of the ship Drottningen, as well as Hans Hansson, captain of the ship Wasa, were among the potential visitors from Salomoniska Logen not yet listed by Haffner.

On 2-7-1804 Chalmers complained to his brother that the ships were now directed to Macao, where freemasonry was not permitted (by the Catholic Portuguese), and remarked 'Canton is therefore no longer the proper place for our work, and therefore also the English lodge [= Amity?] which worked here some years ago came to nothing'.¹³⁸ Earlier he wrote to his brother 'my two colleagues are not keen and will not take an office. I am thus alone and to work a Swedish lodge in a foreign language I have found above my capabilities'.¹³⁹

The Swedish Factory in Canton was located next to the old British Factory. It is not surprising then, that lodge Elisabeth had quite a few British members¹⁴⁰, while James Chalmers' notes make it clear, that they were also aware of the presence of British lodges in China. For instance, he remarked on the 'recently' suspended activity of lodge Amity in Canton in 1804.

The minutes of the Grand Lodge of 1805 recorded an 'unwelcome tidings' from lodge Elisabeth, stating it had been unable to work properly for the last six years.¹⁴¹ Chalmers received instructions from Provincial Grand Master Pehr Dubb, to destroy the lodge archive, consisting of two crates and two boxes, if he could not safely take it back to Göteborg.¹⁴²

The last SOIC ship returned home from Canton in 1806. However, in the collection of the Swedish Grand Lodge is a seal, the grip made of ivory and mother of pearl, which is engraved with the arms of the lodge and the inscription: '1806, Joh[an] Peter Sundstén, Canton Maij' (fig. 7.26). Sundsten was *overligande hovmastare* (steward) and general-consul in Canton, involved in orders for porcelain. The seal depicts a white, cubic altar, decorated with two intertwined triangles (Solomon's Seal). On the altar is a burning fire, above which is a blazing five-pointed star. The altar is standing on a chequered floor with a Templar cross. Surely a seal would not have been ordered unless the lodge was still active. Why otherwise make the expense? Indeed, Haffner does not list lodge Elisabeth as formally suspended until much later, on 23-2-1812, and mentions that its archives were returned to the Grand Lodge in Sweden in 1814¹⁴³, following the dissolution of the SOIC in 1813. The altar of the lodge was also preserved (fig. 7.27).

Meanwhile the Dutch were having a tough time. By 1810 the political trouble at home and the British occupation of Java stopped ships getting through. Supercargo J.H. Bletterman (1771-1845) had to depend on Hong merchants to tie him over financially in order to keep the Dutch Factory functioning for the next five years. In 1822 the Factory offices burned down and had to be replaced, while the foundation of the Dutch Trade Company (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij) was meant to turn the tide, but meanwhile the international competitors had made good use of the weakened position of the Dutch.

◆ *Fraternal commissions for America*

The Americans were relatively late to the porcelain trade with Canton, they joined in after the revolutionary war. There is little information on the activities of American freemasons in China until the founding of a lodge in Shanghai in the second half of the 19th century (discussed below). But plenty of surviving objects bear witness to the fact that the American market for masonic export porcelain flourished soon after as their first ships reached China. American commissions for masonic export porcelain are closely linked to those of other 'brotherhoods' or fraternal organisations, as well as to the Unionist ideals.

The first American ship to sail to Canton, the Empress of China, left in 1784 with captain John Green (1736-1796). The history of the Munson family recalls that this ship already carried some masonic porcelain on the return journey:

Major Munson sent to China by Capt. Green for two two-gallon punch-bowls; one designed for himself ornamented with masonic emblems and his initials, W.M.; the other designed for Gen. Washington ornamented with military emblems and his initials, G.W. Before the precious china could be presented to Washington, his death occurred. Soon after, the Major visited the General's widow, presented the bowl, and dined with her.¹⁴⁴



Fig. 7.29: Punch bowl with the five masonic motifs and vine border, belonging to major William Munson, 1784. Polychrome enamels, height 15 cm, diam. 36.5 cm. Collection: Hiram Lodge no. 1, New Haven. Photograph kindly provided by John Schatzlein. (Also reproduced in Schiffer 1980, p. 142.)

Major William Munson (1747-1826) was a member and officer of Hiram Lodge in New Haven, which received his masonic punch bowl from his granddaughter in 1891. The bowl, which is decorated with the 'five masonic motifs' discussed below, is still in the lodge collection (fig. 7.29).¹⁴⁵

The supercargo of the *Empress of China*, major Samuel Shaw (1754-1794), described in his journals the social scene among the Europeans, who tried to pass the time between the arrival of ships with billiard games, concerts and dinner parties:

The Europeans, as has been observed, who have establishments at Canton, pass the intervals between the seasons for trade at Macao, where each nation has a good house, hired by the Portuguese, in which they are well accommodated. [...] It often happens that, for want of room in what are called the company's houses, some gentlemen among the English and the Dutch hire houses on their own account, towards the rent of which they are allowed a stipulated sum by the company. This gives rise to a number of social parties, and tends to promote a harmony and good-fellowship [...].

During my residence here, every attention has been paid to me that I could wish. From the Chief, Mr. Hemmingson, and other gentlemen of the Dutch house, it was of such a nature that I went to their table whenever I pleased and without ceremony. To that of the Swedes I always waited for a particular invitation. With the Danes particularly, and with their Chief Mr. Vogelsang, particularly [...] I was ever at home. With the French supercargo, Mr. Desmoulins, and the other gentlemen of that nation, I was upon a friendly footing, particularly with Mr. Bourgogne. [...] Mr. and Mrs. Dozy, of the Dutch house, who lived separate from the company, as Messrs. Bethem and Boers, of the same nation, were also particularly attentive to me [...].¹⁴⁶

Another good friend of Shaw was Thomas Freeman of the British Company, like Dozy a member of Swedish lodge Elisabeth in Canton.

Although we do not have concrete evidence of commissions, Shaw's diary illustrates how such informal relationships could have facilitated the private trade in masonic export goods. It is not known if Shaw was a freemason, but he was certainly in the position to order fraternal objects, if not masonic items. He was a member of the Society of the Cincinnati, a fraternal hereditary order founded by a group of high ranking militaries to preserve the friendship between the Continental Army and its French allies.¹⁴⁷ George Washington became president of this society in 1783, and a high percentage of freemasons was amongst the founders and members. Freemasonry and other fraternal organisations like the Society of the Cincinnati, the Odd Fellows, the Society of Bucks, etc. have certain social and ritual elements, as well as



Fig. 7.30: Part of a Chinese export porcelain service with the logo of the Society of the Cincinnati. Polychrome enamels with gold and an underglaze blue border, ca. 1784. Collection: Winterthur Museum, Wilmington, inv.nos. 1963.700.28 and 1963.700..57 A-C.

Reproduced from: museumcollection.winterthur.org.

Fig. 7.31: Detail of a plate decorated with the logo of the Society of the Cincinnati. Collection: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Reproduced from: metmuseum.org.



Fig. 7.32: Portrait figurine of a Dutch merchant, possibly A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, unbaked clay with oil paint, produced in Canton ca. 1770, 36.5 x 31.5 x 20 cm. Collection: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, BK-1976-49. Reproduced from: rijksmuseum.nl.

symbolism and material culture in common. The orders for export porcelain for such fraternal organizations have rarely been explored and deserve more attention.

Shaw ordered a blue and white dinner and tea service, consisting of 302 pieces, with the insignia of the Society of the Cincinnati.¹⁴⁸ In his journal he described how he showed several prints to a porcelain painter and tried to explain his wishes for a design. He found that although the artist could copy them precisely, he had great trouble in assembling the intended design from various parts. The end result was therefore a compromise: a winged figure with trumpet representing Fame, bearing an American bald eagle on a bow of blue ribbon (figs. 7.30-7.31). When Shaw left Canton his commercial partner Thomas Randall waited for the order to be completed, so the porcelain cargo arrived in Baltimore with the next American ship, the *Pallas*, in 1785. It was sent to New York City, where through the services of colonel Henry Lee

(1758-1818) it was acquired by George Washington in 1786. (See also the Cincinnati porcelain signed by Syng Chong, fig. 7.39 discussed below.)

The head of the Dutch Factory, Van Braam Houckgeest was also involved in an important order for American porcelain and therefore deserves to be introduced further (fig.7.32). His father had founded the firm Van Braam & Helsdingen in Amsterdam, merchants in East India linen and Chinese curiosities.¹⁴⁹ After becoming supercargo in 1758 Van Braam travelled to Canton, where he acted as head of the Dutch Factory between 1758-1761, 1761-1763 and 1765-1773.¹⁵⁰ After his time in the VOC, he had emigrated to the USA in 1783, where he worked as Dutch consul. He then settled as owner of a rice plantation and became a US citizen in 1786. After a difficult period, during which he lost four young children, he entered the VOC service once more and was appointed head of the Dutch Factory in Canton one more time from 1790 onwards. He was from Company service in 1794 but postponed his leave in order to accompany the Dutch embassy to the Chinese emperor in Peking.¹⁵¹ The Dutch diplomats had been making yearly visits to the Chinese emperors since 1655 in order to offer allegiance. By the end of the 18th century, the frequency had been reduced to every four years and the journey in 1794-1795 would be the last. The two commissioners of the diplomatic journey, Sebastien Cornelis Nederburgh and Jean Siberg (see chapter 5), were freemasons, as were the diplomats who made the journey to the emperor in 1795: Titsingh, Dozy and Van Braam Houckgeest.

The previous year Titsingh had been acting as Worshipful Master of lodge La Vertueuse in Batavia (see chapter 5). Before his leave to China, where he would join Van Braam Houckgeest, the lodge minutes recorded on 12-8-1794:

As now the main purpose of our meeting had been to once more have the pleasure of the important and pleasant presence of our worthy and high enlightened Brother Past Master Titsingh and to bid a solemn and brotherly farewell to him who will shortly be leaving for China, the Worshipful expressed his and the Brethren heartfelt sorrow about the pending loss of an enlightened and worthy member and predecessor of our Order with the most cordial wishes for his wellbeing and successful return to said Brother, who reciprocated in a similar captivating fashion [...]. While one was already busy to make everything in order for the reception of the Profane, the Worshipful brought to the attention of the Brethren the receipt of a seal carved from mother of pearl for the grand Seal of this Lodge, one that was sent to him by Brother van Braam [from China] as a gift to the Lodge, and proposed to thank said Brother on behalf of La Vertueuse and carried this commission to Brother Titsingh who willingly accepted.¹⁵²

Curiously this precious little object is not mentioned in the rather detailed inventories of the lodge, except in 1834.¹⁵³ Van Braam Houckgeest used the diplomatic journey to study Chinese culture, made notes and sketches, and collected objects. In 1795 he emigrated to the USA again, where he worked on the publication of his memoirs of the journey.¹⁵⁴

As an admirer of George Washington (1732-1799), America's most famous freemason, Van Braam Houckgeest has been named in connection to orders of Japanese lacquer on Washington's behalf (see chapter 6). In 1795 he also ordered a 45 piece Chinese porcelain tea-, coffee- and chocolate service in Canton as a gift for Martha Washington (1731-1802) (fig. 7.33-7.34).¹⁵⁵ The design is thought to have been supplied by Van Braam Houckgeest himself. It was decorated with the initials 'MW' in a wreath of green leaves, described as laurel and olives, against a radiant sun or sunburst, derived from the American eagle design popular in the new Republic. Beneath it is a banner, reading *Decus et tutamen ab illo* (*Honour and Glory come from it* [= from the Union]).¹⁵⁶ The rim of saucers and cups belonging to this service is decorated with a chain of elliptical links, carrying the names of the States of the Union. Above the chain an ouroboros is depicted: a snake with blue and gold scales, biting its tale and thus forming a perfect and never ending circle.¹⁵⁷

Although there is no masonic symbolism as such present here, the radiant sun, the chain and the ouroboros are all symbols which do appear frequently in masonic iconography, for instance in the decorations of 18th century aprons (fig. 7.35). In such decorations, the chain refers to the unbreakable *chaine d'union*: the forming of a human chain by lodge members (Dutch: 'broederketen') during the ritual, a symbol of unity and the unbreakable bond of brotherhood (fig. 7.36). The service therefore has two layers of symbolism, which the viewer will have overlooked or recognized depending on his background. To most



Fig. 7.33: Chocolate cup with cover and saucer with the initials of Martha Washington, ca. 1795. Photograph: Mount Vernon Porcelain Collection, courtesy of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, Mount Vernon, USA.



Fig. 7.34 and detail: Dish with the initials of Martha Washington, ca. 1795. Photograph: Mount Vernon Porcelain collection, purchased by the Connoisseur Society of Mount Vernon, 2013, W-5308.

this design would evoke the ideals and strength of the union of the new republic, but to Washington and fellow initiates it could also evoke subtle overtones of masonic idealism. The service illustrates how enlightenment, fraternal and republican ideals were all intertwined in the visual culture at the time.

The additional demand from America stimulated further production of export porcelain. Accounts for the ship Experiment which sailed to Canton with captain Steward Dean (born 1748) in 1797 provide information about the retail prices of masonic export ware:

Masonic Bowls from 1 to 1 ½ gallons	2 to 3 [dollar]	each
ditto mugs 3 in a set	1¼ [dollar]	set

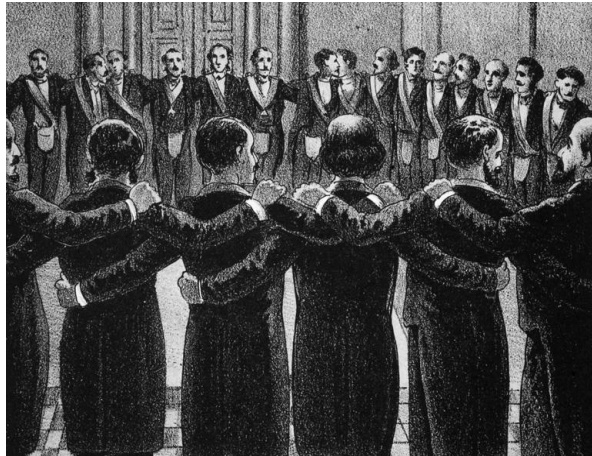


Fig. 7.35: Apron decorated with a RoseCroix degree jewel, flanked by a crown of thorns and an ouroboros surrounding a chalice. The words 'pax vobis' are embroidered in masonic code on opposite sides of the flap, which carries a radiant grail and stars. Collection: CMC 'Prins Frederik', The Hague. Reproduced from: Kroon 2001B, p. 256.

Fig. 7.36: Freemasons at a lodge meeting, forming the 'chaine d'union' or 'broederketen'. Reproduced from: Taxil 1894.

ditto pint mugs

20 [dollar]

100 p[iece]s¹⁵⁸

While they are now considered curiosities, such pieces were clearly sold by the hundreds. It would not be surprising if these prices referred to pieces decorated with the 'five masonic motifs' discussed below (see fig. 7.134), which were indeed mass produced and of which the largest number of pieces still survives.

◆ Syng Chong's involved in fraternal commissions

There is no information on the artists involved in the production of masonic export porcelain. Chinese export porcelain was mass produced in large workshops at Jingdezhen, employing several artists at the same time. It was unusual for their work to be signed or even the name of the workshop was rarely listed. That makes the punch bowls signed by Syng Chong, a Chinese porcelain merchant in Canton, all the more rare. One of the surviving pattern sample plates of his workshop is kept in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London (fig. 7.37), which shows various border and monogram samples.¹⁵⁹ There were of course many porcelain merchants in Canton, but somehow Syng Chong stood out. He was often praised by the European and American traders who dealt with him:

The most respectable China Ware or Porcelain trader – he is very correct in Business – his worth is better than that of any other Dealer in Canton and his prices are in Proportion, for Common & Cheap Goods he is not so suitable as some Other.

Old Syngchong is Head China Ware Merchant, is sometimes dearer, often a little cheaper generally better China & always best packed of any man in Canton, is a closed fist old miser, gets drunk every day, but performs his contracts and whatever you can bind him to, he will fulfil.¹⁶⁰

The aforementioned American supercargo Shaw was certainly also familiar with this man, although he only once referred to him in his journals:

Syng Chong, the principal porcelain merchant at Canton, told me one day, with much satisfaction, that his wife had brought him a third son, - and added, with an air expressive of gratitude, that Joss [= a household deity] was very good to him. 'Joss loves me', continued he, 'because I make him much chin-chin [= worship].'¹⁶¹



Fig. 7.37: Pattern sample plate with the mark of 'Syng Chong FM', over glaze enamels and gilding, produced at Jingdezhen, 1790-1800. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London (gift by Mr R.A. Pfungst), C.121-1923. Reproduced from: collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O437100/plate-unknown.

That the Swedish Company also dealt with him, is clear from the inclusion of his name on a list of four important Chinese porcelain merchants in the papers of Carl Christian Ström (1767-1842), a ship's preacher aboard the *Gustaf III* in 1796 and probably a relative of captain and lodge member Gabriel Ström.¹⁶²

Syng Chong was responsible for several orders of fraternal porcelain for the Society of the Cincinnati. One was a punch bowl, now in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. It is finely decorated after an engraving for a membership certificate, issued in December 1785 by the Society of the Cincinnati to major-general Ebenezer Stevens (1751–1823), vice president of the New York branch of the Society (figs. 7.38-7.39).¹⁶³ A polychrome version of this bowl was made for colonel Richard Varick (1753–1831), president of the New York branch of the Society during Steven's time. Varick later became Washington's confidential secretary and mayor of New York (1789-1801). The bowl is now in the collection of Morristown National Historical Park, New Jersey.¹⁶⁴

Another bowl was presented on 4-7-1812 by major-general Jacob Morton (1756-1837, former Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New York) to the Corporation of the City of New York (fig. 7.40). The interior of the bowl is decorated with a view of *New York from Brooklyn* after a design by William Birch (1755-1834) and engraved by Samuel Seymour (circa 1755-1822) in 1802.¹⁶⁵ Apart from an inscription relating to the presentation, the lettering on the base reads: 'THIS BOWL WAS MADE BY SYNGCHONG IN CANTON FUNGMANHE PINXT' - a most rare revelation of the name of the Chinese artist, Fung Manhe. The initials 'FM' on the sample plate mentioned above (fig. 7.37), probably also point to this artist.

Syng Chong was also responsible for at least one masonic piece commissioned for a British lodge in India, now in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London (fig. 7.41). It also happens to be one of the largest preserved Chinese punch bowls in the world. A text along the foot and the inside rim of the bowl reads:

This bowl is presented to the Worshipful Master Wardens and Brethren of the lodge of True Friendship Bengal No 1 as a mark of esteem by their Brother Hugh Adams.
This bowl made by Syng Chong China Merchants Canton AD 1813.¹⁶⁶

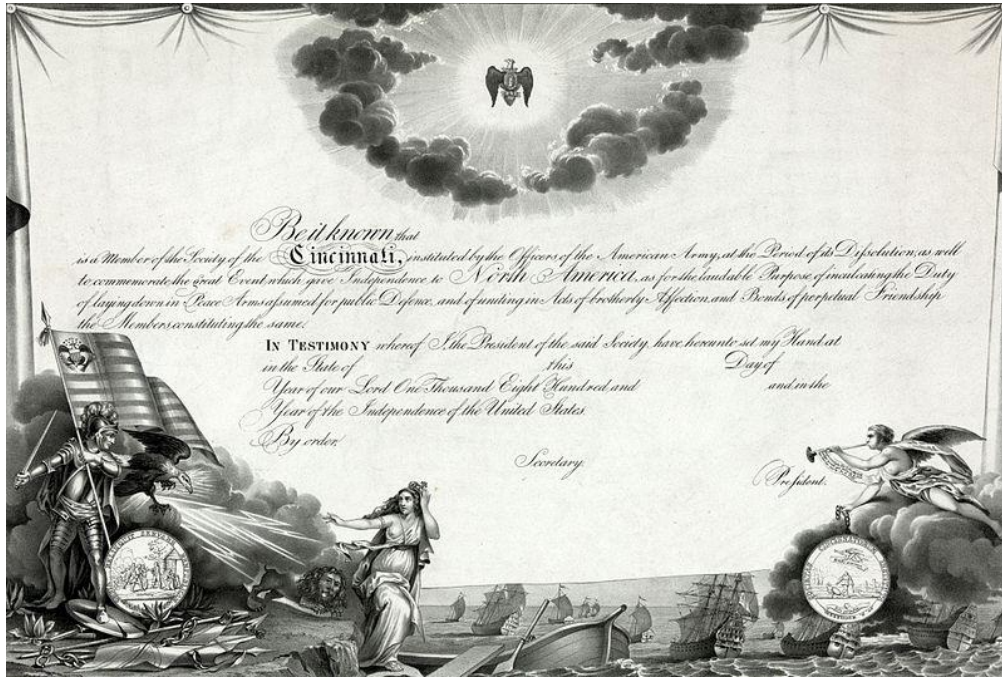


Fig. 7.38: Blank membership certificate for the Society of the Cincinnati. Collection: Library of Congress, Washington, inv.no. LC-DIG-pga-01184. Reproduced from: loc.gov.



Fig. 7.39: Punch bowl decorated after an membership certificate of the Society of the Cincinnati issued to Ebenezer Stevens (1751-1823) in 1785, signed by Syng Chong, Canton, diam 40.6 cm. Collection: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (gift of Lucille S. Pfeffer), inv.no. 1984.449. Reproduced from: metmuseum.org.



Fig. 7.40: Punch bowl with a decoration after a view of New York from Brooklyn (1802), presented on 4-7-1812 by general Jacob Morton (1756-1837) to the Corporation of the City of New York, signed by Syng Chong, Canton, diam. 25.4 cm. Collection: New York Historical Society, on permanent loan to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Reproduced from: Howard 1984, cat. c. 71.



Fig. 7.41: Punch bowl produced by Syng Chong in Canton and commissioned by Hugh Edwards for the lodge True Friendship No. 218 in Bengal. Polychrome enamels and gold, dated 1813, height 26 cm, diam. 56 cm. Collection: The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. D2009/42 (permanent loan from lodge True Friendship). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.co.uk (above) / Howard 1997, p. 133 (below).



Reverse sides and interior of fig. 7.41. Reproduced from: Hervouët/Bruneau 1986, p. 285.

Lodge True Friendship was the first lodge in Bengal, founded in 1773. So far, nothing was known about the bequeather, Hugh Adams. Most likely he was the commander of the ship Upton Castle by Forbes & Co, active in Bengal in 1798, and later working as a Free Mariner (someone licensed by the court of London to earn their living as a professional mariner in the East Indies) in India in 1809.¹⁶⁷

The punch bowl has a diameter of circa 55 cm, providing enough space for one of the most elaborate masonic decorations executed on export porcelain.¹⁶⁸ The exterior top rim is painted with a blue and gilded meander while the other decorations are divided into four main groups of symbols. The first is a miniature tracing board type decoration with symbols for the Apprentice, Fellow-Craft and Master's degrees.

Between two columns is a set of steps, on which rests a bible, opened on II Chronicles, Chapter III (dealing with the building of the temple). On top of the bible are a set square and compass; around it on the steps three candlesticks and a coffin are grouped. Various tools appear from behind the bible: a Jacob's ladder, a level, a rule, a plumb rule, a trowel and a maul. To the right is a pair of clasped hands, referring to friendship and the lodge name, and to the left a hand holding a plumb line. Below the bible is a pentagram with the letter 'G', and above it are depicted the sun, moon and seven stars, topped with all-seeing eye, a dove and a blue banner reading 'FIDE, SPE ET CHARITATE' ('Faith, Hope and Charity'). The dove is probably a reference to Noah and the (British) side degree of Royal Arch Mariner. Faith, Hope and Charity are here a reference to the Rose Croix degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (AASR). Other parts of the decorations also refer to higher degrees and side workings.

The second group of symbols shows a bridge, consisting of five arches, referring to the Knights of the Sword and of the East (AASR). The bridge is topped by a cross entwined by a serpent, referring to the degree of Knights of the Brazen Serpent (AASR). On both sides are eight pointed stars. The left shows another cross with a serpent within a garter carrying the motto 'LONGE INDE ESTE' ('Far from me'). The right shows a cross with two crossed swords within a garter is the motto 'IN HOC SIGNO VINCES' ('In this sign thou shalt conquer'). The latter represents the badge of the Order of the Knights of Constantine.

The third group depicts a compass on a section of a circle, framing a radiant sun, possibly the Officer's jewel for the Deputy Grand Master in Bengal. Around it is the text 'LODGE TRUE FRIENDSHIP. BENGAL NO 1 G[RAND] L[ODGE OF] E[NGLAND] 315', topped by a pair of clasped hands, a reference to friendship and the lodge name. The fourth group again refers to higher and side degrees, such as the Knights Templar. It shows a patriarchal cross with the text 'INRI' and IHS' and a serpent entwined around it. Above the cross is an all-seeing eye, to the left an eight pointed star with a (brazen) cross and serpent, a coffin with a skull and crossed bones at its centre. Below the star a skull is painted. To the right is a Templar cross, with skull and crossed bones below. Under this scene is a banner with text reading 'SUB CRUCE SALUS' ('Salvation under the Cross'). These symbols refer to the Knights Templar, another side working.

The interior of the bowl is painted and gilded with a wide floral rim. On the base is a fifth group of masonic symbols, referring to the Royal Arch degree: underneath an arch is a radiant altar, carrying amongst others a triangle with the *Tetragrammaton*. To the left are a crossed pickaxe and shovel, to the right a pair of compasses crossed with a set square. Above the altar is an All-seeing eye, and above the arch is a banner with the text 'SIT LUX ET LUX FUIT' ('Let there be light and there was light').¹⁶⁹

The bowl remained in the possession of the lodge. In 1892 a three tier, triangular stand of ebonised wood for the bowl was presented. It was decorated with silver panels with the names of the consecutive Worshipful Masters (additional names were added in 1963). In circa 1920 the lodge was presented with a additional silver ladle with an ivory handle.¹⁷⁰ After the end of the British Empire in 1947 the bowl was returned to England, where the lodge continued to meet in Bristol. The museum's provenance records that in the past, the bowl was taken back to the lodge from time to time for use at a special occasion. Even the recipe for the punch is preserved:

4 Quarts of Three Star Brandy, 4 Quarts good Jamaica Rum, 4 Quarts Whisky, 1 Orange Curacao, 1 Pint Lime Juice, 2 Tablespoons Angostura Bitters, 2 sliced Oranges, 2 sliced Lemons. The sliced skin of one Cucumber, 2 pounds of Sugar. Garnished with a handful of fresh herbs and spices. The punch was prepared at 1 pm or 'Tiffin' time and just before the evening banquet bottles of Bathgate soda water were ceremonially added by four members standing at North, South, East and West of the bowl. The ration per member was a fifth of a gallon and it was recommended that only punch or water be drunk on those evenings. The flavour was strong

and the recipe notes that a considerable quantity of soda and brandy could be used to top up the bowl before the flavour suffered.¹⁷¹

◆ *The first Chinese freemasons*

The activities described above all pertain to those of foreigners on Chinese soil. So far, the comprador Ava and the merchant Syng Chong are the only Chinese men named in relevant archives. What then of Chinese freemasons? In Europe it was common to initiate employees as Servants in order to ensure their secrecy. The services of Chinese men were hired by the Dutch lodges in Batavia and Canton, but their names were not discovered in any of the membership records researched for this project. After the closure of the Swedish lodges, freemasonry continued as an imported phenomenon, but in this phase it became a mostly British occasion.

As mentioned above, there is little information on the British lodges Amoy (founded 1760) and Amity (founded 1767). Apart from possible losses of archive materials at sea, several fires destroyed the Canton Factories, which helps explain this lack of documentation. Amity suspended activities around 1804,¹⁷² and although it seems unlikely that no other nation would have filled the gap, according to official masonic history it would take forty years before any lodge activities resumed. The strained relationship between Britain and China after the end of its East India Company charter and the subsequent Opium War (1839-1842) must have been contributing factors. It seems the treaty of Nanking, which opened up more ports to foreign trade and the transfer of Hong Kong to the British created the right climate for lodge activities to resume.

On 29-4-1844 twelve freemasons petitioned the English Grand Lodge for a letter of constitution for a lodge in Victoria, Hong Kong. The constitution dated 18-9-1844 for Royal Sussex Lodge no. 735 was not received until 27-3-1847.¹⁷³ The lodge met in a room of the *godown* (warehouse) of the trading company Gibb Livingston & Co, as T.A. Gibbs was a member.¹⁷⁴ In 1845 Samuel Rawson (1819-1893), merchant at Fox, Rawson & Co and earlier a member of lodge Industry and Perseverance no. 129 (now no. 106) in Calcutta, was elected Master of the Lodge. Meetings took place in a house at Holywood Road.¹⁷⁵

The membership flourished to 62 men and by 1846 another lodge was needed to accommodate them all.¹⁷⁶ The constitution of that second lodge in Hong Kong, named Zetland no. 768, was dated 21-3-1846. The Worshipful Master was Oliver Goldsmith, Assistant Commissary General. The members of this lodge were less prosperous than those of Sussex.¹⁷⁷

By 1847 a Provincial Grand Master was appointed by the British Grand Lodge and the choice fell on Rawson.¹⁷⁸ When many lodge members moved to Canton for commercial reasons, Royal Sussex lodge also relocated to Canton. The first meeting there took place in the British Factory on 18-2-1847; later meetings were held in the Club House above the boat house of the Factory. When the Factory was burned down as a result of civil unrest, the lodge returned once more to Hong Kong in 1856.¹⁷⁹

Meanwhile, the membership of lodge Zetland dwindled, but meetings continued in the houses of various lodge members. When activities picked up again, funds were raised for a proper lodge building on the site of the former Court House, for which the foundation stone was laid on 1-2-1853 with much pomp and circumstance:

The Provincial Grand Master, Bro Samuel Rawson, led a procession of Masonic brethren in regalia who were preceded by the bands of the 59th Regiment and the United States naval vessel Susquehanna. When HMS Cleopatra made the signal that the sun was at its meridian, the bells proclaimed high noon and the stone was lowered into position. After the Provincial Grand Master tried the stone with the plumb, level and square, he poured corn, wine and oil on the stone, and the building was declared dedicated to Freemasonry.¹⁸⁰

The lodge building was replaced by the more impressive Zetland Hall on the upper junction between Zetland Street and Ice House Street in 1865 (fig. 7.42). This second Hall was designed by lodge member C. St. George Cleverly (1819-1897), Surveyor General for Hong Kong.¹⁸¹

Meanwhile, a lodge had also been founded in Shanghai. Although the formal constitution of the Lodge of Northern China no. 832 dates from 1849, efforts to form this third lodge started earlier. On 7-11-1844 Rutherford Alcock was appointed Consul in Amoy. Having earlier been a member of Brittanic Lodge no. 33 in London, he now became active in the founding of the Lodge of Northern China, as did some members from Zetland and Royal Sussex lodge who had relocated to Shanghai.¹⁸² Fourteen freemasons signed the petition for a constitution dated 1-8-1849. Meetings first took place in the house of a captain



Fig. 7.42: Zetland Hall on Zetland Street, Hong Kong, ca. 1865 (bombed in 1944). Reproduced from: Wikimedia Commons.



*Fig. 7.43: Masonic Hall (left) and Pustau & Co. (right) on the Bund in Shanghai, 1886.
Collection: Chinese Museum (Museum of Chinese Australian History), Melbourne.
Reproduced from: chia.chinesemuseum.com.au.*

Landers in December, a bungalow next to the Friends of China office.¹⁸³ The lodge acquired a building of its own on Nanking Road (formerly Park Lane) and met here from circa 1855 onwards, while in 1857, the house known as Maloo Gate was the lodge premises.¹⁸⁴ After that, the meetings were held in a building shared with the English and German Glee Club (later The Harmonia), in the library and other places, until it was decided to assemble funds for the building of a proper Freemason's Hall.¹⁸⁵ Consul W.D. Methurst expressed his worry, that the 'respectability of the institution in the eyes of the Chinese' depended on choosing the right name for the building, as locals often attached 'lucky' or negative names to a location, which could influence their attitude towards it:

In the case of the Lodge, the natives at present know it, I believe, by the name the Library has, but I have not the slightest doubt that ere long, the mysterious character of the ceremonials conducted within it, will reach their inquisitive eyes and ears, and their diseased imaginations will infallibly hit upon a solution of the mystery by no means complimentary to the Fraternity, and the Lodge will be named accordingly. You will at once see how detrimental this result may prove to the name of Freemasonry in this port, and even beyond it, more especially if you call to mind the fact that to a Chinese everything that is vile and horrible is associated with the very idea of a secret society. [...]

Mencius, who as you know, was a Chinese sage of ancient days, happened curiously enough in his teaching to on the subject of the compass and the square, and to demonstrate therefrom [sic] to his disciples, that, as those instruments were the origin of the circle and the square, so the good man was the perfect exhibition of the relations of human society. [...] I propose therefore the Chinese name of 'Kwei-hei-tang', meaning 'Compass and Square Hall' as the most fitting designation that can be adopted. This title will at once associate the building, and the fraternity who congregate within it, in the minds of the uneducated natives with all that is right and orderly [...] as uttered by the sage, and which fortuitously perhaps, but none the less distinctly, convey so Masonic an idea to the mind.¹⁸⁶

Methurst referred to his time in Batavia, where he 'repeatedly had the lodge building pointed out to [him] as "Roomah Saitan", that is "The dwelling of Beelzebub"', to underline his argument.

The lodge thought it wise to adapt the suggested name for its new The Masonic Hall on Canton Road, which was taken into use in 1861, as recollected *The Freemason's Monthly Magazine* (1866):

[...] it was determined to build that fine three storied building in the Canton Road, where, besides all meetings of Lodges, chapter and encampment, there are those also of the Asiatic Society, Debating Society, &c.

The plans for this building, called by the Chinese, according to the, inscription over the portal, Kwe-itche-tong - the Hall of the Compass and Square, - were made by Mr. C. W. Gribble, since deceased, the work being contracted for by a Chinese, at a total cost, including the ground purchase, of taels 11,500, 9,500 of which were advanced by certain of the brethren on loan, free of interest. This has all been repaid; so that, in its property alone, the North China Lodge is the richest in China [...].¹⁸⁷

The Northern Lodge of China was renumbered as no. 570 in 1863. The lodge took in members of several lodges in Shanghai and Hong Kong that had been erased through depletion of members. Masonic activities in the region were increasing. Royal Sussex Lodge also moved to Shanghai in 1863. One of its members was the widely known masonic historian Robert Freke Gould (1836–1915). In that same year the lodge Ancient Landmark was granted a constitution by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in the USA, while the Sphinx Lodge No. 263, a military lodge travelling under Irish constitution, arrived in Hong Kong.¹⁸⁸ Meridian Lodge no. 1045, a military travelling lodge formed by the 31st Regiment of Foot (as a daughter of a lodge of the same name in Poona, India) applied for use of the Freemasons Hall in Shanghai between 1862 and 1863.¹⁸⁹ In 1864 Victorian Lodge No. 1026 was founded in Hong Kong, as was Tuscan lodge No. 1027 in Shanghai. That same year Northern Lodge of China allowed the foundation of Scottish Cosmopolitan Lodge No. 428 to take place on its premises.¹⁹⁰ That is not counting the various Chapters and side degrees active in China at the time.¹⁹¹

As their membership expanded, the Northern Lodge of China, Royal Sussex lodge and Tuscan Lodge decided to join efforts to erect a new, three-storied lodge building in Italian style on The Bund at Canton Road in Shanghai, which was designed by architect and lodge member Clark, and finished after his leave by

lodge member W. Kidner (fig. 7.43). The foundation stone was laid in 1865, and the building was consecrated in 1867.¹⁹² Its design was described as follows:

The *Idea* was to have a Lodge, Reception, and Preparation Rooms on one Floor, but it having afterwards been proposed, that an Organ be obtained from England, it was determined, in open Lodge, *to have the Upper Floor as one Large Hall*, with a Small Room for Tyler, and a Preparation Room adjoining; as when the Organ is erected, a proper Dais, placed at the East End, and the walls properly coloured, the Room will be nicely proportioned - The Reading Room, was intended for a small Lodge Room, - and the Book room, as Reception & for Banqueting Room - the lower Floor or Godown has been Ceiled and Moulded, and a Wooden Floor laid, so by introducing glazed windows, the East end may be closed off and used as a Kitchen, by being fitted with an American Cooking Stove, &c. and the West end would form a fine Banqueting Room.¹⁹³

In 1868 the Grand Orient de France established the lodges Confucius in Hong Kong and Foederis Arca in Shanghai, as the founding of English lodges continued.¹⁹⁴ While all these lodges boasted a very international mix of members, Chinese names are lacking among them. Periods of civil upheaval and the difficulties of transporting archives overseas might explain why there is now so little documentation available on the initiation of local Chinese men into these lodges, but the first must have taken place around the middle of the 19th century, as was the pattern in the rest of Asia.

Freemasons have often remarked on similarities between their own fraternity and the many secret societies in China, such as the Heaven and Earth Society. Although the shared, pre-Christian origins perceived by some 19th-century authors were clearly based on wishful thinking, the fact that organisations with a fraternal, ritual and secret character were common in Chinese society may have facilitated the introduction of freemasonry into that same society. Jean DeBernardi has explored the relationship between the Chinese Triad societies and freemasonry from the perspective of social anthropology. She points to a statement by a 'missionary resident in the Straits' Settlements' (British Malaysia) circa 1859:

[...] [t]he English, instead of destroying these secret [Triad] societies, have tried to introduce amongst the Chinese freemasonry; and many respectable merchants among them generally frequent the lodge of the place where they are.¹⁹⁵

As discussed in chapter 5, the earliest surviving records of the initiation of Chinese men seem to originate from the Dutch East Indies, the first being the sugar merchant, The Boen Keh, initiated into lodge De Vriendschap in Surabaya in 1856.¹⁹⁶

In 1865 Yung King, a Chinese graduate of an American college, applied for membership of Cosmopolitan lodge, and was rejected.¹⁹⁷ The initiation of Shan Hing Yung, a lieutenant in the Chinese navy, into lodge Star of Southern China EC in Canton in 1889 and that of Lie Khong, a merchant, into Corinthian Lodge in Amoy in 1895, are still considered the earliest of such events recorded in China itself.¹⁹⁸

Table 7.1: Swedish and Dutch freemasons among East India Company employees in China (1757-1813)¹⁹⁹

Last names between [square brackets] indicate suspected, but unconfirmed lodge members; lodge names between [square brackets] indicate a suspected, but unconfirmed continuation of activities.

Year	SOIC	VOC	EIC	Other companies	Available lodges
1754	supercargo F. Habicht (ship Götha Leijon)				-
1755					-
1756					-
1757	captain Ch. Chapman (ship Enigheten)	supercargo J.H. Knibbe			-
1758	captain B. Grubb, supercargo M. Grubb (ship Prins Carl); supercargo H.H. Ditmer (Prinsessan Sophia Albertina)	supercargo J.B. Schartow			-
1759	captain C.G. Ekeberg, supercargo A. Gadd, J. Hahr (ship Prins Friedric Adolph); captain C.G. Lehman, supercargoes Ch. Bratt, F. Habicht, F. Walter (ship Stockolms Slott)	assistant A.E. van Braam Houckgeest			Prins Carls lodge, Canton
1760	supercargo G. Tham (ship Prins Carl), captain Ch. Chapman (Prinsessan Sophia Albertina); captain B. Grubb, supercargoes D. Sandberg, H.W. Hahr (ship Riksens Ständer)	supercargo J.B. Schartow, assistant I. Guitard			Prins Carls lodge, Canton Lodge Amoy, Amoy
1761	supercargoes F.W. König, J.A. Grill (ship Prins Friedric Adolph)	[supercargoes J. Stuart], L. Schermer]			[Prins Carl's lodge, Canton]
1762	supercargoes A. Gadd, J.Fr. Petterson, D. Campbell, C. Laurent, J.A. Grill (home journey) (ship Stockolms Slott); captain C.G. Ekeberg, supercargo H.H. Ditmer (ship Finland)	supercargoes J.B. Schartow, A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistants I. Guitard, [J.P.J. Texier]			[Prins Carl's lodge, Canton]
1763	supercargo G. Tham (ship Prins Carl); supercargoes F.W. König, J. Hahr, U.M. Valtinson (ship Riksens Ständer)	supercargo J.B. Schartow, [assistant J.P.J. Texier]			[Prins Carl's lodge, Canton]
1764	captain S. Ruuth (ship Finland)	supercargo J. Karsseboom, assistants [J.P.J. Texier], I. Guitard			[Prins Carl's lodge, Canton]
1765	captain J. Habicht, supercargo H.W. Hahr (ship Prins Carl); captain C.G. Lehman, supercargo H.H. Ditmer (ship Riksens Ständer)	supercargoes J. Karsseboom, J.B. Schartow, assistants I. Guitard, P. Rocquette			[Prins Carl's lodge, Canton]
1766	captain C.G. Ekeberg, supercargoes A. Gadd, J.A. Grill, J. Pike, U.M. Valtinson (ship Stockolms Slott); captain L. Olbers (ship Adolf Friedrich)	supercargoes [J. Stuart], J.B. Schartow, J. Karsseboom, A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistants J.J. Teschemacher, P. Rocquette, N. Wijnberg	supercargoes N. Garland, A. Savage, translator Th. Bevan, R. Gordon, J. Belly	supercargo Dumont (ship La Paix), cadet Michel (ship Le Vilvain), supercargo P.L.A. de Robien [de Treullan], M. Toyon (all French), H. Westergaard, captain L. Svane (both Danish), F.J. Fritz (German?)	Grill's lodge, Canton
1767	supercargoes D. Sandberg, F. Habicht (ship Adolph Friedric); supercargoes G. Tham, J.F. Pettersson (ship Lovisa Ulrica); supercargo J.A. Grill	supercargoes J.B. Schartow, A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, J. Karsseboom, assistants N. Wijnberg			Grill's lodge, Canton Lodge Amity, Canton
1768	captain C.G. Lehman (ship Cron Prins Gustaf); supercargo J.A. Grill	supercargoes J. Karsseboom, A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistants I. Guitard, F.H. van Eijmbeek			[Lodge Amity, Canton]

1769		supercargoes J. Karsseboom, A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistant I. Guitard			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1770	captain C.G. Ekeberg (ship Finland); supercargo H.H. af Ditmer (ship Cron Prins Gustaf)	supercargoes J. Karsseboom, A.E. van Braam Houckgeest			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1771	captain G. Ström, supercargoes H. W. Hahr, C.H. Forss (ship Adolph Friedric)	supercargoes J. Karsseboom, A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistant I. Guitard			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1772		supercargo A.E. van Braam Houckgeest			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1773		-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1774	captain G. Ström, supercargo H.H. af Ditmer (ship Cron Prins Gustaf); captain C.G. Ekeberg (ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena)	-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1775	supercargo C.H. Forss (ship Stockholms Slott); captain Ch. Chapman (ship Terra Nova)	-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1776		-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1777	captain Ch. Chapman, supercargo H.H. af Ditmer (ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena)	-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1778	captain Mauritz von Krusenstierna (ship Finland); captain G. Ström, supercargo H. König Petterson (ship Terra Nova); captain A. Savage	-			Lodge Amity, Canton
1779	supercargo H.W. Hahr (ship Lovisa Ulrica)	assistant A.A. Boers			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1780	captain Mauritz von Krusenstierna (ship Adolph Friedric); supercargoes H.H. af Ditmer, E. von Stockenström (ship Cron Prins Gustaf)	-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1781	supercargo J.A. Smedberg (ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena); captain J.A. Burts, supercargo H. König Petterson (ship Gustaf III)	-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1782	supercargo H.W. Hahr (ship Lovisa Ulrica); supercargo G.J. Conradi (ship Cron Prins Gustaf)	-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1783	supercargo F.U. Peyron (ship Adolph Friedric); captain Mauritz von Krusenstierna (ship Gustaf III)	-			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1784	supercargo H. König Petterson (ship Terra Nova); captain J.A. Burtz, superkargor: J.A. Smedberg (ship Gustaf Adolph)	assistant A.A. Boers			[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1785	captain H.H. Clason (ship Adolph Friedric); captain P. Tranchell, supercargoes G.J. Conradi (ship Cron Prins Gustaf)	assistant A.A. Boers			Masonic Society, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1786	captain J. Habicht, supercargo H.W. Hahr (ship Riksens Ständer); captain J. Gegerfelt (ship Gustaf III)	assistant A.A. Boers			Masonic Society, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1787	supercargo: J.A. Smedberg (ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena)	assistant A.A. Boers			Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]

1788	captain H.H. Clason (ship Cron Prins Gustaf); captain P. Tranchell, supercargo: G.J. Conradi, J.L. Törngren (ship Götheborg II); supercargo L. Gothéen (Terra Nova); lieutenants M. Graméen, J.G.A. Nordenheim, A.J. Lilljestråle, J.L. Kjerrman-Skold; assistants C.A. Malm, J. Fagraus; C. Broberg, P. Björkman, mate A. Andresson, 1st mate E. Nissen, 5th mate A.W. Silfverhjelm		supercargoes William Chalmers, [Th. Freeman], D. Marshall, 3rd assistant V. Beijer, J. Bruce	[assistant G. Beck (Danish)]	Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1789		assistant J. Bekker Teerlinck	supercargo William Chalmers		Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1790		director A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistant J. Bekker Teerlinck	supercargo William Chalmers		Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1791	supercargo O. Hanqvist, preacher G.L. Sivertson, barber-surgeon C.F. Gröndahl, assistants assistant F. Warming, F. Winberg, I. Toutin, G. Palm, mate P. Maurice (ship Gustaf III)	director A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistant J. Bekker Teerlinck	supercargo William Chalmers		Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1792	captain C.G. Treutiger, supercargoes P. Schenling, J.L. Törngren, assistant P. Roempke, lieutenant G. Gadd, preacher J. Brunnus, servant J. Holmgren (ship Götheborg II)	director A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistant J. Bekker Teerlinck	supercargoes William Chalmers, George Cumin		Lodge Elisabeth, Canton
1793	captain H.H. Clason, supercargoes J.A. Smedberg, J. Chalmers (ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena)	director A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistant J. Bekker Teerlinck	supercargo William Chalmers		Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1794		director A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, assistant J. Bekker Teerlinck			Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1795	captain E. Nissen, supercargoes P. Schenling, J. Dassau (ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena); captain J. Gegerfelt, supercargo: O. Hanqvist, C. Ericsson Malm (ship Gustaf Adolph); clerk J. Grill jr, mate J.G. Ulmann; Giffhorn, A. Fitings, S. Wennerstrom	director R.J. Dozy, diplomats A.E. van Braam Houckgeest, I. Titsingh	Supercargoes H. Brown, J.A.J.L.C. Drummond, H. Barin, T.C. Pattle, inspector C. Arthur, doctor J. Crichton, merxchant D. Reid, mate G. Lockart		Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1796	captain C.G. Treutiger (ship Gustaf III)	director R.J. Dozy	supercargoes S. Peach, G. Sparks, J.W. Roberts		Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1797	captain J.J. Kjerrmansiöld, supercargo P. Roempke (ship Gustaf III); captain F.A. Shierman, supercargo: O. Hanqvist (ship Gustaf Adolph)	director R.J. Dozy			Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1798	captain H. Hansson (ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena); captain E. Nissen, supercargo: P. Schenling, C. Ericsson Malm, A. Ljugstedt (ship Drottningen); captain I. Ritterberg, supercargo: J. Dassau (ship Maria Carolina)	director R.J. Dozy			Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1799	captain J.,J. Kjerrmansiöld (ship Gustaf III); captain G. Gadd (ship Östergöthland)	director R.J. Dozy			Lodge Elisabeth, Canton suspended [Lodge Amity, Canton]
1800	captain H. Hansson, supercargo A. Siberg (ship Drottning Sophia Magdalena)	director R.J. Dozy			Lodge Elisabeth, Canton [Lodge Amity, Canton]

1801	captains C.G. Treutiger (journey to Canton), J. Gegerfelt (home journey), supercargo P. Roempke (ship Drottningen); captain I. Ritterberg (journey to Canton) (ship Maria Carolina)	director R.J. Dozy	supercargo James Chalmers		[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1802	captain E. Nissen, supercargo H.J. Åhman (ship Gustaf III); captain G. Gadd (ship Prinsessan); A. Ljugstedt, Ullgren, J. Minten	director R.J. Dozy	supercargo James Chalmers		[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1803	captain F.A. Shierman, supercargo A. Siberg (ship Drottningen); captain H. Hansson (ship Wasa)		supercargo James Chalmers		[Lodge Amity, Canton]
1804	captain G. Gadd (ship Gustaf III)		supercargo James Chalmers		Lodge Amity suspended
1805					-
1806	J.P. Sundsten				-
1807					-
1808					-
1809					-
1810					-
1812					Lodge Elisabeth, Canton erased
1813					Lodge Amity, Canton erased

7.2. Masonic export porcelain

During the 18th and 19th centuries Chinese porcelain with decorations of family crests, monograms, seals and other emblems was made to order by European families, organizations and companies. From the middle of the 18th century onwards (coinciding with the foundation of European lodges in Asia) the production of such *Chine de Commande* started to include decoration schemes with masonic symbols. These export products are usually categorized as 'armorial porcelain'. While so much has been written on the subject, identification and dating of the surviving objects still proved difficult. On the one hand, standard works on export porcelain treat masonic objects as curiosities, the explanation of their decorations usually limited to 'various masonic symbols', 'the symbols of the fraternity' or an inaccurate attempt at interpretation.

The online catalogue of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London for instance, in 2015 provided the following description of an octagonal dish, decorated with the masonic theme of the Three Grand Masters (fig. 7.118 below):

The original design may have been taken from an engraving by William Tringham made in 1755.[...] In the scene three figures stand around a wooden box, or the Ark, symbol of the Lodge, looking at plans; close to them are the mason's tools: the gavel, square, compass, level and plumb-rule, which respectively stand for power, morality, God's justice, equality, and uprightness. The same design appears on other export porcelain, and may represent the constitution of a new lodge. In 1764, Lord Blayney founded in London a Masonic sect called 'The Moderns', and attempted to reconcile the differences with other groups. It has been suggested that the service to which this dish belongs may have recorded such an event.²⁰⁰

As will become clear from the detailed discussed of this theme below, not only is this item attributed to the wrong artist (Tringham instead of Cole), the interpretation of basic masonic symbolism is also incorrect (including mistaking a cubic stone for the Ark). The idea that a service with this design - relating to the building or founding of the Temple of Solomon - could have been commissioned for the founding of a (Grand) lodge is not too farfetched. However, describing the Moderns' Grand Lodge as a 'sect' does not reflect the professional objectivity expected from an educational online tool. This example illustrates how the results of academic research into freemasonry, which have developed to a high standard in the last quarter of the 20th century, are yet to be disseminated into the art historical field. That there is a need for more cooperation between relevant disciplines is further illustrated by the fact that masonic literature and exhibition catalogues tend to get both the dating and country of origin of export wares wrong.²⁰¹ Below, the dating of objects as provided in museum provenance records has for the first time systematically been reviewed on the basis of dated masonic sources, allowing for many corrections.

Dutch freemasons were involved in the porcelain trade. The men mentioned in studies of export porcelain, as for instance by Jörg and Kroes, have been identified in lodge records. As the Dutch traded in masonic lacquer and were present in the international lodge in Canton, we may expect them to also have been involved in the trade in masonic export porcelain. However, so far only orders for non-masonic porcelain services by freemasons have been documented, which means we would have to identify Dutch sources for the decorations on masonic export porcelain in order to confirm any Dutch involvement in this trade. While the production of masonic lacquer ware was mainly a Dutch enterprise, the production of masonic export porcelain involved several European countries as well as the United States. As a result, there is a much wider variety of decors to be considered as a possible Dutch link.

As there is no comprehensive guide to masonic porcelain decorations, the following paragraphs attempts to offer the first such overview, distinguishing the most popular decoration types and their possible pictorial sources.²⁰² No less than 16 different themes (not counting variations within each theme) have been identified and it's possible more will yet be discovered. From this overview it will become clear that there are many surviving pieces with elaborate iconographic schemes, which have none of the family or company crests associated with armorial porcelain, but instead offer a deep symbolic significance to their owner.

◆ *Masonic or not?*

The first question to be addressed is: which decorations on export porcelain are 'masonic' in character? Recognizing masonic symbols - be it in the decoration of objects, interiors or architecture - can be problematic, even for experienced scholars. As explained in chapter 2 freemasonry used a wide spectrum of symbols and narrative scenes, derived from a much older iconography that was widely used in western (predominantly Christian) society well before the development of modern freemasonry. Examples are:

- tools from the building trade (compasses, square, plumb line, etc.), also found in emblems and allegories related to art and architecture, as well as guild emblems;
- astrological symbols (sun, moon, stars, etc.), also found in both western and non-western art;
- personifications (Wisdom, Strength, Beauty, Silence, etc.), also common in Christian art;
- mourning and transience symbols (tears, skull, broken column, etc.), also found in *memento mori*;
- biblical symbolism and narratives (building, destruction and rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon; pelican with young, rose and cross, etc.), derived from the most well-known book at the time of freemasonry's development.

Not all objects presented as 'masonic' in literature or at auction, qualify for this distinction on closer inspection. When masonic symbols are present on Chinese export ware this can heighten their rarity and market value, making a positive identification more attractive than a negative one. But mistaken attributions more often spring from the citation culture amongst scholars and the unfamiliarity of art historians with the subject, than from financial motives.

When attempting to identify masonic porcelain, one has to consider how heavily freemasonry borrowed from earlier pictorial traditions, including the visual imagery used by all kinds of organizations related to building, architecture, arts and sciences. Therefore, only specific combinations of symbols can be identified as masonic:

- decorations referring to the masonic myths of the initiation ceremonies of various degrees, described and illustrated in ritual manuscripts and printed manuals;
- decorations derived from the symbolism depicted on masonic regalia, tracing boards and other ritual objects;
- decorations derived from particular pictorial examples, such as engraved lodge certificates, and the illustrations in publications by or for members of the Order.

If a pictorial source cannot be identified, circumstantial evidence is necessary to support the identification process, preferably lodge archives documenting the membership of the commissioner, trader or buyer of the object. When there are no such documents, prosopographical research can be used to verify that the person in question had at least an affiliation with the Order through family, friends or business relations, or had intimate knowledge of masonic symbols, concepts or literature circulating within his social group. In some cases, documentation is absent and a level of uncertainty will remain. (Again absence of proof is not necessarily proof of absence, however, because early masonic archives are simply incomplete.)

■ *Theme 1: Nautical themes*

▫ *Heraldic-shield-and-ship design (Dutch)*

A fine example of an ambiguous case is that of a tea service dated circa 1760, now in the collection of the Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania (fig. 7.44).²⁰³ It's decorated with a family crest, consisting of a shield in front of which a stork is standing on a ball, searching in the water before a field of reeds, under a blue sky with three octagonal stars. On top of the shield is a helmet and another stork with spread wings and an eel in its beak. The shield is resting on a dune top and several navigation tools are depicted at its feet: a quadrant (sextant), a compass, a pair of compasses and a set square. The background scene shows the sea with two ships, one flying a Dutch flag. According to Jochem Kroes' *Chinese Armorial Porcelain for the Dutch Market*, it may have belonged to the Dez Maretz family in Delft or the Woltgraft family in



Fig. 7.44 and detail: Tea service decorated with a Dutch family crest against a nautical scene, combined with small flower sprays. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1760. Collection: Photograph: The Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania. © Christie's Images Limited, 2015 (top) / Reproduced from: phoenixmasonry.org (bottom).

Kampen, after which it was passed to the Van der Leck Le Clerq collection in the province of Zeeland in the mid-19th century.²⁰⁴

The museum's provenance record describes this service as masonic. A pair of compasses crossed with a set square has been a typical masonic image since the 18th century, the 'logo' of freemasons if you will, but this particular combination of tools was not used exclusively within freemasonry. It is also part of the visual imagery of the architectural and nautical sciences. A compass on a quadrant can look very similar to a sextant, when painted in miniature by a Chinese hand unfamiliar with western tools. The question is in which context the depicted tools should be interpreted here, nautical or masonic? As no additional information is currently available on possible membership of the Dez Marez or Woltgraft families of the Dutch Grand Lodge (whose membership records of this early date are incomplete), it is not possible to draw definite conclusions either way, although the early dating also implies nautical rather than masonic meaning.

In the 18th century, this scene would have appealed to a buyer in the shipping trade, a shipyard owner or a seaman, while a freemason might take to it for a different reason, and that is still the case today. Some could argue that the allusive 'game' is being played here on purpose (see chapter 2). The use of 'hidden' symbolism to be 'discovered' by members only - a layering of different levels of symbolism in architecture, decorations and objects, which provide informed viewers with a so called *Aha Erlebnis* - is typical for the material culture of freemasonry.²⁰⁵ The question remains whether the original (western) artist of the design ever intended this double layered meaning, or whether it is a case of *Hineininterpretierung* by later buyers. In such cases where documentation is lacking, it is wise to err on the side of caution. Once a label has been assigned, it will quickly become part of a citation culture.

▫ *Monument-and-ship design*

The identification problem can be further illustrated by a decoration, which is available in versions with both heavy, light and zero masonic overtones.²⁰⁶ The first examples clearly have a masonic context. A plate dating circa 1790 in a Danish collection was decorated with a nautical scene in the centre (fig. 7.45). It consists of a (square) monument, bearing the monograms 'PNS' and 'ODLA' and the text *varigt venskab* (true friendship). It is placed in front of - or hacked from - a rock face, from which a tree or branch is sprouting. To the right of the monument is a broken column, carrying a group of tools (a pair of compasses, a set square and a plumb line) from which hangs a medallion with the letter 'I'. To the left of the monument is a view of a ship at sea, carrying a banner marked 'N E 1'. Above the scene is a flaming eight-pointed star carrying the letter 'Z'.

The monograms have been identified as belonging to Peder Norden Solling (1758-1827), a captain in service of the Danish East India Company, and Otto Diderick Lytken Agerbech (1747-1806), his second in command, both members of lodge Zorobabel til Nordstjernen in Copenhagen since 1781.²⁰⁷ The text on the plate indicates that it was probably commissioned to mark both the men's friendship and the bond of lodge brothers. From that masonic perspective one could speculate if the clean lines of the monument may have been contrasted with the rough surface of the rock on purpose, referring to the work of the Apprentice. The green branch could be a Chinese interpretation of an acacia sprig, while the monument itself could represent a grave monument: that of Hiram. The letter 'I' most likely refers to the column Jachin, while the flaming star with 'Z' can only be a reference to the lodge name.

The same gentlemen commissioned another plate with a variation of this design (fig. 7.46). In the second version the monument has a more elegantly curved shape, carries an urn and is dressed with a garland. The rock face has disappeared and instead a rock is depicted on the foot of the monument. The broken column is more prominent in the composition, while the tools are now arranged separately against the column and the tree is reduced to a decorative branch with leaves instead of pines. The text on the monument now reads *saa fast staeer venskabet* (so firmly steers friendship). The ship is more prominent and appropriately carries a Danish flag. Overall, the masonic symbolism is so reduced that this scene would be interpreted as 'just' nautical and/or a *memento mori*, if it weren't for the flaming star with the letter 'Z'.²⁰⁸

How subtle the difference between masonic and non-masonic variations of the monument-and-ship design can be, is illustrated by two punch bowls from the same decade. The first one shows the monument

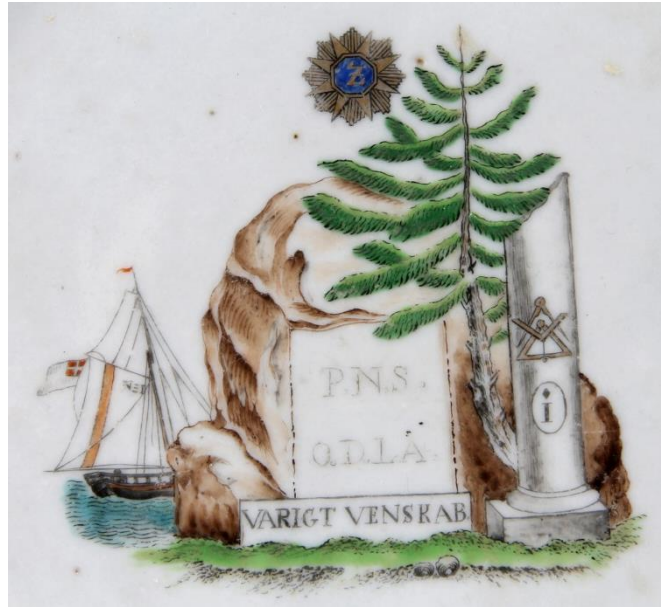


Fig. 7.45: Plate with a monument-and-ship type decoration, commissioned by Peder Norden Solling (1758-1827) and Otto Diderick Lytken Agerbech (1747-1806). Polychrome enamels, 1790s, diam. 24.5 cm. Appeared at auction at Lauritz.com, lot.no. 3271985. Reproduced from: Lauritz.com. (Also reproduced in Grandjean 1965, fig. 96.)



Fig. 7.46: Detail of a plate with a monument-and-ship type decoration, also commissioned by Solling and Agerbech. Polychrome enamels, 1790s. Reproduced from: Grandjean 1965, fig. 96a.

Fig. 7.47: Punch bowl with a monument-and-ship type decoration. Iron red enamel, 1780-1800, diam. 39 cm. Collection: C.L. Davids, Copenhagen. Reproduced from: Grandjean 1965, fig. 119.

carrying the monogram 'EE' and the text *fliid vinder anseele* (diligence is gaining) (fig. 7.47). Cornucopias are depicted at the foot of the monument, tools are arranged along the column. The scene is flanked by seascapes with ships. The inside rim of the bowl is decorated with a series of monogrammed medallions, hanging from garlands: 'MW', 'CB', 'MS', 'CS', 'PP' and 'PR'. On the bottom of the bowl a verse is written:

*Derfor viin og kierlighed
lad kun ordet blive
Det kan lindre vor fortred
Og al sorg bort drive
Brodre kom skienk I duldt maal
Gasset foer til munden*

Let love and wine
therefore be the only word
It can relieve our misery
and dispel all grief
Brethren come, pour your glass full
and lift it to your mouth



Fig. 7.48 and detail: Punch Bowl with a monument-and-ship type decoration and small flower sprays. Iron red and blue enamels with gilding, ca. 1795, diam. 33 cm (rim)/17.8 cm (foot), height 14 cm. Photo's: Jan-Erik Nilsson, Göteborg, Sweden. Reproduced from: gotheborg.com/exhibition/exhibit_64-147_armorial.shtml (collection listed as 'AW').

*Kierlighed og viinens skaal
Drick den ud til bunden*

Love and wine glass
drink them down to the bottom

The text includes some spelling mistakes made by the Chinese artist. The bowl was attributed to Erich Erichsen (1752-1837), director of the Danish East India Company and a member of lodge Zorobabel since 1778.²⁰⁹ Considering the presence of compasses and square on the column and the word 'brothers' in the verse, the other monograms may well refer to the members of his lodge.

On the second bowl however, the masonic tools on the column have been omitted (fig. 7.48). The cornucopias have been replaced by some pottery, the monogram now reads 'PBC' while the ship in the background carries a Swedish flag.²¹⁰ Nothing suggests a masonic context here.

The design was also used in orders from other countries. Three examples show non-masonic variations. Fig. 7.49 shows the monument, carrying the monogram ('SG'), faced with a floral spray and surmounted by a bird (seagull or stork) holding a sprig or eel in its beak.²¹¹ Here the ship is flying an American flag and the monument is surrounded by greenery. The column is missing and some tools are displayed at the foot of the monument, which can be interpreted as either nautical or masonic, comparable to the crest-and-ship design discussed above. Above the scene is now a banner reading 'AMERICA'. Fig. 7.50 shows a second version of this design on a cup in the collection of Reeves Centre in Washington. Here, the ship flies the British Union Jack (authorized in 1801) and above the central design is a banner with the words 'IN CREDO' (= 'In Faith'). A third variation is seen on a teapot, carrying the initials 'CB' on the monument (fig. 7.52), and on a mug, carrying the initials 'IH' or 'JFC', where the scene also includes a Union Jack, but shows a dove perched on an urn (fig. 7.51).²¹²

A Dutch variation was made to commemorate the marriage of the assistant Johannes Arend de Melander in 1790, who travelled to Canton in 1789-1792 (fig. 7.53).²¹³ In this version, the year is depicted below the monument, while the initials of the married couple and the name 'SCHIP ALBLASSERDAM' is painted on the monument itself, suggesting this ship is depicted in the background.²¹⁴ Fittingly, two loving doves are depicted on a perch above the urn. A sugar bowl in another Dutch collection is decorated in the same manner with initials and the name of the ship 'VASCO DI GAMA' (fig. 7.54). Both these examples also lack any masonic references.

These many variations on the same theme illustrate how, once a design was copied, the Chinese artists could re-use and alter the design to suit the next client's wishes. It is not clear of the masonic or the non-masonic version was used first. Did the commissioners of the American, British and Dutch versions ask for symbols to be omitted, or did the Danes ask for masonic symbols to be added to an existing design?

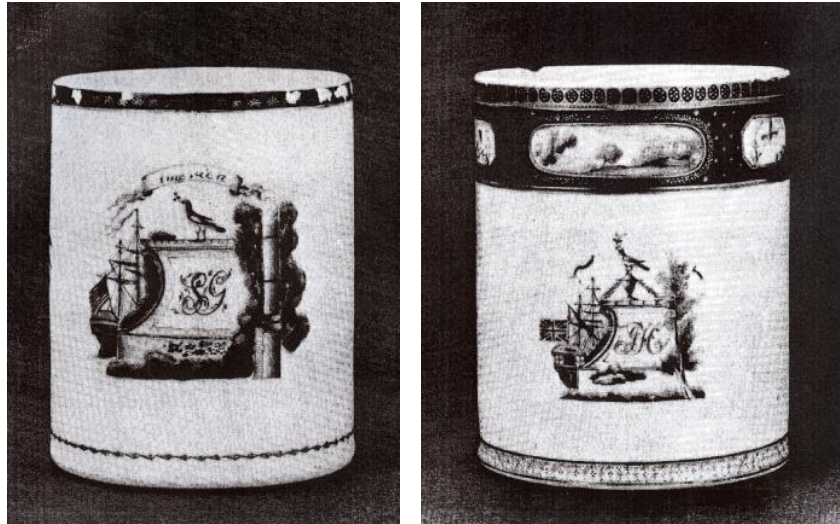


Fig. 7.49: Mug with a monument-and-ship type decoration and the monogram 'SG'. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1795, height 10.2 cm. Reproduced from: Howard/Ayers 1978, no. 467. (Also reproduced in Cat. exhib. Seattle 1976, p. 63.)

Fig. 7.50: Mug with a monument-and-ship type decoration with the monogram 'IH' or 'JFC', and a blue, star studded band with six oval medallions with landscapes and birds. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1805, height 14 cm. Reproduced from: Howard/Ayers 1978, no 468.



Fig. 7.51: Cup with a monument-and-ship type decoration. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1805, height 6.7 cm. Collection: Reeves Center Collection, Washington and Lee University. Reproduced from: Litzenburg/Bailey 2003, p. 251.



Fig. 7.52 and detail: Teapot with a monument-and-ship type decoration and the monogram 'CB'. Grisaille painted with gilding, ca. 1800, 15.24 cm. Collection: Polly Latham Asian Art, Boston. Reproduced from: pollylatham.com.



Fig. 7.53: Tea caddy with a monument-and-ship type decoration, commemorating the marriage of J.A. de Melander. Polychrome enamels with gilding, 1790, height 15 cm, base 4 x 9 cm. Private collection. Reproduced from: Jörg 1982, p. 146.

Fig. 7.54: sugar bowl with a variation of the monument-and-ship motif. Polychrome enamels with gilding, 1790, height 6.3 cm, diam. 12 cm. Collection: Groninger Museum. Reproduced from: Jörg 1982, p. 146.



Fig. 7.55: Token for admission to Freemasons' Hall in London, silver coloured metal, 1755-1770, diam. 3.3 cm. Collection: Museum and Library of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2013/185. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

Fig. 7.56: Plate jewel for Lodge No. 71, presented to W. Bro. J. White. Cut and engraved metal, ca. 1760, 4.8 x 4 cm. Collection: Museum and Library of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/1643. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.57a-b: Tankard and punch bowl decorated with masonic tools and a pentagram. Red and black enamels with gilding, dated 1755, tankard height 15.8 cm; bowl height 12.2 cm, diam. 28.3 cm. Collection: British Museum, London, inv.no. BM Franks 741-741a (donation by Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks). Reproduced from: britishmuseum.co.uk (left) / Connor e.a. 1986, p. 96, no. 125 (right).



Fig. 7.58a-c: Punch bowl with two heraldic motifs, separated by masonic tools; a flower sprig on the bottom of the bowl and a blue and gold star border around the exterior rim, ca. 1800. Polychrome enamels, height 16.5 cm, diam. 43.8, 5-11-2011. Displayed at Skinner Auctioneers & Appraisers, Massachusetts. Reproduced from: liveauctioneers.com.

◆ Characteristics and variations in decoration

■ Theme 2: Masonic tools

Early examples of masonic porcelain have a restrained decoration consisting of a group of building tools, comparable to those depicted on lodge jewels or tokens (see for example figs. 7.55-7.56). Such is the case with a mug and a punch bowl in the collection of the British Museum, inscribed with the year 1755, making them the oldest dated pieces of masonic export porcelain. Both objects are decorated with a central decoration of a five-pointed star (pentagram), intertwined with a set square, plumb-line and level (fig. 7.57a-b). The initials 'E' and 'M' appear on either side of the central decorations, which are separated by flower sprays on the bowl and by a pair of compasses on the mug. The base of the bowl is decorated with a pair of compasses.²¹⁵ Together, these tools represent the distinguishing badges of the senior officers within a lodge (see chapter 2, table IV).

In other cases, masonic tools were combined with a family crest to demonstrate an affiliation to the Order (see figs. 7.20 and 7.131-7.133). An example is a punch bowl, decorated on two sides of the exterior with a coat of arms, consisting of a shield below the banner 'God with us'. The shield is divided in four fields, showing two lion faces and two covered urns or cups with rings, the whole topped by a gold ring with a gemstone. Masonic tools, representing officers' jewels, are painted on the remaining sides of the bowl: a level, a set square and a ruler hanging together from a bow, and a pair of compasses on a quarter circle embracing a radiant sun, also hanging from a bow (fig. 7.58a-c).



Fig. 7.59 and detail: Punch bowl with a miniature tracing board type decoration in oval medallions, separated by flower sprays, and flower garlands along the interior rim, ca. 1770. Polychrome enamels, height 10 cm, diam. 23 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London (loan by Quatuor Coronati Lodge nr. 2076), inv.no. QC 37. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

Fig. 7.60: Masonic seal, 18th century, metal, 7 cm. Collection: Musée de la Maison des Maçons, Paris, inv.no. S2-987. Reproduced from: glmf-musee.fr.

■ Theme 3: Tracing boards

As mentioned before, after the middle of the 18th century specific combinations of symbols, best described as miniature or simplified versions of tracing boards (= the most important symbols of a particular degree, see chapter 2). These designs appeared as illustrations in ritual manuals and formed the basis for decorations on aprons, seals and membership jewels, all of which travelling freemasons could have carried to distant ports. In some cases Chinese artists copied directly from the published prints, made available to them for this purpose. In other cases a freemason would submit a design of his own hand to an artist, but such designs were always inspired by the familiar symbolism of their regalia, lodge certificates and engravings of tracing boards.

▫ Tools in oval medallion

A fine example is a punch bowl from the collection of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge of Research (fig. 7.59). It is decorated on two sides with an oval medallion, topped with a bow and ribbons, separated by flower sprays. Inside the medallion are masonic tools: a pair of compasses and set square, a level, a pickaxe and a maul. The presence of sun and a crescent moon indicate that this symbolism is derived from a tracing board. The medallion itself is formed by a decorative double border. The inner border has foliage at the top, possibly a (decorative) representation of an acacia sprig. The design seems to have been derived from a seal in the collection of the Musée de la Maison des Maçons (fig. 7.60). The design on the bowl is a mirror image, indicating a seal print may have been used as an example. On the bowl the shape of level is somewhat distorted, almost resembling a bell, while the ruler is missing.



Fig. 7.61: Punch bowl decorated with a design by Rowling Kent, presented by Thomas Reason to Mourning Bush Lodge. Famille rose enamels, ca. 1776, height 13 cm, diam. 30.5 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/362 (donation by Mrs. Berridge, 1949). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

▫ Rowling Kent design (1776)

From 1773 onwards Thomas Reason was a member of Mourning Bush Lodge No. 13 in London, later named Lodge of Emulation, now No. 21. The minutes of this lodge recorded the following events:

1776, Nov. 11th:

Bro[ther] Reason made the Lodge a present of a set of Bowls which he had made in China for the use of the Lodge; his health with thanks was accordingly drank on the occasion.

1777, Feb. 24th:

A motion was made and seconded that Bro[ther] Reason's health be drank annually for the very genteel present he made the Lodge, and also that he be made admitted an Honorary Member.²¹⁶

The bowls' decoration was designed by another lodge member, the surgeon Rowling Kent. When a hundred years later it was decided to sell some of the lodge possessions amongst the members, both bowls were sold to Robert Berridge, and eventually donated to the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London. One is illustrated here (fig. 7.61).²¹⁷

The body of the bowls is decorated with a heart shaped miniature tracing board, depicting a sun and moon, a set square, crossed keys (= Treasurer's jewel), crossed quills (= Secretary's jewel), a sun enclosing the letter 'G', a level and a plumb rule. Below is a banner bearing the text 'R KENT DELINEAT / MOURNING BUSH LODGE / DATUM T REASON'. The whole is surrounded by flowers, while flower garlands are hanging from the exterior rim. Flower sprays decorate the base of the bowl and a flower band is painted along the interior rim.

These designs must have been re-used by the Chinese manufacturer for other customers, as a bowl with a similar decor is now kept in the collection of the Musée de la Maison des Maçons (fig. 7.62) and a tankard with this motif appeared at auction (figs. 7.63).²¹⁸ In those examples the sun and moon were emphasized with clouds and rays, now carrying a face, while a blue cloud with seven stars was added above the heart shape. In freemasonry, these stars represent the Pleiades (even if not all seven are present) and allude to the numerological symbolism of the number 7, which is specifically mentioned in the masonic ritual. A different floral pattern was chosen for this variation, now combined with a chain motif which, although not exclusive to freemasonry, would especially appeal to lodge members as a reference to the *chaîne d'union* (see chapter 2). Considering the dated Rowling Kent design, these examples must have been made around 1780-1785.



Fig. 7.62: Punch bowl with a heart shaped miniature tracing board type decoration. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1780-1785, size not listed. Collection: Musée de la Maison des Maçons, Paris, inv.no. F2-788. Reproduced from: glmf-musee.fr.



Fig. 7.63: Tankard with a heart-shaped miniature tracing board type decoration, separated by flower sprays, and a chain with flower garlands around the exterior rim. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1780-1785, 15 cm. Displayed at Christie's Paris, sale 5098, 8-7-2004, lot 1536/Christie's London, sale 6510, 10-6-1994 lot 272. © Christie's Images Limited, 2015.

▫ *Riegelsen/Fuglede design (1775-1779)*

Among the members of The Drejers Klub, a Danish Literature Society founded in 1775 in Copenhagen. were many freemasons. Two of them - H. Riegelsen, a ship's captain, and Philip Christian Fuglede (1748-1816), commander of the Danish East India Company - ordered several export porcelain punch bowls for the club. Fuglede had designs brought to China for this purpose.²¹⁹ Possibly Riegelsen and/or Fuglede were also members of the lodge Zorobabel til Njordsternen in Copenhagen, as the inventory of this lodge for the year 1779 listed 120 plates with the same masonic decorations as the Drejers Klub bowls.²²⁰ Two smaller punch bowls with the same design are now in the collection of the Frederiksborg Historical Museum (fig. 7.64 and 7.65).

The main decoration on the exterior of the bowls consists of a crowned shield resting on a pedestal or altar, surrounded by clouds. Around the shield is a draped flag or banner. Above it is a radiant group of four stars, two six-pointed and two seven-pointed. Perhaps these refer to a star sign or a home beacon in the Northern sky? Depicted within the crest are various symbols topped by a small ring, suggesting they

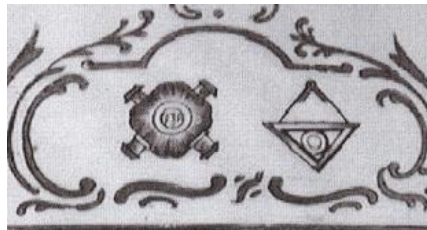


Fig. 7.64: Punch bowl with a miniature tracing board type design commissioned for the Drejers Klub in Denmark. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1780. Collection: Storlogen af Denmark, Copenhagen. Reproduced after: Grandjean 1965, fig. 117.
 Fig. 7.65 and details 7.65a-h: Punch bowl of a service with a miniature tracing board type design, commissioned for the Drejers Klub in Denmark. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1780, height 16.5 cm, diam. 39.8 cm. Collection: Det Nationalhistoriske Museum, Frederiksborg Slot. Reproductions kindly provided by Erik Westengaard.

represent officer's jewels. These include: a pair of compasses with a rule and set square (Worshipful Master); a cross and an anchor (the Wardens?); an axe crossed with a sword and a radiant sun on top (the combined jewel for the Worshipful Masters of an Andreas Lodge and Chapter in the Swedish Rite); a key through a heart (the combined jewel of the Treasurer and the Almoner), and a purse (the jewel of the Almoner). If the heart-shape of the purse is intentional, together with the cross and anchor this represents the trias Faith, Hope and Love. In front of the pedestal is (Hiram's) coffin, probably indicating that the pedestal is in fact a grave-monument, with a skull and cross-bones (a reference to rebirth), and a sword. Lying against the crest on the right is an officer's jewel in the shape of a triangle with a radiant sun (possibly belonging to the Orator).

Around the exterior top rim of the bowls is a border of cartouches with various symbols, some of which appear distorted. They mostly refer to higher degrees and side workings as practiced in Britain and Scandinavia, including (see details in fig 7.65a-h, from left to right):



Fig. 7.66: Plate of a service with a miniature tracing board type design, commissioned for the Drejers Klub in Denmark. Polychrome enamel with gilding, ca. 1780, diam. 23,1 cm. Collection: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv.no. AK-NM-13521 (J.G.A.N. de Vries bequest, The Hague, 1925). Reproduced from: Rijksmuseum.nl.

- a sword and a sceptre (attributes of king Cyrus in early Royal Arch or Scots Master's degrees);
- two winged cherubs in what seems a basket, but is meant to represent angels carrying the Ark of the Covenant (a symbol of the Cryptic degrees);
- a trowel, the Ten Commandments (a symbol of the Cryptic degrees of the York Rite), a set square and Jacob's ladder (a symbol of the Adoption Rite, transferred to British Craft degrees);
- a plumb, circle within a square (referring to the chest in the next set of symbols) and a level. These symbols are depicted upside down on the bowls;
- broken columns and a chest with the tetragrammaton, its glorious rays overshadowing the usual underlying symbol (circles and squares) which is therefore represented in the previous set of symbols²²¹; and a downward triangle hanging on strings from a ring (a jewel of the Cryptic degrees of the York Rite. These symbols are also depicted upside down on the bowls);
- a building crane (a symbol of the Scots Master's degree in the Swedish Rite, where the ritual refers to



Detail of fig. 7.66.

- a gallows or crane, used to lift Hiram's mummy from the vault), a pentagram (a symbol of the Knights of Malta degree, representing the star-shaped table with the tools of the Knights lying upon it) and a rectangular shape on a ring (possibly a distorted representation of Hiram's mummy). Again these symbols are depicted upside down;
- Noah's Ark (a symbol in both the Adoption Rite and the degree of Royal Ark Mariner);
- a Maltese cross carrying an open book on two crossed swords (a symbol of the Order of the Red Cross of Constantine, while the open bible can also refer to the officer's jewel of the Chaplain).

The interior rim of the bowl is decorated with a band of flowers.

A similar bowl is in the collection of the Danish Grand Lodge (fig. 7.64), and there are plates with a similar design in the collections of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (fig. 7.66) and the Grand Orient de France.²²² On these plates, the cartouche containing the tablets with the Commandments has been omitted in order to allow the border decoration to be divided in three groups of three cartouches. But a symbol has also been added in the sequence with the broken columns: three trowels within a triangle, representing the officer's jewel for the Keeper of the Seal.

The complex combination of symbols points to the Royal Order of Scotland, a side degree of which the first lodge outside Great Britain was founded in Sweden.²²³ It is not clear if the colours of the prominent banner around the crest (red, yellow, blue) are a specific reference. They are not typical for the Danish flag



Fig. 7.67: Jug with a twisted strap handle and lid, the body decorated with a tracing board after Jachin and Boaz [...] (ed. 1776). Iron red and blue enamels with gilding, 1785-1795, size not listed. Collection and photograph: Dietrich American Foundation, on loan to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, inv. no. 389-1997-22a-b.

Fig. 7.68: Plate jewel with a design after Jachin and Boaz [...] (ed. 1776), with an inscription on the reverse: 'JOHN READ MM'. Engraved silver coloured metal, 7 x 4.8 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/1668. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

(red and white) and have in the past caused these objects to be attributed to several other European countries. Perhaps these are the heraldic colours of the families involved, the lodge colours or simply artistic license

▫ *Frontispiece of Jachin and Boaz (1776)*

As discussed in chapter several editions of *Jachin and Boaz* [...] included an illustration of a tracing board. The frontispiece of the 1776 edition inspired various British plate jewels (see for instance fig. 7.68), and was also copied on a pair of jugs in the collection of the Dietrich American Foundation (Philadelphia) (fig. 7.67). These jugs have twisted strap handles and a lid with a crouching lion finial.²²⁴ The tracing board is depicted on the sides of the body in an oval medallion with a bow, executed in iron red and blue, with highlights in gold. The rim of the jugs is richly decorated with various patterned bands and flower garlands. These objects probably date before 1797, when a new edition of *Jachin and Boaz* included a different frontispiece.

▫ *Oval tracing board*

A punch bowl in the collection of the Reeves Centre of the Washington and Lee University shows a tracing board in an oval medallion (fig. 7.69). Depicted are the two columns, topped by a sun and a moon, standing on an elevation of five steps. In the space between them is an altar (or stylized bible) with a pair of compasses and a set square, above it the symbol for Euclid's 47th proposition (a mathematical sign, which shows that in order to get a square angle it is necessary to draw a triangle with the sides proportioned as 3-4-5). It is given a prominent place in this composition, indicating the commissioner or owner may have been an Installed Master, as the symbol is associated with this function in British freemasonry. Above it is a five-pointed star or pentagram, and a radiant letter 'G'. Surrounding the bible are various tools (their shapes somewhat distorted by the painter, who was clearly unfamiliar with them), Jacob's ladder. Beneath the elevation is a coffin with what no doubt is meant to be a skull, curiously executed like a grimacing mask.



Fig. 7.69: Bowl decorated with a miniature tracing board in an oval medallion. Iron red and blue enamels with gilding, ca. 1795, diam. 28.9 cm. Collection: Reeves Center, Washington and Lee University. Reproduced from: Litzenburg/Bailey 2003, p. 206.



Fig. 7.70: Jug decorated with a miniature tracing board in an oval medallion (worn), with strap handles and a lid topped with a crouching lion finial, ca. 1795, size not listed. Displayed at William J. Jenack Auctioneers, sale 30-4-2006, Lot 94. Reproduced from: liveauctioneers.com/item/1946425.

Fig. 7.71: Teacup decorated with a miniature tracing board in an oval medallion. Iron red and blue enamels with gilding, ca. 1795, diam. 6.5 cm. Collection: Winterthur Museum, Wilmington, inv.no. 1956.0038.045. Reproduced from: museumcollection.winterthur.org.



Fig. 7.72: Punch bowl with a reduced style tracing board decoration and garlands on the exterior, a gilt monogram 'WR' with a pair of compasses and dividers within a sunburst in the base. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1795, diam. 33.7 cm. Braunfeld collection, displayed at Sotheby's New York, sale 7961, 17-1-2004, lot 1021. Reproduced from: sothebys.com.



Fig. 7.73: Plate with a decoration of an oval panel with the monogram 'TP' between columns, with masonic tools in the foreground and flower sprays along the rim. Polychrome enamels and gilt, 1790-1795, height 3.2 cm, diam. 14.6 cm. Collection: The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1209 Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.co.uk.

A teacup with this décor is found in the collection of the Winterthur Museum (fig. 7.71).²²⁵ The execution is somewhat different, the skull here resembling a smiling face. Other parts of this service type include a jug (fig. 7.70) and mug with twisted strap handles (consisting of two ribbed straps with flower terminals), as well as a teapot, tea caddy, tea bowl and saucer, bowl and a plate.²²⁶ In some cases, the five-pointed star has been replaced by a six-pointed star or Seal of Solomon.

▫ *Embraced by acacia*

As freemasonry gained popularity in the 18th century, its visual symbolism had become a familiar part of the iconography of the time. More and more objects for personal use were decorated with masonic symbols, including dinner services, snuff boxes and smoking paraphernalia. In some designs - either for aesthetic purposes or for practical reasons like a simple lack of space - the tracing board would be reduced to a bare minimum. For the initiated the space between the columns J and B was already enough to evoke the association with the lodge room or the Temple.

Fig. 7.72 is an example of a reduced style tracing board in the décor of a late punch bowl. On one side of the bowl, a decoration of two columns, an altar and candles on a chequered floor represents the lodge. The bible with set square and compasses can be seen on the altar, but the usual tools and other accompanying symbols were omitted. The scene is topped with a radiant sun and embraced by two green branches, probably intended as acacia sprigs. The reverse and sides of the bowl are decorated with flower sprays. In the interior of the bowl is a gilt monogram 'WR' with a pair of compasses and dividers within a sunburst. The theme of the Temple or the columns embraced by two acacia sprigs also features on aprons of the time (compare for instance chapter 2, figs. 2.32-2.33).

▫ *Columns and monogram*

In the decorative compositions for (European) aprons the space between the columns would also be used to show a pair of compasses and a set square, a coffin or simply the letters 'MB' (referring to the secret Master word). On export porcelain this provided a convenient space for the depiction of a commissioner's monogram. Fig. 7.73 for example, shows a plate with the monogram 'TP' between Corinthian columns, topped with globes. In the foreground are masonic tools (including a set square, level and hammer). Above the column is a gilt sun with facial features.

■ *Theme 4: Advertisements with masonic symbols*

▫ *The Queen's Head*

Princess Sophia Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz (1744-1818) came to England in 1761 to meet her husband, King George III, to be for the first time. She travelled by boat and coach, possibly passing through Gravesend, and arrived at St. James's Palace by coach. Forty years later, the proprietor of a local inn in Gravesend clearly wanted to advertise a connection between his establishment and the new Queen. He had the mug made, decorated with the portrait of Charlotte, reproduced from an engraving published in 1762 after a painting by Thomas Frye (1710-1762) (fig. 7.74). The portrait was placed in a medallion with a cartouche containing the text:

John Jounson
Queens H[ea]d Gravesend
NB: Clean & well m[a]d[e] Beds Neat
Post Chaises. A Coach to Chatham and a
Boatt to London every
Tide

Around the cartouche various masonic symbols convey to the viewer that Jounson (perhaps a misspelling of Johnson?) is affiliated to the Order and therefore must be dependable (fig. 7.75). Clockwise from the right hand top corner, one can discern the capital of a (broken) column, a level and a set square, followed by a pair of compasses crossed with a set square, and a beehive surrounded by bees. Next are what appear to



Fig. 7.74: Portrait of Sophia Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz by Thomas Frye, mezzotint, published 24-5-1762, 50.2 x 53.5 cm. © National Portrait Gallery, London, inv.no NPG D11287 (gift by Mary Elizabeth Stopford, 1931). Reproduced from: npg.co.uk.



Fig. 7.75: Detail of a mug advertising the Queen's Head in Gravesend, ca. 1790. Private collection. Reproduced from: Hervouët/Bruneau 1986, p. 288.

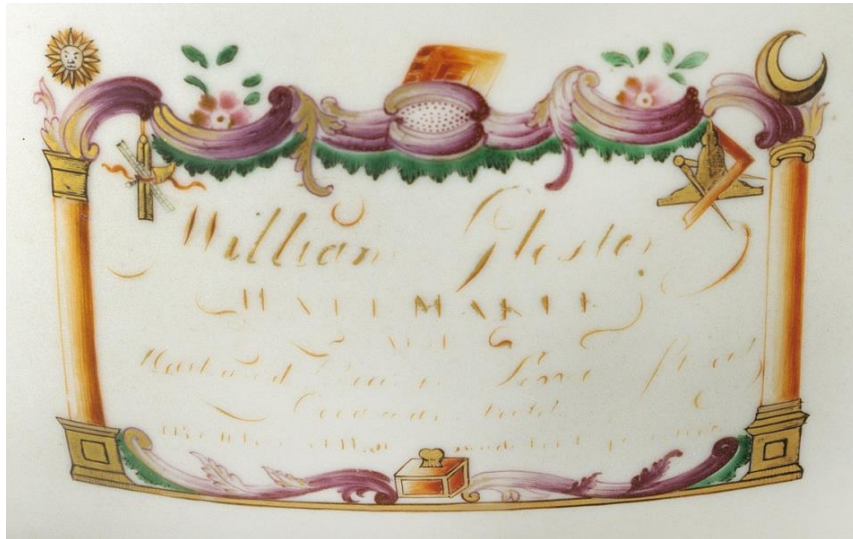


Fig. 7.76: Punch bowl with an advertisement for hat maker William Gloster, depicting masonic tools. Polychrome enamels with gilding, 1785-1790, height 11.4 cm, diam. 25.8 cm. Collection: Winterthur Museum, Wilmington, inv.no. 2000.0061.074 (gift of L.A. and D.C. Hodroff). Reproduced from: museumcollection.winterthur.org.



Fig. 7.77: Hat & Beaver trade card, ca. 1791. Reproduced from: Howard 2013, p. 109.

be an Andreas-Cross and a trowel, and lastly a candlestick with another capital of a (broken) column. The whole is topped by the image of a coach, flanked by a sun and a moon with stars.

▫ *Hat maker William Gloster*

Another example that showing one's affiliation to the Order could be beneficial for business is fig 7.76. This is clear from a punch bowl that probably served as a shop display at the end of the 18th century, now in the collection of the Winterthur Museum.²²⁷ The bowl is decorated on opposite sides with a cartouche, entwined with flower garlands and foliage. The top half depicts a beaver in a landscape, topped by a hat, clearly copied from a trade card from hatter William Gloster (fig. 7.77). The bottom half shows an inscription, reading:

William Gloster
 HATMAKER
 at the Hall and Beaver
 37 Leman Street
 Goodman's Field's
 London
 Makes fine Beaver and other Hatts Wholesale & Retail.
 NB Hatts turned Dyed Lined & blocked in the Newest Manner

Below this are two white rabbits and a recumbent camel. Gloster was a member of Lodge of Unity No. 183 in London.²²⁸ A subtle sign that he wanted to attract freemasons as clientele are the pair of compasses crossed with a set square, dangling from the middle of the cartouche underneath the beaver. On the other sides of the bowl are cartouches, formed by pillars, topped with a sun and a moon. A building block or cubic stone with a hat on top is depicted in the foreground. From the scrollwork and foliage between the pillars ribbons are hanging, bearing masonic tools. This is a less subtle reference to the hat maker's membership of the Order. Within the cartouche an inscription which repeats his address. On the interior of the bowl is a medallion with the monogram 'WG' on a ribbon, surrounded by a band of flowers, garlands hanging from the interior rim. The bowl probably dates from the late 1780s.

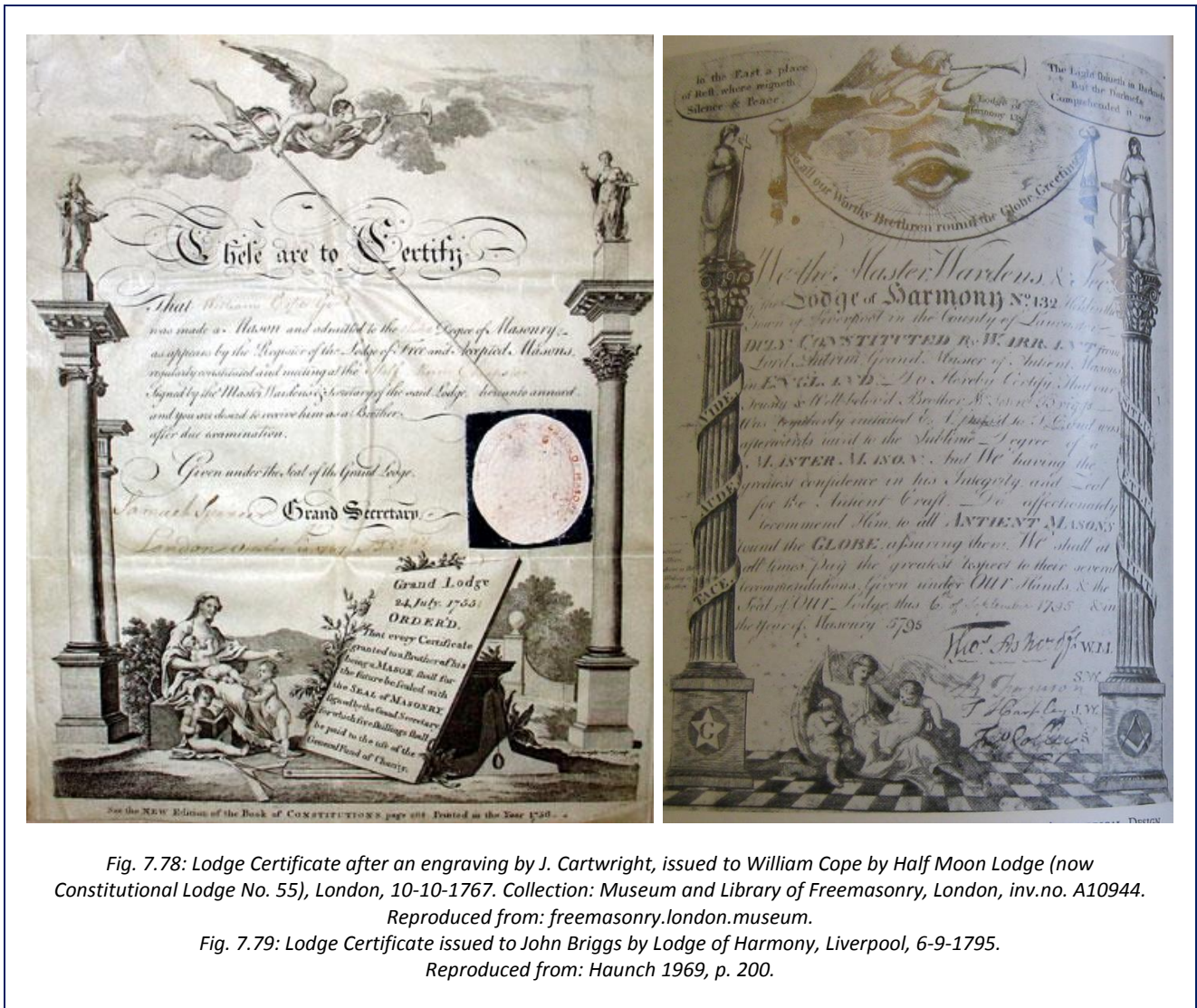


Fig. 7.78: Lodge Certificate after an engraving by J. Cartwright, issued to William Cope by Half Moon Lodge (now Constitutional Lodge No. 55), London, 10-10-1767. Collection: Museum and Library of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. A10944. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

Fig. 7.79: Lodge Certificate issued to John Briggs by Lodge of Harmony, Liverpool, 6-9-1795. Reproduced from: Haunch 1969, p. 200.

■ Theme 5: Masonic virtues

The first masonic certificate issued by the Premier Grand Lodge of England was printed in 1756 with a design incorporating female personifications of the Christian virtues Faith, Hope and Charity (fig. 6.78).²²⁹ Faith (woman with book) and Hope (woman with anchor) were depicted on top of the columns J and B, with Charity (bare breasted woman with children) seated on the floor between them. In the 18th and 19th centuries, both British and American lodge certificates (for instance fig. 7.79), as well as aprons, were often decorated in a similar style. Personifications of the masonic trias Wisdom, Strength and Beauty were also common.

▫ Faith and Hope

A first example of this theme on export porcelain is a covered pitcher in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 7.80). An arched frame enclosed a composition of two columns on a set of three steps, between which is the usual symbols and tools are grouped, including a bible with the inscription 'St John'. The columns are topped with the figures of Faith and Hope, while Charity appears to be missing here. But Jacob's ladder has been reduced to three steps. In masonic iconography, the ladder represents the virtues which need to be practiced to attain heaven, the minimum of which are the three theological virtues Faith, Hope and Love (Charity). So in that sense the trias is still complete.²³⁰ In front of the steps is a coffin with skull and cross-bones, and an acacia sprig, referring to Hiram's grave and inscribed 'Memento Mori'.²³¹



Fig. 7.80: Covered pitcher with a twisted strap handle and crouching lion finial, decorated with a tracing board including Faith and Hope. Polychrome enamels, ca. 1795, height 29.1 cm. Collection: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, inv.no. 20.161ab (gift of A. Murray Young, 1920). Reproduced from: archive.org/details/mma_pitcher_with_cover_194624. (Also reproduced in Hyde 1936, p. 101, plate XX, nr. 82.)



Fig. 7.81: Teapot with a twisted strap handle and a Faith, Hope and Charity type decoration, the lid with a strawberry finial. Blue and pink enamels with gilding, ca. 1785-1790, height 15 cm. Liebman Collection, Chazen Museum of Art, Madison. Reproduced from: Coleman Brawer 1992, p. 79, no. 54.



Fig. 7.82: Tea caddy with a Faith, Hope and Charity type decoration and a cover with a lychee finial. Blue and pink enamels with gilding, ca. 1795, height 14 cm. Displayed at Christie's New York, sale 1327, 20/21-1-2004, lot 418.
© Christie's Images Limited, 2015.



Fig. 7.83: Punch bowl commissioned for the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, decorated with the Great Seal of the USA and personifications of Faith, Hope and Charity. Polychrome enamels, 1785-1800, height 17.6 cm, diam. 40 cm. Collection: Detroit Institute of Arts, inv.no. 55.516 (gift by Robert H. Tannahill). Reproduced from: dia.org.

▫ *Cross and Anchor*

A variation on the theme is seen on a tea pot of the twisted strap handle model with a cover with a strawberry finial in the Lieberman collection at the Chazen Museum of Art (fig. 7.81). It is decorated on each side with columns, flanking an apron with the monogram 'ACL'. The apron strings wind around the columns.²³² A cross (Faith) and an anchor (Hope) are lying on the ground underneath the apron, and a beehive is set on a pedestal. Between the capitals of the columns is a cloud in which two figures are resting: a woman and child, representing Charity to complete the masonic trias. Above the cloud is a radiant all-seeing eye. The scene is surrounded by foliage, from which ribbons with compasses and squares are hanging. The central motif is surrounded by scattered floral sprays.²³³ A tea caddy with a similar design appeared at auction (fig. 7.82). Its cover is decorated with a lychee finial.

▫ *Faith, Hope and Charity*

A punch bowl included in the Seattle exhibition *China's Influence on American Culture in the 18th and 19th centuries* (1976), but unfortunately not illustrated, was described as decorated on one side with:

[...] an altar arrangement flanked by columns supporting allegorical figures and surrounded by various emblems based on the arts of building. Prominent in this arrangement is a Book of the Law opened to the Chapter of St. John. Below the altar is placed a coffin with an inscription MEMENTO MOEL' [= probably a misspelling of *memento mori*].²³⁴

This theme was repeated on the inside of the bowl, the exterior decoration consisting of the 'five masonic motifs', discussed below.



Fig. 7.84a: Engraving, depicting masonic virtues, attributed to I. Dood. Collection F.W. Levander.
Reproduced from: AQC (1907) Vol XX, n. pag.

The allegorical figures were most likely Faith, Hope and Charity, which also feature on the Union Lodge punch bowl (fig. 7.127). The three virtues appear as similar female personifications on a punch bowl in the collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts (fig. 7.83). Between Hope and Charity is the Great Seal of the United States, while the face of a radiant sun is depicted between Hope and Faith. Between Charity and Faith are two symbols: the coat of arms of Pennsylvania and a masonic symbol. The latter consists of a bible, on the cover of which is a radiant all-seeing eye. The book is embraced by a set square and a ruler, and topped by a pair of compasses (together forming a square with a triangle). The inside of the bowl is decorated with five pillars, from which flower garlands are hanging. Their basements carry masonic tools: a set square, a compass on a quarter circle, a triangle, a plumb line and a level. In the middle of the bottom of the bowl is a winged cherub trumpeting the motto 'AD MAJOREM SUPREM ARCHITECTI GLORIAM' (For the Greater Glory of the Supreme Architect). On a banner suspended from the trumpet is the text 'GRAND LODGR OF PENNSYLVANIA' (misspelling 'lodge').²³⁵

▫ *Seven masonic virtues*

A last example is a punch bowl in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. The interior is decorated after an undated engraving, attributed to I. Dood (perhaps a misspelling of Dodd, a more common engravers name around 1800) (fig. 7.84a). It depicts eight masonic virtues in front of the Temple. In the forefront is a medallion with female personifications of Faith, Hope and Charity. To the right are Temperance, pouring water into a cup, and Strength, accompanied by a lion. A closed book is lying by her side, suggesting she doubles as wisdom. They are standing on rocks. To the left are Prudence, viewing into a mirror, and Justice, holding scales and a sword. Both are standing on cubic stones, as is a beehive. Behind them are the columns J and B, topped by globes, and a chequered floor, leading to the entrance of



Fig. 7.84b: Punch bowl with a decoration of Faith, Hope and Charity in the interior, a phoenix and a monogram on the exterior, dated 1795, diam. 23.5 cm. Collection and Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, inv.no. 40.243 (In memory of Dr. Gorham Bacon presented by his daughter, Mrs. R. M. H. Harper). Reproduced from: mfa.org (interior), Hervouët/Bruneau 1986, p. 288 (exterior).

Solomon's Temple. A triangle with the letter 'G' is suspended underneath an arched doorway. On top of the temple are statues of three crowned figures. An all-seeing eye is depicted in the sky above.

On the punch bowl, the composition has been slightly altered. Only Charity is depicted with her children in the central medallion. Jacob's ladder has been added behind the book, lying next to Strength, emphasising these virtues are the path to heaven. The all-seeing eye was omitted. Around the exterior rim of the bowl is a blue ribbon, decorated with masonic tools and carrying three medallions with the image of a phoenix on a pedestal, surrounded by the text 'WE BY DYING LIFE ATTAIN 1795'.²³⁶ This is a reference to the symbolic death and rebirth of the candidate during the ritual of the Rose Croix degree, with which the image of a phoenix is also associated. Below the medallions the monogram 'FHB' is repeated three times.²³⁷

■ *Theme 6: Grand Lodge arms and seals*

As the origins of the Order are linked to the (British) building trade, the seal of the Premier Grand Lodge of England incorporated the coat of arms of the Masons Company of London: a crest with three towers and a pair of compasses (fig. 7.85). Probably copied from membership certificates and other documents carrying this seal, the Premier Grand Lodge seal also appears on export porcelain from the middle of the 18^{de} century onwards. Pieces can often be dated according to changes made in the design of the seal by the Grand Lodge.

▫ *Premier Grand Lodge seal*

The earliest version of the Grand Lodge of England seal, used around 1732-1738, shows the crest with towers and compasses, supported by two beavers and crowned by a bird (lapwing) (fig. 7.86).²³⁸ A cup in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London, dated circa 1760, is decorated on the front with a rococo cartouche, depicting the central part of this seal, surrounded by foliage. On the opposite sides of the handles are flower sprays (fig. 7.88).

▫ *Relief seal*

Between April 1737 and October 1757, the Grand Lodge minutes and certificates were validated with the so called 'Relief seal', after the misspelling of the word 'relief' (fig. 7.87). Its design is attributed to engraver James Cartwright, member of Lodge No. 197 at the Jack of Newbery pub in Chiswell Street, London.²³⁹ This seal also appears on both sides of a punch bowl, separated by flower sprays, in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry (fig. 7.89).²⁴⁰ Under the arms is a banner reading 'RELEIF AND TRUTH' enclosed in an oval frame bearing text 'THE SEAL OF THE GRAND LODGE OF MASONS, LONDON'. The provenance record for the bowl dated it ca. 1760, based on the use of the seal, but the border decoration suggests a much later date, ca. 1790-1795.²⁴¹ That implies that a 35 year old certificate was shown as an example at the time of commission, or there may have been much earlier pieces depicting this seal, which were copied. A similar bowl appeared at an auction.²⁴²

◦ *Arms of the Antients' Grand Lodge*

In 1751-1753, a second Grand Lodge was formed in England.²⁴³ This was the result of an influx of Irish day labourers earlier in the century. The masons among the Irish tried to visit lodges in London, but were either rejected because of their social status or experienced differences in ritual practice. As a result, several lodges became active independently of the (Premier) Grand Lodge of England from the 1730s onwards. These started to admit English members and by 1750 moved towards unification as a new masonic body. This body called itself The Antient Grand Lodge of England, resulting in a competition between the 'Antients' and the 'Moderns'. The Grand Secretary of the Antients, Laurence Dermott (1720-1791), wrote a book of constitutions in 1756: *Ahiman Rezon, or a help to a brother*. It was popular enough to be reprinted several times. These reprints, which travelling freemasons could have carried to China, included a frontispiece with an illustration of both the arms of the Moderns (Premier) and Antients' Grand Lodge (fig. 7.90). The Antients' arms depicts winged satyrs, supporting a crest with the symbols of the four Evangelists (a lion, an ox, a man and an eagle). It is crowned by winged figures holding the Ark of the Covenant. Below the crest are masonic tools and a banner with the motto 'Holiness to the Lord'. These arms were incorporated into the seal of the Antients' Grand Lodge in 1775.²⁴⁴

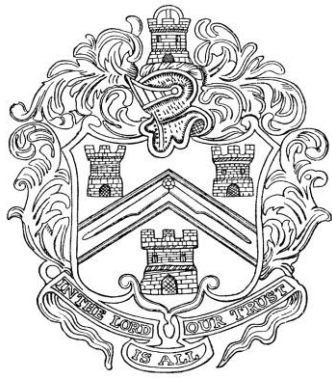


Fig. 7.85-6.86: Coat of arms of the Masons Company of London (left) and the Seal of the Premier Grand Lodge of England (middle).
 Reproduced from: freemasonry.bcy.ca (left) / Haunch 1970, p. 239,
 Fig. 7.87 (right): The so-called 'Relief seal', inscribed on the reverse '1 Cartwright London Sculp'. Steel, 1737.
 Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London.



Fig. 7.88: Tea cup decorated on one side with the arms of the Premier Grand Lodge of England; flower sprays on either side of the handle. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1760, height 6.5 cm, width 5.9, depth 8.3 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1211. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.89: Punch bowl, painted on opposite sides with the 'relief seal' version of the arms of the Moderns Grand Lodge, separated by flower sprays with a butterfly, which is repeated on the inside of the bowl. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1790-1795, height 12.1 cm, diam. 29 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1213. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.90: Frontispiece of Laurence Dermott, Ahiman Rezon, or a help to a brother (1st ed. 1756), edition 1764, depicting the arms of the Antients Grand Lodge (top left). Collection: Photograph: The Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania. Reproduced from: phoenixmasonry.org.

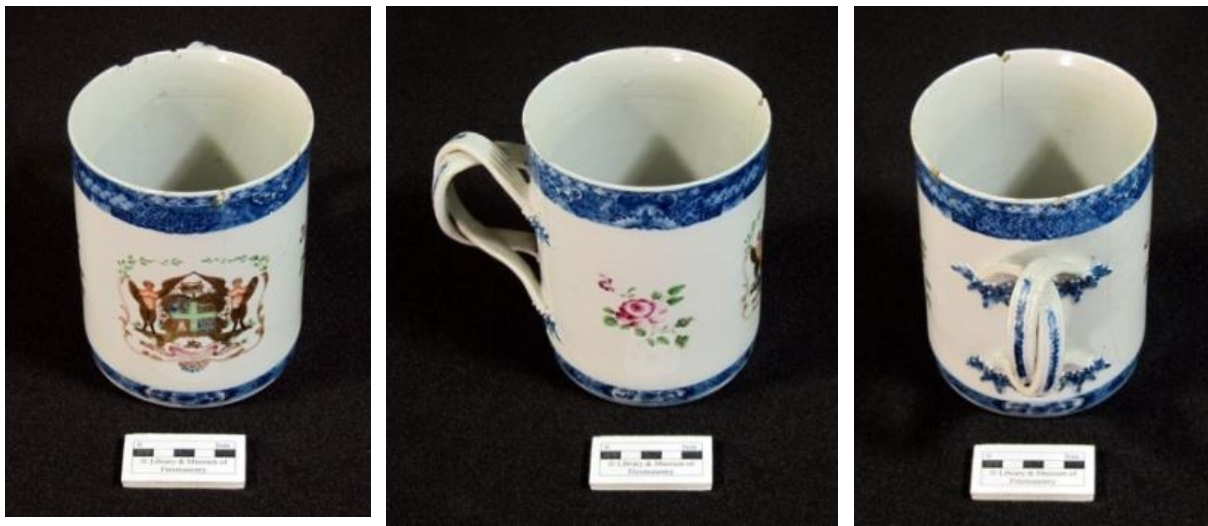


Fig. 7.91: Mug with twisted strap handles, the body decorated with the arms of The Antient Grand Lodge of England and flower sprays; a blue diaper design around the rim. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1795-1810, height 14.9 cm, diam. 11.3 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1277 (donated by R.L. Golds). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

The arms of the Antients' Grand Lodge are depicted in combination with various flower sprays on a strap handle mug (fig. 7.91) and two punch bowls (figs. 7.92-7.93) in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry.²⁴⁵ A similar bowl appeared at an auction.²⁴⁶



Fig. 7.92: Punch bowl decorated with the coat of arms of The Antient Grand Lodge of England on both sides, separated by flower sprays; a flower spray in the interior. Famille rose enamels, ca. 1770, height 11.2 cm, diam. 26.7 cm. Collection: The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M1988/85 (purchase Philips, London 1988).
Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.93: Punch bowl decorated with the arms of The Antient Grand Lodge of England on four sides, surrounded by flower sprays, flower garlands along the interior rim. Famille rose enamels, ca. 1770-80, height 16.8 cm, diam. 39.8 cm. Collection: The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/356 (purchase 1938).
Reproduced from: Howard 1997, p. 134 (top) / freemasonry.london.museum (bottom).

■ Theme 7: Lodge names

Porcelain commissioned by (or as a gift to) a local lodge is often decorated with coat of arms or seal of that particular lodge, or a decoration alluding to its name. While there are many examples on European porcelain and ceramics, there are but a few on export porcelain. The service with the arms of the Swedish Salomoniska Logen in Göteborg, discussed above, is one such example (figs. 7.4-7.9).



Fig. 7.94: Punch bowl decorated with panels depicting St. George and the dragon and a banner with the text 'UNITY / IS THE GOD OF / MASONRY'; a flower sprays along the interior rim and in the base. Famille rose enamels, ca. 1770, height 17.1 cm, diam. 40.1 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M1965/62 (donation by St. George & Cornerstone Lodge, 1965). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

▫ *St. George & Cornerstone*

A punch bowl dating from circa 1770 was purchased by St. George & Cornerstone Lodge and donated to the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, because its decoration may refer to the lodge's name (fig.7.94).²⁴⁷ The bowl is decorated with three, equally spaced rococo cartouches depicting St. George slaying the dragon. Each cartouche is surrounded by masonic symbols (tools, broken columns, etc.), foliage and flowers. A banner below bears the text 'UNITY / IS THE GOD OF / MASONRY'. While a decoration of George and the dragon on itself could have been interpreted as just a reference to a patron saint, the inclusion of the text makes it plausible likely that this scene is indeed an allusion to a lodge name.

▫ *The King's Arms*

A teapot in the collection of the British Museum (fig. 7.95) and a tea canister in the collection of the Winterthur Museum (fig. 7.96), as well as a tea bowl in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry (fig. 7.97) are all decorated with the coat of arms of the Hanoverian Kings of Great Britain (1714-1801). They are supported by a lion and a unicorn, and enclosed by a belt with banners reading the French motto's 'DIEU ET MON DROIT' ('God and my honour') and 'HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE' ('Evil/Shame unto him who thinks evil of it', the motto of the Most Noble Order of the Garter). Underneath the arms is a rococo cartouche in which masonic tools, an apron and a sword are depicted lying on the ground. The level, plumb, gavel, set square, ruler and apron are recognizable, other shapes could represent a tracing board and a lewis (iron clamp to lift a stone), but appear distorted.

The design was too large for the cup, so it was divided into two parts and combined with a floral motif. The inside base was decorated with an additional set square and a level. According to the museum's provenance record, the cup was probably commissioned on the occasion of the initiation of William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland (1721-1765) in 1743, which would make this one of the earliest masonic designs. The rococo cartouche could be dated as early as 1760, but considering the flower sprays on the lid



Fig. 7.95: Teapot and cover with the Royal arms of England, replacement handle and branch-like spout. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1770-1780, height 17 cm, width 22.5 cm. Collection: British Museum, London, inv. no. Franks.806.
Reproduced from: britishmuseum.org.

Fig. 7.96 and detail above: Tea canister (lid missing), decorated with the Royal arms of England. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1750-1775, height 10.95 cm, diam.7.65 cm. Collection: Winterthur Museum, Wilmington, inv.no. 1956.0046.071.
Reproduced from: museumcollection.winterthur.org



Fig. 7.97: Tea bowl with the Royal arms of England and masonic tools. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1770, height 4.3 cm, diam. 7.6 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2010/1764 (donation by Sir Algernon Tudor-Craig, 1935).
Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



*Fig. 7.98: Punch bowl decorated with various images relating to George III, dated 1771; a flower spray in the interior base. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1780-1795, height 13.1 cm, diam. 29.1 cm. Collection: The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/3592002 (gift by J. Rochelle Thomas, Jordan Lodge No. 201, 13-12-1932).
Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.*



Reverse sides of fig. 7.98.

and the shape of the spout, circa 1770 is more likely.²⁴⁸ A similar teapot appeared at auction, while a similar teacup was recently displayed by a dealer.²⁴⁹

Rather than seeking a connection between the Order and the royal family in this design, the depiction of the royal or 'King's arms' should here be taken literally. During the 18th century The King's Arms pub in London was a meeting place of several lodges, while a service of this type could have also appealed to, for instance, the Old King's Arms Lodge in London, the King's Friends Lodge in Nantwich and the King George III Lodge in Portsmouth.

▫ *George III*

Some decorations remain very difficult to interpret. Fig. 7.98 shows a bowl decorated with two oval panels: one with a scene of buildings and an equestrian statue, the other with an image of an equestrian statue of George III in Roman dress.²⁵⁰ Between these panels are bows holding masonic tools (compare fig. 7.58a-b), and depictions of both sides of a George III guinea coin dated 1771. In the interior base of the bowl is a flower spray in blue and gold and the border decoration suggests it was commissioned around 1785-1795.²⁵¹ What reference should the viewer observe in this decoration? Clearly there is some relation to George III, but he never became a freemason, although he did father seven sons who lived to maturity, six of whom were initiated into freemasonry.²⁵² And as mentioned above, there was a lodge named after King George III active in Portsmouth in the 18th century, and the 'King's Head' as depicted on the coin was the name of another meeting place of lodges.

▫ *Lodge of Emulation (1789)*

On 17-11-1785 a sea captain of the United East India Company based in Portsmouth, Richard Meriton, was initiated into the Lodge of Emulation, No. 12 (now No. 21) in London. He commissioned several pieces of export porcelain for the lodge, which he presented to the brethren in 1790.²⁵³ Two large, covered loving cups²⁵⁴ and a punch bowl were preserved in the collection of the lodge (fig. 7.99-7.100).

The cups have a bell shaped base and double split handles, and covers with a flower finial. Each cup is painted on both sides with an image of the Temple of Solomon within a double circle with the text 'LODGE OF EMULATION 1789'. Before the Temple are a chequered pavement and steps leading to the entrance, flanked by columns and statues holding a long staff, possibly representing Wisdom (with a helmet) and Strength. Above the columns the sun and moon are depicted. On both sides of the scene are birds, representing a phoenix and a pelican, behind which are acacia sprigs or trees. Below the Temple is the monogram 'RM' (or 'RW? See the second bowl discussed below). The rest of the body of the vases and their covers are decorated with the 'five masonic motifs', to be discussed below. The punch bowl is decorated in the same manner.²⁵⁵

The design was re-used some years later, as can be seen from a bowl which appeared at auction (fig. 7.101). In this version, the Temple is enclosed in a pink circle with the text 'RICHARD WHITE 1792'. A notable difference is that one can see a golden triangle on the roof of the Temple, with distorted lettering



Fig. 7.99: Pair of large covered cups, commissioned by Richard Meriton for Lodge of Emulation No. 12 in 1789, a flower finial on the cover. Iron red, pink and green enamels with gilding, height 31.3 cm, diam. 18 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. D2008/43 (loan from Lodge of Emulation). Reproduced from: Howard 1997, p. 131.

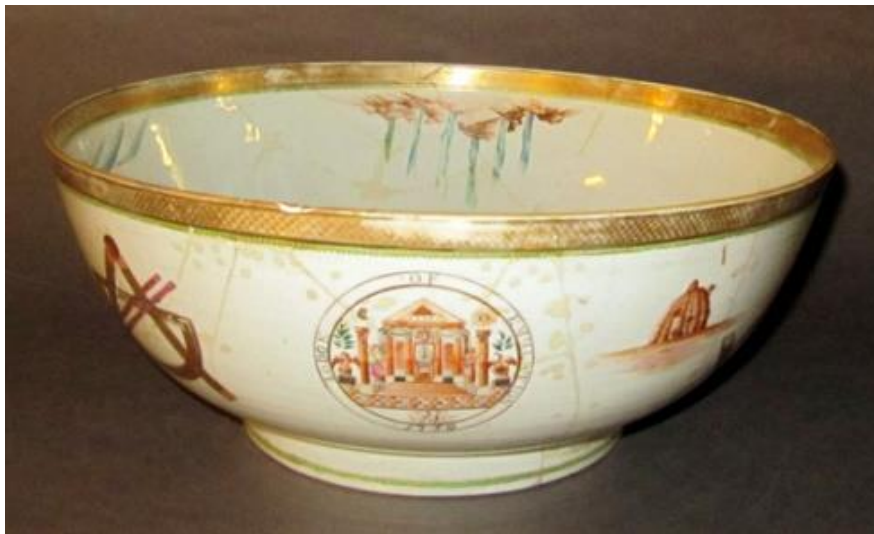


Fig: 7.100 (and detail): Punch bowl, commissioned by Richard Meriton for Lodge of Emulation No. 12 in 1789. Iron red, pink and green enamels with gilding, height 16.6 cm, diam. 40.3 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. D2009/35 (loan from Lodge of Emulation). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

probably meant to spell 'JHWH'. Below the chequered floor is the monogram 'RW'. The rest of the exterior and interior are again decorated with the 'five masonic motifs'. The commissioner, Richard White (ca. 1739-1796) has been identified as a Freemason in Essex, initiated in 1767, and a member of the Lodge of Unity, No. 402 in Colchester around 1784-1785 (the lodge was erased in 1791). A similar bowl is in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, and another appeared at auction.²⁵⁶

A caution is appropriate here: the Lodge of Emulation design has been copied onto cheap modern ceramics in the end of the 20th century. The decoration is usually executed in grisaille and the lodge name is misspelled, appearing amongst others on shaving bowls, fruit stands and pill boxes. These items are often offered online or at flea markets as 'genuine' antiques.



Fig. 7.101 (and detail): Punch bowl, decorated with a round medallion depicting a Temple, combined with the five masonic motifs, commissioned for Richard White in 1792. Polychrome enamels with gilding, height 12 cm, diam. 31.75 cm. Photograph courtesy of James D. Julia Auctioneers, Fairfield, Maine, USA, jamesdjulia.com.

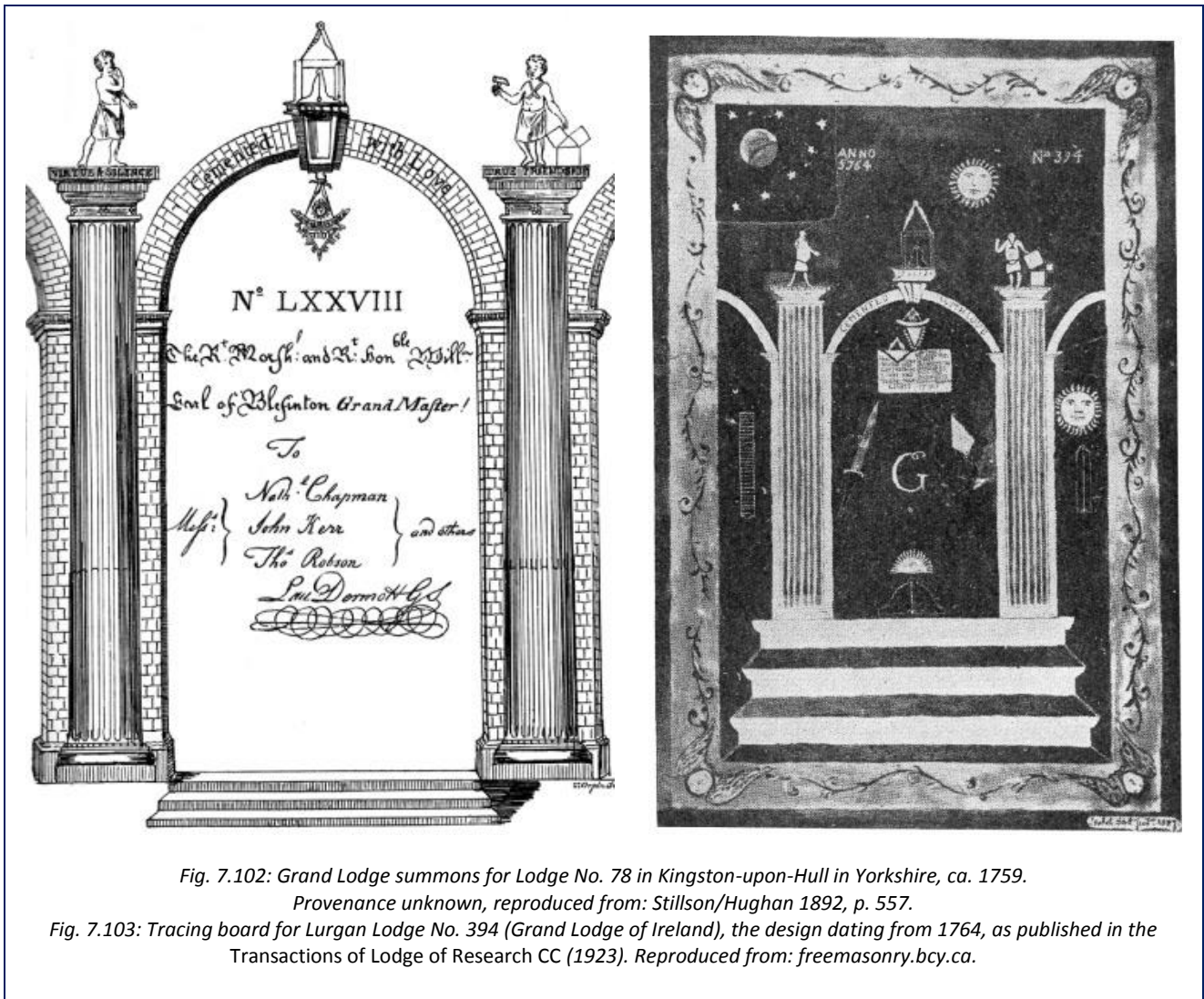


Fig. 7.102: Grand Lodge summons for Lodge No. 78 in Kingston-upon-Hull in Yorkshire, ca. 1759.

Provenance unknown, reproduced from: Stillson/Hughan 1892, p. 557.

Fig. 7.103: Tracing board for Lurgan Lodge No. 394 (Grand Lodge of Ireland), the design dating from 1764, as published in the Transactions of Lodge of Research CC (1923). Reproduced from: freemasonry.bcy.ca.

■ Theme 8: Royal Arch

The rituals of the Royal Arch degrees cover the events in the vaults under the Temple, and includes the finding of the ‘unspeakable name’. The Royal Arch was already practised in Ireland in 1746, but its origins are not yet clear.²⁵⁷ It was probably related to or derived from the early variations of Scots Master’s degrees, and then developed into a separate group. The Royal Arch became more popular in Britain under influence of the Antients’ Grand Lodge and its Grand Secretary, Dermott, around 1753-1763. One of the first Royal Arch lodges grew out of the Punch Bowl Lodge in York in 1761.²⁵⁸

The iconography of this degree includes the image of two columns, connected by an arch with a keystone. An early version can be found on a Grand Lodge summons to Lodge No. 78 in Kingston-upon-Hull in Yorkshire, dating from circa 1759 (fig. 7.102).²⁵⁹ The design consists of an arch between two pillars, bearing the words ‘CEMENTED WITH LOVE’. From the headstone is hanging a pair of compasses on a quarter circle (a Worshipful Master’s jewel), with a triangle with the tetragrammaton (the Hebrew letters ‘JHWH’). On top of the headstone is a composition of masonic tools (compasses, square, level and plumb) forming a triangle upon a square. On top of the left column is an inscription reading ‘VIRTUE & SILENCE’, while on the right are the words ‘TRUE FRIENDSHIP’. Two figures, clothed only in their aprons, are standing on top of the columns. The left one makes a gesture of taciturnity, a finger to the lips, while the right one wears a set square on a ribbon around his neck and is holding a hammer, while pointing at Euclid’s 47th proposition at his feet. A similar design appears on a tracing board of Lurgan Lodge No. 394 (Grand Lodge of Ireland), thought to have originated in 1764 (fig. 7.103).



Fig. 7.104: Punch bowl with a Royal Arch design, separated by flower sprays, the same pattern on the interior of the bowl. Above the arch are roundels with the seal of the Grand lodge and the portrait of the Duke of Bedford, surrounded by text 'BEDFORD HEAD MAIDEN LANE'. Polychrome enamels, 1770-1780, height 13.2 cm, diam. 32.6 cm. Collection: The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1270 (purchase 1938). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

▫ *Bedford Head*

Dermott's Royal Arch also inspired the decoration of a punch bowl, now in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry (fig. 7.104). The arch is repeated three times on the exterior of the bowl, separated by flower sprays, and again three times on the interior of the bowl. A flower spray is depicted in the interior base. There are however some notable differences to the original print. Only the right figure on the columns is wearing an apron, the left is now fully clothed. On either side of the arch is the text 'St. Johns Lodge'. This is not a reference to a specific lodge or lodge name, as masonic lodges of the basic degrees were generally referred to as St. John's lodges. Above the arch are two roundels, one bearing the arms of the Moderns' Grand Lodge surrounded by text 'Amor Honor et Justitia' ('Love Honour and Justice'), the other bearing a portrait of the Duke of Bedford surrounded by the text 'Bedford Head Maiden Lane'.

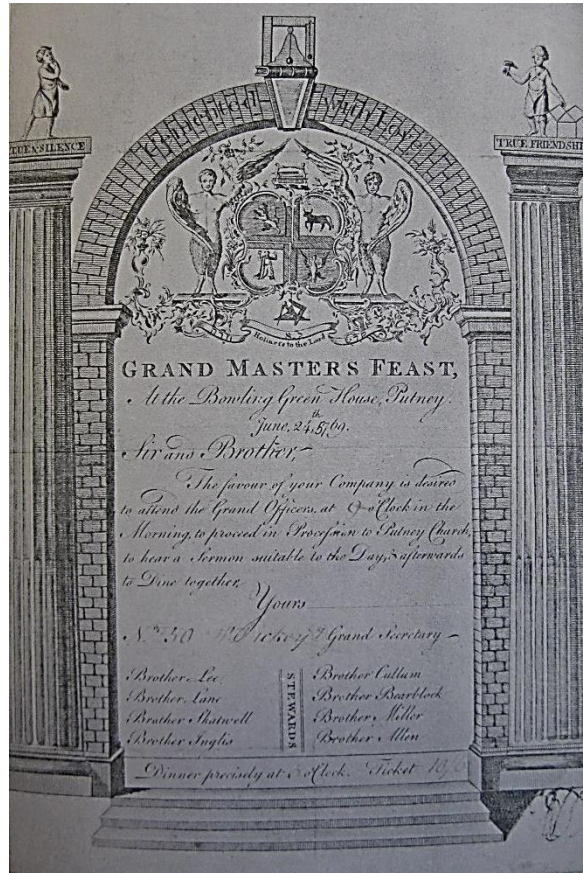


Fig. 7.105a: Lodge summons for the 'Grand Masters Feast' in Putney in 1769. Reproduced from: AQC (1905) Vol. XVIII, z.p.



Fig. 7.105: Punch bowl with a Royal Arch design including the arms of the Antients' Grand Lodge, signed 'Fra. Jukes fecit', and separated by flower sprays; a flower spray in the interior of the bowl. Famille rose enamels, ca. 1770-1785, height 12.2 cm, diam. 29.2 cm. Collection: The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2007/367 (purchase 2007). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.106: and detail: Bowl and plate with a Royal Arch design including the arms of the Antients Grand Lodge. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1795, diam. 13.9 cm. Frelinghuysen collection, displayed at Christie's New York, sale 2528, 24-1-2012, lot 155. © Christie's Images Limited, 2015.

This is not so much a reference to Francis Russell (1593-1641), 4th Duke of Bedford, as to the alehouse after his name, located in Maiden Lane in London. The Bedford Head was listed in *Lane's Masonic Records* as the meeting place of several lodges between circa 1741 and 1833.²⁶⁰ The bowl was probably presented to one of them.

▫ Francis Jukes' design

Dermott's Royal Arch was combined with the arms of the Antients Grand Lodge in the design of a lodge summons for the 'Grand Masters Feast' in Putney in 1769 (fig. 7.105a). The same design, with the text omitted, can be seen on a punch bowl, also in the London collection (fig. 7.105). The bowl is signed 'Fra. Jukes fecit', who can probably be identified as the engraver Francis Jukes (1747-1812), who may have also been responsible for the original lodge summons. The involvement of this engraver implies that the bowl cannot be dated around 1760 as the provenance record suggests, but must have been made somewhat later, circa 1770-1785, which also matches the style of the decoration.

The same design, but on a smaller scale and now enclosed by a rectangular border (even more reminiscent of a lodge summons) appeared on a plate and bowl in the collection of the Grande Loge de France and others at auction (fig. 7.106).²⁶¹ Figures on top of the columns, either freemasons with an apron or personifications of virtues, became a regular part of masonic iconography. The Antients and the Moderns merged in 1813 into the United Grand Lodge of England. Porcelain with the new arms of the Grand Lodge is mostly of European make.

▫ King Zerubbabel

The Royal Arch is also found on a rectangular tea caddy with rounded shoulders and a cylindrical spout (fig. 7.107, same model as fig. 7.82). Here the columns J and B are depicted on a chequered pavement. They are connected by an arch with a keystone, topped by a sun. Below it is the letter 'G'. Distinct are the pattern on the arch and the garland wrapped around the right column. Within the space between the columns, a pair



Fig. 7.107: Tea caddy with a Royal Arch type decoration including a crowned figure behind an open bible. Iron red and blue enamels, ca. 1790-1795, 12.4 x 8.5 x 3.7 cm. Collection: The Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/560. Photograph provided by Martin Cherry.

of compasses and a set square rest on an open bible (the text intended on the bible an illegible interpretation by the Chinese artist).²⁶² Behind the book is the upper body of a crowned figure in a cape, arms raised, probably not representing King Solomon, but King Zerubbabel, who after the destruction of the Temple oversaw its rebuilding. Beneath the pavement is a pair of compasses resting on a section of a circle, enclosing a sun, the jewel of a Worshipful Master.²⁶³

The motif of the crowned figure under the arch, making a pointing gesture, is also depicted on jewels, aprons, masonic charts and handkerchiefs around 1800-1820 (see for example figs. 7.108-7.110). However, the tea caddy probably dates a little earlier, so the original pictorial source on which all these variations are based, remains to be identified.



Fig. 7.108: Both sides of a jewel, presented to William Scott of Lodge No. 6 in London on 27-12-1800 by Lodge No. 1 in Cape of Good Hope. Reproduced from: AQC (1926) VI. XXXIX, p. 273.²⁶⁴

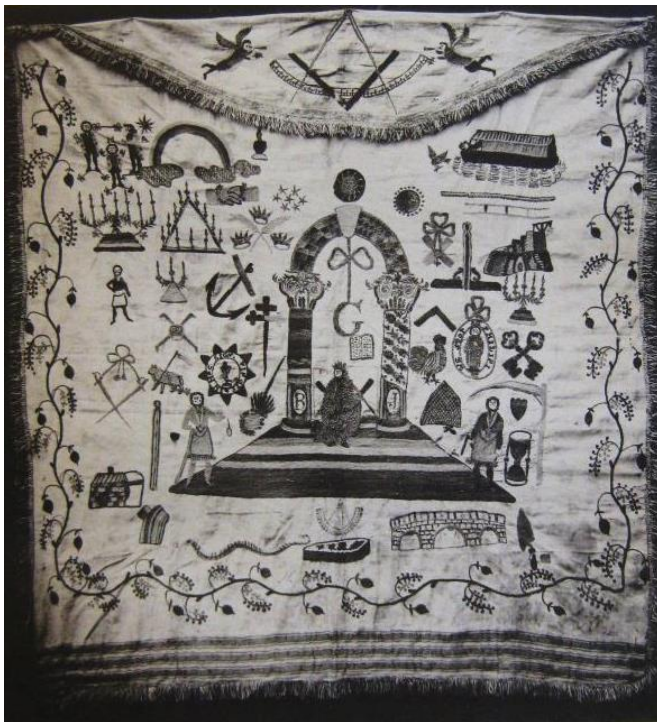


Fig. 7.109: Apron from Lodge Truth No. 22 in Belfast, ca. 1817. Collection: William Gillies, Glasgow.
Reproduced from: AQC (1891) Vol IV, z.p.²⁶⁵

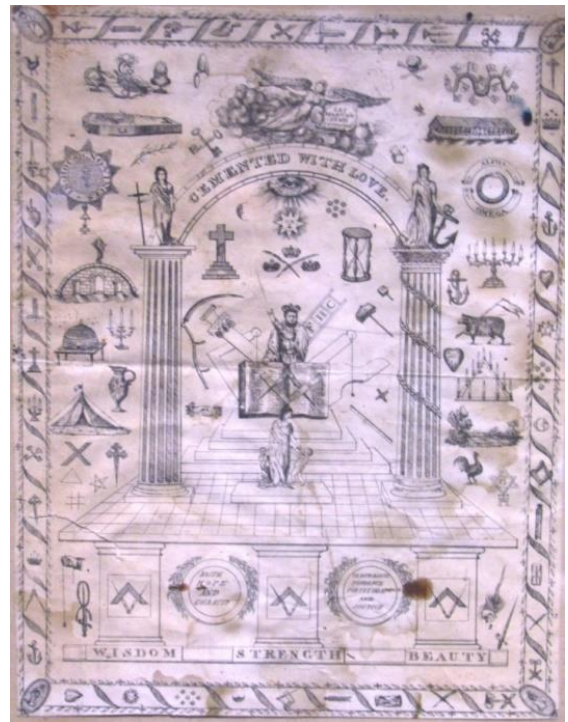


Fig. 7.110: Masonic Chart, ca. 1800. Collection: Shamrock Lodge No. 101, Athlone.
Reproduced from: irishfreemasonry.com/blog.



Fig. 7.111: Jacobus Harrewijn (ca. 1660-ca. 1735), *Solomon inspecting the building plan for the Temple*, engraving ca. 1700. Reproduced from: Van der Sande 1995, p. 40.

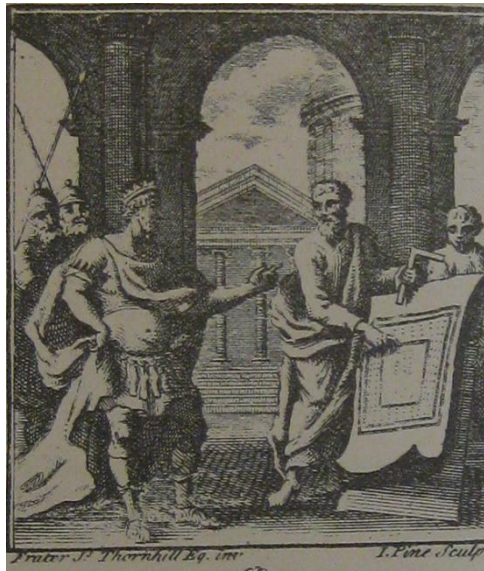


Fig. 7.112: *Solomon inspecting the building plan for the Temple*, in: J.J. Scheuchzer, *Physica Sacra* [...] (1731). Reproduced from: MacNulty 1991, p. 40.

Fig. 7.113: Engraving from Anderson's *The Constitutions* [...] (ed. 1738). P. xii. Reproduced from: *Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha VII*.

Fig. 7.114: *Frontispiece of Chansons originaires des Francs-Maçons* (2nd ed. 1749). Collection: CMC 'Prins Frederik', The Hague, inv.no. 6B2.

■ Theme 9: Three Grand Masters

An example of a decoration that would have appealed to both the general public and freemasons, is a scene depicting King Solomon inspecting the building plans for the Temple. It is found on export porcelain from the middle of the 18th century, but developed from a much older pictorial tradition, not exclusive to freemasonry. In Christian iconography popular scenes from the biblical story were 'Solomon receiving a Messenger', 'The inspection of the Building Plan', 'Solomon's Judgement' and 'Solomon and Sheba', which often shared elements of composition and iconography.

Variations of 'The Inspection of the Building Plan' from the early 18th century - the time in which modern freemasonry developed - include an engraving by Jacobus Harrewijn (circa 1700) and a print in J.J. Scheuchzer's *Physica sacra iconibus aeneis illustrata procurante & sumtus suppeditante Johanne Andrea Pfeffel* (1731) (figs. 7.111-7.112). As freemasons strongly identified with the biblical story in a ritual context, they made the iconographical theme their own. It was first depicted within a specific masonic context in an

engraving by James Thornhill (1675-1734) after a design by John Pine (1690-1756), among others published in the 1738 edition of *The Constitutions* (fig. 7.113). Another variation by Samuel Wale (1721-1786), showing a gentleman-architect inspecting the building plan, was published as a frontispiece to *Chansons originaires des Francs-Maçons* (2nd ed., 1749) (fig. 7.114).²⁶⁶ There are several other variations of later dates.

By the middle of the 18th century the text of popular ritual manuals, such as *Three Distinct Knocks* (1760), must have influenced the visual representation of 'The Inspection of the Building Plan'.²⁶⁷ This publication includes a masonic catechism (1st-3rd degrees), which reads as follows:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Mas[ter] | Why do three make a lodge Brother? |
| Ans[wer] | Because there were three Grand Masters in the building of the World, and also that noble Piece of Architecture Man; which are so complete in Proportion, that the Antients began their Architecture by the same Rules. |
| Mas[ter] | The second Reason, Brother? |
| Ans[wer] | There were three Grand Masters at the building of <i>Solomon's Temple</i> . ²⁶⁸ |
| Mas[ter] | What supports your Lodge? |
| Ans[wer] | Three Great Pillars. |
| Mas[ter] | What are their names? |
| Ans[wer] | Wisdom, Strength and Beauty. |
| Mas[ter] | Who do they represent? |
| Ans[wer] | Three Grand-Masters: <i>Solomon</i> , King of <i>Israel</i> ; <i>Hiram</i> , King of <i>Tyre</i> ; and <i>Hiram Abiff</i> , which was the Widow's Son who was killed. |
| Mas[ter] | Were all those Three Grand-Masters concerned in the building of <i>Solomon's Temple</i> ? |
| Ans[wer] | They were. |
| Mas[ter] | What was their Business? |
| Ans[wer] | <i>Solomon</i> for finding Provision, and Money to pay the Hirelings; <i>Hiram</i> , Kind of <i>Tyre</i> , for finding Materials for the Work; <i>Hiram Abiff</i> , for performing the Work. ²⁶⁹ |

A similar reference was included in the catechism for the 3rd degree, published in *Jachin and Boaz* (1762). The visual and textual traditions somehow morphed into one new theme: 'The Three Grand Masters', usually depicted as King Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre inspecting a drawing offered to them by Hiram Abiff.

▫ *Dundee Arms Lodge summons (1750s)*

The text of ritual manuals could have inspired the engraver Benjamin Cole (1695-1766). He was commissioned by the English Grand Lodge to regularly produce the 'Engraved Lists of Lodges' between 1745 and 1766.²⁷⁰ Around 1750 Cole was commissioned by Dundee Arms Lodge (now Old Dundee Lodge No. 18, London) to make an engraving for the lodge summons (fig. 7.115).²⁷¹ In his engraving Cole incorporated the theme of the Three Grand Masters. Two crowned figures, Solomon and Hiram of Tyre, are shown standing on a chequered floor against an architectural background, underneath a sky including both the sun and the moon. A building block or cubic stone is placed in the foreground, surrounded by various tools. The scene is placed in a medallion, formed by an ouroboros and surrounded by three pillars, which are carrying globes of heaven and earth and a beehive. The two outer pillars are decorated with the crest of the Masons Company and a crest depicting a pot of lilies, after the arms of the city of Dundee.²⁷² Beside and below the columns are representations of Faith, Hope and Charity.

The published history of Old Dundee lodge by Arthur Heiron (1921) quotes archive documents, which demonstrate how the lodge repeatedly ordered a set of 500 prints from Cole for the sum of 15 shillings in the years 1749-1755 (presumably the lodge summons), and in 1750 paid him for altering a (copper) plate.²⁷³ Heiron also provides some abstracts from the archives, mentioning some interesting expenses:

- 1754, Nov 28: 'Bro[ther] Inglis made Ye Lodge a present of a China Punch Bowl',
- 1754, Dec. 30: 'Paid foor Stand for the Punch Bowle', £ 1 s.1. d.0,
- 1757: 'P[ai]d Br[other] Clarke for the Designs of the Bowls', £ 0 s.4. d.0,



Fig. 7.115: Benjamin Cole (1695-1766), engraving for a summons of the Dundee Arms Lodge, ca. 1750.
Reproduced from: Heiron 1921, opposite p. 209.

- 1762: 'P[ai]d Br[other] Dobbie for 4 China Bowls for this Lodge', £ 5 s.0. d.0,
- 1767: 'P[ai]d for 2 China Bowles', £ 1 s.16. d.0,
- 1798: 'P[ai]d for mending 7 Bowles', £ 0 s.4. d.8.²⁷⁴

Brother Inglis was a 'Sea Member', apparently in the position to order export porcelain.²⁷⁵ He or one of his fellow lodge members was probably responsible for getting Cole's print to China in the next few decades. The assumption cannot be verified, but there is a punch bowl in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry with a decoration after this print dated around 1790-1795 (fig. 7.116).²⁷⁶ On one side of the bowl, the theme of the 'Three Grand Masters', enclosed in a medallion, was faithfully copied from the print. The other sides of the bowl show the sun, the moon and the bible with compasses and square from the 'five masonic motifs', to be discussed below. On the bottom of the bowl is a simple flower spree with a butterfly. The exterior rim is decorated with a patterned gilt band, while the interior rim has an additional pattern, which was also applied to the base of the bowl.

Heiron continued his history with a list of gifts to the lodge, which in 1788 included a 'China Punch bowl [...] decorated with emblems of Masonry', donated by John Haverstock, who was also described as a 'Sea Member'.²⁷⁷ The lodge celebrated the arrival of the gift in a fitting manner. On 22-10-1788 the lodge minutes recorded:

The Members of the Dundee Lodge having this Night been presented with an Elegant China Bowl [decorated with The Emblems of Masonry] by Br. Havistock, they returned him Publick [sic] and Sincere Thanks by Drinking his Health with *Three Times Three*.²⁷⁸



Fig. 7.116: Punch bowl decorated on one side with the 'Three Grand Masters' motif after an engraving by Benjamin Cole for the Dundee Arms Lodge, and on the other sides with some of the 'five masonic motifs'; a flower spray with butterfly in the interior of the bowl. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1790-1795, height 13.7 cm, diam. 33.1 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/353. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum. (Also reproduced in Carr 1965, p. 255.)

In the following years, more gifts were recorded:

- 1802, Aug. 12: 'The Thanks of the Lodge was [sic] given to B[rother] John Campbelle for Eleven Handsome Bowls which he has kindly presented to this Lodge; thanks were also given to Mr. Thompson for the great care he took of the same',
- 1802, Sept. 9: 'Mr William Thompson was this Night Balloted and Accepted, and on ac[count] of his going on a Voyage was Initiated into the Three Degrees of Masonry and for his Care in bringing over the Bowls presented to the Lodge by Br. John Campbell was Made "Free of the Lodge"'.²⁷⁹

The records of Dundee Lodge illustrate that travelling members were involved in the import of porcelain over a longer period of time, as would have also been the case in lodges in port towns elsewhere in Europe.



Fig. 7.117: Punch bowl with the 'Three Grand Masters' motif in oval panels, framed by columns and flower garlands, the arms of the Moderns' Grand Lodge below. Between the panels are flower sprays and a monogram, repeated at the bottom of the bowl. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1760-1770, height 9.9 cm, diam. 22.9 cm Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/352. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

▫ *Three Grand Masters variations*

There are two other variations of the Three Grand Masters theme. A bowl in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry was decorated on opposite sides with a panel showing the Three Grand Masters, flanked by flower sprays, but here the execution of the central design is less refined (fig. 7.117).²⁸⁰ Only the main part of the print, the scene with the three men, is depicted and underneath the arms of the Masons Company have been added. The dress of the men is different, with both Kings wearing trousers, and a simple architectural structure as background. The medallion is framed by the three columns, connected with scrollwork and foliage, from which building tools are suspended. The other sides and the bottom of the bowl are decorated with a monogram, enclosed by a circle formed by a chain. Similar bowls have appeared at auction.²⁸¹



Fig. 7.118: Octagonal serving dish with the 'Three Grand Masters' motif, ca. 1760-1770. Polychrome enamels with gilding, diam. 21.1 cm. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London, inv.no. C.225-1931 (Gulland Bequest).
Reproduced from: collections.vam.ac.uk.

Fig. 7.119: Octagonal serving dish with the 'Three Grand Masters' motif. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1760-1770, 41 x 32 cm. Collection: Musée de la Grande Orient de France, Paris. Reproduced from a postcard, author's collection.

Fig. 7.120a: Masonic jewel, late 18th century. Collection not listed. Reproduced from: AQC (1908) Vol XXI, p.5.



Fig. 7.120: Detail of an octagonal plate with the 'Three Grand Masters' motif. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1760-1770, height 4.3 cm, diam. 24.6 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1212.
Photograph by Painton Cowen. Reproduced from: tamrin.proboards.com.

The third version of the design is found on octagonal dinner ware from around the same time, of which a plate is in the Victorian & Albert Museum (fig. 7.118). Similar items are in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry (fig. 7.120) and the Chasem Museum of Art.²⁸² Again the pictorial style is less refined, and the dress of the men is somewhat different. Serving dishes of the same type are part of the collection of the Musée de la Grande Orient de France (fig. 7.119), and have appeared at auction.²⁸³

While the bowls with the original version of the design were probably commissioned for Dundee Arms Lodge, the second and third versions may have been cheaper products and therefore less finely executed. Although the biblical theme may have appealed to a non-mason as well, decorations relating to the old testament on export porcelain were not popular with a wide audience at the time, so these objects must have been primarily aimed at the masonic market.²⁸⁴ A pictorial source for the latter two versions is not known, but they closely resemble the decoration of an engraved lodge jewel from the end of the 18th century (fig. 7.120a), suggesting a common source.

■ *Theme 10: Tringham's The Mysteries [...] (1753)*

In 1755 William Thompson produced reproductions of an engraving, titled *The Mysteries that here are Shown are only to a Mason known* (1753). The design was made by William Tringham (1723-after 1770), a London based engraver, print seller and publisher. His image is rich with symbolism (fig. 7.121). On the left is a temple, with the text *Pulsanti Aperietur* ('who knocks shall be answered' or 'knock and it will open', referring to the candidate who has to knock on the door of the lodge (see Matt. 7:7; Luke 11:9). Above it are depicted personifications of Time (also represented by a partially visible zodiac) and Dawn (Aurora) with a cornucopia. Dawn is holding a scroll with the text *Hic Labor, Hoc Opus* ('this is the labour, this is the work'), indicating the work is done.²⁸⁵ A winged angel is blowing a trumpet with a banner bearing the date '5753' (thus heralding freemasonry in the *anno lucis* 1753), while cherubs are carrying a veil with the motto 'Silence and Secrecy' are lifting the clouds. These are references to the wisdom gained by the initiate, the secret revealed.

Beneath the Temple is are two broken columns (referring to the Scots Master's degree) with a skull and cross-bones (referring to death and rebirth), as well as a cubic stone with a hammer and a chisel (symbols for the Entered Apprentice degree). In the background on the right a group of seven freemasons (which according to masonic ritual 'makes a perfect lodge') is seen passing seven arches. The men are holding various tools, as if they are discussing symbols in a field lodge. On the right in the foreground is the most important figure: a crowned man, seated at a table with a tracing board (with a black-and-white dented border) in his hands. He is drawing Euclid's 47th proposition, while seated on a stool on a chequered pavement in a landscape with pillars and architecture.

The question is, who this crowned figure represents. It cannot be Solomon, as he was not an architect. According to masonic literature, only Euclid, Pythagoras and Hiram Abiff are able to draw the mathematical figure, but none of them were kings. This suggests that this is no worldly crown, but a 'crown of the wise' (Proverbs 14:24).²⁸⁶

The man's drawing board rests on a monument, altar or tomb, while in front of him is a sundial, the side of which is decorated with a radiant sun. The sundial refers to the symbolic work of freemasons, from noon to midnight. According to *The Three Distinct Knocks* (1760), the Junior Warden is positioned 'in the South [...] to observe the Sun, at high Meridian'.²⁸⁷ Behind him are five beehives, grouped in the shape of a pentagram on a triangular base.²⁸⁸

In the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London are two punch bowls with a decoration derived from Tringham's print, both dated circa 1760 and showing a monogram supported by hares on the interior base. On each bowl the top and bottom half of the print are depicted in separate oval medallions. On the first bowl, these medallions are separated by the arms and seal of the Moderns' Grand Lodge (fig. 7.122).²⁸⁹ On the second bowl they are separated by the arms of the Moderns and the crest of the Boys family with London in pretence (fig. 7.123). The angel heralding freemasonry is now turned towards the sun. According to the provenance record, this bowl was probably made for Samuel Boys from Hoventon (Norfolk) and his wife Anne London of Albye. Her coat of arms was incorporated into that of Boys.²⁹⁰ The bowl is accompanied by a lacquered wooden stand.



Tringham Sculp.

The Mysteries that here are Shown
are only to a Mason known.

Price 6^s Plain
Properly Coloured 1:6

To the most Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons this Plate
is most humbly Inscrib'd by their most Affectionate Brother Willi: Tringham. Hieroglyph

Fig. 7.121: William Tringham (1723-after 1770), The Mysteries that here are Shown are only to a Mason known (1753). Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London. Reproduced from: MacNulty 1991, p. 68.

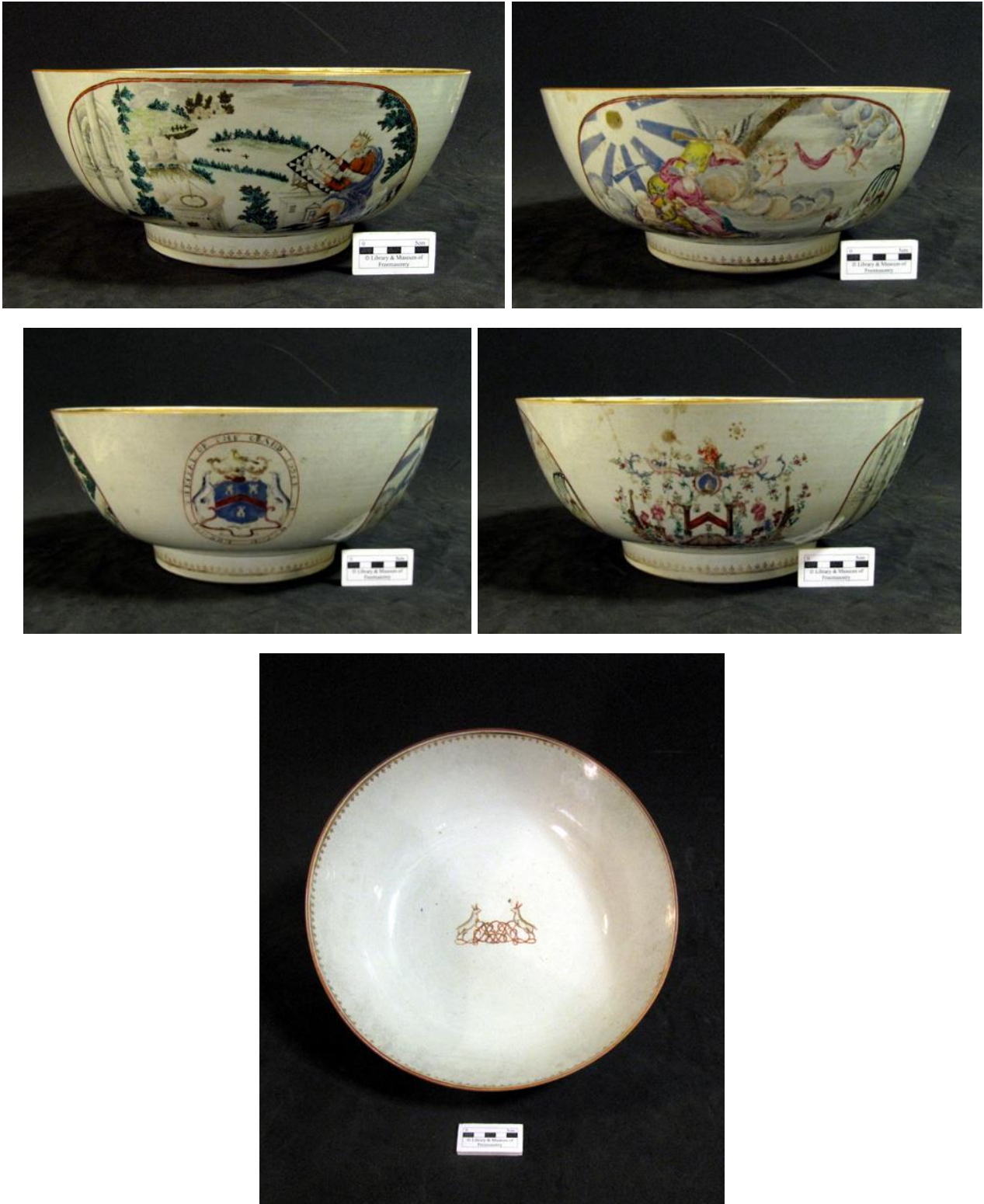


Fig. 7.122: Punch bowl, decorated with two oval panels after William Tringham's *The Mysteries* that here are shown [...] (1753), and the arms and the seal of the Moderns' Grand Lodge. The bottom of the bowl is decorated with a monogram supported by hares. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1760, height 14.7 cm, diam. 35.7 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1274. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.123: Punch bowl, decorated with two oval panels after William Tringham's *The Mysteries* that here are shown [...] (1753), separated by the arms of the Moderns Grand Lodge and the arms of the Boys family. The bottom of the bowl is decorated with a monogram supported by hares. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1760, height 10.9 cm, diam. 25.5 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1210. Reproduced from: Howard 1997, p. 131 (top) / freemasonry.london.museum (middle and bottom).



Fig. 7.124: Punch bowl with a 'Knock and you shall be opened' type décor. Famille rose enamels with gilding, ca. 1760-1770, diam. 35.5 cm. Collection: Musée-Archives-Bibliothèque de la Grande Loge de France, Paris, inv.no. Apo.12.1980.
© Christie's Images Limited, 2015.



Fig. 7.125: Plate and bowl with a 'Knock and you shall be opened' type decor combined with flower sprays (background). Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1760-1770, size not listed. Collection: Svenska Frimurare Ordens Museet, Stockholm.
Reproduced from: Cat. Stockholm 1953, title page.

▫ *Pulsanti Aperietur*

On the left side of Tringham's design, an arch is visible on a series of steps between two pillars. An inscription on the arch reads: 'PULSANTI APERIETUR' ('knock and you shall be opened'). A freemason stands in front of the door in the distance, possibly a Tyler. This part of the design may have inspired a different series of punch bowls. It is also possible that both the bowls and Tringham's design were inspired by an earlier source.

A bowl in the collection of the Grande Loge de France is decorated with a round medallion executed in *famille rose* with details in gilt (fig. 7.124).²⁹¹ It shows a similar scene of a freemason standing in front of a door. The words 'PULSANTI APERIETUR' appear on a drapery above the arch. The scene is flanked by scrollwork, from which masonic tools are hanging on bowed ribbons; below is a skull and cross-bones.

The sides and bottom of the bowl are decorated with flower sprays. A similar plate and bowl are in the collection of the Svenska Frimurare Ordens Museet in Stockholm (fig. 7.125).

■ *Theme 11: Closed book, compasses and square*

Depictions of a book with a pair of compasses and a set square surfaced within freemasonry just before the middle of the 18th century.²⁹² One of the first examples appeared in the 1746 frontispiece to *The Builder's Jewel* by Batty Langley (1st ed. 1741), which shows various combinations of masonic tools on three columns, representing the different building orders (fig. 7.126). The book with compasses and square are attached to the left column. The book could of course represent the bible, but as the iconography of freemasonry developed further, the bible was usually shown opened (on the gospel of St. John) with the tools lying upon it, comparable to how these objects were displayed in the lodge during the ritual. Therefore the open bible also appears on most tracing boards, officers' jewels, aprons and masonic prints, which in the 18th century may have served as an example for export porcelain. It is possible that the closed book here does not represent the bible, but for instance a lodge minute book, a book of masonic law, or is a more general reference to knowledge and wisdom.

A document in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry is decorated with a similar closed book caught between a pair of compasses and a set square, as well as a level, plumb line and set square suspended from ribbons (fig. 7.127). It was designed by Michael Devon, the Deputy Grand Master of the Moderns in the 1760s, who illustrated the Grand Lodge minute books with masonic symbols and also accepted commissions to decorate letters of constitution and other lodge certificates. Devon's design with a closed book may have been inspired by the print in *The Builder's Jewel*, but he depicted the set square in a different angle, and behind instead of on top of the book. The book itself carries a mark in the middle, as if to suggest a stamped cover. One of Devon's certificates may have reached China, as his book motif occurs on a particular type of export porcelain. According to Clements, Devon may even have been asked to provide a set of templates for porcelain production.²⁹³

▫ *Book with a pair of compasses*

An early example of the closed book motif appeared on a tea pot stand, now in the collection of Freimaurer Museum Schloss Rosenau (fig. 7.128). It is decorated with a female figure, seated in a landscape, holding a crest with a monogram. Above the central motif is a book caught in a pair of compasses, but without the set square. The sculpted rim of the dish is decorated with a band of foliage. This is yet another example of a motif, that isn't overtly masonic.

▫ *Book with compasses and square*

A dish, kept in the collection of the Grande Loge de France shows the closed book motif on its own (fig. 7.129).²⁹⁴ The dish is shaped like a tobacco leaf, decorated with a underglaze blue border, and may have been part of a larger dinner service. The book with the tools also features in the gilded decoration of a punch bowl (fig. 7.130). The central design on the outside of the bowl is formed by a two columns, connected by an arch of rococo scroll work. Two candlesticks can be seen on the floor between the columns, and a plumb and a level are hanging on bows in the scrollwork. In the top of the design is a cartouche with an all-seeing eye with a pair of compasses crossed with a set square, flanked by a sun and a moon. In the centre between the columns are a large bible with compasses and square, the book executed in an odd perspective and carrying the inscription 'HB', identifying it as the Holy Bible, and 'No. 3', possibly

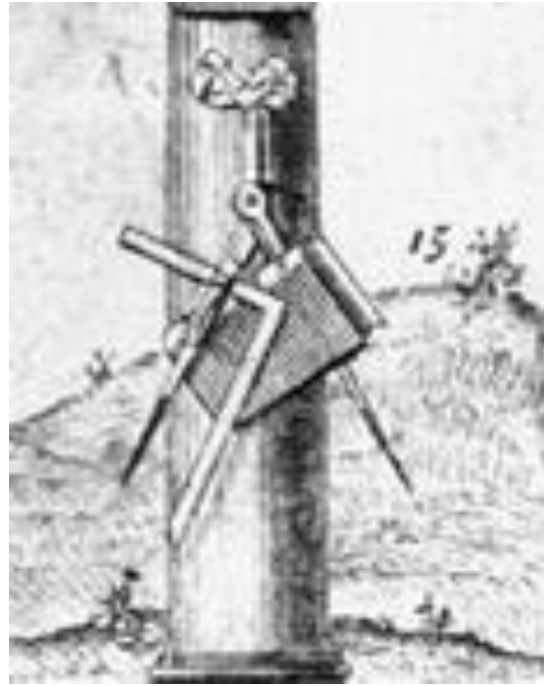
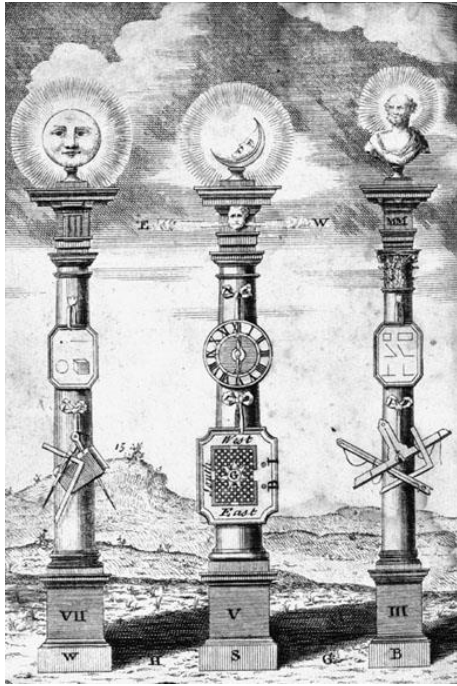


Fig. 7.126: Frontispiece to Batty Langley, *The Builder's Jewel* (1st ed. 1741), ed. 1746. Reproduced from: rickypound.london.



Fig. 7.127: Plea for assistance, designed by Michael Devon, 25-7-1769. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London. Reproduced from: Hamill/Gilbert 1991, p. 49.



Fig. 7.128: Tea pot stand with a sculpted rim, decorated with a crest and a monogram, held by a seated female figure in a landscape; a book with a pair of compasses above it. Polychrome enamels, ca. 1750, size not listed.

Collection: Freimaurer Museum Schloss Rosenau, Rosenau. Reproduced from: Valmy 1991 p. 214.

Fig. 7.129: Tobacco leaf-shaped dish with a closed book motif. Iron red and underglaze blue enamels, ca. 1790, size not listed.

Collection and photograph: Musée-Archives-Bibliothèque de la Grande Loge de France, Paris, inv.no. Apo.12.1983.



Fig. 7.130: Punch bowl decorated with a book, carrying the initials 'HB' and 'No. 3', and a pair of compasses with a set square, framed by elements of a tracing board and masonic tools. Black enamel with gilding, ca. 1760, diam. 30.9 cm.

Displayed at R&G McPherson Antiques, London, stock no. 23227. Reproduced from: chineseceramicslondon.com.



Fig. 7.131: Covered tureen decorated with the arms of Devan impaling Hellord, surrounded by flower sprays and masonic tools; hare head handles; two monograms and a flower finial on the cover. Famille rose enamels with gilding, ca. 1765, height 21.6 cm, width 36.5 cm. Displayed at Freeman's, sale 1482, lot 175. Reproduced from: freemansauction.com.

Fig. 7.132: Soup plates, decorated with the arms of Devan impaling Hellord, surrounded by flower sprays and masonic tools; monograms 'MID' and heraldic lions separated by flowers and butterflies on the rim of the plate. Famille rose enamels with gilding, ca. 1765, diam. 22.9 cm. Displayed at Northeast Auctions, sale 15/16-8-2009, lot 782. Reproduced from: northeastauctions.com



Fig. 7.133: Detail of a soup plate, decorated with the arms of Devan impaling Hellord, surrounded by flower sprays and masonic tools; monograms 'MID' and heraldic lions separated by flowers and butterflies on the rim of the plate. Famille rose enamels with gilding, ca. 1765, diam. 22.9 cm. Displayed at CRN Auctions Inc., sale 1-5-2011, lot 185d. Reproduced from: crnauctions.com.

the number of the lodge which commissioned the bowl. The design is combined with a delicate flower spray and repeated on the inside base of the punch bowl.

▫ *Family crest of Devan impaling Hellord*

One particular service, dating around 1765, seems to have been decorated after Devon's certificate. The plates of this service bear the coat of arms of Devan impaling Hellord, surrounded by four masonic symbols separated by flower sprays (fig. 7.131-7.132). Depicted are the closed book with compasses and square, a level, a plumb line and a set square, the latter three all hanging from bows in the same fashion as on the certificate by Devon. The rim of the plates is decorated with two monograms 'MID' and two heraldic lions on opposing sides, separated by butterflies and flowers. To the uninitiated, the tools in the design could be seen as a reference to architecture, the book to knowledge or the bible. Only a fellow freemason would appreciate the allusion to the Order. A plate of this service is in the collection of the Grande Loge de France, others have appeared at auction (fig. 7.133).²⁹⁵ A matching covered tureen with hare-shaped handles is in the collection of the Grande Loge de France and another has appeared at auction (fig. 7.131).²⁹⁶

■ *Theme 12: Five masonic motifs*

By the end of the 18th century there seems to have been an increase in the number of orders of masonic porcelain for the European and American markets. The number of surviving items of any particular design or shape is not necessarily indicative of how many were actually produced: of most decoration types only a handful of pieces have survived, regardless of their production numbers. There is one type of decoration, however, of which so many examples still remain, that it must have overflowed the market. It concerns a particular combination of five masonic motifs (fig. 7.134):

- A closed book caught between a pair of compasses and set square (after the aforementioned Devon design); often flanked by beehives.
- Various stonemason's and draughtsman's tools, referring to the labour of freemasons:
 - a level, grouped with a plumb line and a drawing or tracing board (or a set square);
 - a folding rule, a protractor and a parallel ruler;
 - a block of (rough) stone, with a saw and a tracing tool leaning against it, and vessels of water (for humidification of the stone during the work) resting on top of it; flanked by a table with bread and water, salt and sulphur (representing the contents of the Chamber of Reflection and the 1st degree²⁹⁷) and by a cubic stone with a Lewis²⁹⁸ in it (a symbol of the 2nd degree).
- A radiant sun and a crescent moon, both with human features, and a group of seven stars; often depicted against a backdrop of clouds. The sun and the moon are sometimes mistaken for a full and a crescent moon, and the five-pointed star with the letter 'G' is sometimes mistaken for a sun, as it often appears somewhat distorted.
- A miniature tracing board, consisting of two pillars topped by globes, standing on a chequered floor, with a radiant and flaming letter 'G' between them. The flames are sometimes distorted into a sun motif. The whole is often, but not always, enclosed by a circle or medallion.
- A waterfall streaming towards an ear of corn²⁹⁹, sprouting from the earth. This motif is often mistaken for rain coming from the heavens (clouds) or even acacia sprigs growing from a mount of earth. It is more likely a reference to the biblical story of Moses. After the Israelites left Egypt, they crossed the Red Sea and travelled through the wilderness toward Mount Sinai. They complained of hunger and thirst, so God told Moses to strike a rock with a rod, and water came pouring out. (Psalm 105:41: 'He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places [like] a river'.³⁰⁰) Here too, the image is somewhat distorted or oddly coloured: the water is sometimes green, resembling sprigs; the rocks blue, resembling clouds. The corn refers to the biblical story of Jephtha and the battle against the Ephraimites (Judges 12), as well as the password for the 2nd



Fig. 7.134: Punch bowl with the five masonic motifs and a scroll and ouroboros border, ca. 1790-1795, height 11.4 cm, diam. 27.3 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2009/48 (donation King George V, 1934). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Reverse sides of fig. 7.134.



Interior of fig. 7.134.



Fig. 7.135a-b: Examples of the border types that would have appealed to a masonic audience: a blue band with gilt stars (right) and scroll border with ouroboros and crossed torches (left).

degree: Shibboleth. The *Emulation Ritual* (1813) describes how 'Shibboleth denotes plenty, and is here [= on the tracing board of the 2nd degree] depicted by an ear of corn near to a fall of water.' This 'fall of water' can also refer to a crossable part of the river Jordan, where Jephtha made anyone who wished to cross speak the word 'Shibboleth'. He did so in order to discover Ephraimites, who would pronounce it as 'Sibbolet' and would then be killed. Although the ear of corn should be paired with the rocks, is often painted on top of the circle enclosing the miniature tracing board, even when the rocks aren't represented in the rest of the decoration scheme.

These 'five masonic motifs', for lack of a better name, are mostly found on punch bowls, but also on various parts of tea, coffee and chocolate services, as well as on sturdier, covered jugs and mugs of the twisted strap handle type. On larger objects like punch bowls and jugs, all five masonic motifs are usually represented, although the grouping of the different elements, colours and style vary. On smaller objects



Fig. 7.136: Plate with the five masonic motifs. Polychrome enamels, ca. 1780, height 3.7 cm, diam. 20.2 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M1969/260 (donation 1969). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

like teacups and saucers some symbols were omitted in order to fit the design onto the available surface, while a service as a whole would again represent all five. All items with this décor were probably produced for the American market around 1795-1810.

Commissioners could chose different patterns for border decorations. A blue band with gilt stars, although not exclusive to masonic export porcelain, would have especially appealed to a masonic clientele, as blue is the colour of the Order and a blue ceiling with stars would become the standard decoration of the lodge room around this time (fig. 7.135a). A scrolled green band, decorated with purple flowers and interceded by an ouroboros with two crossed torches, may have also appealed to a masonic audience (fig. 7.135b). The snake biting its tail represents the eternal life, the torches the flame of life. This symbolism is found in relation to some Dutch cemeteries in the end of the 18th century (where the torches are pointing downwards, though to represent life extinguished), as well as in at least Dutch one interior.³⁰¹ (It requires further investigation to determine if the symbol was common on a European level or particularly used by the Dutch, to determine if there may be a Dutch connection to this type of export porcelain.) In the border of the punch bowls, the torches are depicted sideways and almost shaped like clubs, their shape possibly misunderstood by the Chinese painter. This means they may have also been interpreted as clubs by the buyer, which could have added an extra layer of symbolism to their interpretation.³⁰²

Most decorations on masonic objects refer to the Master's degree, but the symbolism of the five masonic motifs points heavily to the 2nd degree, in which the lewis, flaming star, letter G, ear of corn and waterfall all play a part.

▫ *Tea and coffee services*

A plate in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry has a restrained decoration, showing only the bible and one standard group of tools. While the medallion around the columns and the rocks have also been omitted, the sun, moon and stars are present (fig. 7.136). Such variations could be the result of a request by the commissioner or artistic license taken by the painter. Two sets of tea bowls and saucers



Fig. 7.137a-f: Teacup and saucer with the five masonic motifs, ca. 1790. Teacup height 4.7 cm, diam. 8.9 cm; saucer height 2.8 cm, diam. 14.3 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2008/1214-1215. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.138: Tea bowl and saucer with the five masonic motifs. Polychrome enamels, ca. 1780, size not listed. Collection and photograph: Musée-Archives-Bibliothèque de la Grande Loge de France, Paris, inv.no. Apo.012.1982.1-2.

in the same collection dating around 1790, one of which illustrated here, are executed with a gilt border along the inside rim and a scroll and ouroboros border around the exterior rim (fig. 7.137).³⁰³

In the collection of the Winterthur Museum are parts of a larger tea, coffee or chocolate service, including cups and saucers, a covered sugar bowl and a tea caddy, each decorated with one of the five motifs (fig. 7.140a-d). A similar cup is kept in the collection of the Musée de la Maison des Maçons in Paris. This service has a very loose variation of the scroll and ouroboros border. The round medallion with the



Fig. 7.139: Coffee or cream jug with cover, decorated with the five masonic motifs. Polychrome enamels, ca. 1780, height 15.9 cm. Displayed at Christie's New York, sale 1621, 26-1-2006, lot 144. © Christie's Images Limited, 2015.



Fig. 7.140a-d: Pieces of a tea service with the five masonic motifs and a scroll and ouroboros border. Polychrome enamels, ca. 1790-1800, sugar bowl height 14.6 cm, tea canister height 14.6 cm, saucer diam. 14.3 cm, teacup height 6.5 cm. Collection: Winterthur Museum, Wilmington, inv.no. 2002.11.1a-b/2/3. Reproduced from: museumcollection.winterthur.com.

columns is not represented in this set, but it most likely appeared on a tea, coffee or chocolate pot, of which examples have appeared at auction (fig. 7.139).

A saucer dish from the collection of porcelain expert and author Elinor Gordon (fig. 7.141) is among the small objects decorated with all five symbol groups. Here the depiction of the flaming letter 'G' between the columns is curious, no longer recognizable as a western symbol. A cup and saucer set, together showing the five motifs, is kept in the collection of the Grande Loge de France. The saucer of that set shows the columns in a medallion with a scrolled border, topped with an ear of corn (fig. 7.138).

Two less common variations stand out. One is a bowl of this type executed with a pink interior rim decoration of a triangle pattern (fig. 7.142). Another is a bowl with a sculpted rim and blue underglaze border with flower and honeycomb pattern, both kept in the collection of the Musée de la Maison des Maçons. A similar bowl with an underglaze blue border is kept in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry (fig. 7.143). Their size suggests they may have been rinsing bowls.



Fig. 7.141: Saucer dish, decorated with the five masonic motifs. Polychrome enamels, ca. 1790-1800, diam. 20.3 cm. Elinor Gordon collection, displayed at Sotheby's New York, sale 8650, 23-1-2010, lot 283. Reproduced from: sothebys.com.



Fig. 7.142 (left): Bowl with the five masonic motifs. polychrome enamels, ca. 1795-1810, height 6 cm, diam. 13.5 cm. Collection: Musée de la Maison des Maçons, Paris, inv.no. F2-727. Reproduced from: glmf-musee.fr.

Fig. 7.143a-b: Bowl with the five masonic motifs and a sculpted rim, the outside of which is decorated with a scroll and ouroboros border, the inside with a pattern of flowers and honeycomb. Underglaze blue and polychrome enamels, ca. 1790, height 9.3 cm, diam. 11.7 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M1969/255 (donation 1969). Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.144: Punch bowl with the five masonic motifs and a gold border, the initials 'JD' between the columns on the inside of the bowl. Polychrome enamels with gilding, 1790-1800, height 11.8 cm, diam. 29.2 cm. Collection: Winterthur Museum, Wilmington, inv.no. 1956.555. Reproduced from: museumcollection.winterthur.org. (Also reproduced in: Palmer 1976, p. 119.)

▫ Punch bowls

Punch bowls decorated with the five motifs are by far the most common masonic export objects found in European and American collections. The medallion with the columns, as a reference to Solomon's Temple, is typically depicted on the inside bottom of the bowls, while the sun, moon, stars and rocks are usually evenly spaced along the interior rim, and the book and tools are evenly arranged on the outside of the body (see fig. 7.146 with a vine-leaf border and fig. 7.147 with a neo-classical border). There are simply too many surviving items to discuss here, so only items with additional or non-typical decorations are mentioned.³⁰⁴ For instance, a bowl with a simple gilt rim in the collection of the Winterthur Museum carries the monogram 'JD' between the columns (fig. 7.144).

While dozens of similar bowls survived, only in a few cases the provenance of the objects is known. A pair of punch bowls with the five masonic motifs in the collection of the Grand Lodge of New York once belonged to Columbian Commandery No. 1, a lodge of the Knights Templar (a popular masonic side degree) in New York. The pair is said to have been used in 1824 at the ceremonies when the marquis de Lafayette was made a member of this Commandery, but probably had been brought from China some decennia earlier.³⁰⁵

A punch bowl in the collection of the National Heritage Museum in Lexington was originally owned by George Doolittle (1759-1825) (fig. 7.145). He was a shoemaker who fought in the American Revolutionary War. Doolittle was commissioned a brigadier general in 1800 and served in the war of 1812. He was presented with the bowl by his fellow officers.³⁰⁶ A similar bowl in the collection of the New York Historical Society was presented to chancellor Robert R. Livingston (1746-1813), one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, for his 50th birthday.³⁰⁷



Fig. 7.145: Punch bowl with the five masonic motifs and a scroll and ouroboros border, presented to General George Doolittle (1759-1825). Polychrome enamels, 1790-1800, height 10.1 cm, diam. 23.1 cm. Collection of the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library, Gift of Frederick B. Doolittle, inv.no. 77.32. Photograph by David Bohl.

Fig. 7.146: Punch bowl with the five masonic motifs and a vine leaf border. Polychrome enamels, 1790-1800, height 11.7 cm, diam. 29.5 cm. Collection of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library, inv.no. GL2004.2566. Photograph by David Bohl.

Fig. 7.147: Punch bowl with the five masonic motifs and a neo-classical border. Polychrome enamels, 1790-1800. Reproduced from: fairfielddauction.com.



Fig. 7.148: Tankard with a twisted strap handle, decorated with the five masonic motifs and a scroll and ouroboros border, ca. 1780, height 12.7 cm, diam. 14.2 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2004/1521. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.

The Albany Institute for the History of Art has a bowl in its collection, having belonged to either Leonard Gansevoort (1751-1810) or his brother, general Peter Gansevoort (1749-1812).³⁰⁸ In the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art is a punch bowl with the five masonic motifs in combination with the inscription 'AM Eckfeldt', belonging to Adam Eckfeldt (1769-1852, a coiner at the Philadelphia Mint between 1795-1839), and his wife Maria Hahn. Eckfeldt was a member of Concordia Lodge No. 67 between 1795-1806 and Master of the Lodge in 1803.³⁰⁹ A punch bowl donated by King George V is kept in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in 1934 (fig. 7.134).³¹⁰ Richard Hely baron Hutchinson (died 1825), Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, owned a punch bowl which combined the five masonic motifs with the arms of Hutchinson, made between 1788 and 1797.³¹¹

▫ Mugs or tankards

Mugs decorated with the five masonic motifs all have a straight sided cylindrical body and a twisted strap handle. Most common are the variations with a rim decoration of a blue band with gold stars, such as examples in the Winterthur Museum (fig. 7.149).³¹² Among those in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry (fig. 7.148) and Musée de la Maison des Maçons are variations with a scroll and ouroboros border.³¹³ Examples with a vine leaf border are also known in American collections.³¹⁴ In some cases, like an example in the Musée de la Maison des Maçons, the border design was left out to allow more room for the central decoration. Again there are simply too many surviving pieces to warrant an individual discussion and provenance records are rare.



Fig. 7.149: Tankard with a twisted strap handle, decorated with the five masonic motifs, and a blue and gold star border. Polychrome enamels with gilding, 1790-1800, height 12.6 cm, length 14.5 cm, diam. 10.2 cm. Collection: Winterthur Museum, Wilmington, inv.no. 1956.557. Reproduced from: museumcollection.winterthur.org.



Fig. 7.150: Mug with a shaped and gilded handle, English porcelain in the style of Chinese export porcelain with a closed book motif, ca. 1800-1810, height 8.1 cm, diam. 8.5 cm. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London, inv.no. M2010/789. Reproduced from: freemasonry.london.museum.



Fig. 7.151: Covered jug with the five masonic motifs, twisted strap handles and a lid with a crouching lion finial. Peach coloured enamels with gilding, early 19th century, 26 cm. Hodroff Collection, Winterthur Museum, inv.no. L2003.2775.32. Photograph kindly supplied by Ron Fuchs. (Also reproduced in Fuchs 2005, p. 148.)

It is however, interesting to note that this design has travelled the world and returned home. A mug in the collection of the Library and Museum of Freemasonry is of English make, but is decorated with a closed book design after a Chinese export example (fig. 7.150). The body of the mug is separated into yellow and white panels by gold chain-patterned bands. The front panel depicts the closed book between a pair of compasses and set square.

▫ *Jugs or pitchers*

Lastly, the five masonic motifs are depicted on sturdy covered jugs or pitchers of the twisted strap handle type, the cover usually decorated with a crouching lion finial. In the collection of the Winterthur Museum is an example decorated in peach-coloured tones and richly gilded (fig. 7.151). All the elements of the motif are present on the body of the jug, with the columns in a roundel under the spout, while the rim and cover are decorated with a broad vine leaf border. A monogram is depicted on the sides of the jug. A similar jug is in the collection of the Musée de la Maison des Maçons (fig. 7.152) and another appeared at auction.³¹⁵ Variations with a vine leaf border on a clear underground are found in American collections.³¹⁶



Fig. 7.152 (detail): Covered jug with the five masonic motifs and the monogram 'JF', twisted strap handles and a lid with a crouching lion finial. Peach coloured enamels with gilding, ca. 1800, size not listed. Collection: Musée de la Maison des Maçons, Paris, inv.no. F2-1269. Reproduced from: glnf-musee.fr.

A pitcher in the Musée de la Maison des Maçons, with a blue and gold star border, carries the monogram 'JF' in between the columns under the spout. Similar items are found in other American collections and have appeared at auction.³¹⁷

■ Theme 13: Paul Revere certificate

In 1760 the well-known American patriot, goldsmith and engraver Paul Revere (1735-1818) became a member of St. Andrew's Lodge in Boston in 1760 and later acted as Worshipful Master.³¹⁸ He was instrumental in the creation of a Provincial Grand Lodge of Massachusetts under the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1769 which, as one of the first institutions to break its ties with Great Britain at the time, became independent in 1777. Between 1795 and 1797 Revere then acted as Grand Master of the new Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, established in 1792. During his artistic career Revere engraved lodge jewellery and seals, and designed several lodge documents. In 1772 he made a design for a lodge summons for St. Peter's Lodge in Newburyport (Massachusetts) (fig. 7.153), which was used again for St. Andrew's Lodge in 1784.

The summons has an ornamental border. At the top is a scene of two putti, wearing aprons and working with various tools on stone blocks. The arrangement of the tools, such as a saw resting against a cubic stone, is somewhat reminiscent of those depicted in the five masonic motifs. In the top corners are cartouches, one of which shows a beehive and the other a lodge plan or tracing board. From the sides of the border four sections of the columns are visible, and masonic tools (representing officers' jewels) are hanging from ribbons. Seated at the bottom is a cherub writing on a piece of paper.

In the collection of the National Heritage Museum in Lexington is a punch bowl with a decoration clearly inspired by Revere's design. The various parts of the border design have been copied as separated segments onto the exterior body of the bowl (fig. 7.154).³¹⁹ The inside of the bowl however, shows a classical temple with a dome, topped by a statue. One would expect to see Solomon's Temple here, but instead this building probably represents the Temple of Liberty, with the statue representing Fame declaring the (masonic) ideal of Liberty. Although the form of the temple on the bottom of the bowl is somewhat reminiscent of an oriental pagoda, on closer inspection it bears a likeness to the Capitol in Washington, designed in 1791-1793. The Capitol is considered the United States' own Temple of Liberty, and here illustrates the mixing of masonic and Unionist ideals. This would date the bowl ca. 1795 and illustrates that a spearhead border was used longer than previously assumed.³²⁰

■ Theme 14: Illustrations of Masonry (1801)

John Cole (died 1818) was the third generation of a British family of engravers, known for producing masonic prints. He established a 'Masonic Printing Office' at Fore Street in London. In his *Illustrations of Masonry* (1801) he included a print of a tracing board for the Second Degree, engraved by F. Curtis (fig.



Fig. 7.153: Paul Revere (1735-1818), lodge summons for St. Peter's Lodge in Newburyport (Massachusetts), 1777 (after a 1772 design). Reproduced from: americanantiquarian.org.

7.155). It illustrates a passage from the ritual for the Fellow Craft degree. After passing the pillars J and B in front of the temple, the candidate arrives at a winding staircase, where the Junior Warden will question him on the correct signs and words. The candidate then climbs the staircase, at the top of which he meets the Senior Warden, who will question him on the correct signs and words for the second degree before passing him to the Middle Chamber of the Temple. On top of the stairs are the doors to the Middle Chamber, a chequered floor before them and a radiant triangle with the letter 'G' above them. To the right



Fig. 7.154: Punch bowl, decorated after an engraving by Paul Revere; an image of the Capitol as the Temple of Liberty in the base of the bowl. Purple enamels with gilding, ca. 1795, 16.8 x 39.6 cm. Collection of the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library, Special Acquisitions Fund, inv.no. 84.7. Photograph by David Bohl.

hand side is an ear of corn and a waterfall underneath an arch. The imagery is reminiscent of the earlier 'Knock and you shall be opened' theme (compare figs. 7.124-7.125 above).

Several punch bowls have been decorated after Cole's design. One example was documented in the Mottahedeh collection (fig. 7.156). Here, Cole's design was supplemented with a circle in the middle of the stairs, including the letters 'T F P J' around a radiant sun, the letters separated by a bible, pair of compasses

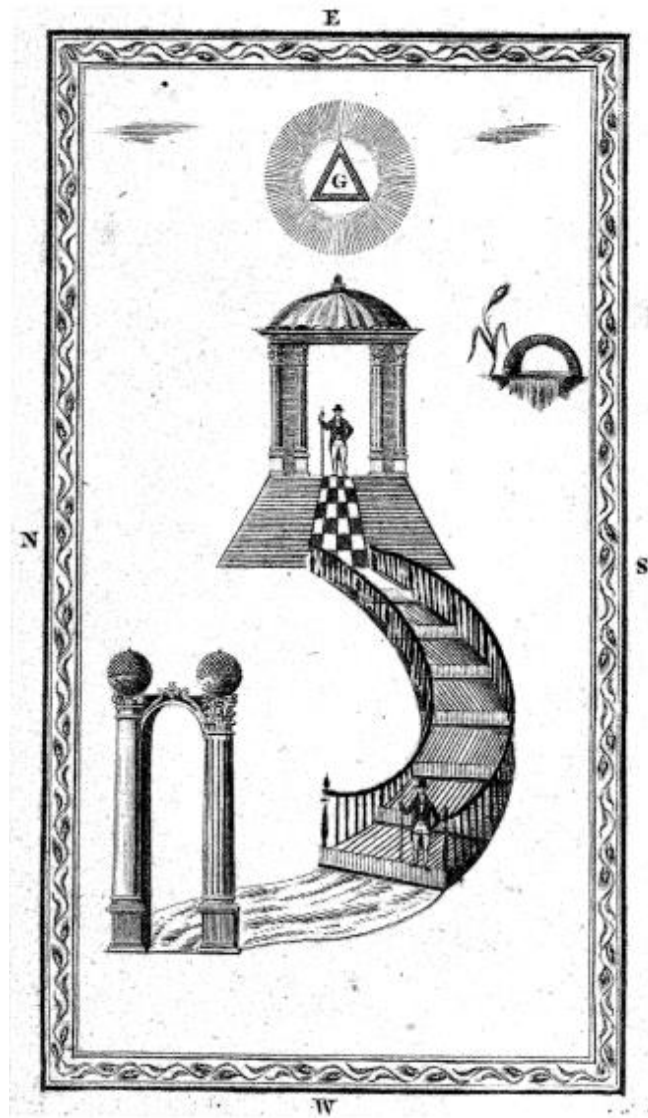


Fig. 7.155: Tracing board as depicted in John Cole, *Illustrations of Masonry* (1801). Reproduced from: MacNulty 1991, p. 78.



Fig. 7.156: Punch bowl decorated on the inside after a tracing board by John Cole's (1801) and on the outside with the five masonic motifs. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1805, diam. 29.8 cm. Mottahedeh collection, displayed at Sotheby's New York, sale 5281, 30-1-1985, lot 202 and sale 7520, 19-10-2000, lot 249. Reproduced from: Howard/Ayers 1978, no. 323a and sothebys.com (exterior).



Fig. 7.157: Punch bowl with an interior decoration after a tracing board by John Cole's (1801), repeated on the outside. Polychrome enamels with gilding, ca. 1805, size not listed, Collection: Lodge La Parfaite Intelligence et l'Étoile Réunies, Liège, Belgium. Reproduced from: *Cat. exhib. Brussels 1983*, p. 94, no. 384.

and square. It is a reference to the virtues: Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice, which the initiate will come to know on his masonic 'path'.³²¹ Around the central motif, various masonic tools and symbols derived from (British type) tracing boards have been placed, including three candles, a rough and a cubic stone, a tracing board and a circle with a centre point. The latter is a symbol of time and eternity, while the two parallel lines at its sides represent John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, while an open bible is represented by the curve between them. On top of this a standing Jacobs ladder. This symbol is often found on tracing boards for the 1st degree. The design along the inner rim and the outside of the bowl represent the 'five masonic motifs', discussed above. The border around the exterior rim includes a cord with tassels.

A similar design is found on a punch bowl in the collection of lodge La Parfaite Intelligence et l'Étoile Réunies in Liège (Belgium) (fig. 7.157). In this case, Cole's print has been depicted on the inside as well as the outside of the bowl.³²² Various masonic tools are depicted around the central motif, 'floating' in Chinese type 'curled' clouds.

■ Theme 15: Compasses & Square

Over time, the image of a set square crossed with a pair of compasses developed into the distinguishing sign of freemasonry, comparable to an emblem, trademark or logo. While often part of a more elaborate masonic decoration, the motif also appears as a central design on masonic export services.

▫ Compasses & square with hands

By the end of the 18th century, a tea service of the twisted strap handle model was produced with the simple emblem of a pair of compasses crossed with a set square (fig. 7.158). The decoration refers to the tools. A trowel and hammer are placed at the sides and the whole is crowned with a crescent moon. In some designs, a row of seven stars is added above the moon.³²³



Fig. 7.158: Parts of a tea and coffee service, decorated with a compasses-and-square design. A lychee finial on the teapot. Blue enamel with gilding, ca. 1800. Photograph: Carlsen Gallery Inc., carlsengallery.com.



Fig. 7.159: Plate and mug with a compasses-and-square type design and a monogram. Blue enamel with gilding, ca. 1800, diam. 13.3 cm. Displayed at Christie's New York, sale 2528, 24-1-2012, lot 157 (Frelinghuysen collection). © Christie's Images Limited, 2015.



Fig. 7.160: Cup plate, decorated with the Great Seal of the USA between a crossed pair of compasses and set square; the shield on the breast of the eagle shows the initials 'DW'. Blue enamel with gilding, ca. 1795, diam. 14 cm. Collection and photograph: The Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania, inv.no. 2003.6. Reproduced from: pagrandlodge.org.

▫ *Compasses & square with sun*

In a variation of the previous design, a sun replaces the clasped hands in the space between the compasses and square (fig. 7.159). A coffee pot in the National Heritage Museum shows this latter design in combination with monogram 'RMB'.³²⁴ In a private collection is a tea service of this type with the monogram 'JSB', which according to the provenance records belonged to Joseph Bartis of Philadelphia.³²⁵ Other examples with varying border decorations can be found in the collection of the Musée de la Maison des Maçons and have appeared at auction.³²⁶

▫ *Compasses & square with eagle*

After the American Revolutionary war, masonic imagery was often combined with symbols referring to the Union.³²⁷ An example is a plate in the collection of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, carrying the Great Seal of the USA in the space between the crossed square and compasses (fig. 7.160). It depicts an American eagle with spread wings, holding arrows in its right talon and an olive branch in its left. A shield on the breast of the eagle shows the initials 'DW'.³²⁸

■ *Theme 16: Masonic and non-masonic combinations*

Although masonic motifs are often combined with or separated by flower sprays, heraldic arms or crests, a combination of these motifs with non-related (narrative) scenes is rarer. A punch bowl in the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem for instance, is decorated with hunting scenes as well as the five masonic motifs (fig. 7.161). On the exterior of the bowl are two oval medallions, showing horsemen in riding dress, one riding at a five-barred gate and the other riding at speed with a raised whip. The image is loosely based on an engraving by James Seymour (1702-1752), *Jumping the Gate*, and may be derived from a secondary source based on that print.³²⁹ At the other sides, two circular medallions are decorated with images of country houses, while the masonic motifs separate these seemingly unrelated scenes. On the bottom of the interior of the bowl is the usual roundel with the two columns and the radiant letter 'G', the whole topped with an ear of corn. Unusual is that around this representation of the Temple various tools are spread, including an arch, plumb line, a pair of compasses and a set square, trowel, gavel and callipers. Also depicted are a coffin - with a skull and cross-bones, and a heart on top - as well as Solomon's seal (two interlaced triangles forming a six pointed star). Besides the right column is a sword piercing a rope or noose and besides the left column is a key. The provenance record states a Mrs. Theodore Brown as the former owner.



Fig. 7.161: Punch bowl decorated with two medallions with hunting scenes and two with country houses, combined with the five masonic motifs, originally owned by Mrs. Theodore Brown, ca. 1785-1800. Polychrome enamels with gilding, height 11.8 cm, diam. 29.5 cm. Collection: Peabody Essex Museum, Salem. Reproduced from: Sargent 2012, pp. 412-413.



Fig. 7.162a-c: Two punch bowls commissioned by Robert Edwards, member of Grand Master's Lodge No. 1, London, in 1827, with their transport crate and carrier nets. Diam. 56cm. Displayed at Sotheby's London, sale 5-11-2014, lot 337 / Cohen & Cohen, Tefaf Maastricht, 2015. Bowls and detail reproduced from: sothebys.com. Photograph of the crates by C.J.A. Jörg with kind permission of Cohen & Cohen, London.

A similar bowl, depicting the same hunting scene without the masonic motifs, was part of the Mottahedeh collection.³³⁰

Very unusual is the combination of Chinese figurative designs and masonic emblems, found on a set of punch bowls which appeared at auction (see fig. 7.162a-c). Both bowls are identical, each decorated in the interior with a medallion enclosing the compasses and square motif discussed above. Here, a radiant sun is depicted between the tools, flanked by a trowel and a gavel and topped with moon and stars. Below the tools is the text 'Grand Masters Lodge No. 1'. The medallions are surrounded by a Chinese scene, depicting an assembly of scholars, ladies and attendants in a fenced garden with bamboo and rocks. These are shown below a wide band of birds and flowers against a gilt ground. The exterior of the bowls is similarly decorated with a shaped foliate cartouche enclosing the masonic emblem, framed by flowers and the beribboned 'eight treasures', alternating with shaped floral panels enclosing ladies, scholars and warriors, all below a band of shaped cartouches with dragons and cranes.

Rare is that these bowls were preserved in their original wooden crate and carrier nets. Also rare is that the provenance of the bowls is clear: Lodge No. 1 is listed in Lanes Masonic records as founded in London in 1756 and formally constituted by the Grand Lodge of England in 1759. The bowls came into possession of the lodge in 1827, when they were acquired by lodge member Robert Edwards from Canton.³³¹ The lodge itself offered them at auction in 2014.

◆ *No Dutch involvement?*

The variety of shapes of masonic porcelain is no different from that of armorial export porcelain. Surviving objects mainly include tea services, mugs, jugs and punch bowls. Figurines were not mentioned in the reviewed records and none with masonic connotations are known to have survived. Some items were personalized by combining masonic decorations with family crests or monograms, and reflect the expression of affiliation to the Order by the porcelain's commissioner. In some cases the design incorporated a blank space, where monograms could still be added, while in other cases the composition was compromised and they were added anyway. Most of the surviving objects however, are decorated with a purely masonic design, suggesting they were aimed at a wider buyer's market.

The decorative iconography applied to masonic export ware was directly derived from the symbolism of the masonic ritual. The designs were therefore often reminiscent of contemporary regalia (aprons, jewels) and/or the illustrations of tracing boards in ritual manuals. By the use of this particular iconography, these objects expressed the beliefs, virtues and ideals held by members of the Order, and served their owner as a reminder of his duties as a mason in both the lodge and the profane world. Even the choice of a blue border with gilt stars - although not exclusive to masonic commissions - would have especially appealed to freemasons, reminding them of the typical ceiling decoration of lodge rooms. Dated masonic prints and certificates suggest a particular decoration could not have been introduced earlier than its publication or issue (*ante quem* principle). Border designs, however, show that the same masonic designs were sometimes applied several decades after their first issue.

The above overview suggests that the production of masonic porcelain started with British commissions around 1750, followed by Scandinavian commissions around 1760 (see table 7.1). Most of the arms depicted on the pieces discussed are of British origin, while the Library and Museum of Freemasonry in London (the collection of the Grand Lodge of England) now holds the largest collection of masonic export porcelain. This indicates that the British held their dominant position in the trade - at least until 1785, when the Americans joined in and a whole new masonic market opened up. Most of the surviving objects date from the last two decades of the 18th century, suggesting a sudden surge in orders and popularity. This may have been due to the general boom in freemasonry in Europe and America around that time, when it became fashionable to display one's membership of the Order through personal objects. The last important commissions seem to have taken place in the early 19th century. The chaos created by the Napoleonic wars did obstruct the VOC trade through Batavia, but not that between America and China.

While the Dutch were key players in the masonic lacquer trade, they seem to have been less involved, if at all, in the masonic porcelain trade. Orders from lodges in the Netherlands have not been recorded in the consulted literature and, contrary to the lacquer commissions discussed in chapter 7, the (incomplete) archives of the lodges in Batavia have not revealed any commissions for masonic export porcelain either.³³² From inventories dating between 1775 and 1834 it is clear that Chinese porcelain was used daily in lodges La Vertueuse and La Fidèle Sincérité, but porcelain with masonic decorations is not specifically mentioned until the first quarter of the 19th century. The inventories of La Fidèle Sincérité list a 'large Japanese masonic punch bowl' in the years 1819-1822.³³³ Then in 1825-1829 a 'Large porcelain bowl with masonic figures' is mentioned.³³⁴ It is likely that both descriptions refer to the same object and that the responsible lodge officer simply confused Japanese and Chinese porcelain while writing the inventories. No Japanese export porcelain is known to have been decorated with masonic designs - although it cannot be ruled out that such objects might still be identified in the future.

Kroes points out that by the 1760s the number of Dutch orders for armorial porcelain were already declining, which may have been a contributing factor, but surely is not the whole story.³³⁵ Does the fact that the English Grand Lodge did not acknowledge the Dutch Grand Lodge as a sovereign body until 1770 and/or the agreement in 1771 not to found lodges on each other's territories, have anything to do with it?

	British	Scandinavian	American	Origins unclear
1750s	- Masonic tools - Bible & Compasses			
1760s	- Premier Grand Lodge seals - Tringham design - Pulsanti Aprietur - Crest of Devan impaling Hellord	- Salominiska Logen seal - Crest of Lehman		
1770s	- Antients' Grand Lodge arms - Various lodge arms - Dermott's Royal Arch - Three Grand Masters motif			
1780s	- Rowling Kent design - Francis Jukes design - Lodge of Emulation		- Masonic virtues	
1790s	- Masonic advertisements - Oval tracing board - Jachin and Boaz - King Zerubbabel - Dundee Arms summons	- Monument & ship motif	- Paul Revere summons	- Embraced by acacia - Columns & monogram - Five masonic motifs
1800s	- John Cole design		- Compasses & square motif	
1810	- Lodge True Friendship		- Union Lodge	

It almost seems as if the trade in masonic export goods was being divided up by some agreement, with British, Scandinavian and later the American freemasons supplying porcelain and the Dutch supplying lacquer ware, perhaps to be traded against each other? The country of origins of pictorial sources may be a 'red herring' as to for which country the export objects were intended. If the Dutch ordered lacquer ware decorated after an engraving of the foreign *Jachin and Boaz*, surely they'd have no problem with porcelain decorated after foreign engravings either. But the lack of documentation at least suggests that the Dutch were not seriously involved.

It is clear however, that the Canton lodges and the various East India Companies were inextricably linked. An international mix of lodge members was involved in the porcelain trade for their companies or engaged in private trade. Although there are few documents linking specific people to masonic commissions, there was clearly an international social network in place to support such activities for several decades. Men like Grill, Grubb and Lehman were probably key players for the Scandinavians. As for the Dutch, Van Braam Houckgeest was in the right place at the right time.

Like masonic lacquer ware, the very existence of this type of export porcelain raises questions about the nature of cultural exchange: from the 1750s onwards Chinese artists came into contact with western images with a specific ritual context. They copied the unfamiliar western symbols from lodge certificates, illustrations in ritual manuals and other masonic prints, while the rules of the Order clearly prohibited showing such 'secrets' to the non-initiated. It is tempting to question if friendships between men of different nationalities would have allowed the initiation of a Chinese man into the brotherhood, before the formal history of Chinese freemasonry began in the middle of the 19th century. However, there is no archival evidence and local authorities at the time actively guarded against the transmission of western (religious) beliefs into China. While many questions remain, we do know that the commercial exchange between East and West in general had a large impact on Chinese society and arts. The contact with freemasonry may have contributed more significantly to that impact than we were previously aware.

By the end of the 18th century, the demand for export porcelain had led to such mass production of goods, that it affected the quality of individual pieces. Meanwhile, European porcelain had developed to a high standard, with factories better able to cater quickly to the changing fashions in the West. Porcelain with masonic themed transfer prints was readily available in Europe and the United States. In 1822, following many years of troubled trading and a recent devastating fire which required the Batavian government to heavily invest in the trade post, the Dutch factory in Canton was suspended and replaced by a consulate,

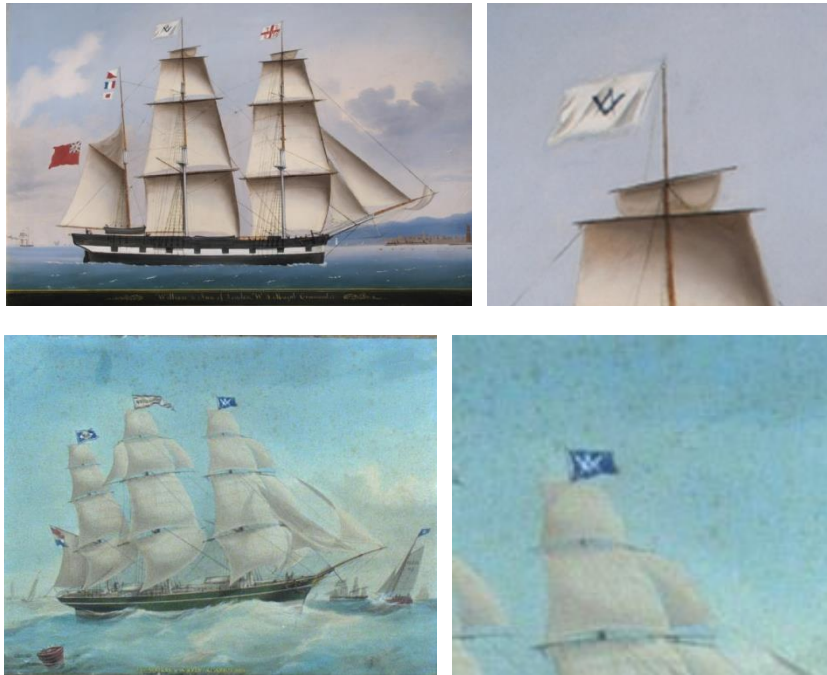


Fig. 7.163: M(ichele) Renault (active 1840-1868), The English ship 'William and Anne', off Livorno, dated 1855. Collection: Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London. Reproduced from: bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings.

Fig. 7.164: Jacob Spin (1806-1875), Fregat ship sailing in the wind, watercolour, 1864. Gift by the artist to his daughter, Anna Spin, on the occasion of her marriage to Gottlieb Wilhelm Weigel, 21-4-1864. Collection: Maritiem Museum Rotterdam, inv.no. P1291. Reproduced from: maritiemdigital.nl.

which would operate until 1840. A fire then permanently destroyed the international factories in Canton in 1856.

By that time Canton had lost its importance, as other ports now also catered to western traders. In the 1840s the Treaty Ports of Hong Kong, Shanghai, Amoy, Foochow and Ningpo attracted western merchants. Developments in ship building, such as the introduction of the *klipper* in the middle of the 19th century, were also partly responsible for a decline in the China trade, as these could carry more cargo per journey and actually caused an over-supply of goods. By the second half of the 19th century the tradeclimate had completely changed.³³⁶ Although the export of porcelain continued, it did so in much lesser quantities, while most masonic porcelain was now produced locally in Europe and the United States.

It is interesting to note that marine paintings from the middle of the 19th century onwards show ships flying a masonic flag with the compasses and square 'logo' (figs. 7.163-7.164). So far mainly American and a few British ships have been identified as carrying this flag, as well as a rare Dutch example.³³⁷ This is an indication that for the owner or captain, marking one's affiliation to the Order was somehow favourable to international (trade) relations. Perhaps it was a sign to invite fellow brethren to visit, a way of attracting business from freemasons in the port of call, or an alternative choice of flag for a ship's owner who did not have many other affiliations to show. There are many anecdotes of freemasons receiving preferential treatment in situations of conflict or as prisoners of war, so perhaps the flag was also a means of alerting the enemy (military, pirates) or of securing assistance. Here too, information is lacking and the subject deserves to be researched further.

◆ *Function of masonic export porcelain*

Kroes notes in his standard work on Dutch armorial porcelain, why it was so popular during the 18th century. As more and more people started to drink tea, export porcelain functioned in European homes as a status symbol, a fashionable and decorative object, which could also commemorate a special event in the owner's life, such as a wedding, or mark time spent in the East.³³⁸ Masonic export porcelain however, also had a distinctive ritual element, as the Table Lodge with its ceremonial eating and drinking is the closing

section of the masonic ritual itself (see chapter 2). Dining services, wine glasses, punch bowls and tea services were all used for the Table Lodge, and the more informal drinking session that often followed. Masonic export porcelain was therefore designed to be suitable for use both at lodge meetings (in member's houses, hired accommodations or lodge buildings) and within private homes (intimate circles of family and friends, whose lodge affiliation was known to the host).

Because of its ritual character and symbolism, this export ware (like all masonic objects) shares some characteristics with religious objects: there is a combined decorative, functional and ritual aspect within one object. Previous studies of armorial porcelain have overlooked not only the ritual aspect, but also the importance of the element of allusion (see chapter 2), so characteristic for the material culture of freemasonry as a whole. Decorations of masonic spaces and objects often have an ambiguous character, in which only the initiated recognize references to symbols used or phrases spoken in the masonic ritual. Often a 'profane' decoration, such as a perfectly harmless flower spray, would be placed on one side of a bowl, a masonic symbol on the other, so that either side could be displayed, while the other remained unseen. The owner could choose to dramatically 'reveal' the masonic side to a particular visitor. Or he could use the object within a private circle, as a reminder of the customs and ideals shared within the lodge, both evoking and emphasising the bond between brethren. As described by Snoek, this aspect of revelation and stimulating intellectual play with the visitor is also seen in the design of masonic gardens.³³⁹ By owning masonic porcelain, the owner expressed not only his affiliation to the Order and his belief in masonic ideals, but also his understanding of allusions in decorative symbolism, and more importantly his belonging to an intellectual, enlightened civil society, which communicated through such allusive imagery.³⁴⁰

To be classified as armorial porcelain therefore seems too limiting a label. Masonic and fraternal organisations, like the Order of the Cincinnati, share many characteristics, as does their material culture, including porcelain. This is why they are studied as a group in the field of Religious Studies. It seems logical to follow this classification and regard 'masonic and fraternal' items as an individual category of export porcelain. That will allow a better understanding of the function and meaning of these objects, and will stimulate the exploration of the historical role of fraternal networks in the international trade.

◆ *Porcelain in the CMC collection*

As explained in the introduction, a wish to know more about the Japanese lacquer boxes and Chinese porcelain bowls in the collection of the CMC prompted this exploration of the role of freemasonry in the trade with Asia (see Foreword, figs. 7-9). Based on the above overview of the many different decors, it is now clear that both bowls in the Dutch collection are painted with the five masonic motifs and were probably produced circa 1790-1800 for the American market.

It is not clear when these bowls were acquired. The 19th century exhibition and collection catalogues of the Order of Freemasons under the Grand East of the Netherlands do not list Chinese porcelain and there is no indication they were already part of the collection before 1940. Considering the fate of such fragile items when the Nazi's looted the Freemasons' Hall in The Hague, it seems more likely that they were acquired or donated after 1945 when efforts were made to rebuild the collection.



Fig. 7.165: Masonic apron of John Flagg Fry, a member of St. John's Lodge No. 1 in Providence (Rhode Island), 'wrought in Canton, China'. Embroidered silk with metal threads and fringe, ca. 1799. Collection: Doylestown Lodge F. & A.M. No. 245, Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Photograph: The Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania.

7.7. Masonic export textiles

Porcelain was just one of many commodities traded from China. Embroidery, mostly executed by male artists, was also exported from Canton during the 18th century. Orders included religious clothing for the Catholic mass, intended for use both in Asia and Europe.³⁴¹ The trade in such export textiles is a somewhat neglected field of study, but there is some evidence that this export may have included a few rare masonic items.³⁴²

◆ Chinese aprons

There is only one apron which according to its provenance record was 'wrought in the City of Canton, China, in the year 1799' (fig. 7.165).³⁴³ It belonged to John Flagg Fry (1773-1809), a member of St. John's Lodge No. 1 in Providence (Rhode Island). He can be identified as an employee of the firm Browne and Ives (formerly Browne and Benson).³⁴⁴ The apron was probably brought to America on the ship *Ann Hope*, which carried porcelain and other goods for Brown and Ives and its trade partners from Canton in 1798-1799. John Flagg's son, John William Fry, Worshipful Master of Doylestown Lodge no. 245 in Pennsylvania, presented the apron to his own lodge on 11-2-1859.

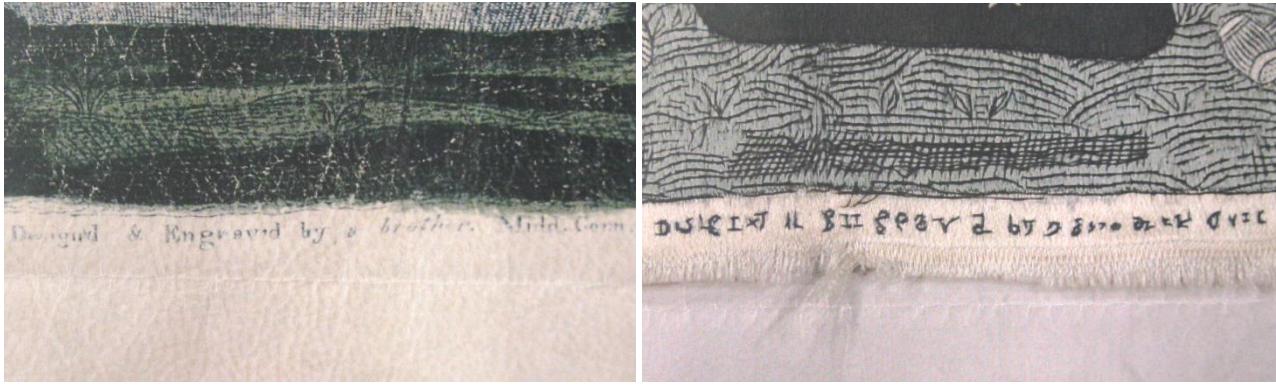
The decoration of this apron, executed in embroidered silk, shows a miniature tracing board as commonly used in America around 1800. The central motif consists of three candle sticks on an elevation of three steps, flanked by columns. Sun, moon and stars are hidden under the flap which is decorated with a radiant all-seeing eye. Surrounding the columns are various symbols, which to the right are from the top down: a pickaxe, a rough stone, a rolled up plumb line, Jacob's ladder, level and a beehive. Beneath the steps are a coffin with a scythe, an acacia sprig and a skull with crossed bones. Continued clockwise are a sword pointing at a heart, a shoe, a winged hourglass, a ruler, a gavel, Euclid's 47th proposition, and a bridge. Symbols like the hourglass, shoe, sword and heart were introduced into the York Rite in American



Fig. 7.166: Apron printed with an engraving by James T. Porter, Middletown, Connecticut, ca. 1820-1825. Printed silk. Collection of the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library (Gift of Harold Burns), inv.no. 75.14.



Fig. 7.167: Apron decorated with a miniature type tracing board, after an engraving by James T. Porter, ca. 1820-1825. Embroidered silk, 36.8 x 45.7 cm. Collection of the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library (Gift of John M. Bachulus), inv.no. 82.11. Photograph by David Bohl.



Details of figs. 7.166-7.167.

freemasonry by Thomas Smith Webb (1771-1819), and popularized through his publication *The Freemason's Monitor or Illustrations of Masonry* (1797). The book was issued in several later editions and followed up by his pupil, Jeremy Ladd Cross (see chapter 6).

As is also the case with Japanese lacquer and Chinese porcelain some details in the design again appear to be somewhat distorted, as the embroiderer was not only unfamiliar with freemasonry, but with western objects altogether. Note for instance the odd perspective of the coffin, the rough stone, the hourglass and the pickaxe. The faces of the sun and the moon, as well as the all-seeing eye could be considered as having oriental features. Another indication that the apron was indeed made in China is the choice of particular blue shades for the chequered floor, the type of stitching and the use of metal strips, rather than metal threads.³⁴⁵

An apron in the collection of the National Heritage Museum is also believed to have been made in China (fig. 7.166).³⁴⁶ It has a pleated silk border and is embroidered with a miniature tracing board type decoration after an engraving by freemason James T. Porter (circa 1785-1826) of Middletown, Connecticut, which appears on another apron in the same collection (fig. 7.167).

As usual the central motif is placed on a set of steps flanked by two pillars topped with globes, but in between these pillars is another set, showing the three building orders topped with personifications of Faith, Hope and Charity. On the chequered floor are the usual altar with bible, compasses and square, and the three lights, although the five pointed star is here found on the altar and the letter 'G' superimposed in gild on one of the columns. The whole is surrounded by various symbols, including a book with a sword, an urn, a winged hourglass, a sword pointing at a heart, a circle with a centre point topped by a book, Euclid's 47th proposition, a cubic stone, a rough stone, a beehive, Jacob's ladder, Noah's Ark, and an anchor. In the foreground is a coffin with a spade and a gavel. The sun, moon and stars are depicted under the flap, while on the flap itself is a radiant all-seeing eye.

The artist made such a faithful attempt at copying the original that even the lettering under the print appears in the embroidery, albeit in illegible script. It's a clear indication that the artist could not read Latin script.

◆ *Two identical aprons*

Previous publications have discussed two identical aprons in the collection of the CMC in The Hague, dating from around 1800-1825.³⁴⁷ Both are made of white satin and are beautifully embroidered with coloured silk and metal threads (fig. 7.168a-b and 7.170). Around one apron is a satin border of (faded) yellow and black silk in a triangle pattern, associated with the Dutch lodge Le Préjugé Vaincu in Deventer on top of an original blue border. The other apron only has the original blue border. The embroidery on the aprons was again probably copied after the design of a British or American lodge certificate, which as discussed before often included personifications of masonic virtues on top of columns (see figs. 7.78-7.79). Common were

depictions of Faith, Hope and Charity, or Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, but here a curious combination of Wisdom, Strength and Charity was chosen.

On the flap of both aprons, the embroidery depicts an all-seeing eye, flanked by ribbons and foliage, from which masonic tools are hanging: a pair of compasses and a set square, two crossed feathers, a hammer and a plumb, a trowel, two crossed staffs, a level and two crossed keys. These represent officers' jewels. Beneath the flap are the sun, moon and seven stars, while in the centre the Bible with square and compasses is depicted, enclosing the letter 'G'. From the compasses and square are hanging ribbons with other tools: a trowel, hammer and level. To the left of the bible is a beehive, to the right is Noah's Ark, and above Jacob's ladder.

In the foreground of the scene is a chequered floor between two columns. The left carries a Minerva, recognizable by her helmet, spear and shield, representing Wisdom. The right carries a woman holding a *fascis* (= bundle of branches), representing Strength. In the middle of the floor is a woman with bare breasts and two children, representing Love in the sense of Charity. Behind the right column is what seems like a smaller pillar, because of the odd perspective, but it is meant to depict a third column, thus completing the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian building orders.

By the foot of the right column is a small figure working with hammer and chisel on a rough stone, which identifies him as an Apprentice. A second man by the left column is measuring the angle of a cubic stone, identifying him as a Fellow of the Craft. These figures appear as putti on a certificate used by several lodges of the Grand Orient de France (fig. 7.169),³⁴⁸ suggesting the apron design could be a composite of several earlier sources. Nearby the foot of the right column is a small tree, no doubt representing an acacia sprig. In the foreground is a coffin with a scythe, and to the right a skull with bones. These *memento mori* symbols identify the apron as that of a Master Mason. The acacia marks the temporary grave where Hiram was buried by his murderers. The left column seems to be connected with a smaller pillar or tower, standing on a green patch in the otherwise blue floor. This is probably an interpretation of Hiram's permanent grave, marked with a monument.³⁴⁹

In the middle of the floor are three candles. The objects scattered on the rest of the floor are less easy to identify. From left to right these depict: a rough stone with a compass on top, a shape which could represent a tracing board, a gavel and a trowel, a pair of compasses and a set square, and an object which may be a chalk bucket with a shovel, a pickaxe and a shape resembling a vat, possibly a very distorted cubic stone. Along the underside of the scene is a balustrade.

The fact that two almost identical aprons exist, points to serial production. Fortunately, in this case one of the apron's provenance is well known. The one with the original blue border belonged to Hendrikus Veuger (1786-1847), who was born in the small Dutch town of Meppel (fig. 7.171).³⁵⁰ He was a 'commissionair' (merchant) and lived on Haarlemmerdijk 327 in Amsterdam when he was initiated into the lodge La Paix in 1816.³⁵¹ It is interesting that he received the three basic degrees at the same time 'by communication'; indicating that the actual initiation ceremony was left out, as was usual with those about to embark on a (long) journey. Veuger was not mentioned in the lodge records again until two months later, on 5-2-1817, and he was frequently noted as 'absent' between 1816 and 1823, although his location was not recorded.³⁵² Veuger tried to resign from the lodge on 26-9-1820 due to his frequent travels, but his request was denied because he was now a Master of Ceremonies, which meant that he was required to first finish his term as lodge Officer.³⁵³ On 10-10-1821 he was initiated into the Rose Croix degree of the Chapter of La Paix (Fig. 7.172).³⁵⁴ Veuger had to wait until March 1823 before he was eventually discharged from membership. By that time he had moved to the small town of Runerwold and embarked on another foreign journey.³⁵⁵ In 1827 Veuger married Neeltje Blaauboer, daughter of the local Burgomaster, and together they ran a shop in the 'Hoge Huys' (Tall House) in St. Maartensburg.³⁵⁶ It is not clear if he continued to do business in Amsterdam, or whether he ever became a member of a lodge again, either in the Netherlands or abroad. Veuger died on 27-1-1847 in Zijpe.³⁵⁷



Fig. 7.168a-b. Two master aprons depicting Wisdom, Strength and Charity, ca. 1800-1825, the right having belonged to Hendrikus Veuger. Silk embroidered satin, silver and gold threads, 44 x 44 cm. Collection CMC 'Prins Frederik', The Hague, inv.nos. 645 and 15431. Photograph by Kroon & Wagtberg Hansen, The Hague.



Fig. 7.169: Certificate issued by Lodge L'Union Parfaite in St. Louis, Senegal, early 19th century. Reproduced in: Hamill/Gilbert 1991, p. 126.



Fig. 7.170: Detail of the apron of Hendrikus Veuger, 1800-1825. Collection CMC 'Prins Frederik', The Hague, inv.no. 15431. Photograph by Kroon & Wagtberg Hansen, The Hague.

At some point during his life, Veuger also came into the possession of a Japanese lacquer box with a masonic design (see chapter 6), in which he used to keep his apron.³⁵⁸ This suggests that he may have travelled to Asia, but there are no records of his travels.³⁵⁹ If he did not go there himself, lodge La Paix had many members who were merchants and travellers to the East, including Musquetier, Hooft and Ogtrop (see chapter 6). One of his lodge brothers could have ordered the box on his behalf, or presented it to him as a gift.

When comparing the design of the two identical aprons with that of John Flagg Fry discussed above, some similarities stand out: the way the coffin with scythe, the beehive with little arrows for bees, and the rounded shape of Noah's Ark have been executed, as well as the blue colours of the chequered floor, and



Detail of fig. 7.170.

the metal strips used to embroider the columns. The all-seeing eye and the figures depicted on the columns seem to have a non-western look. It all suggests these aprons may have also been made by an Asian artist. An indication that at least the design of the two aprons was available in China after 1800, is a magnificent punch bowl in the collection of the Museum of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania (fig. 7.173). Fortunately, in this case the provenance of the bowl is also traceable.

At the time of the founding of Union Lodge No. 121 in Philadelphia, two of its members - Henry Toland Jr (1785-1863) and Caleb Ash - were abroad. They could therefore not personally sign the request for a letter of constitution to the Grand Lodge. Toland was a merchant in the Philadelphia grocery firm Toland and Son.³⁶⁰ From circa 1808 he travelled to China as a supercargo, where he was in business with Ash, about whom more information is not yet available.³⁶¹ Not being present at this key moment was apparently a big thing to these two men. On 2-4-1812 they wrote to their brethren requesting to be formally listed as founding members despite their absence. The request was granted and the minutes of the lodge noted on 16-4-1812:

A letter was received and read from Brothers Henry Toland Jr., Caleb Ash, and William Smith, entreating the Lodge to accept a large handsome China bowl, whereon the Secretary was directed to return the unanimous thanks of the Lodge to the brethren for their handsome present, and to congratulate them on their late safe arrival from abroad.³⁶²

The third benefactor mentioned can probably be identified as William Smith (1768-after 1820), captain of the ship *Albatross*. The Chinese punch bowl passed into ownership of the politician Richard Vaux (1816-1895), a member of Union Lodge between 1844 and 1895. It is believed that punch continued to be served



Fig. 7.171: Portrait of Hendrikus Veuger (1786-1842), ca. 1800-1820. Private collection. Photograph by Kroon & Wagtberg Hansen, The Hague.



Fig. 7.172: Certificate for the Rose Croix degree, issued to Veuger by the Chapter of lodge La Paix in Amsterdam, 15-12-1816. Collection: CMC 'Prince Frederik', The Hague, inv.no. E 2-114. Photograph by Kroon & Wagtberg Hansen, The Hague.



Fig. 7.173: Chinese porcelain punch bowl with masonic decoration, donated to Union Lodge No. 121, Pennsylvania, in 1812, height 24.13 cm, diam. 55 cm, able to hold 9 gallons. Collection and photograph: The Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania.

at the table lodge in this bowl up until 1906.³⁶³ Vaux's descendants then donated the bowl to the Museum of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1948.

The decoration of the bowl must have been taken after the same pictorial source as the two identical aprons discussed, as the design is strikingly similar. Note how even the clothes of the personifications are executed in the same colours. Similar also, are the distortions of some of the symbols: the bible is no longer book-shaped, the coffin is again disproportioned as are the various tools on the floor, Noah's Ark has a rounded, tucked-in effect and, here too, little arrows are swarming around the beehive.³⁶⁴ The bowl is executed in a very fine manner, suggesting it may have been produced in the same Chinese porcelain



Fig. 7.174: Apron presented to George Washington by Elkanah Watson and M. Cassoul in 1782. French embroidery on silk, size not listed. Collection: Alexandria Washington Lodge, Frederiksborg. Photograph kindly supplied by Mark Tabbert.

Fig. 7.175: Apron presented to George Washington by the marquis de Lafayette in 1784. French embroidery on silk, 53.98 cm × 41.75 cm. Courtesy of the Brethren of Mt. Nebo Lodge #91, Ancient Free & Accepted Masons, established December, 1811; Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

workshop of Syng Chong as the True Friendship bowl discussed earlier, which is of a similar size and date (fig. 7.41).

◆ **George Washington's Mark Master apron**

One of the most iconic objects from American and masonic history, to many a symbol of masonic virtues and their influence on the early development of the USA, is George Washington's apron (fig. 7.177).³⁶⁵ The former president's affiliation with freemasonry is well documented. Washington was a member of the Frederiksborg and Alexandria Lodges, and many of his formal appearances were marked with a masonic element.³⁶⁶ Although much of his association with freemasonry has been idealized and many tales cannot be verified, his surviving correspondence documents his sincere affiliation to the Order and its ideals, while several masonic objects are associated with Washington's estate.

In 1782 the freemasons Elkanah Watson (1758-1842) and François-Corentin Cassoul, owners of an international trading company in Nantes (France), presented Washington with a silk apron, said to have been embroidered by French nuns (fig. 7.174).³⁶⁷ In 1784 a second apron, a gift by the French Grand Lodge, was presented to Washington by the marquis de Lafayette (Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Mortier, 1757-1834) on his visit to Mount Vernon (fig. 7.175). After Washington's death in 1799, his estate papers mentioned '1 Japan box containing a masons apron', which - assuming this was not one of the two aprons he received as gifts - would bring their total to three and fits the number of surviving pieces.³⁶⁸ All these items remained in the possession of Martha Washington, until after her death parts of the Washington estate were sold in 1802.³⁶⁹

The 'Watson-Cassoul' apron is believed to have been purchased by Burdett Ashton (1747-1814), husband of Washington's niece, Ann (1752-1777). He passed it on to his wife's cousin, major Lawrence Lewis (1767-1839), probably along with a masonic sash and a book shaped lacquer box. Lewis in turn donated all three objects to Alexandria Washington Lodge No. 22 on 3 June 1812 (fig. 7.176).³⁷⁰ The apron is embroidered with a radiant cloud carrying a golden triangle with the letters 'JHWH', surrounded by the



Fig. 7.176: Chinese, book-shaped lacquer box with Mark Master symbolism, in which according to tradition one of Washington's aprons was kept. Black lacquer and gold on wood, inlaid with ivory panels painted with flowers, ca. 1800, size not listed. Collection Alexandria Washington Lodge No. 22. Photo (top) kindly supplied by Mark Tabbert / Reproduced from (bottom): Harris 1998, p. 4.

faces of seven winged cherubs. This symbolism suggests a connection to the *Écossois* degrees, in which the golden triangle with the *tetragrammaton* buried beneath the Temple plays a role (see chapter 2). It is an indication that Washington may have been initiated into this degree. Behind the cloud are two crossed flags, one French Bourbon flag and one United States flag. Under the flap is a cord with love knots and tassels, a gavel hanging from it on a ribbon with a bow. The gavel indicates the apron belongs to a Worshipful Master, which is indeed a position Washington held in Alexandria Lodge in 1788-1789. The box is executed in black Chinese lacquer on wood, painted in gold with a lattice pattern border, in which six oblong ivory panels with rounded corners have been inlaid and painted with flower patterns.³⁷¹ The lid of the box is decorated in gold with masonic symbols: a set square and a pair of compasses on one side, and on the other side a beehive in a circle with the letters 'HTWSSTKS'. This is an abbreviation of 'Hiram the Widdow's Son Sent To King Solomon', a text referring to the ritual of the Mark Master's degree. Part of the iconography of this degree is a keystone in the vault underneath the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Temple, bearing this motto.³⁷² It has previously been suggested that he may have received the Mark Master

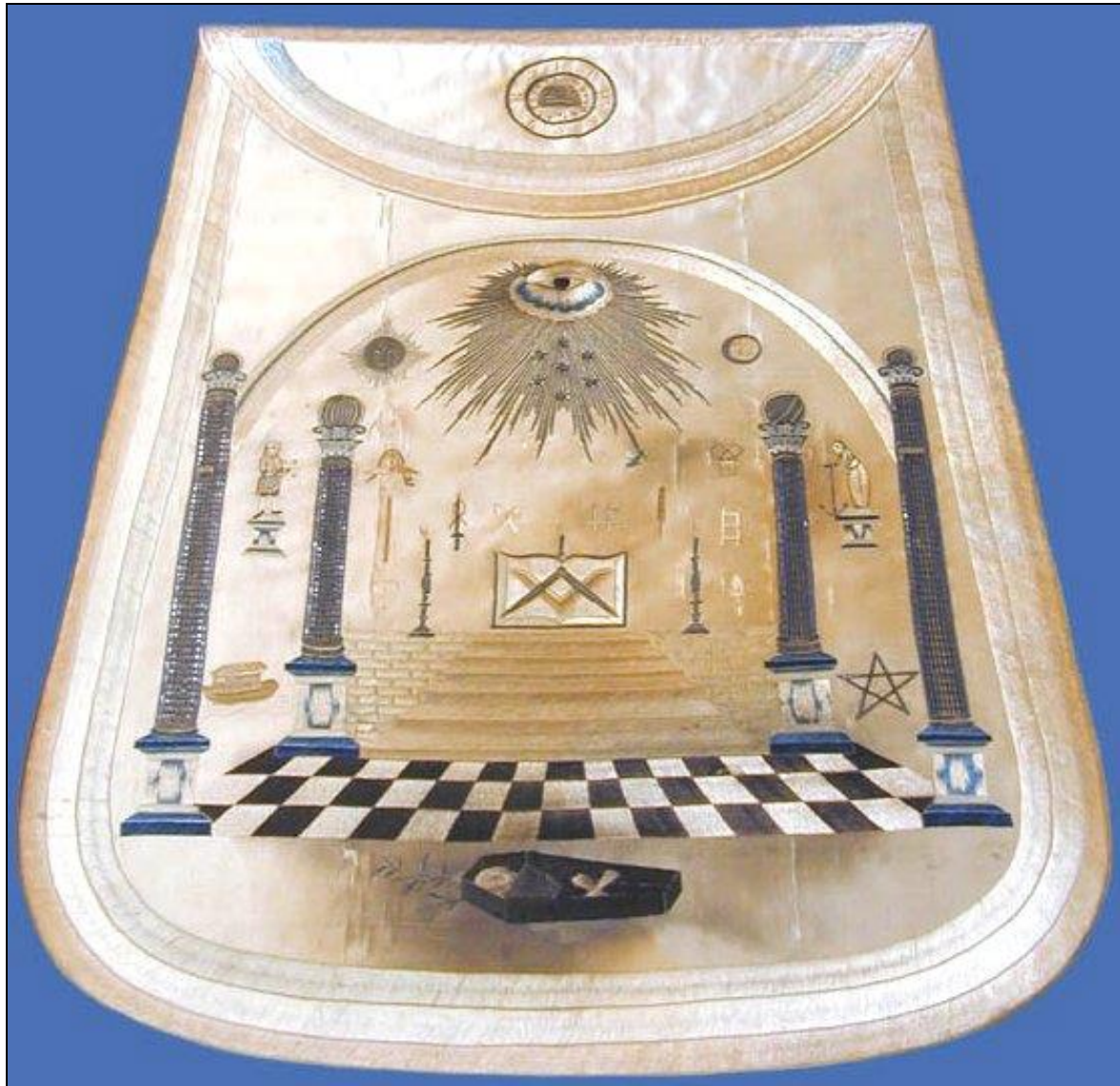


Fig. 7.177: Masonic apron, formerly mistaken for the Lafayette gift to George Washington, but more likely related to the lacquer box from his estate. Embroidered silk, ca. 1800. Collection: Photograph: The Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania. Photo reproduced from: phoenixmasonry.org.

degree in the Military Lodge No. 227, attached to the 46th Regiment, as well as the Royal Arch degree, which his lodge in Fredericksburg began to award from 1753 onwards.³⁷³ The symbolism on Washington's box and apron also suggest that may have been the case. So far, this box is the only known example of Chinese export lacquer with a masonic decoration. We will come back to it in relation to the 'Pennsylvania' apron.

The 'Lafayette' apron is believed to have been purchased by Thomas Hammond (1770-1820), husband to Washington's niece, Mildred (1772-1805). When Hammond became a member of Mount Nebo lodge in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, in 1815, he donated the apron to the lodge. It is embroidered in a similar fashion as the Watson-Cassoul apron, with silver and gold coloured metal threads, again depicting two crossed flags: those of France and the United States. On top of the flags are a pair of compasses crossed with a set square, surrounding a skull with a crossed bone and dagger, a reference to the Elu degrees (see chapter 2). Behind the flags is an acacia sprig. Under the flap is again a cord with love knots and tassels, from which a ribbon with a gavel is hanging. The apron is lined with black silk and has a black silk ribbon along the border.



Details of fig. 7.177: *The Secretary and Hope, depicted on the Washington apron.*



Fig. 7.178: Tankard, decorated with a medallion and the name 'SMITH', topped by a female figure leaning on an anchor. This service was likely made for Henry Smith, super cargo of the ship *George Washington* in 1784. Polychrome enamels, underglaze blue border, handle restored, height 15.2 cm, diam. 12.7 cm. Collection: Polly Latham Asian Art, Boston. Reproduced from: pollylatham.com.

Fig. 7.179: Detail of a punch bowl, decorated with a shield with the monogram 'JH' topped by the figure of a woman leaning on an anchor, the whole surrounded by drapes; flower sprays on the other sides, ca. 1780-1800. Pink and blue enamels with gold, underglaze blue border, height 13 cm, diam. 30.5 cm. Displayed at Skinner Auctioneers and Appraisals, 7-11-2009, lot 255. Reproduced from: liveauctioneers.com.

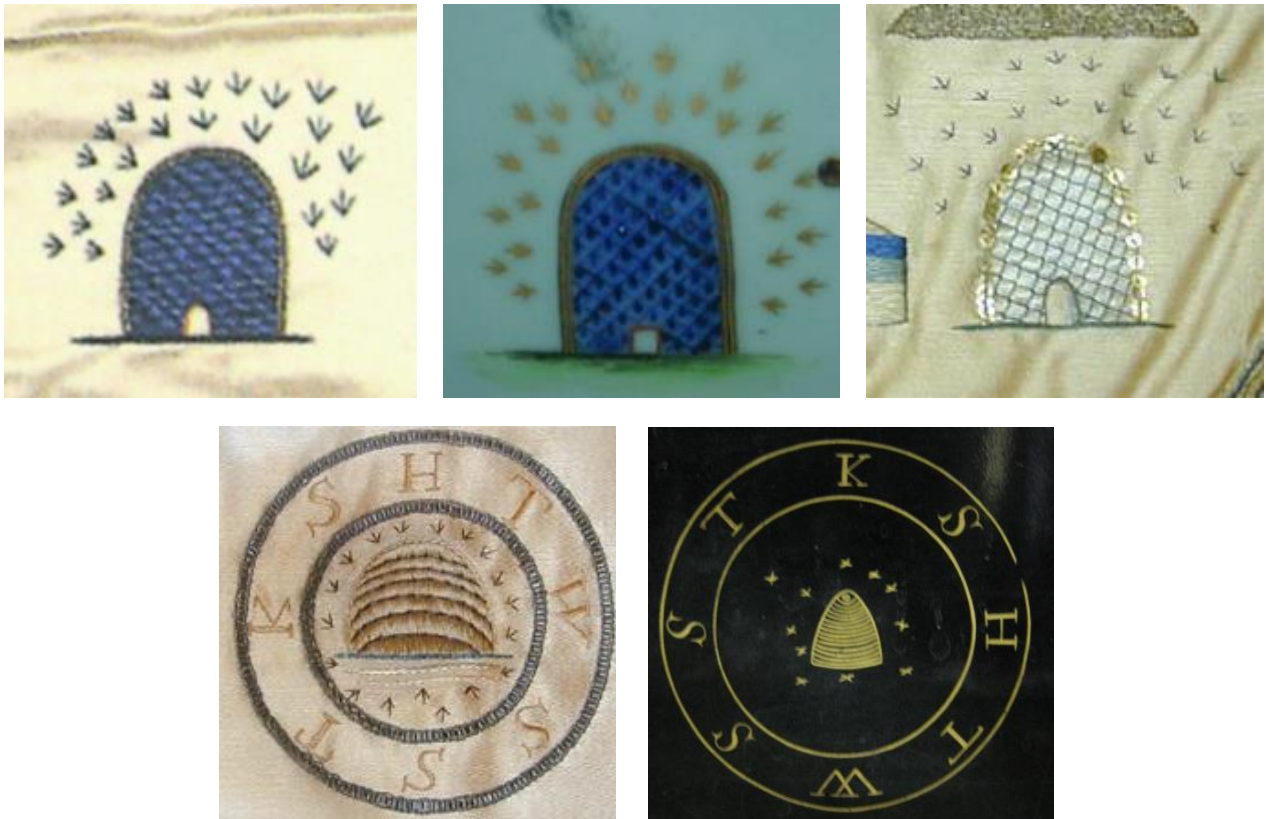


Fig. 7.180: Beehives surrounded with bees, as depicted on the Veuger apron (top right), Union Lodge punch bowl (top middle), Fry apron (top right) and Washington apron (bottom left), and the Washington lacquer box (bottom right).

Since the beginning of the 19th century, the Watson-Cassoul and Lafayette aprons have often been confused with each other, not helped by the fact that they look similar.³⁷⁴ Meanwhile, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania acquired a third apron (fig. 7.177), which for a long time contended to be the 'Lafayette' apron, but documented history only shows this third apron was gifted by an unspecified group of Washington's legatees to the Washington Benevolent Society on 26-10-1816. The Society in turn donated the apron to the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania on 3-7-1829.³⁷⁵

The 'Pennsylvania' apron has a miniature tracing board type decoration, similar to those used in British and American rituals of the time. An arch rests on two of four pillars, enclosing the scene. From the top down, several familiar symbols are depicted: the all-seeing eye with sun, moon and stars, and a bible with a set square and pair of compasses. These are surrounded by several working tools and various other symbols, such as a Jacob's ladder, Noah's Ark, a pentagram or five pointed star, as well as a personification of Hope, and the figure of a freemason holding keys (representing a lodge Secretary). Not normally present is the bird, flying underneath the rays of the eye. The emblem with the beehive and letters 'HTWSSTKS' applied to the flap of the apron clearly suggests a relationship with the Mark Master's degree and the aforementioned lacquer box with the same letter emblem. As the Watson-Cassoul and Lafayette aprons have recently been verified to be genuine by curator Mark Tabbert, could the Pennsylvania apron be the third one, described in the 1799 Washington estate papers as paired with a lacquer box? To a layman's eye Japanese and Chinese lacquer look quite similar, so it would have been an easy mistake to make while drawing up the estate papers. As the 'Pennsylvania' Mark Master apron shares symbolism with a Chinese object, the lacquer box, it's worth examining the apron itself for a possible connection with China, if only to exclude it.

Although the apron was clearly executed with great care, it too shows distortions of western shapes similar to those on the two identical aprons and the punch bowl discussed above. Most notable are the facial features of the figures (especially the Secretary) and all-seeing eye, the strange attire of the personification of Hope (barely recognizable as female), the rounding of the square shapes of tools and

other symbols, and again the use of arrows instead of bees (fig. 7.180). A western embroiderer would not likely have made such mistakes on an important commission. It is also relevant to note similarities between the figure of Hope on the apron, and the portrayal of this personification on armorial porcelain from the end of the 18th century (compare figs. 7.177 and 7.169).³⁷⁶ The (faded) blue colours of the silk, as well as the type of metal thread are similar to the aprons of Fry and Veuger discussed above. Could the apron have been produced by a Chinese hand at the same time as Veuger's lacquer box and the Union Lodge punch bowl?

Unfortunately, there is no documentation available to verify this assumption. Furthermore, it should be noted that Chinese embroidery was also produced outside China, by artists living in Chinese communities in other parts of Asia. For instance, there was a large Chinese community in Batavia, also involved in the international trade. Then again, from the porcelain orders for the Washington and Cincinnati services, we know that people from Washington's circle were in the position to order such objects directly in Canton. It is tempting to consider that men like Shaw or Van Braam Houckgeest might have been involved here too, but it is wiser to refrain from speculation and wait for American researchers with better access to relevant sources to solve this puzzle.