



13<sup>th</sup> June 2002

Dear Brethren

Every month we struggle through and mangle the beautiful prose we proudly call "The MacBride Ritual" without knowing much about:-

- Why we are one of the few lodges in the world that work this Ritual?
- Who are the other Lodges working this Ritual?
- How did it come about that Lodge Ailsa changed its ritual?
- Who was A.S. MacBride?
- Why were his works so important?
- Etc.

In attempting to answer some of these questions, I have compiled the following letters, booklets, speeches and publications into this document.

It is in no way complete, as I suspect that there is more information to be had and I hope that it inspires others to dig deeper into this enigma and add to this body of knowledge in due course...

Fraternally

Bro. Colin Macdonald RWM  
Lodge Ailsa 1172 SC

To the Worthy Secretary  
Lodge Ailsa 1172 SC  
Freemason's Hall  
Coleman Street  
Singapore 0617

28th September 1999

**Bro Gartshore,**

Thank you for your letter of the 6th September 1999, it arrived last week. Your Lodge has every reason to be proud of working the McBride ritual, it is, when properly done, probably the most beautiful Masonic degree worked in masonry, and in the past 47 years, I have never heard anything is equal.

As to how the situation in Lodge Ailsa came to be is as follows:-

In 1972, brother David Liddell Grainger was the Grand Master Mason, and he requested through the Grand Secretary, permission from me as the Right Worshipful Master of Lodge Progress No.873, that, as we worked the McBride ritual, and that brother Andrew McBride was a founder member of our Lodge, and, that his son "young" Andrew McBride had also been a Right Worshipful Master of the Lodge, would I, since it was a restricted ritual, send him a copy to be sent to your Lodge.

I discuss the request with "young" Andrew and the "old PMs", and it was agreed, that since it was personal from the GMM, they would endorse my decision to submit to copy to him.

I sent my own copies to the Grand Secretary, who had it copied, and sent me back my own copies (they are very scarce) and that's was the last I heard of it. (I did not even know, until I saw your yearbook last year), that it was your Lodge to whom the ritual and permission to use it had been given. Since you obviously work the four degrees, I wonder if you use the McBride Installation Ceremony, because I never gave Grand Secretary copy of it.

Should you wish a copy of the Ceremonial I would be delighted to forward copy of it to you. It is "sheer poetry".

There are only five lodges in Scotland who work the degree, although is not unusual for Brethren of other Lodges, to do a McBride Degree, using one of the three degrees, but there it stops, which gives us the edge on other Lodges.

As to the yearbook:

I had the opportunity of glancing through what I thought was your yearbook. It gave details of going to another Lodge and working the degree and the fun you had on the journey, and as I said, it told me about your Lodge working the McBride.

There was also a historic piece about closing the Lodge during the war and the re-opening after the fracas, along with many photographs off your Lodge.

Hope my brother, this little note will have been of some assistance to you, and, if I can be, at any time, of further assistance, do not be afraid to ask.

I apologize for delaying the reply to you, but we have recently moved into a smaller house and there were so many odds and ends to take care of, that time vanished.

Keep well,  
Yours Fraternaly

**Andrew Pryde PM**  
24 Wood Avens  
Cambus Park  
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207/5 Weymouth Drive  
Glasgow G12 OEM

8<sup>th</sup> April 2002

Dear Bro. Joe,

At last herewith some of the material I promised. I do apologize for the delay but honestly it was not all my fault, as I have been waiting the arrival of some of the literature, some of which has yet to come. I will send this on immediately it arrives.

I have included one or two items which you may find interesting i.e. a short history of A.S. MacBride and a lecture given to P.G.L. by his son Andrew together with two copies of "The Ashlar", an etching done some years ago by one of our members and of course the copies of "The Lodge Master" you requested.

Again my apologies for the delay.

May and I have more or less settled into a normal routine again after enjoying a most memorable visit to the East and to the Southern Hemisphere.

I trust this finds you in good health and hope we can meet again in the not-too-distant future.

Please convey to all your brethren, fraternal greetings, particularly from members of Lodge Leven St. John No.170 and Lodge Progress, Glasgow No.873

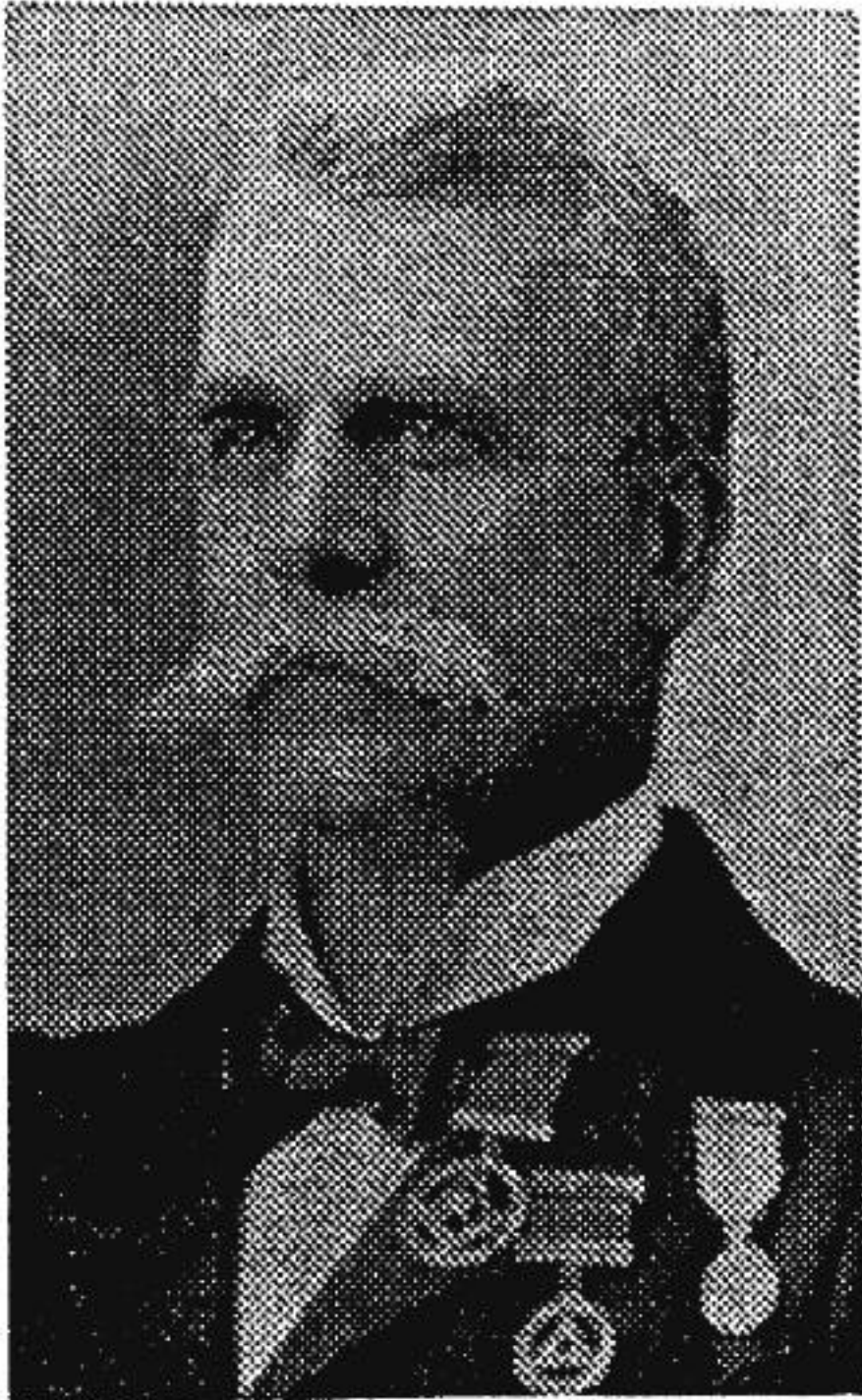
With kind regards & Best Wishes

Andy Cromwell PM 873

BRIEF STORY  
OF THE  
LIFE AND WORK  
OF  
ANDREW S. MACBRIDE  
LODGE LEVEN ST. JOHN  
LODGE PROGRESS

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BY BRO. J. AGNEW  
Past Secy. Lodge Leven St. John



A. S. MACBRIDE

## A. S. MACBRIDE

### ERRATUM AND ADDENDUM

On page 17 it is stated that A. S. MacBride was elected again in 1914 as Master of Lodge Progress. This is not so. The Brother elected on this occasion was his worthy son, Andrew MacBride. Consequently, A. S. MacBride was Master of Lodge Progress for one year only, 1900-1901, and, as he had been Master of Lodge Leven St. John for twenty-one years before this, the total is twenty-two years as Master, and not twenty-three as stated. This is still phenomenal, so that the error no way detracts from the picture I have attempted to draw of the Great Master.

I would also take this opportunity of describing in part a very important ceremony, Bro. A. S. MacBride's Installation in December, 1867. The details are from this own pen.

The ceremony was preceded by a torchlight procession through the village, and carried out in the Old Black Bull Inn, in a room that was very plain and dimly lighted, it was 16 feet broad by 24 feet long, about a quarter of the area of the present hall. Down its centre ran a long deal table reaching to about four feet from the Master's chair. Long benches were set on each side of the table, and they were packed with about sixty Brethren, among whom were many grey heads, and six or seven Past masters. Many of them were from 30 to 50 years' standing as Masons. They had come from the surrounding district to spend a few hours together, some having had to walk five or six miles, as there was no other means of transport then. And this on a mirky stormy December night.

In the upper window of the inn was placed a coloured transparent picture of our Patron Saint, the Venerable St. John, complete with beard, and several candles had been placed behind to make his features clear and life-like to the passers-by outside.

The Installing Master, the I.P.M., was a man of about fifty, of average height, dark, stout, and somewhat round shouldered. He had no great store of knowledge, and still less of the gift of expression, yet he had a rough dignity of manner, and the knack of giving parts of the ceremony an expression of mystery and importance, due, of course, to the very nebulosity of his phrasing. This was Bro. Wm. Stratton, The Master Elect was Andrew S. MacBride himself, a lad of twenty-three years of age of medium height, fair, and spare of figure. By fortuitous circumstances he had been unanimously elected to the chair. He feels like a Pretender being crowned without the slightest claim to the throne, and he feels uncomfortable and perplexed. His only claim is a popularity that attributed to him virtues that he wishes he really had. This is the Great Master's own description of himself.

It was something that occurred at this ceremony that enabled him to refute a statement made by the great Masonic historians Gould and Murray Lyon. They maintained that a certain practice was not observed in any Lodge because they could find no written evidence to prove it. But MacBride discovered during this Installation that the practice was certainly observed in Lodge Leven St. John, and had been observed since its erection as a Lodge in 1788. But it had never been written down. Thus, the documents consulted by these two Masonic historians were inadequate for their purpose. This led MacBride to assert, as far back as 1867, that more than written documents are required for an accurate history. This is the view now held by historians of consequence.

J. AGNEW.

IT WILL BE a hundred years ago on the thirteenth of July next since the greatest figure in Scottish Freemasonry was initiated into Lodge Leven St. John No. 170, Renton. He was Andrew Sommerville MacBride, J.P., Provincial Depute, Grand Master of Dunbartonshire, Pastmaster of Lodge Leven St. John and of Lodge Progress, Glasgow, compiler of "The MacBride Ritual" and author of "Speculative Masonry."

It has been said that the only excuse for writing a biography is that one has something to say that has not been said before. It would seem to many Freemasons that this claim cannot be made on behalf of A. S. MacBride, for the obvious reason that his name, in association with the above-mentioned works, has for decades been on the lips of all Freemasons who have made use of them.

But it is what has not been said before that is going to be said here. And what has not been said before is how his Brother came to be able to write such a work as "Speculative Masonry" or revise and amend a ritual that had probably been in use for a century before. No man could have carried out these tasks successfully without first having some educational background, some preliminary training in thought and expression, and, above all, the ability to absorb it-in thought, so that his mind could not be ossified by the constant repetition of ritual (as happens so often now) and in expression, so that he could present his thoughts in clear concise English.

This sketch is a compilation from a variety of sources, the main source being Bro. Andrew MacBride, P.M., the son of Bro. A. S. MacBride, the subject of this delineation. It may be said here that Bro. MacBride, the son, who so kindly handed me a mass of material concerning his father, was described in "Transactions of American Lodge of Research 1958" as being one of Scottish Freemasonry's greatest authorities. In view of this, I believe my principal source of information to be satisfactory. Some information has been gleaned from the minute books of Lodge Leven St. John, but minutes merely contain information considered important only at the time of writing. Much that may be of greater importance historically is left out and forgotten.

Andrew Sommerville MacBride, generally referred to as A. S. MacBride, was born in Stirling Street, Renton, in December 1843. His father, John MacBride, was a cooper at Dalquhurn Works, but died during a cholera epidemic in 1846. His mother, Catherine Douglas, was a native of Bonawe, Argyllshire, and as Andrew was a child of only three years when he lost his father, it was she who had undoubted influence on the boy's mind, for she was a born Gaelic speaker, and like all highlanders of those days, a veritable mine of highland tradition and fairy lore, told in her soft vocalic and mellifluous native tongue, better suited to the poet's art than is English. The effect of this can be seen in much of his work. His elder brother James was a block printer, a very respectable calling in those days. He was probably the main support of the widowed mother. There were also several sisters. One married and went to America during the Civil War and settled in St. Louis. Another became the wife of Robert MacIntyre who was Master of Lodge Leven St. John from 1832 to 1834.

As a very small boy Andrew would seat himself on summer evenings near the old worthies of the then very small village of Renton who used to range themselves on the seat round the oak tree which stood in front of the Old Tree Tavern, and listen to their anecdotes and reminiscences, and tales of smugglers and illicit stills in the Poachy Glen. Murdoch's smiddy, beside the

inn, was another of his haunts. This James Murdoch was said to be a younger brother of the celebrated William Murdoch who introduced gas lighting to the world. The Old Tree Tavern was said to have been lit by gas before it was used for that purpose elsewhere, due, of course, to Murdoch's influence. The blacksmith also had a son with the Royal Navy at the siege of Sevastopol. So young MacBride, as a very small boy, would hear stories of the inventor brother and sailor son of the village blacksmith.

The only schooling Andrew received, as far as can be ascertained, was at the old school in Dalmonach Hall, which still stands on the left-hand side of the entrance to those works. This is where the Mechanics' Institution met after its founding in 1834. But he was not content with being merely able to read and write words, nor did he believe in unlettered instinct. Rather did he find character in the selection and juxtaposition of words which no paraphrasing of other people's writings could render. So we find him amassing a considerable library in which could be found the works of Butler, Milton, Shakespeare, Dryden, De Quincy, Carlyle, Burns' "The Old Makars" as well as Young's "Night Thoughts," which influenced his ritual, and MacPherson's "Ossian," the controversy over which had the good result of stimulating investigation into the oral traditions of the highlands. He was also deeply interested in Scottish history and Gaelic tradition; and he did not merely read these works; he studied them.

It was not mere literacy he was aiming at. It was literary culture. Science was another of his interests, the magazine "Nature" being one of his favourite periodicals, and he was also attracted by the religious controversies of the end of last century which raged around the works of Darwin, Huxley and others. With the exception of some of Smollett's works, his library contained few, if any novels. His opinion was that these could be found in any circulating library; the best books only should be kept at home for constant reference and example.

At eight years of age young Andrew worked as a "half-timer," which was common enough in those days. Half his day was spent at work and the other half at school. He was a clerk with the North British Railway Company when it ran between Balloch and Bowling in the early 'fifties of last century. Then he became a bricklayer, but not content with learning the practical side only, he studied building construction and drawing, which later on was to be of service to Lodge Leven St. John.

But when he was eighteen years of age he attracted the attention of Mr John Matheson of Cordale, sole partner of William Stirling & Sons, who eventually made him salesman for cloth at Daiquhurn Works. This Mr Matheson was for a time chairman of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. He was also to read papers at the Social Science Congress, and the British Association in Glasgow, and write a popular book on ravel and trade entitled "England to Delhi." He herefore could have been no mean judge of MacBride's character and accomplishments.

The dyeing and bleaching industry in the early sixties was in its heyday, and there were then no business colleges, no trained selling staffs, and no modern advertising techniques. So for Mr Matheson to select MacBride as his successor as salesman at this period, and to entrust him with a position upon which the prosperity of both the industry and the district depended, showed that he had absolute faith in his potential abilities. Mr Matheson spent long periods in India on the firm's business so that A n d r e w received and handled all trade reports sent from there by him.

To form an opinion of what type of man MacBride was we have to examine what he wrote. Someone once said "As a man thinketh so is he." But this proverb might have been extended to read "As a man writeth so thinketh he; as a man thinketh so is he." In short, a man is what he writes. So let us examine some of MacBride's many writings to see what kind of man he was.

He was president of the Vale of Leven Liberal Association when the first Liberal was returned for Dumbartonshire and in his day the Liberal Party claimed to be the progressive party. But its left wing claimed to be more progressive still. They were called Radicals, and it took a great deal of courage and conviction to be a Radical. This is what MacBride wrote when Mr White of Overtoun, for his services to the Liberal Party, was elevated to the peerage to become Lord Overtoun:

As a red-hot Rad. I'm sorry and glad,  
At what in the papers appears,  
We have lost our friend White,  
Who in many a fight

Drew our heartiest plaudits and cheers.  
At our loss I am sad,  
At his gain I am glad,  
But my hopes are mingled with fears,  
For a Liberal often goes to the bad,  
When he goes to the house of the Peers.

And again, among some verses entitled "A Poetical Address to the Brethren of Lodge Leven St. John," written in 1896, we find this one, revealing his views on the mere acquisition of wealth:

The worship of mean Mammon grows apace,  
The simple manly virtues disappear,  
And like dry-rot from crown to base,  
From 'tier to tier,  
Within our social frame to-day,  
The love of luxury proclaims decay.

One wonders what his views would be today. Here is another verse in the same strain:

For Gold  
They break God's peace and run,  
With rifle and with Maxim gun,  
To mow down like grass upon the plain  
The dusky natives of the soil,  
And o'er high-piled heaps of slain,  
Through foaming flood  
Of gurgling gushing human blood,  
Exultant, seize the longed-for spoil.

These examples reveal without any doubt his political tendencies.

On local politics, also, he had decided opinions. Here is a verse from a number of them written in 1870 about old Bonhill bridge, better known as "The Bawbee Brig," during the times of the agitations and disturbances with the aim of abolishing the toll charged for using the bridge:

The brig in the air is hingin.  
Though it isna' the brig o' the Ayr,  
And oot ow'r the Leven it's swingin'  
Whaur the dyein' is "tented" wi' care.  
It's quite a suspicious suspension.  
In mair ways than ane I'll be boun',  
An certes, an auld cuddy's canter  
Wa'd shatter an' clatter it doon.

And this verse on the same subject:

There are brigs in the south, there are brigs in the north,  
There are brigs ow'r the Clyde, there are brigs ow'r the Forth,  
But for greed and for gain a match ye'll ne'er see  
Tae the brig o' Bunuill an's its Bonny Bawbee.

We are left in no doubt about his local politics.

Like all Scots, especially those with Celtic blood in their veins, Andrew MacBride loved his country. He expresses it thus in the first verse of his poem "Scotland the Peerless":

Land o' the heather and bold misty ben,  
O' the silvery loch and the pine-scented glen,  
O' the green-covered strath and the truehearted men,  
And the lassies fu' sweet and fu' fair.  
Ho hey! Scotland the peerless,  
Hey ho! Scotland the fearless,  
Ho ro! Scotland the dearest,  
The land o' the brave and the free.

He made several translations from the Gaelic, one of which is entitled "Creag Uanaich" or "The Rock of the Lambs." One verse only is given here:

Hill o' my heart, O Craig Uanaich,  
Green thy turf and corries rare,  
Restful soothing scenes; beside thee  
English plains are tame and bare.

The effect of his Gaelic studies can be seen in this verse from "The Ceannard's Message." Ceannard is of course "high chief."

The songs of bards my eager ear hath heard,  
Within the walls of Selma, far renown,  
When from Malvina's harp, with trembling chord,  
To her white hand responsive, gave sweet sound,  
When Ossian great, in cloudy Cona sung  
Mystic lays of Gaelic, gleaming fire;  
No equal fame has through the ages rung,  
Till Coila's bard attained his matchless lyre,  
Then holy Brendan came, with cross of Christ to bless  
This sea-locked isle with balmy air and fruitfulness.

This refers, of course, to the island of Bute. We cannot conclude this paragraph without quoting a verse from his 'In Memonam James Baillie, OBE.' Bro. Bailie was Master of Lodge Leven St. John from 1898 to 1903. He died on 22nd September, 1919.

Thy work on earth is o'er, and thou hast passed  
Between the pillars, up the winding stair  
Of the Eternal Temple: thou hast gone  
To claim the rich reward of craftsman rare,  
And in the middle chamber, solve at last  
The Mystery Divine--the Three in One—  
Which here our symbols faintly could forecast.

A volume would be necessary to contain all Andrew S. MacBride's writings, poems and songs. All that can be done here is to mention a few titles. "A Stout heart and a Stigh Brae," "A Poetical Address to the Brethren of Lodge Leven St. John,"

"Ode to Burns," a verse of which is inscribed on the walls of his mother lodge, "Nell o' Kilmahew," "My Donald's Awa'," "The Black Clouds are Scowling," "The Millburn," "The Tale of the Crofter's Wife - dealing with the Highland Clearances of last century, and "Dark Fa's the Gloaming" Besides these, he wrote two plays, both of which were performed in Renton - "An Extravaganza" and "The Masons." A number of his Masonic hymns and poems were also published in "The Master Mason," an American publication, in March 1924.

A sufficient number of examples has been given to show what kind of man Mac Bride was Outside circumstances influenced his mind as it does everybody's, but he could express in words the feelings and thoughts these circumstances evoked - in words so arranged as to leave us in no doubt about his meaning; a gift granted to few.

His activities were not entirely confined to writing, for we find him president of the Scottish Football Association from 1875 to 1876. This Association was founded in 1873. MacBride was its second president, and according to the then secretary, Mr J. K. MacDowall, was "one of the ablest and most respected gentlemen who ever adorned the position." It was in the season 1876 - 1877 that the two greatest football matches up to that time were played - the defeat of Queen's Park by the Vale of Leven in December 1876, and the defeat of the Rangers after three matches, and the consequent winning of the Scottish Cup by the Vale of Leven in the same season.

In 1901 Andrew was elected president of An Comunn Gaidhealach, the society for the preservation of Gaelic culture and literature, and went to the Eisteddfod as a bard. A bard in ancient Celtic society was a trained man. It took seven years to train a bard - seven years memorising old Celtic tradition, laws and history, for these were never written. To alter anything was an offence. These rules are not so rigid nowadays, and much Celtic tradition has now been recorded, but it may have been his close association with Celts and his knowledge of their ancient method of preserving and handing down tradition that influenced MacBride when he instituted a Lodge of Instruction and cleared older Masonic ritual of what he considered to be irrelevant interpolations. He was also a close friend of Bro. Bennett of the "Dumbarton and Lennox Herald," Pastmaster of Lodge Dumbarton Kilwinning, to whom

he sent many Masonic articles and reports for publication. These can be found in the files of "The Lennol Herald." He was also made a Justice of the Peace.

On the 13th of July, 1866, the day before Glasgow Fair Saturday, he was proposed by Bro. John Donald and seconded by Bro. Thomas Sutherland as a fit and proper person to become a Mason and member of Leven St. John's Lodge, Renton, and was initiated the same evening. The Lodge meetings at that time were held in the old Black Bull Inn, the site of which was within the area now occupied by the playground of Renton School. When his mother heard he was going to join the Masons she wept bitterly, and thought her son was on the straight road to ruin. This was not only natural, but also typical, for, as has been pointed out, she was a highlander, and highlanders were more concerned with the "straight and narrow path" than were their lowland brethren, for at that time Masonic meetings were a byword throughout the country. There was scarcely a Lodge in Scotland, outside the cities, which did not hold its meetings in licensed premises. The work was hurried through to get to the refreshment table. No doubt, as MacBride himself said: "The beauty and truths of Masonry were drowned in a Bacchanalian flood," and added that "As a man is an intellectual and moral as well as a social being, the social aspect must be kept in place. It was not so kept at that table, and that is why my mother was upset." We shall see how he dealt with this problem when it presented itself to him.

On Friday, the 9th of November, 1866, four months after his initiation, he was elected secretary of the Lodge, and some weeks after, on the 27th of December, he attended his first Masonic ball with the lady who, two and a half years later, became his wife. The conferring on him of the office of secretary at such an early stage in his Masonic career demonstrates that among his fellows, his abilities were quickly recognised. Nor were they wrong, for on the 8th of November 1867 it was moved that the Chair Degree be conferred on a Brother. This "degree" was from an old ritual and contrary to Grand Lodge Law. An amendment was moved by Bro. MacBride and seconded by Bro. Watson, that as no authority had been given to the Lodge by its charter to give that degree, it must not be conferred. On a vote being taken, the motion was carried, so that MacBride and several others left the meeting protesting. They were, of course, conforming to Grand Lodge Laws while on the other hand the majority of the members was not. The Lodge was authorised to hold meetings on the E.A., F.C. and M.M. degrees only. It is evident that the Brethren later recognised that Bro. MacBride's refusal to "trim his sails" to conform to the opinion of the majority was justified, for they showed their appreciation just two weeks after by electing him Master of the Lodge. This was on the 22nd of November 1867.

He remained in the chair for seven years, till 1874, and was re-elected in 1879, holding the office till 1884, was elected again in 1887, occupying the chair till 1896, so that in all, he was for twenty-one years Master of Lodge Leven St. John. He affiliated to Lodge Progress, a teetotal Lodge, on the 13th of April, 1900, was elected Master on the 9th of November, 1900, and installed by the Provincial Grand Master of Dumbartonshire on the 14th of December following. He served for one year, but was elected again in 1914 and served for another year. In addition to this he played his part in Provincial Grand Lodge of Dumbartonshire, holding successively the offices of P.G. Secretary, P.G. Junior Warden, P.G. Senior Warden, and P.G. Master Depute. He was also asked to have his name put forward for office in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Glasgow. This he refused as he thought his energies would be of better

service in his Lodge, but he served on their committee for a number of years. He was also a member of Quatuor Coronati Lodge which deals with all aspects of Masonic research.

As has been said, Andrew S. MacBride was Master of Lodge Leven St. John for twenty-one years and Master of Lodge Progress for two years, making a total of twenty-three years in all as a Master. This was phenomenal, even apart from his other obligations. We may ask what was the secret, what was there in him to make men select him as their leader. The answer can be found in the two following incidents.

There were often many petty and personal disputes in the Lodge. This state of affairs is, unavoidable when people assemble. But MacBride, as Master, did not interfere. What he did was to write down the causes of the disputes and when the participants later were shown the causes of their disagreements set down in cold black and white, they found them so ridiculous that a stop was put to all wrangling. Henceforward all disputes and quarrels were kept outside the Lodge. Such was MacBride's method.

How he overcame the "refreshment" problem referred to earlier also deserves attention. He was not a teetotaler, but he realised that with many, "refreshment" was everything, and "work" nothing, so that something had to be done to prevent the real work of Masonry being sacrificed for refreshment. It was moved at a meeting that at the refreshment table each member should pay sixpence, and that the limit should be two refreshments. It must be remembered that at that time, more than ninety years ago, a bottle of whisky cost less than

half-a-crown. The custom was to place the refreshment on the table for everyone to help himself, with the result that some members got more than they paid for and others less. The new proposal to limit the refreshments was strongly opposed, and a heated discussion followed. MacBride as Master did not take part, for he made it a rule not to intrude in any discussion, as in his view the Master ought to keep himself free from debates as long as the members were keeping to the point at issue. But on this occasion, without showing any bias, he broke in and pointed out to the wrangling members that, as Masons, they must apply the square to the refreshment table as well as to the work. This new light on the subject astonished some of the members, but the suggestion was ultimately carried, and in consequence the table was limited to two refreshments.

These two occasions reveal The secret of MacBride's popularity much more clearly than does a chapter of adulatory comments. It was that, besides all else, he had tact and charm. His outlook is summed up in his own words which many Masons should ponder over, "A man who says, he knows all about Masonry proclaims his own ignorance."

Up till November 1892 the Lodge met in a well equipped Lodge Room in the house of a Bro. William Murray, but greater and more suitable accommodation was found to be necessary, and the members expressed a desire to have a hall of their own. Bro. MacBride inaugurated a scheme whereby members took out shares, to be paid up in twelve instalments. Sufficient money was raised and a start was made. To keep down expense, MacBride, making use of the skill he had obtained as a bricklayer and the knowledge he had acquired during his study of Building Construction, drew out plans and specifications, thereby saving the cost of an architect and master of works. He superintended the construction until completed and it was he also who was responsible for the interior decorations. During the building

operations, which were carried out by the members in their spare time, MacBride used to march round amongst them playing his pipes to give them encouragement. In these operations he was ably assisted with both advice and work by Bro. William Sinclair and Bro. Robert Watt, both of whom wrought night after night along with many other members at their labour of love. The foundation stone was laid in November 1892, and the completed hall consecrated in December 1893. Later on it was found necessary to extend the hall. The alterations were commenced in 1914, the first meeting in the enlarged premises taking place on 22nd November 1915. The interior decorations and design were still those of Bro. MacBride. During the period of reconstruction, from October 1914 to July 1915 the Lodge meetings were held in the Masonic Hall, Dumbarton by the kind courtesy of Lodge Dumbarton Kilwinning. As in 1892, this work of reconstruction was accomplished by the voluntary labour of the members. And even now, at the time of writing, necessary interior reconstruction is once more being carried out by the same means. Such is the Lodge tradition, brought into being by Andrew S. MacBride.

The ritual used in Leven St. John up till about 1870 was based on "Preston's Illustrations of Freemasonry," published about the middle of the eighteenth century. It had been copied down in a large notebook about three quarters of an inch thick which had been handed down from one generation to another. It probably fell into MacBride's hands when he became Master in 1867. In it he found much to criticise. Coarse and vulgar methods had crept in due to the previous users' not having studied the symbolism deeply enough, and their having but small conception of its real beauty and meaning. His criticism brought him into conflict with many of his fellow-members, but by his tact and patience, he was able to modify and influence those views adverse to his conception and so gain the respect and admiration of those who initially opposed him. When revising the older ritual, he used to spend hours on end wandering over Carman Hill, pondering over the best ways of presenting the ideas it contained, rejecting tautologies and interpolations which had become embedded in it throughout the years, and devising a ritual that would teach what it was meant to teach, without ever departing from the spirit and truth of Masonry.

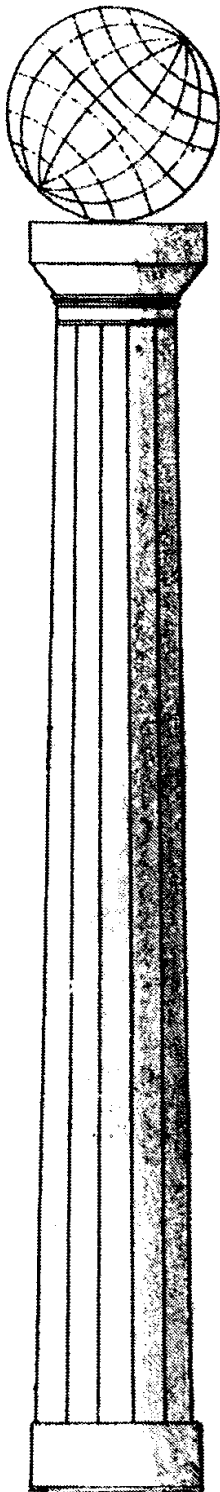
He first of all directed his attention to the office-bearers under him, for they had to be leaders, as was proper, and together they studied the ritual, symbols, and ceremonies of the craft. Later on he extended his teachings to other members. But those who had no sympathy with the real work of Masonry soon dropped out and only those remained who had a genuine love for the craft. The result was that during a period of thirty years, Lodge Leven St. John and Lodge Progress established a reputation for their high standard of work and knowledge of Masonry. In 1899 it was suggested that a degree of Most Excellent instructor be conferred on those members who had shown satisfactory knowledge of the craft through MacBride's teaching, but the idea had to be abandoned as such was deemed to be a violation of the charter.

MacBride then published his "Masonic Instructor," which was very highly commended by the then Grand Secretary, Bro. D. Murray Lyon, and by the secretary of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, who, comparing it with those used in England, said "In all respects yours is superior. His specification books in the various degrees were published next which enabled not only his own, but also other Lodges to beautify and adorn their work. They were an example of what Masonic ritual should be, and have been known ever since as "The MacBride Ritual." His series of lectures given at Lodges of Instruction were

revised and published in book form under the title "Speculative Masonry." This was his last and greatest work. It found a ready sale not only in the United Kingdom, but also in the U.S.A., Canada, India, Australia, and New Zealand. It was selected as a textbook for the Colleges of Instruction under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. Bro. Rev. Ford Newton, in his foreword to the American edition of "Speculative Masonry," published by the Masonic Publications Division of Southern Publishers Inc. says this about him. "Though not a great scholar he was a man of rich learning . . . but his artist eye, his sense of the fitness of things, together with his spiritual insight and sound common sense, made him an ideal leader." Or to quote from "The Builder," an American publication, commenting on the same book. "The author was one of the most famous and best beloved Freemasons of his generation - a Craftsman to whom the world was a temple, a poet to whom the world was a song." In all he left a permanent impress upon the Masonry of his native land, and was responsible to a great degree for having contributed to the better understanding and clearer knowledge of the symbolism of Masonry. Andrew Somerville MacBride summed up Masonry in his own words thus. "It presents a most fascinating ideal of humanity adapted to meet the conditions of all classes and of all peoples, and its fundamental principles are those of peace and brotherhood throughout the earth."

The attainment of his fiftieth year as a Mason was a cause of celebration by both Lodge Progress and Lodge Leven St. John. By Lodge Progress on 21st October 1916, when he and his wife were presented with a solid silver cake and fruit stand and a diamond ring, and by Leven St. John on 9th December 1916, who presented him with solid silver loving cups and his wife with a diamond brooch. A. S. MacBride a true son of Renton, died in December 1923 at the age of seventy-eight, and his loss was a distinct bereavement to the Craft. It is fitting to close with a verse from the last thing he wrote a few days before he died, "An Evening Psalm" dedicated to his grandchildren.

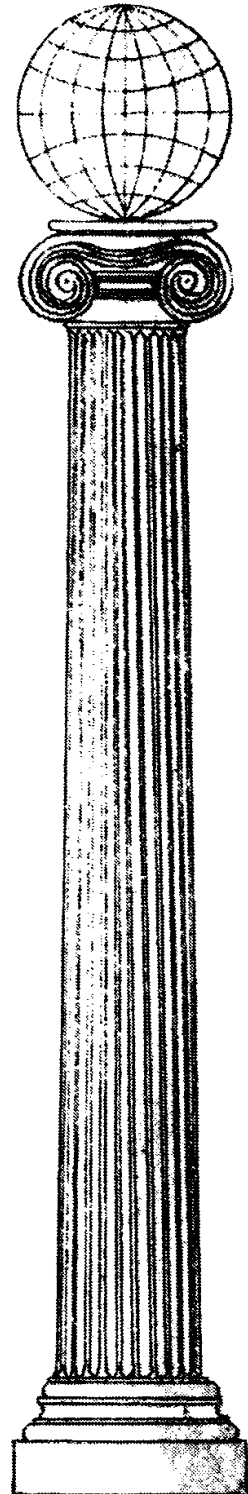
Within my soul let Thy light shine,  
That I Thy Truth may know,  
And in Thy wondrous love Divine,  
My love to Thee shall grow.



# THE LODGE MASTER

His qualifications,  
Duties, Powers  
and Privileges

By  
**Andrew MacBride**  
P.M. Lodge Progress  
Glasgow No 873





*The Author -*  
**ANDREW MACBRIDE**  
*PM Lodge Progress, Glasgow No 873*

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**The Grand Master Mason...**  
EDINBURGH

I am delighted to give my fullest support to this very valuable booklet which fully defines the role and duties of Master of a Lodge. Uprightness of character, sound judgement and a knowledge of Masonry are essential attributes of a successful Master and are emphasised in the booklet's text. An enthusiasm for the Craft as well as the ability to encourage the Brethren by good personal example is also mandatory if the Lodge is to flourish actively and happily. My only regret is that I did not have a copy available when I first became Master of my own Lodge.

I warmly recommend the booklet to all prospective Masters. They will find its teachings are as supportive as they are instructive.

**Archibald D. Orr Ewing**, BA Grand Master Mason

**Past Provincial Grand Master,**  
Dunbartonshire

THEY SAY THAT in every soldier's Kit Bag is a Field Marshall's Baton. By the same token every candidate and therefore every member of a Lodge is a potential "Master".

The Leader of the Lodge is a very important position and not sufficient Brethren prepare themselves for the task ahead. It could be argued justly, that there is not sufficient information available to guide the Office-Bearer with Master ability and inclination. The Aims and Relations, The Grand Lodge Laws, Provincial Grand Lodge Laws and Lodge Bye-Laws, are all helpful, but there is a gap. What Knowledge, Judgment, Ability and Character, for example, are essential. This booklet fills that gap.

The Author of this book is Andrew McBride, the son of A. S. McBride, the Author of the McBride Ritual. Young Andrew, as he was fondly known, was a very knowledgeable and upright Mason, the finest example of our Craft that I have had the honour and pleasure of knowing.

Andrew gave me a copy of this book more years ago than I care to remember, and I found it very helpful before, and during, my Mastership, and many times since.

Whether you are an aspiring Master, a Reigning Master, or a Past Master guiding any of the foregoing, you will find it more than useful, It could be called the Master's Bible.

All the proceeds from this book will go to the Masonic Homes Appeal. The purchase alone will therefore do good, but think of the bonus to our Craft of its study and, more particularly, the implementation of its concept and advice to the Lodge Master.

I hope it will be as helpful to you.

**ANGUS N. MacINNES** Past Provincial Grand Master, Dunbartonshire

## **HIS QUALIFICATIONS...**

THERE ARE CERTAIN points essential to the making of a good Master of a Lodge, and these are:

- 1-Upright Character
- 2-Sound judgment
- 3-Knowledge of Masonry
- 4-Mental Ability

The full performance of the duties of a Master demands these qualities, and the degree of excellency in a Master lies in the measure in which he possesses them. Let us consider them.

### **1-UPRIGHT CHARACTER**

THIS IS THE most important qualification. Without it, knowledge, ability, and even genius are of little value. It directs these to noble ends, and makes them valuable to the individual and to humanity.

The Mallet and Chisel are not of much service for the building of the Temple unless governed by the Square. Intellect to morality is as the lever to the hand and as the pulsating engine to the ship's helm. An upright man so directs his life that, although his work may not be great, it will be true, and if his knowledge be limited, he will use what he has for great purposes. What we call capability is constitutional. Knowledge is an acquirement. Uprightness is a development and forms the beautiful in human character. Beauty is not identified with bulk. The microscope reveals beauty, the telescope greatness. Uprightness is not an appendage to great intellect, and in morals there is no mensuration. It is from the right use of our faculties that we gain real development and power; for the upright in heart build on the eternal rocks, and the infinite power of the Universe works with them. As a man is true to the little he knows, so is his power to know more. If he rules himself rightly, he will be able to govern others wisely, and without this quality no one can be a good Master.

To the young craftsman, who cherishes the laudable desire of becoming a Master, I would say that the development of uprightness, like all human development can only be attained by effort, and the first thing needful is the true desire for it. If that be cherished in the heart, like seed in the earth, it will seek upwards into the light of day, and grow into flower and fruit. Through darkness and over all difficulties, it will surely, though often slowly, work its way upwards. From desire springs action. Without action, desire burns itself to the dead ashes of vain regret. In action, it develops new life and a higher existence.

Upright growth of character is attained by working true to a higher power than our own. The operative Mason by the plumb-rule keeps in perpetual touch with the great power of gravitation. He cannot deviate from it with impunity. Neither can any one hope to build an upright life-structure unless in his actions he constantly strives to keep true to the divine ideal revealed to him. Uprightness is based on humility - the level line of human dependence on the divine. It is the evidence of the mortal rising to the immortal plane, upheld by the infinite power than sustains the Universe, just as a noble pillar, well founded, rises gracefully upwards; upheld by the force of gravitation. It is attained through earnest aspiration and by working true to divine law.

Genius may be a curse to society. Upright Character is always a blessing. Mental ability may see evil: the upright heart alone will overcome it. The former has no benevolence: the latter is both benevolent and beneficent. Benevolence is a spirit. You may measure a body by bulk, but spirit never. To invest our souls in material things outside of ourselves is poor economy. Our tenure in such things is, at the best, a short one. We lose them often in life and certainly in death. But proprietorship in Uprightness is registered in Heaven. It unites with the just and the true forces, with the pure and the beautiful of the Universe, and links us with that Divine Power outside ourselves that makes for Righteousness.

## **2-SOUND JUDGMENT**

JUDGMENT IS THAT faculty of the mind that can properly estimate the value of things. It gives true perspective to our views and just consistency to our actions. It maintains our balance in life, directs our aspirations, and decides our course. When it is sound - that is, healthy and strong - we have wisdom. Uprightness of character without Sound Judgment may sow seed on stony places, cast pearls before swine, and lose battles gathering straws. Sound judgment will lose a sprat to catch a whale, will suffer present loss for future gain and will boldly sacrifice the lesser for greater life. The judgment is not sound that listens to desire more than to conscience, that is influenced by gain rather than by honour, and has no faith in the ultimate and eternal triumph of truth and right.

The exercise of Sound Judgment by a Master has an immense influence on the well-being of his Lodge and on his personal peace of mind and happiness in the Chair. An unjust or imprudent decision will strip him of that moral authority without which no master can efficiently rule. Sometimes an unfair decision may be given in haste, and without any intention of being unfair. Smartness is often mistaken for ability and the desire to appear smart may lead to serious mistakes. It is better to be slow and sure than hasty in judgment. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread", and the small mind is the most apt to damn the consequences of its decisions. Careful consideration should always precede a Judgment delivered from the Chair. Where the subject is one with which the mind is familiar, through knowledge and experience, a prompt decision is an advantage. But, as a rule, careful consideration gives thorough knowledge, and thorough knowledge does not often run with hasty judgment.

The Master who has Sound judgment is distinguished by Prudence, Proficiency and Progress. His prudence is shown in what he does, and more in what he does not do. His desires, even when most laudable, he circumscribes within the compass of his power, and he measures his power by the desires of his Lodge. His proficiency is manifested by making the heaviest work appear light and pleasant, and the lightest full of weight and meaning. His progress is rapid, because his steps are slow and sure, because he measures his speed by progression and not by motion. He is not the fluttering barn-fowl full of furious motion, but the soaring eagle, whose almost motionless pinions carry him swiftly upwards and onwards.

## **3-KNOWLEDGE OF MASONRY**

THERE IS A kind of knowledge of degrees and ceremonies gained by having gone through them. But this kind is more an exercise of the purse than of the brain, and scarcely deserves the name of knowledge. You may go

through all the degrees up to the thirty-third, have a lorry load of Diplomas, and more jewels than your coat can carry, and yet be utterly ignorant of real masonry.

Your parchments may be nothing more than the hieroglyphic wrapping round an Egyptian mummy, and your jewels the ornaments of a stage puppet. There is also a kind of knowledge in being able to repeat the rituals and forms, of the Order. This gramophone ability, however, does not imply any real knowledge of the truths and principles than underlie its symbols and ceremonies. A parrot may repeat the proverbs of Solomon and be none the wiser thereby.

True knowledge is the perception of the principles underlying anything; for instance, the craftsman who knows the laws that govern the art of building, the lines that give strength and stability, and those that give beauty to a fabric. This kind of knowledge is power. It makes a man a Master. It gives the power and planning and working to a given end and purpose. It enables the Captain to direct the ship, and gives him his right to the quarter deck. It enables the Master of a Lodge to plan his lodge work in perfect harmony with its Constitution and Mission, and to work-out that plan successfully. The Master who has not this knowledge is the blind servant of red tape and mechanical routine. He is full of ignorant childish fears in his work, and the more conscientious he is, the more fearful he will be. He must stick to every word and letter of what he has learned, for he knows merely the words and letters and not the spirit. He has no knowledge of how to take his bearings and shape his course by the sun and stars, and consequently he creeps along the shore, ever fearful of losing his course. He is not a Master of his craft, in the proper sense of the term. He is a slave to it, and knows it not.

#### **4-MENTAL ABILITY**

**STRENGTH AND SKILL** of mind form mental ability. It is distinguished from genius in being more the product of cultivation and development than of nature. Genius, like beauty, is a natural gift more than a development, although, like the diamond, it may owe much to art. It is also rare like the diamond, and comes not directly into the ordinary service of life. Ability is different. It is not uncommon and can be acquired. It can be developed just as strength and skill of body. The aspiring Master, therefore, should regularly exercise his mind by a serious study of the symbols and history of the craft and the ceremonies of the several degrees. This exercise, to be beneficial, should be regular and not spasmodic. It should also be systematic, beginning at the work of initiation and proceeding on step by step. Each point and symbol should be studied in its relation to the special truth and principle it teaches, also in its connection and harmony generally with the ceremony or proceeding of which it forms a part. By this regular and systematic exercise the mental faculties will be strengthened and developed, and skill in the craft attained.

But the Master should not only have the mental ability to understand the craft of Masonry, he should also have the ability of giving expression to his thoughts and ideas in suitable and correct language. Nothing tends more to lower the dignity of the Chair and lessen the Master's authority than stumbling uncouth utterances. It often offends the feelings and convictions of the listeners, as well as their sense of good taste, even when kindly meant.

In any dispute he is apt to add fuel to the flame, even when he means to be perfectly fair. A few well-chosen words, on the other hand, will generally

restrain ill feeling, and direct the debate into a channel leading to a harmonious conclusion. It is, therefore, of importance that a Master should possess the mental ability to speak freely, as well as to think clearly, and to that end the aspirant should study and practise the art of expressing his thoughts in words fitted to the occasion.

While the Master ought to be thus able, he should in any debate speak as seldom and as shortly as possible. This is a point that ought to receive the careful consideration of every Master, particularly those who think they have "the gift o' the gab". In this, as in most things it is quality and not quantity that tells; for clear expression lies more in the selection than in the volume of words, and that art can only be obtained by study and practice.

Through the endeavour to formulate our thoughts in words we obtain a clearer view of them. When the architect tries to build and shape his ideas, he relishes their imperfections as well as their beauty. The conceptions of the artist are developed and perfected on the canvas.

The inventor's notion becomes plainer in his own mind as he works out his plan or his model; so our thoughts, somewhat vague as they arise in our minds, become more definite and distinct to our vision as we try to formulate and express them in words. We are told that at the beginning of creation "the earth was without form and void, and darkness moved on the face of the deep." Only when He had worked out His thought in substance and form "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good."

By the effort to express our thoughts and clothe them in the form of words or actions, or matter, we not only benefit others, but also, and even more so, benefit ourselves. Thus, the giving of knowledge does not impoverish, it enriches the giver. The true Master who makes a careful study of the Symbols or Ceremonies of Masonry, and tries to give expression to the truths he finds therein, will find his ideas of them all the clearer, his mental ability all the stronger, and will realise in his experience that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

### ***HIS NOMINATION, ELECTION AND INSTALLATION...***

THE ELECTION OF the Master of a Lodge, so far as records go, has been annual, with I think, the single exception of the Lodge Dunblane, which, during 23 years ending in 1760, elected their Office-Bearers biennially see Murray Lyon's History, p16. In Mackay's Lexicon (London Edition, 1869), it is stated (p87):

*The election of Officers of a Lodge must always take place before St John the Evangelist's Day, which is with us the commencement of the Masonic year. Should it from any circumstances be postponed, it cannot afterwards be entered into, except by dispensation from the Grand Master. Nominations of candidates are not permitted by usages of Masonry, but a short time previous to the election the brethren should be called off to refreshment for the purpose of interchanging their opinions, they are then called on, and each brother deposits in the ballot box the name of him whom he deems best qualified or most worthy; and the votes being counted, the one who has received the greatest number is declared elected."*

In p209 it is further stated:

*"He (the Master) is elected annually, but must have previously presided as a Warden, except in the case of a newly constituted Lodge, or when every Past Master and Warden, as well as the present Master, have refused to serve, or have died, resigned, or been expelled."*

There are three statements in the foregoing extracts, viz.:

**First:** "The Election ... must always take place before St John the Evangelist's Day, etc.

**Second:** "Nomination of candidates are not permitted by the usages of Masonry."

**Third:** "He (the Master) . . . must have previously presided as a Warden."

Mackay gives no authority for these assertions.

The present office of Master was at one time called Warden, and so far as I know there is no foundation for the first two in the customs or in the Laws observed by Lodges generally throughout the world either at present or in the past. The third statement is applicable to English Lodges, but I do not think it applies to Lodges universally and, certainly not to Scottish Lodges. It is to be regretted that a book, otherwise so useful and informative as this Lexicon, should be marred here and there by loose statements such as these. The rule fixing St John's Day as the date at which Lodge Wardens were to be elected was not of universal application, for December 20 was the statutory date for the election of Wardens of Lodges within the bounds of Kilwinning, the Nether Ward of Clydesdale, Glasgow, Ayr and Carrick.

At the present time in Scotland the date of the election of the Office-Bearers of subordinate Lodges varies according to the custom, bye-laws and convenience of each Lodge. Some Lodges have it on or about St Andrew's Day, others on or about St John's Day, and others again on a fixed meeting, such as the first or second meeting in a particular month. The election by ballot was introduced at the time of the erection of the Grand Lodge (1736), and has since been gradually adopted.

It is now the mode in which elections are carried out generally, but it is not a Grand Lodge law for subordinate Lodges. The Grand Lodge laws regulate the election. They recognise the distinction between Nomination and Election, and provide for both as separate acts, which may take place at the same or at different meetings according to the custom or the bye-laws of the Lodge.

A meeting for nomination separate from that for election is desirable so that sufficient time may be given to the members for considering the merits of the candidates. This may be open to the objection that it invites canvassing, the formation of parties, the introduction of outside influences of a social and political character and the fermentation of strife. But the other method of voting immediately on nomination is apt to result in hasty ill-considered action. There are foolish persons in every society and in every Lodge, and these are apt to make proposals, on the spur of the moment, which the wiser but slower members do not approve, yet do not counteract, and the Lodge is thus too often saddled with incompetent Office-Bearers.

Nomination and election at the same meeting gives the opportunity for a coup d'etat, an interval gives the time needful to make such efforts futile. It is true that such rash action is rare in the Mason Lodge, yet it is not wise to tempt human nature with the opportunity.

There are dangers in both ways, but my experience is decidedly in favour of an interval between nomination and election.

In some Lodges there is a standing order, or rule, that in all nominations and elections no speaker shall make any reference to the personal merits or demerits of the candidates. This is a very wise and simple rule. It is the duty of each member to ascertain for himself all about the candidates, and,

as a rule, these are well enough known. The praising of one candidate provokes depreciation by those in favour of another one, and as no man is perfect, fault-finding is easy. The result is that, the personal character and reputation of each candidate is dragged into discussion, and in the momentary heat of controversy, words may be used that will inflict lasting wounds.

The present Master is bound to see that the Laws and Regulations of the Grand Lodge are properly observed in the election of a new Master, and even when he is himself a candidate he cannot divest himself of his obligations and responsibilities, and if he vacates the Chair he is all the same responsible to the Grand Lodge for the proceedings. He should only retire when he has reasonable grounds to believe that the business will be fairly and constitutionally conducted in his absence. If he has good grounds to expect the contrary, then his clear duty is to stay and guide the proceedings to the best of his ability, and if there are any indications of serious objections to him doing so while he is a candidate, he should at once withdraw his candidature, if it is at all possible for him to do so, consistent with a conscientious view of the highest interest of the Lodge and of Masonry. Only under stern necessity should a Master preside over an election in which he is a candidate. By doing so he exposes himself to the charge of taking an unfair advantage of his position, and thus injuring his future reputation and usefulness in the Lodge. When there exists no just cause to fear unfair or unconstitutional action - and this will be so unless in extremely rare cases - then the Master should hand over the Mallet to the Immediate, or the next Past Master present, and retire. This is obviously a duty he owes to himself as well as to the Lodge.

But this much debated point must be settled by the Master himself, according to the circumstances of the moment, and no general rule can here be laid down for him. Two considerations, however, stand out clearly, and these he should steadily keep in view:

- (1) he cannot divest himself of his responsibilities for the proper conduct of the election;
- (2) the interests of the Craft and the Lodge must be held by him as superior to all those of a personal character.

There is a custom now being adopted in a number of Lodges of the Office-Bearers or the general committee submitting a list of nominations. This has much to commend it. The Office-Bearers should naturally have a fuller knowledge than the members generally of the qualities required for the duties of the various offices, and of those brethren who have shewn evidence of having those qualities. This custom provides a guide to the Lodge Members and does not preclude them from nominating other eligible brethren. When wisely exercised it will prevent ill-considered and hasty nominations and be of advantage to the Lodge. On the other hand, the Office-Bearers should be very careful in the exercise of such a privilege, so as to prevent the formation of an official clique, or even\* the suspicion of such. Members of a Lodge as a rule will rightly resent any appearance of interfering with their ancient and undoubted right to nominate and elect their own officers, and the presiding Master at a nominating meeting should be careful to ask for nominations, after the official nominations are read, so that there may be no doubt as to the wish of the Office-Bearers to meet the views of the members generally.

Previous to the election of Office-Bearers meeting, the present Master should carefully read over the Grand Lodge Laws and the Lodge Bye-Laws on the subject so that he may have everything done in accordance with these. The following are a few points to be specially noted:

- 1-That the candidates nominated are in "good standing".  
"Good Standing" means a Master Mason registered in the books of the Grand Lodge, a clear member on the Roll of the Lodge, and not under any sentence of suspension or expulsion.
- 2-That the proposers and seconders are also in "good standing".
- 3-That the election is in the 3rd Degree.
- 4-That the book of the Laws and Constitution of the Grand Lodge is laid in front of the Chair.

### ***POWERS AND PRIVILEGES***

THE WORK OF the Master of a Mason Lodge naturally arranges itself into three Main Divisions, viz:

- 1-Administrative Work
- 2-Legislative Work
- 3-Educative Work

A Mason Lodge is at once the most democratic and the most autocratic of institutions. The Master is elected annually by the suffrages of his brethren to rule and govern the Lodge. Within certain defined limits his word is Law. The Lodge elects him as Master, but he can only be deposed by his compeers in the Grand Lodge. (The words here, "Grand Lodge", include Provincial and District Grand Lodges which are bodies delegated, within limited areas, to act for the Grand Lodge). The Master is not responsible to his Lodge, but he is responsible for his Lodge. His power is great in directing, but he cannot perform any work by himself alone. He can order, but he cannot execute. He may draw the plan, but it is the Craft that works. On account of these circumstances it is of prime importance that -there should be a hearty mutual love and respect between the members of the Lodge and the Master. Let the Master keep clearly in view the relative rights and privileges of the Members. By keeping in close touch with them, and taking them into his confidence, he will have their esteem and respect.

### ***HINTS TO MASTERS...***

1. THE MASTER should not be labourer, builder, and everything. His function is to superintend and direct the work.
2. Allocate various parts to your Depute and substitute Master, so that they may assist and relieve you.
3. Have a meeting of office-bearers as soon after the election as possible to arrange your work, and to enter your duties enthusiastically.
4. Remember it is the Master's work to plan and to draw Out the plan.
5. Give encouragement to anyone who wishes to work, and bear in mind that your own Members have the first claim on your assistance and encouragement.
6. Don't parade your authority, but prove yourself worthy of the power placed in your hands by using it as seldom as possible.

In the Constitution of a Lodge an Ideal Condition is implied, for everything in Masonry is Ideal. In practice, of course, this ideal condition is not attained, but there are three things essential towards the attainment of it. There must be

- (1) the earnest desire on the part of the Members and the Master for his ideal state;

- (2) a knowledge of their relative rights and powers;
- (3) an endeavour to bear and forebear with each other in all things.

These and a sincere desire for brotherhood will enable them to overlook the imperfections, the failings, the frailties of each other with a charitable eye.

A true knowledge by a Master of his powers and privileges will form the basis of harmonious working, for ignorance is the prolific Mother of contentions and strife. A just conception of our own rights dispose us to respect the right of others and a true idea of the limits of our powers render us more free to acknowledge the power of others.

Let us enquire briefly. What are the Powers and Privileges of a Master, and what are the limits of these?

### ***POWERS AND PRIVILEGES OF THE MASTER***

1. THE LODGE cannot sit in judgment on him.
2. Any charge against him by any members of the Lodge or the Craft must be formulated by petition to the Grand Lodge.
3. Grand Lodge cannot suspend or censure him without a regular process.
4. He can summon special meetings of the Lodge.
5. He is Ex-Officio member of all committees, and unless he has agreed to another Convener being appointed he is Convener of all committees.
6. He plans the order of Lodge Business, and of Lodge Labour, unless where that is predetermined by the Lodge or its bye-laws.
7. In all points of order his decision is final, and all must work according to his Plan and Instructions.
8. He can call on any Brother to work for him, but unless the Brother is an Installed Master, he cannot occupy the Chair.
9. He can refuse to put to the Lodge any motion which he considers contrary to the Laws of the land, the landmarks of the Order, or the Grand Lodge Laws.
10. He can order any Brother to retire from the Lodge.
11. He can personally bring any dispute between him and the Lodge under the consideration of the Grand Lodge.
  - (a) By raising a question of privilege.
  - (b) By regular motion on the matter, or
  - (c) By petition against certain members of the Lodge.
12. To the Lodge he is the Interpreter of the Laws of the Grand Lodge, which he is bound to interpret to the best of his ability.
13. For the due execution and administration of the Grand Lodge Laws and the Lodge Byelaws he is responsible to Grand Lodge, and is armed with full authority. Any interference with the proper exercise of that authority can be dealt with as per Paragraph 11 above.

### ***LIMITATIONS OF THE MASTER'S POWERS...***

1. AT THE end of twelve months the Lodge may elect another Master, and on the installation of the Master-elect the authority of the Master retiring ceases.
2. He is responsible to the Grand Lodge both for his own acts and those of his Lodge.
3. Without petition from his Lodge the Grand Lodge may call him to account, and by regular process proceed to try him.

4. He is bound to observe strict morality of personal life and conduct; to conform to the Laws of the realm; to respect the Landmarks of the Order; and to order himself and the Lodge according to the Laws of the Grand Lodge and the Bye-Laws of the Lodge.
5. For Lodge business he cannot hand over the mallet unless to the officers of the Lodge according to precedence.
6. For Lodge work he cannot hand over the mallet unless to an Installed Master.
7. In his absence from the Lodge the Chair is filled according to precedence, and he cannot appoint any other by commission or letter.
8. If a Master wants to do some work or to do some business which in the circular calling the meeting the members do not wish to consider or to do, they adopt the following legal means of obstruction:
  - (a) By not assembling in sufficient numbers to enable the Master to open the Lodge, or
  - (b) By motion of adjournment of the business, or
  - (c) By retiring so as to leave less than a quorum, in which case all business and work ceases, or
  - (d) If they have time through a petition by obtaining an order from the Grand Lodge getting an interdict to the proposed proceedings until the dispute has been adjudged.
9. If a Master wants to stop a certain business or work, refuses to allow a motion, or to do the work, or proceeds to close the Lodge against the wishes of the majority of the members present, the members can constitutionally proceed:
  - (a) By a motion that the certain business or work be proceeded with immediately, or
  - (b) That the Master retire, and the next present, according to precedence, do take the Chair, while the said business or work is proceeding, or
  - (c) By petition to Grand Lodge, or
  - (d) By refusing to stand to order so as to enable the Lodge to be closed.
10. He cannot shift the date and hour-of the regular Lodge Meetings.
11. He cannot refuse permission to a Brother to retire when the Brother pleads
  - (a) the necessities of nature,
  - (b) the call of public or family duty, or
  - (c) his dissatisfaction with and protest against the proceedings of the Lodge or Master, or
  - (d) his disagreement with some Brother or Brethren with whom he cannot sit in harmony.
12. The interpretation of its own Bye-Laws lie with the Lodge and not with the Master.
13. His decisions and conduct are subject to appeal to Grand Lodge.

#### ***DUTIES OF A MASTER...***

THE FIRST AND all-important duty for a Master is to enlighten himself. Unless he has the light in him he cannot impart it. In the installation ceremony he is charged in the following or similar words, that: 'As the sun rises in the East to open the Day and dispense his cheerful light over the earth,

that profit may result from the labour it enlightens, and pleasure from the beauty it reveals, so is the Master placed in the East to open his Lodge, to enlighten the brethren, and to set the craftsmen to work with proper instruction, so that there may be profit from the labour and pleasure from the beauty of our Ancient Craft." Again his attention is drawn to the Jewel of his office, and he is reminded that he is to take that great luminary as a pattern in the performance of his duties. The view here expressed is that on the Master doing his duties well, the profit and pleasure of the brethren depend. If he does not enlighten, there can be little profit or pleasure resulting, as there can be no good harvest if the sun does not shine. Get the aid and assistance of experienced Past Masters. A cultured Past Mater, with his experience will guide the Master in the work of the Lodge, and will influence his mind towards high ideals of the symbolism and ceremonies. The young Master should study also the best Masonic Authors.

### ***LODGE BUSINESS AND WORK***

IT WILL BE useful for the Master clearly to distinguish between Lodge Business and Work. Business refers to matters of Minutes, Records, Reports, Finance, Laws and Bye-Laws, everything connected with the Lodge as a Machine, its upkeep, preservation, and efficiency. Work refers to the various ceremonies, instruction, lectures, all that matters for the building and enlightenment of its members in Masonry. The first appertains to the organisation of the Lodge, the second to the teaching of Masonry.

The Business of the Lodge is to keep itself fit and efficient so as to enable it to work well in building up its members in the principles and truths of the Craft.

After all the chief end of the Lodge is the making of Masons and a furtherance of Masonry. The true Mason is a builder, building morally the eternal temple, by cutting and carving himself as a living stone for the structure, working with his brethren and helping them in the labours of the Lodge so that through the Lodge they may radiate an influence on human society. In this sense the Lodge is workshop or machine, organised and fitted to make Masons.

In arranging the order of business and Work, precedence should be given to the more important items. How often have we experienced the time and attention of the Lodge wasted in trivial, paltry business for a lengthy period, and all the time in the adjacent room candidates, who have been asked to attend, are wearily waiting for initiation. The Work for which the Lodge exists is consequently begun at a late hour and hurried through in a perfunctory manner in the presence of a limited number of members.

This sort of thing produces evil effects. The candidates are wearied at waiting so long, and they receive a bad impression of the Master by that and the slovenly haste of the ceremony. The members of the Lodge also get disgusted with trivial discussion and bad working, and cease attending regularly. There may be times of course when business must take precedence. This should not take place unless after careful consideration. In planning his work the Master should remember that the Lodge is a means to an end, and the work of Masonry is of higher importance even than the Lodge itself.

Only when it is essential to the machine doing its work should the business of attending to the machine take precedence of the real "work".

From the foregoing the Master will see that the first claim on his attention is to plan the business and work of his Lodge. The question as to

precedence of Lodge business and Lodge work is often a disputed one. It seems to me that the way to settle the matter is to ascertain which is the greater in importance - not from the view of greater convenience either personally or to the Lodge, but from the higher and broader view which should never be lost sight of, that of the interest of Masonry generally.

### *Biographical Notes*

ANDREW MacBRIDE was the second generation of Masonic Researchers and Historians.

His Father, A. S. MacBride, is better known, due to his compilation of the Masonic Ritual, generally called the "MacBride Ritual".

Although compiled in 1870, the MacBride Ritual is still only used by a minority of what some call "the thinking Lodges". Certainly it eliminates much of what causes criticism today. His work was not in favour with Grand Lodge in 1870, but it sometimes takes a little while for genius to be recognised, for his attitude to the Penalties, for example, is now more appreciated.

Born the son of a cooper in December 1843, at Renton, A. S. MacBride attended Dalmonach School, but was mostly self-educated. He was President of An Comunn Gaidhealach and 2nd President of the Scottish Football Association. Joined Freemasonry in July 1866, was Master in 1867, and between then and 1896 was Master of Leven St John Renton, for a period of 21 years. Was Master of Lodge Progress 873 in 1901, the year Andrew was initiated.

Andrew was Master in 1914; he was always in the shadow of his more well-known Father, but was a very able and skilled Historian and Mason in his own right.

The quality of the man is apparent from the quality of the work you have just read.

PROGRESS.



MEDIÆVAL  
1136 A.D.  
GLASGOW CATHEDRAL FROM  
THE NORTH EAST.

FROM THE ORIGINAL ETCHING BY  
DR. WILFRED C. APPLEBY, 1873.

**THE FIRST SCOTTISH PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE  
(ITS ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION)**

**ANDREW MACBRIDE, P.M. Lodge No. 873**

*Addressed to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Glasgow at their Quarterly  
Communication on Tuesday, 31st January, 1950.*

Tonight, I find myself in a peculiar position and in an unaccustomed role, in this Provincial Grand 'Lodge. At the' request and by the good grace of our Provincial Grand Master, I have chosen to speak to you, for a little, on some old far-off forgotten things and Masonry long ago; to take you backward in a time dimension flight of over two centuries when the first Scottish Provincial Grand Master was appointed by Commission on the 7th February, 1739.

To understand the circumstances properly, please present to your mind's eye this picture of Glasgow' at this period. Two hundred years ago; it was a city compactly built together, in an area of a few thousand square yards around its venerable Gothic Cathedral and its ancient College' in High Street; extending to Gallowgate, Candleriggs, Trongate, Saltmarket and to the banks of the Clyde at the Stockwell old toll bridge. The, Clyde was then a pure pellucid stream, abounding in salmon and trout, and meandering on its shallow bed to. the Firth. The population of Glasgow at this period was approximately 17,000 inhabitants. It was no mean city but one of the most beautiful and well built cities in Europe and its, praises have been recorded in lyrical terms by writers such as Daniel Defoe, Dr. Tobias Smollett and Pennant.

At this period it was evolving into a commercial cen tre and its citizens were inspired with a true spirit of enterprise and industry. Social life and luxury were rampant. Its 'tobacco lords', in scarlet cloaks and knee-britches, with handsome swagger-canes, kept the "croon o' the caussey" and paraded the plain-stanes of the Candleriggs. There, in the Old Coffee Room in the Trongate, one of the most commodious assembly rooms in Europe of that period, the merchant princes met at noon and there at night the brethren of the mystic tie held their Lodge meetings and harmonies, promoting every social as well as the moral virtues in their assemblies.

There were three Lodges then established in Glasgow

- (1) the time immemorial Lodge Glasgow St. John (now 3bis);
- (2) Lodge Glasgow 'Kilwinning; and
- (3) Lodge Glasgow St. Mungo

Glasgow St. John Lodge was then a purely operative. Lodge and a pendicle of the Incorporation of Masons. It did not come under the jurisdiction of, the Grand Lodge: until the middle of the next century, in 1850., Lodge Glasgow Kilwinning (now No. 4) was instituted on 1st April, 1735, and its. membership, was composed largely of merchants and tobacco lords. , This. Lodge was represented at the institution of the Grand Lodge. of Scotland, 30th

November, 1736; also as a Lodge she possesses in her minutes the fir, authentic record of the conferring of the Third Degree,, so far as Glasgow is concerned.

Lodge. Glasgow St. Mungo (now No. 27) was founded in. the year 1729 by a Charter from Mother Kilwinning.. She. also was represented at the founding of Grand Lodge in 1736, but she did not receive her Charter of Confirmation from. Grand Lodge until the year 1762. This Lodge was evidently founded in 1729 for the purpose of receiving into Freemasonry such citizens as could not be' admitted into St. John's Lodge, as membership of the latter was exclusively confined to those connected with the Incorporation of Masons and with the operative building trades.

Passing from these general remarks let us consider the genesis of the first Provincial Grand Lodge in Scotland.

This is contained in a minute of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, of which the following is an excerpt:-

"Grand Lodge of Scotland, November 30th, 1738.

John, Earl of Kintore, G.M.

Capt. John Young, D.M.

John Douglas, Esq., S.M.

Patrick Lindsay, Esq., S.G.W.

George Drummond, Esq., J.G.W.

Thos. Mylne, Esq., G.Treas.

John M'Dougall, Esq., G. Secy.

Mr. Robert Alison, G.Clerk.

"Since the institution of the Grand Lodge the principles of the Craft had been so rapidly propagated through every part of the Kingdom that it was found necessary to appoint Provincial Grand Masters over particular districts who were empowered to hold general meetings and to take cognizance of everything relating to Masonry within the bounds of their district. In consequence of this resolution, Alexander Drummond, Esq., Master of Greenock Kilwinning, was appointed Provincial Grand Master over the Lodges in the Western Counties of Scotland."

On the 7th February 1739, this resolution of the Grand Lodge was ratified by the granting of the Commission as Provincial Grand Master to Bro. Alexander Drummond over the Lodges in the Counties of Argyle, Clydesdale., Dumbarton, Renfrew and Stirling (see copy of Commission).

Previous to this there is no evidence in Scotland of a Provincial Grand Master or a Provincial Grand Lodge, in the modern meanings of these terms. The nearest resemblances to such are to be found in two records written at the end of the 16th century. The first is contained in the Privy Seal Book of Scotland, Holyroodhouse, 25th September 1590, which records the ratification by King James VI. (Scots) of the election of Patrick Copland, of Udaught, to the Office of "Wardane and justice over the Masons within the Counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine," and which states that the King in doing so gave effect to the choice of a majority of the Master Masons in the District.

The second is found in the Schaw Statutes, which are the Magna Charta of Scottish Masonry, dated 28th December 1599, *vide* (the Eglinton or Kilwinning copy):-

*"Item.-It is thocht neidful and expedient be my Lord Warden Generall . . . that the Ludge of Kilwynning, Secund Ludge of Scotland, shall have their Warden present at the election of the Wardenis within the boundis of the nether waird of Claiddisdaill, Glasgow, Air and boundis of Carrik; with powers to the said Wardenis and dekynis within the boundis foresaid, quhan they haif ony neid of importance ado, to be judgit be the warden and dekyn of Kilwynning, quhen it sall pleis thame to convene for the tyme, aither at Kilwynning or within ony ither part of the West of Scotland and boundis foresaid.*

*"Item.-Commission is given to the Warden and deakon of Kilwynning as secund Ludge to seclud and away put furth of their societie and cumpanie all person's disobedient to fulfil and obey the haill acts and ancient statutes sett down of befoir of guid memorie and all personis disobedient aither to Kirk, Craft, Counsall or otheris statutes and acts to be maid heirafter for ane guid ordour."*

From these ancient records it appears that the Office of Warden or Deacon of Kilwinning, with jurisdiction over the Lodges in the West of Scotland, and the Warden appointed by King James VI. over the Counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Kincardine, may be termed as equivalent to the office of Provincial Grand Master.

These ancient documents are not only interesting and important on account of being Scottish Masonic records written over 350 years ago, but also because they supply the best example of how Scottish Masonry was then organised and show how these ancient Provincial Grand Lodges were constituted. They also present to us a peculiar picture of the usages of the craft of that period, which are unique in character and purport. Further we perceive that the powers and duties of our Provincial Grand Masters have been evolved and based on the regulations as set forth in our ancient Scots Statutes.

The first Scottish Provincial Grand Master, Alexander Drummond, Collector of Customs, Greenock, was a notable man and mason of his era.

Initiated in Lodge Kilwinning, Greenock, in the year 1736, he was elected Master on the 27th December (St. John's night), 1738. The first Provincial Grand Lodge minutes in Scotland are contained in the first Minute Book of Greenock Kilwinning No. 12, in February 1739, when the Earl of Kintore, Grand Master, installed Bro. Drummond as Provincial Grand Master over the Lodges in the "Western Country." Bro. Drummond's Commission was renewed by the Earl of Morton, who succeeded Kintore as Grand Master. The three succeeding Grand Masters; the Earl of Strathmore, the Earl of Leven and the Earl of Kilmarnock (beheaded for his share in the 1745 Rising) each renewed his Commission which expired in 1743.

On receiving his Commission and being installed Bro. Drummond at once proceeded to discharge his duties in terms of his patent with assiduity

and fidelity as the following excerpts from the old minute books of Glasgow Kilwinning No. 4 and St. John Kilwinning Dumbarton bear witness :

"GLASGOW KILWINNING LODGE

At the Old Coffee House, Glasgow, 6th March,  
1739.

*Present*-The Most Worshipful Alexander Drummond, Provincial Grand Master.

JAMES MONTGOMERY, Grand Wardens  
JOHN CLARK, pro. temp

JOHN BAIRD, Master.  
GEORGE MURDOCH, S.W.  
JOHN TELFER, J.W.

We had the honour of visitation from Alexander Drummond, Esq., our Most Worshipful Provincial Grand Master, who was received to the Chair with all suitable solemnity and respect. In obedience to his Charter from the Grand Lodge, of which annexed is a copy, he appointed James Montgomerie and John Clark, Provincial Grand Wardens: Our Provincial Grand Master having taken the Chair proceeded to a strict examination of the whole affairs of the Lodge and approved the management. The members were interogatt and answered the propper questions of Masonry and after drinking the usual healths and singing the ordinary songs, our Lodge was regularly shutt.

JAMES MONTGOMERIE, S.G.W. Pro.  
JOHN CLARK, J.G.W. temp.

AL.  
DRUMMOND, Pr. Gr.  
M."

Excerpt from Minute Book of Lodge St. John's Old Kilwinning No. 6, Inverness:-

"On the 20th April, 1739, Alexander Drummond, Provincial Grand Master of Scotland, visited the Lodge and being entreated took the Chair and lectured the brethren for their instruction."

The Master of this old Lodge then was Archd. Grahame, Officer of Excise. This journey north to Inverness must have been a hazardous one in

1739 for our first Provincial Grand Master, when you consider the transport available then; no railways, no made or Wade roads; only drove roads over hills and through valleys from the lowlands to far Lochaber and Inverness city.

Minute of the Provincial Grand Master's visit to  
DUMBARTON KILWINNING LODGE -

"Dumbarton Lodge the second day of May, 1740, and the year of Masonry 5740.

The Provincial Grand Lodge met in the dwelling-house of Widow. Anderson by the Most Worshipful Alexander Drummond, Provincial Grand Master, Nathaniel Watson, S.G. Warden, Ralph Bell, J.G. Warden, and other officers of Dumbarton Lodge. Upon their taking of the Chair they were saluted in the usual manner by the Lodge. Thereafter the Most Worshipful the Provincial Grand Master went through the whole members and examined them upon the points of Masonry and was satisfied with the answers made, and read over their Charter Constitution, Minutes and Regulations and gave very suitable instruction upon the business of Masonry and for the advantage of the Lodge to which punctual obedience was promised

Thereafter several loyal healths were drunk and suitable songs sang and the Lodge dissolved in the usual, form.

(Signed) AL. DRUMMOND, R.W.G.M.  
MATH. WILSON, S.G.W.  
RALPH Bell, J.G.W"

At the Lodge meeting it is recorded on the same date that the Provincial Grand Master Alexander Drummond "having produced his patent from Grand Lodge, the same was read and a copy of it was taken and put in the Lodge Box." The production of the P.G.M's. Commission or patent in evidence, constitutes a Provincial Grand Lodge, just as the production of the Charter or Warrant constitutes a daughter Lodge.

In, the year 1744 Alexander Drummond was appointed H.M. Consul at Aleppo, and, while resident there, was active and zealous in promulgating the tenets of Masonry. He formed and. constituted the first Scottish Lodge in the Near East. According to the minutes of Grand Lodge, November 30th, 1747, "It was stated by the Grand Master Mason the Rt. Hon. The Lord Provost of Edinburgh George Drummond, that his brother Alexander Drummond, late Provincial Grand Master of the West of Scotland, having taken up his residence at Alexandretta in Turkey had erected several Masons Lodges in that part of the country, and as he was anxious still further to diffuse the principles, of the fraternity, he begged that Grand Lodge would grant him a Provincial or District Grand Commission. The Grand Lodge having taken this petition into consideration unanimously granted his requisition."

Thus Bro. Alexander Drummond had the dual honour conferred on him of being the first Scottish Provincial Grand Master and the first Scottish District Grand, Master appointed by the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

In the course of my Masonic researches, by what I might term a providential concourse of circumstances which often happens to those who seek after light, I was fortunate in finding in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, a fine folio volume of the "Travels of Alexander Drummond," 'HM's. Consul at Aleppo, written in a series of letters addressed to his brother, George Drummond, Esq., Lord Provost of Edinburgh, during the years 1744 to 1750. This volume was edited by Dr. Tobias Smollett, novelist, poet and historian in 1753.

On May 26th of that year, Smollett contracted with George Drummond to prepare for the press the travel letters his brother, Alexander Drummond. In return for his executing and managing this work, to use his own words, Smollett received a hundred guineas from George Drummond, Lord Provost of Edinburgh. This handsome publication is full of graphic pen pictures and beautiful engravings of the various parts of Germany, Italy and Greece, and several parts of Asia as far as the banks of the Euphrates; describing the conditions of these countries' as well as their monuments of antiquity. The two following extracts should prove of special interest to Masons of to-day:-

"At Zante, 1745, Drummond writes, "I had the pleasure of meeting Father Catifero of the Greek Church and Dr. Nicolo Attinco, both worthy and learned men; not only in their own professions but in belles letters. I had the good, fortune to acquire their esteem. One evening the Rev. Father asked me if I knew anything of the Franc Macons; for he was very desirous of being acquainted with the nature of that famous society. I gave him a detail of their principles, solved all his doubts and removed all his difficulties, so much to their satisfaction that they expressed a desire of having a Lodge in Zante. The Father had been, good man, an advocate (without knowing anything of their constitution) in the 'European Transactions' published at Venice of which he for years had been author."

In the year 1735, His Holiness the Pope had issued his famous Bull excommunicating the Freemasons. In his Edict he acknowledged his ignorance of everything relating to Freemasonry, and indeed assigns that as the reason of their excommunication, The Rev. Father Catifero, of the Greek Church, defended the Freemasons and as Smollett observes being of the Greek Church did not come under the ban of his Holiness in this respect.

Letter from Smyrna, 1745 year. "At this carnival season they have an assembly here, at which Consul Mr. Crawley did me the honour to introduce me; and as I had formed a Lodge of Freemasons in this country; the ladies had conceived a strange notion of my character, for I had been represented to them by some priest, as a conjurer who had the devil at his command and raised the dead by diabolical incantations. These terrible prepossessions instead of frightening them only served to raise their curiosity, and when I entered the room, they surveyed me

with a truly female curiosity. One of their number, a pretty blooming little creature, was hardy enough to ask me to dance with her and I walked seven minuets with her during the course of the evening,

"As I have mentioned the Lodge of Freemasons I cannot help congratulating myself upon the opportunity I had of making so many worthy brethren in this place and forming the only Lodge there is in the Levant. The Lodge of Drummond Kilwinning, Aleppo, has reason to be proud and I assure you I am a little vain of being the father of such a flock."

It is worthy of record that while this first Scottish Lodge was founded by Bro. Alexander Drummond in the year 1745, the earliest English Lodge at Smyrna of which we have any record is "Homer Lodge No. 806," warranted in 1860-or one hundred-and-fifteen years later.

Returning from his sojourn in the Levant Bro. Alexander Drummond resided in Edinburgh and resumed his connection and interest in Freemasonry.

On the 24th June 1760, he was elected Master of Lodge Canongate Kilwinning, Edinburgh No. 2, and with his distinguished brother, George Drummond, he took an active part in the work of Grand Lodge and Freemasonry in Scotland.

From this shadowy sketch of our first Provincial Grand Master, we perceive that in his travel on life's chequered pavement, he was always animated with a deep devotion and love of Masonry, loving it with a real fervid spirit; doing good work for it and with it. He appears to us as one of those dim and distant figures, inhabiting the background of early Scottish Freemasonry.

He made his mark on his own day and generation and laid well and truly the foundations of our first Provincial Grand Lodge.

One thing we must not fail to observe is that at this period Grand Lodge, the first Provincial Grand Lodge and the daughter Lodges were not in constitution and organisation what they are to-day. They have passed through many modifications and no inconsiderable part of their form and organisation has been the product of succeeding generations. At the institution of our first Provincial Grand Lodge in 1739, as I have pointed out, there were only three daughter Lodges in Glasgow. To-day, with a population of over a million we have sixty-nine Lodges. Many of the older Lodges have a history luminous with achievements in the past, the newer Lodges have the privilege of making history.

So collateral with the growth of the city Masonry as an institution has flourished, an institution practical, wholesome and distinctly a moral force in our communal life.

An institution such as this that has survived the vicissitudes of over two hundred years, that has enshrined on her Roll the illustrious names of many

Provincial Grand Masters to Scotia and Masonry dear. Such an institution is surely worthy of our veneration, of our love and regard.

In these stupendous times to-day, when rank materialistic conceptions of life are so rife, the interests of humanity demand that our noble heritage shall be preserved and conserved for peace and brotherhood, as a haven of rest amid the storms and tumults of earthly life. As the late Dr. Fort Newton has said "Man was made for brotherhood, never did the world need Masonry as it does to-day; its gentle, spirit of love, its simple faith and its broad wise tolerance."

## A FASCINATING IDEAL

by BROTHER ANGUS N. MACINNES  
P.P.G.M. Dunbartonshire  
P.M., Lodge Saint Patrick (Dunbartonshire), No. 1309  
Master, Lodge Century, No. 1492

How life changes with the times. Many of the great men of the past have been limited by circumstances beyond their control.

The genius of Brunel, the great engineer, was limited by the materials available in his day and by those who thought they were smarter than he was.

The genius of A. S. MacBride was limited by those who could not see the value of his work or who would not accept change; fortunately there were others who did, mostly those who knew him well.

It is interesting that the Ad Hoc Committee, set up by Grand Lodge recently, suggested among others the thought that "More effective Masonic education should be encouraged."

This Committee is approximately one hundred years behind MacBride who, before 1899, instituted an Instruction Class and even went as far as having an examination to attain the degree of Most Excellent Master for those who had shown a satisfactory knowledge of the Craft. When MacBride instituted his Lodge of Instruction he was clearly influenced by his membership of An Comunn Gaidhealach and the training he absorbed to be a Bard. A Bard in ancient Celtic society was a trained man.

It took seven years memorising old Celtic tradition laws and history, for these were never written, and it would be his knowledge of their ancient method of preserving and handing down tradition which would give him the idea and the experience to use in the interests of his Lodge and the Craft.

As recorded in the History of the Province of Dunbartonshire 1739-1989, Grand Lodge complained about this irregularity and it was discontinued. MacBride then published his Masonic Instructor which was highly commended by Grand Secretary, Brother D. Murray Lyon, and by the Secretary of Quatuor Coronati who said it was superior to those in use in England.

The Lodges who follow the MacBride tradition still have to tutor all new entered Brethren in an exact knowledge of the principal parts and points of the ceremonies before being advanced and still work the Instructors or Intenders for the Candidates.

If you wish to judge the lectures to the Lodges of Instruction by A. S. MacBride, read his book Speculative Masonry where they were revised, condensed and printed in 1913.

I therefore thought it was time the Masonic World learned just a little about this man who wrote such a fine but seldom used Ritual, who was ahead of his

time but timeless in his thinking, who put true meaning into dedication in that oft misused phrase 'Dedicated Freemason', who is so little known in the lists of greats and who is better known and appreciated in America than in his own land; proving the saying about the Prophets.

When he became Master of Lodge Progress, No. 873, in 1900 he instituted a Committee of Enquiry whose function was to enquire into all applications for Initiation and Affiliation, to examine and interview all candidates with their sponsors as to their qualifications and report their findings thereon before the Ballot, as they did in Lodge Leven St John Renton, No. 170, and Past Master of Lodge Progress, No. 873, Glasgow compiler of the MacBride Ritual and author of Speculative Masonry. Initiated into Freemasonry in Lodge Leven St John Renton, No. 170, in the Province Of Dunbartonshire on 13th July 1866 at the meeting held in the Black Bull Inn

What kind of man was he? A man who by some was termed as the greatest figure in Scottish Freemasonry. This unique and remarkable man; what made him write the Ritual associated with his name, what made him devote so much time to the Craft; a man who some said was one of the best loved and most famous Freemasons of his generation A Craftsman to whom the world was a temple; a poet to whom the world was a song.

I do not know if we can give full answers to these questions, but we can reflect on some of the problems and how he came to write such a fine Ritual.

He thought the Lodge ought to be as a school in which men learn the way of right living and high thinking. So let us consider—

The Man - The Mason  
His Ritual - His Logic

#### THE MAN

A. S. MacBride was born in December 1843 in Stirling Street, Renton. His father, John MacBride, who was a cooper in Dalquhum Works, Renton, died during the cholera epidemic of 1846, when his son was only three years of age.

It was therefore his mother, Catherine Douglas, a native of Bonawe, Argyllshire, and a Gaelic speaker, who had to bring him up alone and who undoubtedly had great influence on the boy's mind and instilled in him a love of the Highland tradition and folklore, the learning and use of words.

Like all Highlanders in these days she was a veritable mine of information on Highland tradition and folklore. The effect of this can be seen in much of his work.

His only schooling, as far as can be ascertained, was at the old school in Dalmonach Hall, Renton. He was not content with merely being able to read and write words. In search of learning he amassed a library, among which was the works of Butler, Milton, Shakespeare, Dryden, De Quincy, Carlyle, Burns and others.

Being deeply interested in Scottish history and Gaelic tradition, he did not just read these works; he studied them. It was not mere literacy he was aiming at, it was literary culture. Though not a great scholar he was a man of rich

learning, more practical than academic. He had been a clerk with the North British Railway Company and a bricklayer, but was not content with learning only the practical side; he studied building construction and drawing.

He was employed from the age of eighteen in the dyeing and bleaching industry at Dalquhum, and at a young age was given the important position of salesman for cloth at William Stirling & Sons, succeeding the sole partner, thus leaving him free to travel overseas. This indicates the faith his employer had in his ability, as the prosperity of the industry and the district depended upon him and there were no training colleges or business courses to assist.

He was president of the Vale of Leven Liberal Association. He was a poet, a translator from the Gaelic, a Justice of the Peace, second President of the Scottish Football Association and President of An Comunn Gaidhealach, and he even found time to be a very active sportsman.

If you want to form your own opinion of the man, examine what he wrote, for as has been said "As a man thinketh, so is he."

## THE MASON

The custom of Lodge Leven St John, when Brother MacBride was initiated in 1866, was to appoint two Instructors, or Intenders as they were called, to every newly initiated member. Brother MacBride had the good fortune to have as his instructors two of the oldest Masons in the Lodge, and it is to the instruction he received that he attributes the enthusiastic interest he had in studying the history and symbolism of the Craft for over fifty years.

There has always been much difference of opinion amongst the best authorities as to the question of degrees in the old Operative Lodges, and that those now known as Fellow Craft and Master Mason had no existence prior to the revival of 1717. But from a very remote period there were three distinct grades of Masons, not necessarily degrees as we know them today, viz. Apprentice, Craftsman and Master. In various records of the old Lodges there is evidence that a Mason was fined if within a year after taking an Apprentice he failed to enter him and give him his charge. Also found were charges preserved for Masters and Fellows.

It was acknowledged by all that the reading of these charges formed a part - perhaps the principal part - of a ceremony associated with these old Lodges. When an Apprentice finished his term of service he usually "travelled". He was a Journeyman. It is not likely he carried lines or papers to show he had served an apprenticeship. The simple and natural method would be that he had certain signs, words, tokens or grips, and these would necessarily require to be quite distinct from those of an apprentice. He also had to undergo a severe practical trial and examination.

It is interesting to note that the earliest record of a Third Degree in the world is in the minute book of Lodge Dumbarton Kilwinning, No. 18, when Thomas Porter received his Third Degree in March 1726.

Four months after being initiated, Brother MacBride was made secretary of his Lodge. The Brethren were quick to recognise his ability. Twelve months after his initiation it was moved in the Lodge that the Chair Degree be conferred on a Brother. This Degree was from an old Ritual and, contrary to Grand Lodge Law, Brother MacBride moved an amendment that as no authority had been given to the Lodge by its Charter to give that Degree, it must not be conferred. The motion being carried, MacBride left the meeting, protesting at the breaking of Grand Lodge Law. The Brethren recognised his upholding of the Law and his principles, for they elected him Master two weeks later. He served seven years until 1874, was re-elected in 1879, holding office until 1884, elected again in 1887, serving until 1896 - a total of twenty-one years.

What was his secret? What quality did he have to make men select him as their leader? In any petty or personal disputes which are unavoidable when people assemble, MacBride did not interfere but wrote down the cause of the dispute, and when the participants were later shown the cause of their disagreement set down in cold black and white, they saw how ridiculous their wrangling was and stopped.

The custom at the refreshment table in that era was for everyone to help themselves from the bottle on the table, which meant that some got more than their share. MacBride proposed that the limit should be two refreshments, and when he convinced the members that they must apply the square to the refreshment table as well as to the work, his suggestion was carried. It was this simple straightforward approach coupled with his tact and charm, which made him popular.

An occurrence at his ceremony of Installation as Master enabled him to refute a statement made by the great Masonic historians, Gould and Murray Lyon. They maintained that a certain practice was not observed in any Lodge because they could find no written evidence to prove it. But MacBride discovered during his Installation that the practice was certainly observed in Lodge Leven St John and had been observed since its creation as a Lodge in 1788. But it had never been written down, thus the documents consulted by these two Masonic historians were inadequate for their purpose and, as MacBride knew, people familiar with the old Celtic traditions required more than written documents for an accurate history.

When the Lodge decided they needed new premises, A. S. MacBride inaugurated a scheme whereby members took out shares to be paid in twelve instalments. Making use of the skills he acquired during his study of building construction, he drew out the plans and specifications for the building and superintended the construction, thereby saving the cost of an architect and a master of works; was responsible for the interior decoration, and during the building operations carried out by the members in their spare time, MacBride marched round playing the bagpipes to give them encouragement. The hall

was consecrated in 1893, enlarged in 1915, and the result of all their labours can be seen in the beautiful and useful premises still in use today.

In 1900 he was elected Master of Lodge Progress, No. 873, Glasgow, the year his son Andrew was initiated. In the Province of Dunbartonshire he had served as Provincial Grand Secretary, Junior Provincial Grand Warden, Senior Provincial Grand Warden and Depute Provincial Grand Master.

MacBride summed up Masonry in his own words - "It presents a most fascinating ideal of humanity adapted to meet the conditions of all classes and of all peoples and its fundamental principles are those of peace and brotherhood throughout the earth." His outlook can be summed up in his own words - "A man who says he knows all about Masonry proclaims his own ignorance."

## THE RITUAL

How did this man come to write or revise and amend a Ritual that had probably been in use for a century before?

No man could have carried out these tasks successfully without first having some educational background, some preliminary training in thought and expression. Above all, it required the ability to absorb it in thought, so that his mind did not become rigid and inflexible in attitude by the consistent repetition of ritual as happens so often, and remain flexible in expression, so that he could present his thoughts in clear concise English. He was a Master not only of his Craft but the spoken word, gifted in Victorian language.

The Ritual that was used in his Lodge was based, as far as we know, on Preston's illustration of Freemasonry, published about the middle of the eighteenth century. It was handwritten and passed from one generation to another. MacBride probably inherited it when he became Master. In it he found much to criticise. Coarse and vulgar methods had crept in due to the previous users not having studied the symbolism deeply enough and their having but a small conception of its real meaning and beauty.

The work often hurried through to get to the refreshment table and, as MacBride said, "The beauty and truths of Masonry were drowned in a Bacchanalian flood." His criticisms brought him into conflict with many of his fellow members, but by his tact and patience he was able to modify and influence those views adverse to his conception and so gain the respect and admiration of those who initially opposed him.

Before making his Ritual, MacBride had a clear knowledge of our Craft by studying its early origins. The old Charges, as they were called, dated from the fourteenth century, and were read by the Lodges to the Candidate as part of his initiation. These are the origins of the Charges we give the Candidate today. It is said he studied Ashe's Manual. He spent many hours devising a

ritual that would enhance what it was meant to teach without ever departing from the spirit and truth of Masonry.

From his study and interpretation he did not believe, as many do today, that Lodges were only operative in those times but that they were also speculative. His judgement was based on the circumstantial evidence and on the Regulations contained in the Charges of the old Lodge. They all differed but the basic principles were universal in the way they related to the conduct of Masons.

"They are of a Moral and Religious character and are therefore more speculative than operative in their purpose."

In every case the Mason is first of all charged to be true to God, the King and to his fellows. Stealing and vice are explicitly named to be avoided. Falsehood and deceit are condemned. This element in them, apart from and above the operative work that refers to conduct and morals more than any- thing else, shows their relationship with modern Masonry. After all, what is the purpose of our Speculative System but to shape life and conduct to noble ends.

MacBride, in his book *Speculative Masonry*, explains the Mission of Masonry and endeavours to give us a clear conception of the meaning of the words "Mission" and "Masonry". Mission comes from the Latin word "Missu" - I send, I throw. As MacBride says in his first Degree Charge when he is explaining to the Candidate the laws he is to observe - the absolute or fixed laws called the Landmarks in Masonry - that it is his duty to obey all lawful signs and summonses, especially sent, handed or thrown to him from the body of a duly constituted Lodge - Thrown to him; his mission to respect and obey.

Landmarks is a much used and misused word. Boundary lines between different countries between the territories of different tribes and the possession of individuals are called Landmarks, and their preservation was of importance. Severe penalties were attached to their illegal removal or alteration.

A Landmark is not something put up; it had also to be recognised as such. This recognition formed the essence of its authority and the longer it remained the more sacred it became.

In the course of time a change in the boundary line between the possession of two individuals or of two nations becoming mutually desirable, the old Landmarks were removed and new Landmarks were created.

In Speculative Masonry Landmarks have certain established usages and customs, occupying the position which usage and custom do in a community. Politically these are termed "Common Law". Masonically they are termed

"Landmarks". As in common law no usage or custom can overrule the fundamental principle of the square. Common Law in a community has all the force of Statute Law and the Landmarks in Masonry have all the force of Grand Lodge Law.

While a Landmark must be an established usage or custom, it does not follow that an established usage or custom is a Landmark.

As far as I know MacBride was the first man to give us a list of Realistic Masonic Landmarks. He grouped them into four main divisions, each of which contain three sections, as follows: -

#### 1ST DIVISION

(Usages that mark the Masonic from the Outer World):

Section A: A mode of recognition by its members.

Section B: The Tying of its Lodge Meetings.

Section C: The qualifications of its candidates.

#### 2ND DIVISION

(Usages that mark the Degrees of Masonry):

Section A: A mode of recognising the members of one Degree from those of another.

Section B: The Tying of the Meetings of each Degree separately.

Section C: The conditions of advancement from one Degree to another.

#### 3RD DIVISION

(Usages that mark the various ceremonies):

Section A: The principal points in opening and closing a Lodge.

Section B: The principal points in Entering, Passing and Raising.

Section C: The principal points in Consecration, Installation, Foundation and Funeral Ceremonies.

#### 4TH DIVISION

(Usages that mark Official Powers and Duties and Private Rights and Duties):

Section A: The Powers and Duties of the Grand Master, Grand Officers and of Grand Lodge.

Section B: The Powers and Duties of the Master and Officers of the Lodge.

Section C: The Rights and Duties of Private Members.

It is not possible here to deal with the Landmarks in all their details; for those interested I would recommend reading A. S. MacBride's book Speculative Masonry, where all the Sections are discussed in detail. This book was selected as a textbook for the Colleges of Instruction under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, and the Rev. Fort Newton, Litt.D., of the Grand Lodge

of Iowa, in his foreword to the 1924 American Edition said, "It was one of the best Masonic books of our generation. Its style is the native speech of Masonry - simple, lucid, aglow with moral passion and poetic beauty, in which Masonry is shown to be a wise clear-seeing practical Moral Idealism - a classic of the Craft."

Landmarks are not unalterable. They have been altered in the past and no doubt will be altered in the future.

The essence of real life as MacBride says is "To act that each tomorrow finds us further than today."

### HIS LOGIC

We have considered some of the Principles, Thought and Study of MacBride before and during the compiling of his Ritual. Let us now look at some of the logic within it, and may I say that most of this interpretation of MacBride logic and its use in his Ritual is my interpretation. He is not to blame in any way.

When you look seriously at his work he had a simple logical approach to it all. We talk of two aspects of Masonry - Labour and Refreshment. MacBride enjoyed the social aspect of life but the important thing to him was Labour.

That consists of Business and Work. Business is necessary but should be dealt with efficiently and promptly. Work to him was the main function of the Lodge and consists of certain ceremonies symbolical in character and mainly but not exclusively based on the work of Operative Masonry. Operative and Speculative Masonry are related. In Ancient Operative Masonry the material for a building after being selected in the quarries was taken to the Lodge or workshop.

There, according to the plan, it was shaped and carved and made fit for a place in the building. In Speculative Masonry the Lodge exists for a similar purpose but there is an important difference. In the Operative the material was something outside of the Craftsman. In the Speculative it is something inside of him. He is both material and worker and the lodge is the workshop in which he is to shape and square his thoughts to the plan of life laid down on the Divine Trestleboard.

Work was divided into three sections: Preparation, Obligation and Enlightenment. His approach to work and ritual has a different and, to me, more logical approach than many others.

What is the first care observed in most Lodges of Freemasons assembled? To prove the Lodge, Close Tyled. You elect or appoint a Tyler, you obligate him, you instruct him in his duties, then you constantly check up on him to see if he is out there doing his duty. MacBride reports to him that the Lodge is about to be opened. It is logical to assume that he will fulfil the duties he obligated himself to do and he is kept informed on what work the Lodge is doing by the knocks. Similarly, when the Tyler knocks the door the Inner Guard knows whether it is an alarm or a report of Brethren by the knocks given.

You may have noticed in some Lodges they close the Volume of the Sacred Law during Passing or Raising, or they part the Compasses and Square. With MacBride, the open book, after ensuring the Lodge is carefully Tyled, duly constituted and authoritatively declared open, is what indicates the Lodge is open. The source of light must be open at all times while the Lodge is in session. Closing, it closes the Lodge. The Compasses and Square indicate what Degree you are in and are only changed from the first to the second, for example, when the Brethren are proven as Craftsmen and the Lodge declared open by the R.W.M. on that Degree.

In some Lodges in the Second Degree you will see Brethren throw over the Right Shoulder. With MacBride it is to the Left. The Left was the Portend of disaster. Looking East is towards the Rising Sun, the source of Light - the reason the Master is placed in the East as he should be the source of light to the Lodge. Facing East, the North is on your Left - the place of Darkness, the place of Evil, the Devil's side. The left-hand side forebode ill luck and evil, hence the word "sinister" which is Latin for the left-hand side. It portends evil from the orthodox, throwing to the left to the powers of evil and darkness.

The phraseology in the old charges is, I believe, similar to MacBride. In the Third Degree in many Lodges the perambulation is in a clockwise direction. With MacBride you will notice it is anti-clockwise, the old Scots withershins, contrary to the course of the Sun with the implication of bad luck and the portent of disaster. The logical symbolism with the inevitable conclusion - namely death.

The candidate is laid in the North West corner. The West, where the sun sinks to a level with the West to close the bright labours of the day and the North the place of darkness and death.

MacBride removed the Penalties from the Obligation when he wrote his Ritual in 1870 which alone should prove his logical advanced thinking so far ahead of his time and, as you will appreciate, it did not meet with every- one's approval. It does not, even today, with the "Rabid Ritualist". While they are part of the traditions and should be explained, he felt they should not be imposed on anyone. They were only introduced with the advent of the Speculative Membership which was a period when all churches preached Hell Fire and Damnation from every pulpit, which may explain their original use.

In his "Hints to Masters". he shows something of his method and spirit:—

1. The Master should not be craftsman, labourer and everything. He should superintend and direct the work.
2. Have a meeting of the Office-bearers as soon after the election as possible, to arrange your work and encourage them to study and enter upon their duties with an enthusiastic spirit.
3. Get each officer to learn the duties of the officer immediately above him, so that he may, when required, be able to perform them.

4. Always remember it is the Master's work to plan and to draw out the plan of work. Treat your Office-bearers confidentially and show them your plan, and then you may rightly expect them to work to it.
5. Give every encouragement to anyone who wishes to work and get your Office-bearers to do the same, but bear in mind that your own members have the first claims on your assistance and encouragement.
6. Do not parade your authority but prove yourself worthy of the power placed in your hands by using it as seldom as possible.
7. Remember the best Master is he who best serves the Craft.

With MacBride everything was carefully thought out. It is all Logical Symbolism. It is there if you study it and look for it. Some people speak irreverently about MacBride, but when you know the story of the Man, the Mason, his Ritual and his Logic, you know that it is irreverence through ignorance.