



Pillars of Light



Compiled by the
Editorial Team of the
Grand Lodge Library

Volume 3 Issue 6 (31)

June 2007

Editorial

In a discussion I had with a newly initiated member, I was confronted with a question he asked in Lodge and to which he could not get a clear answer. What do we want to accomplish? And what each of us is practically expected to do? Regrettably, these questions will remain unanswered until the Worshipful Masters will give a more literal interpretation to their position: 'placed in the East to employ and instruct the Brethren in Freemasonry.' The mere initiation, passing and raising are, without doubt, of great importance but the provision of the means of instruction is absolutely essential. A program consisting entirely of ritual degrees is not sufficient to meet the needs of the average neophyte. Instruct! Instruct! Instruct! Should be indelibly imprinted upon the hearts and minds of the WMs; Scores of Brethren say quite openly that they find the never-ending succession of ritual work monotonous and wearisome. Freemasonry is a life to be lived, not a formality to be observed. How true that is! And to implement it Lodges must aim at better Masons. If Brethren are not sufficiently instructed in what we are and what we want to accomplish, many would never become enthusiastic exponents of our way of life because they neither understand nor appreciate it. And they will never be able to explain our aims and ways in an articulate manner that will attract and interest new prospect candidates. And as a result of that we will never be able to insure our future existence.

How many Lodges fail to retain the interest of their recent initiates or assimilate them by providing adequate Masonic instruction, making of them merely Lodge Members instead of genuine Masons? Finally, these members lose interest in the Craft and drift away. They have received nothing from Freemasonry and they contributed nothing to it. All that can be changed, brethren! The WMs and the Past Masters of our Lodges can help to improve this situation by just initiating very short addresses in Lodge or individual exchange of ideas with our young Masons, and more than anything else, encourage them to read, to use their privilege and become members of our Grand Lodge Library and find the most adequate material or simply access the Internet Site of the Grand Lodge Library and read this very Newsletter. In the 'Pillars of Light' they can find a vast array of subjects for their entire satisfaction. Unless this is done, our valuable young Masons will never find the answers to their many important questions and will never be able to satisfy the curiosity of a next generation on Freemasonry.

J.V.Haffner

We have our own badge

"An emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason; More ancient than the Golden Fleece or the Roman Eagle, more honourable than the Star and the Garter or any other order that can be conferred upon you at this or any other future period, by king, prince, potentate, or any other person, except he be a Mason."

In these few words Freemasonry expresses the honour she pays to the symbol of the Ancient Craft, our Apron.

- The Order of the Golden Fleece was founded by Philip, Duke of Burgundy, in 1429.

- The Roman Eagle, was Rome's symbol and ensign of power and might, a hundred years before Christ.

- The Order of the Star was created by John II of France in the middle of the 14th Century.

- The Order of the Garter was founded by Edward III of England in 1349 for himself and twenty-five Knights of the Garter.

Mackey believed colour and material to be of paramount importance, and inveighed as vigorously as his gentle spirit would permit against decorations, tassels, paintings, embroideries, etc. Many Grand Lodges follow the great authority as far as the Craft is concerned, but relax strict requirements as to size, shape, colour and material for Lodge officers and Grand Lodge officers.

It is a far cry from the "lambskin or white leather apron" of the Entered Apprentice, to the splendid garment as worn by the higher ranks, aprons heavily encrusted with gold leaf, gold lace, gold thread, etc. to mark the royalty of our Order.

Some Jurisdictions, allow their Lodge officers to wear embroidered and decorated aprons. Past Master's apron, in these Jurisdictions, are adorned with a pair of Compasses on

the arc of a quadrant, which in our Grand Lodge is rightly reserved for the Grand Master only.

The Grand Master of the United Grand Lodges of Germany is wearing a pure white lambskin apron, edged in white silk, with no gold, silver, or other coloured embroidery, tassels or emblems.

The use of the apron is very old – far older than as a garment to protect the clothing of the operative craftsman, or to provide him with the convenient receptacle in which to keep his tools.

Girdles or aprons were part of the clothing of the priests of Israel. Candidates for the mysteries of Mithraism in Persia were invested with aprons. The ancient Japanese used aprons in religious worship.

Words grow and change in meaning with the years; a familiar example is the word "profane" which Masons use in its ancient sense, meaning "one not initiated" or "one outside the Temple". But in common usage profane means today irreverent, blasphemous. So has the word "innocence" changed meaning. Originally it connoted 'to do no hurt'. Today it means rather 'lack of evil', as in 'innocent child'; sometimes lack of knowledge, also, the state of being free from guilt of any act contrary to law.

Masonically, an 'emblem of innocence' is definitely not an emblem of 'ignorance'. Rather do we use the original meaning of the word and make of the apron an emblem of one who does no injury to others. This symbolism is carried out both by colour and material; white has always been the colour of purity, and the lamb has always been a symbol of harmlessness and gentleness.

Truly he has been a real Mason, in the best sense of that great word, he who has worn his lambskin apron during his manhood "with pleasure to himself, and honour to the Fraternity."



On the acceptance of Candidates

Freemasonry is a peculiar Institution and was never designed for the great majority. It is in no sense a Club or an Insurance Society and it offers nothing to any man in the way of pecuniary profit. It is on the other hand, a brotherhood or fraternity of high ideals, seeking to place before the individual the vital facts of living and seeking to help men realize the higher and better aspects of life. Not every man, regardless of his qualifications, is fitted to become a member of our fraternity. Nor must the Fraternity accept every Candidate for the sake of acquiring numbers....

The fact that so many members have lost interest in Freemasonry seems to suggest that we have received into the Fraternity some men who were not fitted to benefit from it. Perhaps they were seeking, in our Lodges, something that was not there and the result was disappointment. In due course their interest has waned and they have withdrawn from the ranks.

I do not believe that the primary function of Masonry is to initiate candidates or as some pretend, to enlarge its membership. Were it so, there would be no basis for our laws against soliciting members. The primary function of a Masonic Lodge, indeed the primary function of our craft, is to train its members to an understanding of the truths inculcated by our rituals and ceremonies; to develop benevolence amongst our members, to cultivate the social virtues among men and to propagate the knowledge of the Art.

The beauty of our ritual and the good fellowship in our lodges cannot be conserved when the chief aim is to fill the empty chairs. We must concentrate in a practical contribution to civilization and society through the influence of those we have helped to train to what we call Masonic Character.

Therefore, it should be the duty of every Lodge to put in action a plan for the Education of its members in Masonic History, Symbolism and Philosophy. Every Lodge should become a centre for the development of Masonic Culture and Freemasonry a System of Education of the highest level.

If, then, the chief concern of the Lodge is with its welfare and the happiness and Masonic development of its members, how are we to choose the suitable material from the applicants who are seeking admission to its doors?

Or whom are we going to discretely approach with this choice in mind?

Here are a few considerations, which should be taken into account when estimating the suitability of prospective candidates:

The readiness and suitability of the Candidate for Masonic Teaching. Is he suitable material to understand, learn and work upon the principles of Freemasonry? Does he have the intellectual ability for it?

The candidate's attitude towards benevolence.

Has he a generous disposition towards his fellow men?

His capacity to keep up with the Lodge's demands and responsibilities. Will his family and/or business suffer? His general social activity / ability / availability. Will he be able to participate in the organization of Lodge social activities and actively take part in the Lodge's social life? What effect his admission will have upon the members?

Will they welcome him or make him feel that he is not wanted?

Will his admission raise or maintain the standard and tone of the Lodge, or would the Lodge be better off without his influence working among the Brethren?

Will he be capable to uphold the traditions of the Lodge, become an integral part of the Masonic community, dedicated and showing a constant readiness to help in the common effort?

There is yet another topic which assumes importance, and that is : What can we tell a prospective candidate before his initiation? This question has engaged the attention and discussion of many of our learned Brethren for many years. Many feel that if the Proposers know their Candidates properly, there is no need to tell them anything. Perhaps it would be as well if every man offering himself for candidature knew that:

Freemasonry consists of a body of men banded together to preserve the Knowledge, the Customs and the Ceremonies handed down to them by our predecessors, for the purpose of mutual social and moral improvement. They endeavour to cultivate and exhibit Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, not only to one-another, but to the community in which we live.

Freemasonry offers no pecuniary advantages whatsoever, nor does there exist any obligation or implied understanding binding one Mason to deal with another in any way in the ordinary business relations of life.

Freemasonry teaches us to remember our common origin; it also clearly enjoins us to respect all social distinctions, so that while some must rule, others must obey and cheerfully accept their stations and positions.

Freemasonry has certain Charities, but it is not in any sense a Benefit Society, nor is it based upon calculations which would render this possible.

Freemasonry distinctly teaches that man's first duty is to himself, his wife, his family and his connections and no one should join the Order who cannot afford to pay the Initiation fees and the dues to his Lodge, and this without detriment in any way to his comfort or to that of those who have any claim upon his support.

Freemasonry is Universal, it recognizes no distinction in religion, but none should enter who have no religious belief. Freemasonry demands, therefore, that everyone, before petitioning for admission to the Order, should be well assured in his own mind:

That he is willing to express a belief in a Supreme Being.

That he sincerely desires the intellectual and moral improvement of himself and his fellow creatures by daily acquiring and imparting Masonic Knowledge and that he is willing to devote his time, his means and his efforts in the promotion of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

That he seeks no commercial or pecuniary advantages.

That he is able to afford the necessary expenditure without injury to himself or to his family.

It is only by a judicious and prudent selection of prospective candidates for admission, that Freemasonry can be enhanced, its sound principles promoted and its ethical benefits be extended for the promotion of the welfare of mankind.

It is only by becoming selective again, that we can insure attrition will stop, and interest in our Craft will be restored.

May we suggest to the Brother Secretary that it would be greatly appreciated if he could include regularly our link:

www.uglnsw.freemasonry.org.au/Library/Default.htm

in the Notice Paper sent to the members of the Lodge.



Are we sure of our facts?

I have been asking lately a certain number of brethren, what have they done to spread in a dignified manner, the word about our Craft? And in to many cases I perceive a hesitation to do anything like this.

So, I ask you my brethren, what is the reason for not being more open on the subject? The very soul of any business is the line of advertisement, which is followed by those engaged in it. And very definitely Freemasonry, among all its other descriptions, and in the wider sense of the word, can definitely be termed "Big Business".

It is the business of *Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth*, and by our own conduct in the daily walks of life, we are taught to exhibit by example the excellence of the Order to which we belong. If we are successful in doing this, it is but natural that the awakened interest on the part of our friends will invoke inquiries concerning Freemasonry, the organisation that encourages us to act according to the highest motives and principles. It is at this point that we will have to consider just what we can reveal to our inquirer, in relation with the Order, but I believe that if we are not revealing the signs and the passwords, we are always on the safe side and can talk about anything else. On the other hand, we must be sure of our facts, know sufficiently about our Craft and that we can express ourselves in an articulate manner on some subjects related to the business of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

It is my opinion that there would be much to gain and little to lose, by giving greater publicity to the principles and ideals, underlying and controlling Freemasonry. Also, I believe that there is much in the Masonic teachings to which the utmost publicity could be given. Its Tenets are so noble, and its principles influence so powerfully on our life and character, that no evil could come from public knowledge of them.

Do not forget, that there is in every human breast a strong disposition for friendship. There is nothing that sweetens life, relieves care, and alleviates pain, more than does simple, loyal friendship. And Freemasonry makes for such friendship, as it brings together men of every class and profession and binds them by the strongest of spiritual ties. The practise of the teachings that we all share, tend towards purity and nobility of character, as they are so totally opposed to everything in the nature of cunning, greed and selfishness.

There should be no harm done if it were known that Freemasonry uses the Ancient Mysteries, the knowledge of antic civilizations and symbols of the past as emblems and references, to create a System of Education that is valid in all times. With these ancient knowledge and tools, Freemasonry claims affinity. The ancient symbols, tokens and words are still with us and although we no longer seek to erect any Temple of stone, we are daily employed in shaping the character of a great spiritual temple which age cannot whiter nor death destroy. Regarding our place in the community, an inquirer might be told that we stand steadfast against irreverence, the desecration of holy things, against oppression of the weak, and all that would tend to dishonour God and Man. Many people are suspicious of

our activities, believing it to be a secret organisation, and this is an idea that should be promptly dispelled. Our signs and tokens are discretely kept, but our meeting places are widely known and we never hid the fact that we are dressing in a special man

ner that advertises our intention to "build" a better society, by improving ourselves. We cheerfully conform to every lawful authority, uphold on all occasion the interest of the community and zealously promote the prosperity of our own country.

Freemasonry teaches men their duty to god, the Almighty Architect of the Universe, their duty to their neighbours, and their duty to themselves and their family. We all know that all Masons – be they Christian, Muslims, Jews or any other creed or philosophy, in so far as they believe in a Supreme Power, fear it and do not violate the rule of right, may be acknowledged as Brothers.

A point that should be clearly pointed out to a non-Mason is that Freemasonry is not a religion, nor can it ever take the place of a religion, although it is essentially religious in its expression.

Freemasonry demands a high standard of moral character in the individual. It expects its members to have a certain level of cultivation that will enable them to better understand the Philosophy of the Craft. It exhorts its members to "act upon the square" and its teachings are directed towards assisting its members to attain to and maintain that happy state.

I have suggested to you only some of the things that might be readily discussed with and imparted to a non-Mason, but I would strongly emphasise this particular point: Such information should only be offered either because a non-Mason sincerely asks for it or because you find that a person to whom you accord respect and might be an adequate prospect for freemasonry, may in your judgment be interested to know more about the Craft, before daring a first step.

We are far from being perfect and our work is far from being done. Imperfection is our lot as mortals and no man of mature age and sound judgment would ever believe for one moment that perfection could ever completely be achieved. Perhaps you find that you can agree with the ideas offered. If this is the case, then my labour will not have been in vain and possibly, you will find how important it is for us to be "sure of our facts" and use our most articulate demeanour when we are in the presence of a prospect candidate to become our brother in this great all embracing Order of which we are proud to claim ourselves as members.

G.L.

We need you !!!

**Are you familiar with the art of
Bookbinding?**

***The Library needs you and your skill
to save some old, rare treasures
which could continue to serve generation of
Masons, if you only wanted to help.***

Call the Grand Librarian, (02) 9284 2825

e-mail: library@uglnsw.freemasonry.org.au



Enlightened Pillars *of the Grand Librarian*

Any Questions? Ask the Grand Librarian-POL edited by Rt Wor Bro J. V. Haffner

Q.: *Some time ago I read that the first Grand Lodge founded in London, in 1717, controlled all Lodges within the 'Bills of Mortality.' Does this have any Masonic significance? What does it mean?*

A.: No, it does not have any Masonic significance. These bills were abstracts from parish registers, originally issued by Parish Clerks, giving the number of persons that died in any particular parish during a stated period of time. They were designated as weekly, monthly or yearly bills according to the period covered.

They originated in London in the early part of the 16th century and were published regularly until the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1836. Originally the parishes for which these bills were published covered a very limited area of what was then London and Westminster and this area was often described as "Within the Bills of Mortality."

Q.: *I am comparatively new in Masonry. Would it be possible for you to furnish a kind of 'family tree' of Masonry, covering the Craft, Royal Arch and the Mark degrees?*

A.: At the time when the Grand Lodge of England was founded in 1717 only two Degrees were in general usage in England and Scotland, the first for the 'Entered Apprentice' and the second for the 'Master or Fellow Craft.' The Third Degree, when it eventually appeared (somewhere around 1725), was *not a new invention*. It was evolved by a splitting of the original First Degree into two parts, i.e. for the E.A. and the F.C., so that the original Second Degree then became the Third in the new Three-Degree system.

When the contents of the Third Degree, now including the Hiram legend, appeared in print in Samuel Pritchard's *Masonry Dissected*, in 1730, it is clear that the Ceremony already contained a reference to a 'lost word' which subsequently formed one of the elements of the Royal Arch story. I must

emphasize, however, that this does not mean that the R.A. existed in 1730. The earliest clear evidence of the existence of the R. A., as a degree or ceremony, is in a rather rare Irish work entitled '*A serious and Impartial Enquiry into the Causes of the present Decay of Freemasonry in the Kingdom of Ireland*', by Dr. Fifield Dassigny, in 1744, in which he shows that the R.A. was originally a separate degree for 'men who have passed the Chair'.

There seems to be little doubt that soon after its appearance in England it began to embody various links with the legend of the Third Degree. Apparently both 'ceremonies' were verbally modified so that a more or less tenuous relationship was established. Thus, if your question is to be answered in the terms in which you framed it, I would say that the R.A. did not grow naturally on the tree of the Craft degrees, but it was 'grafted' on to one of its three branches. So, it is possible to say that the R.A. nowadays does have a faint link with ordinary Craft working, but so much was added to the original material during the second half of the 18th century, that our modern R.A. is generally described as the completion of the Third Degree, though it would be preferable to call it an extension.

The 'Mark'. As early as 1598 we have a regulation in the Schaw Statutes, relating to operative masonry in Scotland, requiring that the 'Master or Fellow of the craft' should have his name and mark regularly inserted in the Lodge Book on the date of admission to that grade. Thereafter there are numerous records, in the Minutes of the early Scottish operative lodges, of masons who 'took their mark and paid for it'. This was a purely operative practice, enabling masons to mark their stones in a simple and recognizable manner. In those days it was certainly not a ceremony or a degree. When it did finally become a ceremony it had lost all operative connection. The Mark as a Degree, took its rise around 1760 and the earliest known Mark Minute is in the records of the Chapter of Friendship, Portsmouth, dated 1st September 1769. Because we have no earlier records, we have to consider it as a 'new' Degree, but it was certainly founded on good old operative practice.

The Editor would welcome correspondence from Brethren who are relatively new to Freemasonry, to obtain their views on the Craft. Please keep letters short. A selection will be published in the Pillars of Light.

Email to Editor at :

library@uglnsw.freemasonry.org.au

or write to the Editor of the Pillars of Light-

United Grand Lodge of NSW & ACT, PO Box A 259, Sydney South NSW 1235



Retrospection into modern Masonry

A research by J.V. Haffner, based on a massive work of RW Bro John Danks PDGM Past Grand Librarian of the UGL of NSW and the ACT (1969-1982)

Masonry as we know it, in its speculative attire, begins when John Boswell, the Laird of Auchinleck, was made a Mason in the Lodge of Edinburgh, in June 1600, although, in all probability he was not the first man to be accepted as a Speculative Mason.

In 1614, Quarter Master General Sir Robert Moray of Scotland was initiated into a Scottish Lodge meeting in Newcastle England. In 1646 Elias Ashmole was made a Mason in a Lodge at Warrington Lancashire. There were many English Lodges in the 1640-1650 period of which we know very little. As records state, we know only of a few Speculative Masons in England up to the year 1665 yet, about 50 years later, four Lodges in London were forming themselves into a Grand Lodge, and by inference we know that many other Lodges must have existed.

What we know of these days, is a great deal about the Scottish Operative Lodges, many of them having 'gentlemen' or non-operative members in addition to the practicing craftsmen. The fifteenth, sixteenth, and the first half of the seventeenth centuries are the most barren years for Masonic research. Through this period there are no complete records of Masonry – free or accepted.

That our Brethren met and operated is undoubted as the evidence of the old documents is conclusive. Did Elias Ashmole and other learned Speculatives who came into Freemasonry in the 1600's hand on as they found it, what awaited them within the Lodge portals, or did they develop it almost out of all knowledge and in fact, or in effect, create something new and different?

Whence came the Esoteric content of Masonry? From a fraternity within the Operative Craft of some 200 years before? Or did the learned and philosophic, clever but superstitious newcomers find in Freemasonry little more than some simple mode or modes of recognition, or did they "fill out" the meager ceremony of the day by borrowing from the Ancient Mysteries?

What was the ritual that came into the hands of the publishers in the 1720's? How much did these men use of the material that came to them and what did they discard? And did what they threw aside persist in some form or other in Lodges here and there in the countryside, and serve in due course to aggravate differences in Lodge working which in the middle of the eighteenth century were to cause bitter discord and open a sore which would take some 60 years to heal? It is doubtful whether there exists information by which some questions can be fully answered, and we can only hope that research will find it.

Some Masonic Students have attempted to side track the problem by claiming that the Speculative Lodges of the 1700's had never had a connection with Operative masonry, and were not the descendents of Masonic fraternities, but where bodies of educated gentlemen holding strong Rosicrucian and

other quaint beliefs who had deliberately chosen to call themselves freemasons at a time when the Old London Company of Freemasons was still so called. They claim that Speculative Freemasonry is of Rosicrucian invention – not merely that Freemasonry was subject to Rosicrucian influence.

Masonry all through the Middle Ages had attracted fine types of learned knowledgeable men, and in the period of Operative decline and Speculative ascent it continued to attract scholars of pronounced historical and antiquarian interest, who perhaps through mere curiosity, came into Masonry to seek, and more than likely stayed to give. The chief evidence for the existence of Speculative Masonry in the eighteenth century rests on records associated with the names of : Elias Ashmole; Randle Holme; Sir W. Dugdale; Dr. Robert Plott; John Aubrey; Henry Yevele.

Ashmole was born in Lichfield in 1617, the son of a saddler and soldier; he died in 1692 and is buried in St Mary's Church Lambeth. He qualified as a solicitor at the age of 21 years. He married the daughter of Peter Mainwaring, a Cheshire landowner. He was on a visit to his father-in-law in 1646 when he and his father-in-law were made Masons at Warrington.

" October 16, I was made a Mason at Warrington in Lancashire with Colonel Henry Mainwaring of Kavincham in Cheshire. The names of those who were then of the Lodge were Richard Penhet, Warden – James Collier, Richard Sankey, Henry Littler, John Ellam, Richard Ellam and Hugh Brewer. The Lodge was presided over by a Warden, not a Master."

It is regretted that the intention expressed by Ashmole to write a history of Freemasonry was never carried into effect. His exhaustive work on the "Order of the Garter" would lead one to expect from his antiquarian pen a record of the original and early progress of our Institution more valuable than any we now possess.

Dr. Knipe of Christ Church Oxford wrote, "from Mr. Ashmole's collection I could gather that the report of our Society's taking rise from a Bull granted by the Pope (Innocent IV) in the reign of Henry III –1227- to some Italian Architects to travel over Europe and erect Chapels was ill-founded. Such a Bull there was and those architects were masons, but this Bull, in the opinion of Mr. Ashmole, was confirmative only. The Bull did not by any means create our Fraternity or even establish them in this Kingdom. St. Alban (286 A.D.) established masonry here and from his time it has flourished, more or less, according as the world went down to the days of king Athlestan who granted the Masons a Charter under the Norman Princes."

Masons were always loyal which exposed them to severities. In the third year of the reign of Henry VI (1424) an Act of Parliament was passed to abolish the society of masons and to hinder under grievous penalties, the holding of regular lodge assemblies. The Act was soon repealed and Henry VI as well as several of the Lords of the Court became fellows of the Craft.

To be continued next month



FAMOUS FREEMASONS

Gerald Rudolph Ford, Jr.



Born July 14, 1913 – Died December 26, 2006, was a Lieutenant in the Navy during WWII, and the 38th President of the United States of America.

Born in Omaha, Nebraska, to Leslie Lynch King, Sr. and Dorothy Ayer (Gardner) King. He was named Leslie Lynch King, Jr. After his parents divorce a year later, his mother married Gerald Rudolph

Ford. It was only in 1935 that he legally became Gerald Rudolph Ford Jr.

Ford joined the Boy Scouts of America, and attained that program's highest rank, the Eagle Scout. He always regarded this as one of his proudest accomplishments, even after becoming president. In subsequent years, Ford received the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award in May 1970 and the Silver Buffalo Award from the Boy Scouts of America. He is the only US president who was an Eagle Scout. Ford attended Grand Rapids South High School and was a star athlete, rising to become captain of his high school football team. Attending the University of Michigan as an undergraduate, Ford played centre and linebacker for the school's football team and helped the Wolverines to undefeated seasons and national titles in both 1932 and 1933.

In 1938 he attended Yale Law School and graduated in 1941. In May of that year, he opened a Grand Rapids law practice with a friend, Philip Buchen. But when the attack on Pearl Harbour occurred, Ford enlisted into the Navy and received a commission as ensign in the U.S. Naval Reserve on April 13, 1942. He was promoted to Lieutenant in March 1943. Applying for sea duty, Ford was sent in May 1943 to the pre-commissioning detachment for the new aircraft carrier USS Monterey which participated in many actions in the Pacific Theatre with the Third and Fifth Fleets.

On October 15, 1948, Ford married Elizabeth Bloomer Warren, a department store fashion consultant. The Fords had four children, Michael Gerald Ford, born in 1950, John Gardner Ford, known as Jack, born in 1952, Steven Meigs Ford, born in 1956, and Susan Elizabeth Ford, born in 1957.

Following his return from the war, Ford became active in local Republican politics. Ford was a member of the House of Representatives for 24 years. In 1965, Re-

publican members of the House elected him Minority Leader. During his tenure, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed Ford to the Warren Commission, a special task force set up to investigate the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. On October 10, 1973, Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned and by November Ford was confirmed Vice President. When President Nixon resigned in the wake of the Watergate scandal on August 9, 1974, Ford assumed the presidency. Ford was an outspoken supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment, issuing Presidential Proclamation 4383, "In this Land of the Free, it is right, and by nature it ought to be, that all men and all women are equal before the law". Ford ordered the final withdrawal of American civilians from Vietnam in 'Operation Frequent Wind'.

He was Initiated in September 30, 1949, in Malta Lodge No. 465, Grand Rapids, Michigan, along with his half-brothers Thomas, Richard and James. The Fellowcraft and Master Mason Degrees were Conferred by Columbia Lodge No. 3, Washington, D.C., on April 20 and May 18, 1951, as a courtesy to Malta Lodge. Ford was made a Sovereign Grand Inspector General, 33°, and Honorary Member, Supreme Council A.A.S.R. Northern Jurisdiction at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia, on September 26, 1962, for which he served as Exemplar for his Class. Ford was unanimously elected an Active Member of the International Supreme Council, Order of DeMolay and its Honorary Grand Master, at its Annual Session held at Orlando, Florida, April 1975; He held this post until January 1977, at which time he became a Past Honorary Grand Master, receiving his Collar and Jewel on October 24, 1978 in Topeka, Kansas, from the Hon. Thomas C. Raum, Jr., Grand Master, Order of DeMolay.

Ford remained relatively active in the years after his presidency and continued to make appearances at events of historical and ceremonial significance to the nation, such as presidential inaugurations and memorial services. In 1977, he established the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at Albion College in Albion, Michigan. This institute is designed to give undergraduates training in public policy. In 1981, he opened the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, and the Gerald R. Ford Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan. In 1999, Ford was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Bill Clinton. In 2001, he was presented with the John F. Kennedy Profiles in Courage Award for his decision to pardon Richard Nixon to stop the agony America was experiencing over Watergate. As Ford approached his ninetieth year, he began to experience significant health problems associated with old age. He suffered two minor strokes and had a pace maker fitted.

Ford died at the age of 93 years on December 30, 2006 and became the 11th U.S. President to lie in state.

Bro Gabriel Bilyk - Librarian