THE THOMSON MASONIC FRAUD
GOVERNMENT WITNESSES FROM SCOTLAND.
Picture taken at Masonic Temple, Salt Lake City.

Left—Joseph Inglis, Writer to His Majesty's Signet; Member Grand Committee of Grand Lodge; Past S. G. W.; Past Grand Prior of the Great Priory; Knight Grand Cross of the Temple; 32d Degree A. & A. S. R.

Center—David Reid, Grand Secretary of Grand Lodge of Scotland.

Right—John A. Forrest, Writer to His Majesty's Signet; Member Grand Committee of Grand Lodge; Secretary of the Royal Order of Scotland; Past First Grand Principal of Royal Arch Chapter Naval and Military No. 40; and 32d Degree A. & A. S. R.
THOMSON
MASONIC FRAUD

A STUDY IN CLANDESTINE PRACTICE

BY

ISAAC BLAIR EVANS

Mundus vult decipi, et sibi decipiatur.

Latin Proverb

PRINTED PRIVATELY AT SALT LAKE CITY
1923
WITNESSES FROM SCOTLAND

Attended at Masonic Temple, Salt Lake City.

W. W., Past Grand Prior of the Grand Lodge of E. Scotland, 21st Degree A. & A. S. R.

E. G. W. B., Grand Secretary of Grand Lodge of E. Scotland.

E. G. W. B., Past Grand Prior of the Grand Lodge of E. Scotland, 21st Degree A. & A. S. R.

E. G. W. B., Grand Secretary of Grand Lodge of E. Scotland.

E. G. W. B., Past Grand Prior of the Grand Lodge of E. Scotland, 21st Degree A. & A. S. R.

E. G. W. B., Grand Secretary of Grand Lodge of E. Scotland.
THE
THOMSON
MASONIC FRAUD
A STUDY IN CLANDESTINE MASONRY

BY
ISAAC BLAIR EVANS

Mundus vult decipi, ergo decipiatur.
—Latin Proverb.
INSCRIBED

to

MASONS EVERYWHERE

who prefer

Honesty to Deception

Truth to Fiction

and

Justice to Iniquity

Poulton

SEP 28 48

1224083
PREFACE

The purpose of this monograph is made sufficiently clear by the title page and first chapter. It is hoped that besides telling the story of an unusual mail fraud, it will, by contrast, make more distinct for the general reader, some of the common aspects of regular Masonry. For this reason, and in order to give proper perspective to the fraud scheme, the second chapter has been added.

It is a pleasure to express my thanks to numerous friends who have helped by providing me with important facts, pamphlets and books. I am especially indebted to C. C. Hunt, Deputy Grand Secretary of Iowa; Dr. Warren Benjamin, Grand Commander, Knights Templar of Utah; Dr. A. C. Wherry, Potentate of El Kalah Temple, Salt Lake City; Walter Daniels, Grand High Priest, R. A. M. of Utah; Charles E. West, Secretary of Utah Council No. 1, R. S. M.; Perry W. Weidner, Secretary General of the Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction U. S. A.; William L. Boyden, Librarian, House of the Temple, Washington, D. C., and F. C. Schramm, S. G. I. G. in Utah and Nevada. I owe invaluable aid to S. H. Goodwin, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Utah, in the accumulation of many necessary facts. To David Reid, Grand Secretary of Grand Lodge of Scotland, and to Joseph Inglis, Esquire, and John A. Forrest, Esquire, members of Grand Committee of Grand Lodge of Scotland, I owe all that is set forth in the following pages about Masonry in Scotland. Finally, to Post Office Inspector M. G. Price, I owe much valuable information gathered by him outside the line of his duty and placed in my hands.

To prepare this book I have carefully read the transcript of testimony (hereinafter referred to as Transcript) in Thomson’s case, and have studied all the exhibits introduced
PREFACE

in evidence, as well as a mass of important correspondence, magazines, pamphlets and diplomas not produced at the trial, and much material is hereinafter presented of which the court and jury had no knowledge. Great pains have been taken to set down only those facts which are supported by competent proof, and it is believed that the number of errors has been reduced to a minimum. No attempt has been made to edit the many extracts taken from Thomson’s letters, magazines and books, and from the transcript of testimony, but they are printed without emendation so that all readers may draw their own conclusions.

The reader is entitled to know my own connection with Thomson’s case. It chanced that I was United States Attorney for Utah in 1921, and I not only prepared the case (with the assistance of Mr. Price) for presentation to the grand jury, but also drew the indictment upon which Thomson, Perrot, and Bergera were convicted.

ISAAC BLAIR EVANS.

Salt Lake City,

August, 1922.
CONTENTS

I. Introductory . . . . . . 1

II. Brief Survey of Freemasonry in America 9

III. Matthew McBlain Thomson and His Fraud Scheme . . . 42

IV. Thomson’s Representations Regarding His Wares . . . . 72

V. The Scheme in Operation . . . . 98

VI. Thomson in Trouble . . . . 115

VII. U. S. v. Thomson, et al. . . . . 151

VIII. Conclusion . . . . . . 244

Index . . . . . . . 263
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Government Witnesses from Scotland............frontispiece

Thomson's Scotch Patent of 1898 (face).............. 48

Thomson's Scotch Patent of 1898 (reverse).......... 49

Matthew McBlain Thomson............................ 54
  Taken from Universal Freemason (January, 1918).

Thomas Perrot.......................................... 68
  Taken from Universal Freemason (July, 1917).

Craft Tree of Scottish Freemasonry.................. 79
  Taken from Who is Who, etc.

High Degree Tree..................................... 85
  Taken from Who is Who, etc.

Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta for
Scotland Knights Templar Diploma (1912).......... 91

Grand Council of Rites Shrine Diploma (1921)...... 93

National Symbolic G. L. of Scotland M. M. Diploma
  (1919) ............................................. 101

Organizers' Contract ................................ 103

Letter of Robert Jamieson (March 18, 1920).... 118
  Denies they canvass for members.

Letter of Thomas Perrot (June 1, 1911)........... 119
  Descriptive of organized system.

Letter of Thomson to Ranson (January 8, 1917).... 125
  Deals with organizing.
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Letter of Thomson to Lindsay (April 16, 1912) 133
Denies he had charter from Louisiana.

Letter of Thomson to Maury (October 9, 1919) 135
Mentions receipt of Rite of St. Martin.

A. M. F. Temple in Salt Lake City 153

Grand Council of Rites 32d Degree Diploma (1920) 169

A. M. F. Master Mason Diploma (1920) 173

Early Grand Mother Encampment of High Knights Templar in Scotland Diploma (1921) 201

Residence of Robert Jamieson 203
No. 4 Fullerton Street, Kilmarnock, Scotland.

Grand Council of Rites 33d Degree Diploma (1904) 219

Letter of Thomson to Maury (March 8, 1918) 231
Suggests that A. M. F. absorb Polar Star.

Grand Council of Rites Royal Order of Scotland Diploma (1901) 251
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The conviction in the Federal Court at Salt Lake City, Utah, on May 15, 1922, of Matthew McBlain Thomson, Thomas Perrot and Dominic Bergera, of using the mails to defraud, was the culmination of efforts of the United States Government, begun in 1915, to have a reckoning with the perpetrators of one of the most ingenious mail frauds, and the most daring and spectacular Masonic imposture in American history. No one can study the facts in the case without sensing keenly the great importance of this trial, both in the history of crimes and the history of Masonry. Future accounts of celebrated American mail frauds will surely be incomplete without some mention of this bold swindle which has gone its way without molestation for more than a decade.

All competent writers on criminal law agree that crimes in general are much more complicated in design and execution today than ever before, and for that reason are much more difficult to detect. This is particularly true of crimes, the gravamen of which is fraud. The men who sold green goods, gold bricks, and fake lightning rods to our grandfathers would stand aghast at the elaborate fraud schemes of present day swindlers. The simple confidence tricks of the old days have given way to a new brand of fraud. The man who conceives a fraud scheme in our time invariably plans to come near enough to the truth to escape prosecution for misrepresentation. He goes to great lengths to build factories, create corporations and outwardly to simu-

---

1 See Arthur Train, The Prisoner at the Bar; and Edmund D. Purcell, Forty Years at the Criminal Bar (London, 1916), pp. 9 et seq.
late scrupulously reputable institutions similar to his own. For this reason it is daily becoming more difficult to expose fraudulent businesses. When caught the crook always flatters himself that he can explain the whole matter to the Inspector's satisfaction or can convince the jury that he is the victim of erroneous judgment and misfortune; whereas, men who commit crimes of violence are usually taciturn and uncommunicative, the designer of a fraud scheme will almost always talk glibly of his affairs and will readily undertake to dissipate all doubt as to the propriety of his business activities. Had Matthew McBlain Thomson talked less it would have been much harder to convict him.

For many years there was no mail fraud statute under which the creators of fraud schemes could be prosecuted by the United States Government. It was easy for a swindler to sit in one state and peddle his wares by mail, for he knew that so long as he committed no crime in the state where he had his office, he was free from arrest. In due time Congress gave attention to the subject and passed a statute to prevent using the mails to further "green goods" or paper money tricks. This statute was afterwards amended to cover all fraudulent devices and today is the most powerful weapon in the hands of United States Attorneys for the suppression of all frauds, which in any way make use of the mails. In the decade or more that this statute in its amended form has been on the books, an infinite variety of fraud schemes have been brought to light through the efforts of United States Post Office Inspectors. Most of these cases are ordinary "get-rich-quick" schemes and the motive is the same whether the sucker's money is taken by means of a stock-selling game or wire-tapping device. The same trick is repeated again and again, but occasionally some strange fraud appears to lend spice to the humdrum life of the Inspectors.

Such a case was that of Samuels v. U. S. (232 Fed. 536-1916), in which Samuels claimed he had discovered a marvel-
ous colorless liquid which, when applied to the eye, would cure most of the ills to which mortal flesh is heir. Scores of witnesses stood ready to tell of wonderful cures, but when the chemists testified that the liquid was little more than common hydrant water without any therapeutic value whatever, the jury overlooked the cures and convicted the quack. Another interesting fraud is revealed in Smith v. United States (267 Fed. 665; 269 Fed. 669; 65 L. Ed. 589-1921). A group of enterprising men represented that they had a large number of wild horses in Conconino County, Arizona, which could be captured and broken at small cost and sold at a handsome profit. After these men had sold several times the number of horses owned by them, Uncle Sam stepped in and presented the matter to a grand jury. The crooks were convicted, but for ten long years they kept their case in the courts, and avoided punishment; last year the Supreme Court affirmed the convictions, and the defendants paid the price of their crooked business. Two most unusual fraud cases were Crane v. United States (259 Fed. 480-1919) and New v. United States (245 Fed. 710-1917), in each of which the defendant represented himself to be in possession of divine gifts of healing and religious inspiration. In each case the jury was cold enough to think the self-styled modern prophet a plain, unvarnished crook, and promptly convicted. It is really astounding what crowds of simpletons can always be found to believe the wildest representations without investigation and to pay out hard-earned money in the hope that it will return multiplied a hundred-fold. The stories of Pandolfo, Ponzi and Horatio Bottomley, M. P., the notorious English swindler,¹ are still fresh in the public memory. Although not quite so well known, the case of Thomson and his confederates is as interesting as any of the foregoing.

As a mail fraud, Thomson’s scheme has many extraordinary features. So far as ascertainable it is the first case

¹ See, The Literary Digest, July 1, 1922.
THE THOMSON MASONIC FRAUD

in which a fake fraternal order was prosecuted for violation of the Federal mail fraud statute; and it adds another type to the long list of fraud schemes suppressed by the United States Government. Thomson’s device was, moreover, peculiar because of the wide scope of the scheme. For its successful operation he had to have a willing confederate stationed in Scotland, who by making a pompous show of Masonic authority, power, and standing, could furnish the final proof to their unsophisticated followers that the whole affair was legal and genuine. One Robert Jamieson of Kilmarnock, Scotland, proved to be a willing tool and readily signed documents, diplomas, and charters, which were sufficient to satisfy many inquirers of the validity of Thomson’s claims. So cleverly was the scheme worked that it was practically impossible for a dupe, after his suspicions had been aroused, single-handed to expose Thomson’s humbuggeries; indeed, in order to demonstrate the falsity of representations regarding Scotch Masonry, it was necessary for Uncle Sam to bring witnesses from Scotland to Salt Lake City. The process of the United States Government runs no farther than the shores of this country, and, therefore, these witnesses could not have been compelled to come to America, but without their testimony the Government could hardly have made a case for the jury. The crime investigating agencies of any one of the states in which Thomson did business, however efficient, were wholly incapable of pursuing Thomson and his confederates successfully. This case, therefore, is a shining example of the sort of crime that the Government can prosecute better than the states. For these reasons, among others, which will be apparent as the story unfolds itself, this case will be remembered as a mail fraud.

For Masons the story of the Masonic mail fraud created by the fertile brain of Thomson, and of his ultimate trial and conviction in a Federal Court, has a particular interest; the reasons for the special interest of Masons in this case
are at once apparent. The tale of his unparalleled deceptions, his monumental conceit, and brazen effrontery, and of the apparent success of his pernicious scheme, fills all Masons with both disgust and wonderment. This is the first case in which a Masonic impostor has been convicted and sentenced for violating the Federal mail frauds statute. Thomson is the first peddler of fake degrees in America who prostituted Craft or Symbolic Masonry with conspicuous success by openly soliciting members. Other clandestine Masons have generally respected the fundamental conception of the order that all men must ask admission to the Blue Lodge of their own free will and accord; but Thomson openly and loudly canvassed for members. Another outstanding phase of the case to Masons is that Thomson claimed to have the right to confer all the degrees in nearly a dozen orders, including the Shrine, which were supposedly “within the bosom of the Scottish Grand Council of Rights,” and which he alone had the right to confer. Thomson said he had all there was or ever had been in Masonry. In order to make his own degrees exclusively genuine Thomson had to challenge the authenticity and regularity of all other degrees and systems in America. This he did without hesitation. Hence, for the first time in their history, all regular Masonic bodies were branded as irregular and were called upon to make proof of their authority. To expose the fraud in Thomson’s scheme, and to answer his colossal claims, means the shedding of a little light in some of the dark corners of Masonic history and practices; and, furthermore, the mere unfolding of this man’s amazing schemes will give rise to a number of difficult questions worthy the consideration of all Masonic scholars.

There are some obvious truths which will be the common property of all intelligent Masons as soon as they read the account of Thomson and his activities. Few Masons realize the vast amount of controversy which exists regarding the history of their own institutions, of both low and high de-
grees, and of the sharp conflict of opinion among Masonic scholars concerning elementary questions of Masonic jurisprudence and customs. From day to day Masons assume that certain practices are correct and permanent and have always existed, and act upon them unhesitatingly. Thomson was well acquainted with the controversies which divide Masonic chroniclers and with the differences of opinion concerning important practices; and upon these, as well as upon certain bare-faced, false representations he built an edifice unlike anything known to Masonry. If Thomson and his associates had been allowed to go on unchecked with their impudent and profitable imposture and to cheat and defraud, simple, honest men, all regular Masons would have been wronged immeasurably.

It is easy to explain how regular Masonry is injured by such unblushing hocus-pocus. In the eyes of the public Masonry stands for certain definite things: it is the oldest and most notable secret order in the world; in America it is composed of men of the highest standing and reputation who have entered its portals voluntarily and who combine their efforts in benevolent enterprises of the most praiseworthy kind. This great brotherhood has not been without its enemies. At one time prejudice against Masonry in this country came near to destroying it, but the order survived all attacks and today is favorably regarded by most non-members. The high esteem in which the fraternity is now held by non-Masons is due principally to the silent good work and exemplary conduct of the many thousands of individual members, and, although the public at large knows little of Masonry, it expects much of Masons. Thomson, in devising his scheme of fraud, took into consideration the fact that in the eyes of non-Masons, one Mason would have the same standing as another. How could the public know a spurious from a genuine Mason? It needs no argument to show that the misdeeds of one such spurious Mason can do more damage to the fraternity than can be overcome
by the good conduct of regular Masons. The fraternity at large has to answer to the public of non-Masons for the bad conduct of both genuine and bogus Masons. This is a truth which all Masons can well afford to take to heart.

Thomson also knew some other things about regular Masons. He knew that they read very little about their own institution, and that, therefore, they are generally ill-informed in matters of Masonic history and law.

Many times his degree peddlers were haled into petty criminal courts to answer to the charge of obtaining money under false pretenses. In all too many instances the prisoner was discharged because the prosecution could not show wherein the fraud lay. The prosecution was dependent, of course, for its proof of fraud upon the testimony of regular Masons. This testimony was often without value and all Masons will know why. Every little victory won by Thomson in the courts gave him just one more argument to make to his dupes. Thomson also knew that regular Masons in general entertain acute indifference towards all things clandestine. The chances of his being caught up for his gross falsehoods were few, because, first, no one knew enough both about his institutions and regular Masonry to answer him, and, secondly, no one would take the pains to run his lies to earth. These things account, in part, for his enormous success for so many years.

The story of the uncovering of the fraud in this case and of the trial and conviction of Thomson and his confederates, is a complete answer to the indifference of regular Masons upon which this man fed so long, and gives new point to the following paragraphs from the writings of Albert Pike:

"It is time that some things should be called by their right names. Theft is nothing less than theft, whatever it be that a man steals. The man, who, without having lawful and regular investiture with a Degree, claims to possess it, is an impostor, and, therefore, a knave. For him to give it for money, is cozenage; to establish spurious or irregular
bodies is sheer rascality: and for men not ignorant and misled, to endeavor to get the right to enjoy the benefits and privileges, of any Rite for sums far smaller than those pay who obtain it at the hands of Regular bodies, and without taking the proper obligations to the regular possessors, hoping thereby to share in what is not their own, is dishonesty and indecency.¹

“If one wilfully resorts to falsehood, either in matters of history, or against persons, not to expose him would be to become his accomplice. . . .

“Every Mason, who has not forfeited the right to call himself, so, is, in an especial manner, the liegeman of Truth; and will best serve it by adopting the declaration, ‘J’appelle un chat un chat, et Rolet un fripon.’ It will make him enemies; but it is always, with rare exceptions, true, of all men whose duty it is to defend the Right and the Truth, that ‘he who has no enemies deserves to have no friends.’”²

¹ Masonic Origins (Washington, 1887), p. 16.
² The Ignobility of Cerneauism Exposed (1889), p. 3.
CHAPTER II

A BRIEF SURVEY OF FREEMASONRY IN AMERICA

A successful fraud is nearly always a plain imitation of some familiar reputable enterprise. No creator of a fake mining or oil scheme would ever organize a company to mine an unknown or rare metal. He makes something similar to an established successful business in order that he may have the benefit of the favorable comparison and deductions to be drawn by his victims. Thomson could never have succeeded with his scheme had it not been for the existing facts of Masonry. His dupes could see what Masonry as an institution was, and they believed Thomson when he said he would sell them something better. At every step in his career he imitated some well-known Masonic order in America. In order, therefore, to understand what Thomson purported to have, it is indispensible that a brief survey of Masonry in America be presented.

A great ethical institution is judged by its history, its purposes, and its accomplishments. It is utterly impossible to give a thumbnail picture of Freemasonry which is at once simple and accurate. What follows, is, therefore, submitted with much hesitation and in the hope that it will serve to present a general outline, the details of which can be supplied by further reading.

No historian has been able to present a satisfactory theory as to the origin of Freemasonry. Inasmuch as the institution is predicated upon secrecy, and has always eschewed the written word, many relevant facts can never be known. Moreover, many of the early historians of the order so mixed fact and fancy that it has taken a full century to expose the fallacy of much that was once accepted as Masonic historical truth.
There are writers who connect Masonry with almost every benevolent, ethical, or philosophical society known to history; others, with a genealogical turn, find no difficulty in running its antecedents back to Adam and claiming as its patrons all the great moral leaders of the past. Imagination has run amuck in far too many Masonic histories.

It is enough for us to know that Freemasonry is distinctly an Anglo-Saxon institution. It apparently grew out of the guilds of operative Masons found after the twelfth century and which were intimately associated with the construction of the beautiful cathedrals and other magnificent stone structures of mediaeval Europe. In time these groups acquired some of the characteristics of fraternal societies. In England and Scotland the craftsmen evolved an organization “in which a gradually increasing element of non-operative or speculative members developed the elaborate ceremonial of that system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, that we know as Freemasonry today.”

How or why this non-operative or speculative element was introduced into the guilds, no one knows, but it is clear that in time this element came to control the destiny of the organization. In the seventeenth century there were lodges here and there in the British Isles, calling themselves Freemasons, having similar signs and practices and devoting themselves to the preservation of the traditions, customs, ceremonies, and moral teachings of the old operative Masons. At this time all of these lodges were self-created, and no general authority existed anywhere which could constitute a lodge. In 1717 the first Grand Lodge in the world was organized in London. In due time the lodges of England joined the Grand Lodge and acknowledged its sole authority to form new lodges. A Grand Lodge was established in Ireland in 1730, and in Scotland in 1736. From these beginnings in the British Isles, Freemasonry has traveled to

---

the four corners of the earth, and from them all regular Masonry traces its descent.

The aims and nature of the order are admirably stated in the following paragraphs of the Preamble to the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts:

"Freemasonry is a charitable, benevolent, educational, and religious secret society, adhering to its own peculiar ancient landmarks. Its methods of recognition and of symbolic instruction are secret and thereby a test of membership is provided, though a Brother be traveling in foreign countries and among those who would otherwise be strangers.

"It is religious in that it teaches monotheism, the Volume of the Sacred Law is open upon its altars whenever a Lodge is in session, worship of God is ever a part of its ceremonial, and to its neophytes and Brethren alike are constantly addressed lessons of morality; yet it is not theological.

"It is educational in that it teaches a perfect system of morality, based upon the sacred Law, by a prescribed ceremonial; and it also provides libraries and opportunities for study therein.

"It is benevolent in that it teaches relief of the poor and distressed as a duty and exemplifies the duty by relief of sick and distressed Brethren, by caring for the Widows and Orphans of the Brethren, by maintaining homes for aged and distressed Brethren and their dependents, and by providing for the education of orphans.

"It is charitable in that none of its income inures to the benefit of any individual, but all is devoted to the improvement and promotion of the happiness of mankind.

"It is a social organization only so far as it furnishes additional inducement that men may gather in numbers, thereby providing more material for its primary work of training, of worship, and of charity."

Freemasonry has always drawn to its fold men of all classes, creeds and occupations. It asks no man to subscribe to any creed, and aside from belief in a Supreme Being, leaves every member to his own religious conceptions. That it is popular with ministers is shown by the fact that 50,000 of them in the United States are Masons. To Theo-
dore Roosevelt, one of the greatest values in Masonry was that it affords an opportunity for men in all walks of life to meet on common ground. The institution is justly proud of the fact that today it counts among its distinguished members the Prince of Wales, Sir Gilbert Parker and Rudyard Kipling in England, and President Harding, Major General Leonard Wood, former Vice-President Thomas R. Marshall, former Ambassador John W. Davis, who is now President of the American Bar Association, former Secretary William G. McAdoo, Chief Justice William H. Taft, and Hanford MacNider, National Commander of the American Legion, to name only a few of its prominent living exponents; but no one of these celebrated men counts for a jot more in its eyes than any one of the thousands of average men who have signed its rolls.

It is true, also, that Masonry has been equally popular with the great men of the past. It argues well for the permanent value of an institution that it has been able in its long history to interest such men as Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns, Lafayette, Voltaire, Garibaldi, Mazzini, Benjamin Franklin, Chief Justice John Marshall and John Hancock. It is known that Masons were exceedingly active in the formation of the American Government. Joseph Warren, the first man to be killed at Bunker Hill, Paul Revere, Israel Putnam, and George Washington are conspicuous names in the long list. The mere fact that such men have been loyal members of the order is sufficient proof to many investigators of the lofty ideals of the institution.

An attempt is made in the following pages to describe more particularly the Masonic and quasi-Masonic institutions now found in this country.

1. Craft or Symbolic Masonry

There are at this time in the United States approximately 2,682,197 Master Masons. Each one of these Masons, vol-

1. Figures courteously furnished by C. C. Hunt, Deputy Grand Secretary of Iowa.
untarily and without solicitation petitioned some duly con-
stituted Blue Lodge, was afterwards carefully investigated
by a committee, and was regularly voted upon by the Lodge
members in due course. After election, each one of these
men received seriatim the three Craft or Symbolic Degrees
of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason.
These degrees are called Symbolic, because the principal
method of instruction in all of them is by symbols. To be
duly constituted in our day a Blue Lodge must have a char-
ter from some regularly organized Grand Lodge and this
charter is the proof of its regularity and authority.

Each American state has one, and only one Grand Lodge,
which alone has full and complete power to issue charters
to subordinate or Blue Lodges. Grand Lodges confer no
degrees, but all Symbolic Degrees are conferred in Blue
Lodges by the proper officers of the Lodge. There is no
such thing in the general practice of American Symbolic
Masonry as communicated degrees. Grand Lodges are
created by a number of Blue Lodges existing in some terri-
tory not already occupied by a Grand Lodge, meeting and
declaring themselves to be a Grand Lodge. Upon recogni-
tion by the other Grand Lodges of genuine Masons, this new
Grand Lodge becomes a member of the family of regular
Grand Lodges of the world.

It is conceded by all scholars that Masonry, as we know
it today, had its origin in the British Isles.1 Masonry came
to America with the early colonists and it is well known
that there were Masons here before the organization of the
first English Grand Lodge in 1717, but is not known ex-
actly when Masonry was brought to America or who
introduced it. Lodge meetings may have been held in Bos-
ton as early as 1720, and they were certainly held in
Philadelphia in 1730; but the first “duly constituted” Blue
Lodge in America was the First Lodge of Boston, established

---

1 Vibert’s *The Story of the Craft*, is a short, accurate and readable account.
in 1733. Probably the first meeting of Masons in America was composed of a few men who had received the degrees in the old country and these men, without charter or specific authority, believing they had the right to do so, organized a lodge in what was clearly unoccupied territory. From the second quarter of the eighteenth century on Blue Lodges were established in the colonies at regular intervals and in a short time more than thirty were in existence. Nearly all of these Blue Lodges had charters from Grand Lodges or Mother Lodges in England, Ireland or Scotland.

In time Provincial Grand Lodges were set up which held authority under the Grand Lodge of England, Ireland or Scotland. At the time of the American Revolution, the Masons had to decide whether or not they could consistently bear allegiance to the Grand Lodges across the Atlantic. Doubtless, moved by the injunction upon these Masons to be loyal to the government of the country wherein they lived, they severed relations with the Grand Lodges overseas and set up their own Grand Lodges. These new Grand Lodges were soon recognized by the Grand Lodges of the Mother Country and proceeded to charter Blue Lodges in the new country. As the states grew in number, new Grand Lodges came into existence, and today every state has its own Grand Lodge. Whatever feeling existed in the past between the American Grand Lodges and the Grand Lodges of the Mother Country vanished long ago, for each American Grand Lodge is today acknowledged to be regular by the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland. Moreover, England herself has again and again recognized that the American colonists followed the lawful and only practicable course for the creation of Grand Lodges and in recent years has approved this method in the cases of Canada and Australia.

2 Ibid., pp. 15-17.
In the Masonic world all advancement of an initiate is by degrees or steps, and certain degrees must be taken in a definite order or succession. The three Craft or Symbolic Degrees are fundamental; many scholars even go so far as to contend that these degrees alone constitute Masonry. It is quite true that no man is a Mason without them. These degrees are found in substantially the same form wherever Masonry exists. On the other hand, what are commonly called the Higher Masonic Degrees, and which can be taken only after the Symbolic Degrees, widely differ in the several countries where they are practiced. Although very similar names may be used, the substance may be radically different.

There is no national Grand Lodge of Craft Masons in America. The Grand Lodges of the several States are all equal independent bodies, basing their claims to legitimacy and sovereignty upon (a) recognition by the other Grand Lodges of America and the British Isles, (b) legislative recognition (in some instances), and (c) such historical connection with the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland, and Scotland as they are able to make. All of the regular Grand Lodges in America and in the British Isles are affiliated in one way or another and acknowledge the recipients of their degrees to be genuine Masons. Members of a Blue Lodge of one jurisdiction visit freely Blue Lodges of other jurisdictions both on this and the other side of the Atlantic, as well as elsewhere on the face of the earth where regular Masonry is found. As a general rule, in America a Mason can belong to but one Blue Lodge at a time, but there are exceptions to this rule, notably Massachusetts, and the practice is quite the other way in Scotland.

2. The Royal Arch

It is often said that a Master Mason in America is eligible to apply to certain other bodies for membership; these other bodies are commonly described as the Scottish Rite and
“York” Rite. It is a pity that the word “York” is used in describing certain well-known Masonic institutions, for the word is not part of the title of any regular Masonic order in America and is really meaningless. It would be much better if this Rite were, for purposes of description, called “American,” because the several orders which are classified under this title are distinctly American. But the term “York” is so well fixed now in popular usage that it will be employed here for the sake of brevity.

The York Rite system comprises, in addition to the three Symbolic Degrees, four degrees conferred in a Chapter, three degrees conferred in a Council and three degrees of Knighthood conferred in a Commandery. The Scottish Rite, however, encompasses thirty degrees in addition to the three Symbolic degrees, and will be described later. For most Masons these two paths are alternative choices, and comparatively few men pursue both of them.

The Master Mason desiring to advance in the York Rite must petition some regularly constituted Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, which, if he is elected to membership, will confer upon him what are called the Capitular Degrees of Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master and the Royal Arch. No man can receive these degrees who is not a member in good standing of a regular Blue Lodge.

We have no definite knowledge concerning the origin of the Chapter Degrees. The most that can be said, is that these degrees, in substance if not exactly as they are now, were part of the great mass of scattered degrees current in Europe in the 18th century. They were first given in Blue Lodges by authority supposed to repose in the Blue Lodge Charter. The Royal Arch was known in England slightly before the middle of the 18th century. The oldest authentic record of conferring the Royal Arch Degree in America seems to be in Fredericksburg Lodge of Virginia, under date of December 22d, 1753.1

1 Masonic Voice Review, April, 1919.
The colonial Masons, especially Thomas Smith Webb, took some of these floating degrees or ideas obtained therefrom, put the breath of life into them, and made the four Capitular Degrees which are certainly found in this country in the last quarter of the 18th century. In 1919 St. Andrew's Royal Arch Chapter of Boston, claiming to be the oldest regularly organized Capitular body on the Western Continent, celebrated the 150th anniversary of its birth.

It is worth noticing that these degrees are recognized in England and Scotland, being controlled in the latter country by the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland.

Mackey, in writing in his encyclopedia of the Royal Arch says:

"The true Symbolism of the Royal Arch System is founded on the discovery of the Lost Word.

"It can never be too often repeated that the Word is, in Masonry, the Symbol of Truth. This Truth is the great object of pursuit in Masonry—the scope and tendency of all its investigations—the promised reward of all Masonic labor. Sought for diligently in every degree and constantly approached but never thoroughly and intimately embraced, at length, in the Royal Arch, the veils which conceal the object of search from our view are withdrawn and the imestimable prize is revealed."

In 1921 there were 3,142 Royal Arch Chapters in the United States with an enrollment of 606,802. Every state in the Union has a Grand Chapter bearing almost the same relation to the subordinate Chapters that Grand Lodges bear to Blue Lodges in the Craft Degrees. There is, however, a General Grand Chapter of the Royal Arch Masons of the United States of America composed of the Grand Chapters of all the states except Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia. The General Grand Chapter has been in existence in Amer-

---

1 See Report of Josiah H. Drummond to General Grand Chapter of 1897.
2 New England Craftsman, September, 1919.
ica since 1798 and asserts that it is “the largest body of organized Masonry in the world.” It is on friendly terms with Grand Chapters of the British Isles, Canada and Australia.

The General Grand Chapter exercises supervisory control over all member Grand Chapters and is recognized by these as the Supreme authority in most things. Since 1826 it has held triennial meetings which consider reports and pass laws for the guidance of the constituent Grand Chapters. It has a permanent fund of more than $25,000 and maintains a Secretary’s office and Library at Coldwater, Michigan.

3. Cryptic Degrees

Cryptic Masonry has been described by its leaders as “The top round of the ladder of Ancient Craft Masonry.” The Cryptic Degrees, Royal and Select Master and Super-Excellent Master are today conferred in a Council. They are a true example of what are sometimes called side-steps in Masonry; for while the Council asks as a prerequisite that a candidate have the Royal Arch Degrees, it is not required that a Mason possess the Cryptic Degrees before petitioning for the degrees of Knighthood. Efforts have been made to have the Knights Templar require the Cryptic Degrees as a prerequisite to Knighthood, notably in 1916, but without success.

The Cryptic Degrees continue the story of the Master’s Degree and the Royal Arch, picturing events connected with the pursuit of the Lost Word, and their admirers believe that they properly belong to the Capitular part of the ritual and are indispensable to a complete understanding of the beautiful drama begun in the Master Mason’s Degree. The

---

2 Ibid, pp. 99 and 164.
4 Proceedings, General Grand Council (1921), p. 63.
Select Master's Degree was first conferred by Henry Winans in Baltimore in 1790; the Royal Master's Degree was first worked by Thomas Lownds in New York in 1805; and the two were amalgamated by Jeremy L. Cross in Hartford, Conn., in 1818.¹

It is supposed that the Super-Excellent Degree was added in the second decade of the 19th century.²

The true story of the origin of the Cryptic Degrees is not known. There is a fanciful tale which attributes their creation to the same Frederick of Prussia who is associated with Scottish Rite history.³ A committee of the General Grand Council on Cryptic history is pursuing the interesting study of the relation of these degrees to those of the Royal Arch and their findings should have real value to all students.

In 1877, long after the degrees made their appearance and long after the establishment of Councils to work them, a permanent General Grand Council of the United States was formed. It holds its triennial meetings at the same time and place as the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. It is composed of Grand Councils in 32 states and the District of Columbia and has in excess of 137,000 members; but there are independent Grand Councils not affiliated with the General Grand Council, having a membership of over 73,000.⁴

The General Grand Council has itself organized many subordinate councils, many of which have been absorbed in State Grand Councils; but a few, in such states as Arizona, Delaware, Utah, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico and Wyoming, and in Alaska and the Philippine Islands, are still directly responsible to the General Grand Council. In 1921 there were 765 subordinate Councils grouped in 33 Grand

¹ Proceedings, General Grand Council (1921), Report of Committee on Cryptic History, p. 52.
² Historical Notes, Columbian Council No. 1 (New York City, 1910), p. 16.
³ Ibid., p. 12.
⁴ Proceedings, General Grand Council (1921), p. 83.
Councils, all responsible to the General Grand Council. Statistics of the independent Councils are not available.

4. The Knights Templar

The system of Templar Masonry in America can be entered only by Master Masons who have received the Royal Arch Degrees. In the United States this order comprises the degrees of Red Cross, Malta and Templar. They are conferred in bodies known as Commanderies, of which there are now more than 1450 in this country with a membership in excess of 300,000. The subordinate Commanderies in the several states are under the jurisdiction of Grand Commanderies, and since 1816 there has been a national organization governing the order having the title today of the "Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America." This Grand Encampment held its 35th Triennial Conclave at New Orleans, La., in the summer of 1922. It is admitted by all American Knights Templar to be the Supreme governing body of the order. As with everything else connected with Masonry it is utterly impossible to give the origin of the chivalric degrees. The name Knight Templar comes from the bands of warriors who fought during the Crusades to wrest the tomb of Christ from the Saracens and to protect pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. Conceding that the noble ideals of the mediaeval Christian Knights are the soul of modern Templar Masonry, there is no credible evidence that the order of Knights Templar in its present form has any direct connection with the old military Templar orders of the middle ages. Some of the many unrelated Masonic degrees which were common property in the 18th century doubtless furnished the inspiration for Templar Masonry as it exists today in the British Isles, America, and Europe.

The Knight Templar was first practiced as a Masonic degree in England and Ireland about the middle of the 18th century. Old records yield lean phrases from which scholars infer that the order of Knights Templar existed in America as early as 1769.¹ There was little unity among the groups conferring the degrees, however, and it was not until early in the 19th century that the institution took form and gave proof of its real possibilities. The degrees were amplified and embellished by Thomas Smith Webb, probably the greatest single figure in American Templardom, who also was responsible for their introduction to many states. To him more than to any other man was due the organization in 1816 of a Grand Encampment to be the supreme head of the Knights Templar in America. In 1916, after 100 years of Templar expansion, the Grand Encampment could boast of a membership of 243,590 individual Knights grouped in 1403 Commanderies and 46 Grand Commanderies, and of friendly association with 237 Commanderies in the British Isles and Canada. In 1916 the only two states without Grand Commanderies were Nevada and Delaware.

In 1910 a concordat was signed by the Great Priories of England and Wales, Ireland, Scotland and Canada, and the Grand Encampment of the United States, which provided for mutual recognition and the interchange of fraternal courtesies. This paved the way for a universal system of Knights Templar.

The Order of the Temple has grown to be one of the most significant and powerful institutions in America. Its charity work during the World War deserves the highest commendation. It contributed to the National Red Cross $20,000, and to the National Y. M. C. A. another $20,000. It first adopted 100 orphans of French soldiers for a period of two years and later adopted an additional 500 war orphans.² It also sent substantial sums to the Great Priories

of England and Scotland to be used for the alleviating of the sufferings caused by the War in those countries. In the meantime it did not neglect its duties close at hand and contributed quietly to the relief of thousands of persons in this country injured by the consequences occasioned by the Great War.

At the 35th Triennial Conclave held at New Orleans in the summer of 1922, the Knights and delegates lawfully assembled voted to create a Knights Templar Education Fund of $100,000.00; this fund is to be increased from year to year by contributions from American Knights Templar. The earnings of the fund are to be used to aid children to obtain a college education. The money is to be lent and not given, first, to the deserving children of Knights Templar and afterwards to the children of other Masons; it will be distributed among the several states in proportion to their respective contributions. Without question this is one of the very noblest acts of any American fraternal order, and is splendid proof of the belief of all Knights Templar in universal education.

5. Scottish Rite

No institution claiming connection with Masonry has given rise to such hot debates as the Scottish Rite. There is a great deal of controversial literature dealing with the subject, and in this Matthew McBlain Thomson has revelled. From the fertile field of disputes regarding the history and authority of the order, Thomson gathered sheaves of arguments which must have impressed his victims as unanswerable. Of course, it never occurred to these simple minded

---

persons that much that Thomson quoted was false, or the expression of mere opinion.

The Scottish Rite, as known to the world today, was born in Charleston, S. C., in 1801. It had its genesis in France, not Scotland, but it is just as much a product of America as is our American form of government. In France, about the middle of the 18th century, were literally hundreds of detached, unorganized degrees, based on a variety of legends and of unequal merit. These degrees had no order or sequence, were not controlled by any institution, and were sold by unscrupulous peddlers just as wild-cat mining or oil stocks are sold in America today. Had there not been a ready market for them, doubtless so many would not have been invented and distributed. For reasons now obscure to us, but perhaps to give that foreign flavor to their wares so dear to salesmen in all ages, some of these degrees were described as Ecossais or Scots Masonry. Certainly no connection has ever been established between these degrees of Scots Masonry found in France in the 18th century, and Scotland. Of these detached degrees the most interesting survived, and some became very popular.

In 1757 a body called the Council of Emperors of the East and West took 25 of these floating degrees and made a system which became known as the Rite of Perfection.¹ This Council granted authority to Stephen Morin in 1761 to establish "Perfect and Sublime Masonry" in all parts of the world.² He came to San Domingo in the same year and conferred the degrees of the Right of Perfection on many men. Morin also appointed a number of inspectors with power to transmit the degrees.² These deputies with their roving commissions in their pockets traveled widely in the American colonies, conferring degrees for money and also creating other inspectors with powers similar to their own.

¹ See Stillson and Hughan, ubi supra, p. 615.
² Ibid, p. 617. See, also, Albert Pike's Historical Inquiry, p. 182, et seq.
The 25 degrees brought to America by Morin, and distributed by his deputies, received a warm welcome at the hands of American Masons, and between 1761 and 1801 four Lodges of Perfection and one Council of Princes of Jerusalem were created, and these were the only bodies of the Sublime Degrees established in America during that period.¹

At Charleston, S. C., in 1801, a number of enthusiastic Masons, led by John Mitchell and Frederick Dalcho, Sovereign Grand Inspectors-General, organized the “Supreme Council of the 33d degree, for the United States of America.” So far as known, this was the first use anywhere on earth of the descriptive title just quoted; this was the first meeting of a Supreme Council of the 33d Degree; and it was the first time that any men pretended to have arranged a system of thirty-three degrees into the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. In 1802 this Council issued to the world a remarkable circular proclaiming the formation of the Supreme Council and recognizing the Grand Constitutions of 1762 and 1786 as binding law.

“Whether the founders of the Supreme Council at Charleston had the lawful right to organize the Rite as they did, is immaterial; therefore, we shall not discuss it. It is enough for us to know that they did organize, and the strongest circumstance that can possibly be produced in favor of their right to do so is found in the fact that all rival claimants for original ownership of the system thereby recognize the fact that there was and is a system or Rite of thirty-three degrees, with a Supreme Council as its head or governing body.”² This unanswerable logic is particularly applicable to the case of Thomson, as will be seen hereafter.

The Supreme Council created at Charleston, specifically denominated now “The Supreme Council of the Thirty-third

¹ Stillson and Hughan, ubi supra, p. 685.
² Stillson and Hughan, ubi supra, p. 642.
and Last Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America,” has grown from small beginnings until today it is the most celebrated institution of its kind in the world. From it the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite was carried to France early in the last century, and there this system was reborn; from France in 1846 the system was carried to Scotland, and then for the first time in its entire history was there a Supreme Council of the 33d degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry in Scotland. Indeed, it may be truthfully said that prior to 1846 there was no such thing on Scottish soil as a Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. The Supreme Council of England also traces its history to the Charleston Council. There are today thirty Sovereign Supreme Councils and they all recognize the Charleston Council as the Supreme or Mother Council of the world.1

In the United States there is also a Supreme Council for the Northern Jurisdiction which exercises exclusive control over the Scottish Rite in all territory east of the Mississippi River and north of the Ohio River. While Thomson has most bitterly assailed and libeled the Southern Jurisdiction, he has said little about the Northern Jurisdiction, and for that reason little will be said about it here. Its tempestuous history is worthy of the careful consideration of all investigators.

The foregoing paragraphs confessedly fail to give anything like an adequate account of the beginnings, struggles, and triumphs of the Scottish Rite. Nothing has been said about the controversy over the origin of the Grand Constitutions of 1786, or of the relations, real or imaginary, with the institution of Frederick the Great of Prussia,2 or of the Cerneau imposture, or of the career of the extraordinary

1 These Supreme Councils are: Southern Jurisdiction, Northern Jurisdiction, France, Belgium, Ireland, Peru, England, Scotland, Cuba, Mexico, San Domingo, Portugal, Italy, Argentine, Brazil, Colombia, Central America, Chile, Uruguay, Greece, Switzerland, Canada, Paraguay, Egypt, Spain, Venezuela, Turkey, Ecuador, Servia.
2 See, Pike’s Historical Inquiry, and his Constitutions.
man and Mason, Albert Pike. Without Pike's rich contributions to its history, ritual, and moral ideals, it is extremely doubtful that the order would have the prominent place in the world which it occupies today.

In the Southern Jurisdiction the Scottish Rite is divided into four bodies, namely Lodge of Perfection, conferring the degrees from the Fourth to the Fourteenth; Chapter Knights Rose Croix, conferring the degrees from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth; Council Knights Kadosh, conferring the degrees from the Nineteenth to the Thirtieth; and the Consistory, conferring the Thirty-first and Thirty-second degrees. These bodies are all under the control of the Supreme Council, whose see is at Charleston, but which has its seat of government at Washington, D. C. The thirty-two degrees (including the three Symbolic degrees) must be taken consecutively. The 33d Degree is not subject to petition but is gratuitously conferred upon those who merit it by reason of their distinguished services to the fraternity. Every 33d Degree Mason is also an Inspector General of the Rite. The Supreme Council is composed entirely of Sovereign Grand Inspectors General; and to distinguish them from the Inspectors General Honorary they are called "Active Members."

In the Southern Jurisdiction, but not elsewhere, there is a Court of Honor, originally proposed by Albert Pike, and established for those brethren who have deserved well of the Rite. It is composed of the Sovereign Grand Inspectors General (Active, Emeriti and Honorary), and such 32d Degree Masons as the Supreme Council selects. Members are entitled "Knights of the Court of Honor." These Knights are of two ranks, Knights Commander and Grand Crosses. The former are elected by the Supreme Council from lists proposed by the several Sovereign Grand Inspectors General (Active), according to the numbers of new

1 For a short account of the main incidents in his life, see Fred W. Allsopp's *The Life Story of Albert Pike* (1930); and for an appraisal of his work, see Robert Freke Gould's celebrated Memorial essay, *A. Q. C.*, xvii.
32d Degree Masons made in the several jurisdictions, or may be selected by the Supreme Council from the jurisdiction at large. At each regular meeting of the Supreme Council it may choose for investiture with the Grand Cross not more than three 32d Degree Masons or Knights Commander to be selected from a list made up of but one nominee of each Sovereign Grand Inspector General. Investiture with the dignity of Grand Cross is for signal services and unusual merit only, and neither it nor the rank of Knight Commander can ever be given in response to application.¹

This Court of Honor is sometimes called the vestibule to the Thirty-third Degree, for the recipients of that degree are selected from the roll of Knights Commander of the Court of honor.²

In 1921 the Southern Jurisdiction had under its supervision and control 117 Consistories, scattered widely throughout its territory, having a total membership of 196,703. There are now 24 Active Members in the Southern Jurisdiction, the maximum being 33; there are approximately 1,885 Thirty-third Degree brethren, Inspectors General Honorary; and 4,087 members who have the rank and decoration of Knight Commander of the Court of Honor. The Northern Jurisdiction has a membership slightly in excess of 200,000; so that it may be confidently stated at this time that there are in the United States of America approximately 400,000 Scottish Rite Masons, having at least the 32d degree.

The Southern Jurisdiction has its home in the House of the Temple at Washington, D. C., which is claimed by many of its admirers to be the most beautiful Masonic edifice in the world. It contains perhaps the most complete Scottish Rite library in the country, including all the writings of Albert Pike as well as all the Masonic books and pamphlets collected by that celebrated scholar.

The Southern Jurisdiction has always been noted for its liberal contributions to worthy causes in times of disaster. At the time of the earthquake and fire at San Francisco the Supreme Council contributed $25,000 to the relief of the city; in 1921 it eclipsed all previous gifts by sending $40,000 to aid the starving and destitute people of China.

The Southern Jurisdiction publishes at Washington, D. C., a monthly magazine under the name of *The New Age*, which is devoted to the objects and purposes of the fraternity. In its editorial policy it has stood firmly for political and religious liberty, a Federal Department of Education, a National University at the Capitol of the Nation, and compulsory attendance of all children in public schools to the Eighth Grade. It has also declared that "We must preserve the Republic, against all of the insidious teachings of half-baked doctrinaires, impossible Utopians, Bolshevists, Communists, and all others who seek to deprive us of our liberties, and, on the plea of social justice, set up a tyranny worse than that of the mob."\(^1\)

6. *The Mystic Shrine*\(^2\)

The Shrine is not Masonic and claims no connection with Freemasonry; nevertheless, because it is composed entirely of Knights Templar and Scottish Rite Masons, it is regarded by the public as a Masonic institution. Although some of the mystery which enshrouds the birth of all Masonic societies is thought to obscure the facts surrounding the creation of the Shrine, in reality we have the sworn testimony of men who participated in its organization, and the truth is easily ascertainable. It can be definitely stated that this society was created in New York in 1872 by William J. Florence, an actor, Dr. Walter M. Fleming, and others. At times admirers of the fraternity have said that it came from Egypt, and at other times, from Arabia; but

\(^1\) *New Age*, December 1921.
\(^2\) Consult the *History of the Imperial Council Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine for North America* (Cincinnati, 1919).
the truth is overwhelming that this institution is purely an American creation and that the stories of a connection with foreign sources are wholly legendary and were fabricated for the purpose of giving a background of mystery and romance to the order.

The circumstances connected with the birth of the Shrine have been twice set forth, under oath, by James McGee, one of the organizers of the Imperial Council. In Georgia, a few years ago, the officers of Yaarab Temple (Atlanta) brought a suit in equity in behalf of the order to enjoin a colored organization from using the Shrine name, emblems, insignia and descriptive titles. The case was tried in the Superior Court of Fulton County, Georgia, and by successive appeals was carried first to the Supreme Court of Georgia and then to the Supreme Court of the United States. The officers of the Yaarab Temple prevailed in every court and the colored men were permanently enjoined from using the name and characteristic symbols of the Shrine.

The origin and history of the order, and the authority to use the name and emblems, were directly drawn in issue in that case, and upon those points the courts had to pass explicitly. James McGee testified in the lower court as follows: "I am a member in good standing in the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine for North America, and have been such member since its inception in 1872. I am a life member of this body.

"This Order was introduced in the City of New York in the year 1872 by Walter M. Fleming, a Thirty-third Degree Mason of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States, aided by a number of Thirty-second and Thirty-third Masons and Knights Templar upon whom he had conferred the Order of the Mystic Shrine. There were about thirty of us, most all residents of New York City."
After hearing all the evidence the jury found, "That the 'Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine' was organized in the City of New York September 26, 1872," and the court made the verdict its own judgment.¹

In a similar case brought in Pulaski Chancery Court (Arkansas), in a deposition given September 13, 1921, at New York, this same James McGee testified substantially as follows: "I am a life member of the Shrine. I was one of the organizers of it. It was founded in America by Walter M. Fleming. It did not come from any foreign country. Noble Fleming's reference to the Order having originated abroad was pure fiction, thinking it might aid the organization to gain a foothold, but he afterwards publicly regretted such reference."²

It is beyond dispute, therefore, that the Shrine, often called the playground of Masons, is an American institution, created by Americans, having no connection historically with any known foreign order of similar nature. In the case of the Shrine, the organization of a general governing body came shortly after the establishment of the first subordinate body, which was Mecca Temple in New York City. The Imperial Council of the Shrine possesses complete jurisdiction in all Shrine matters; it was established in 1876, about five years after the formation of Mecca Temple.

Members of the Shrine are called Nobles or Shriners. There are today more than half a million members of the order.³

There are 150 Temples under the jurisdiction of the Imperial Council, of which one is in Honolulu, one is in Mexico, nine are in Canada, and the balance are in the United States.⁴ There is not now and never has been a Temple in the British Isles or on the continent of Europe,

¹ Faisan v. Adair, Transcript in U. S. Supreme Court, p. 52.
² Insert entitled, Explanation of Shrine History, Thornburgh's History of Masonry (1921).
³ Proceedings, Imperial Council (1921), p. 12.
⁴ Ibid, pp. 158-159.
or in any other places than those just named, and not a particle of competent proof can be produced to show the contrary. The only genuine Shrine bodies in the world are those owing allegiance to the Imperial Council Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North America; all others are bogus and fraudulent.

The Shrine has always been one of the most benevolent and public-spirited of American fraternal orders. It was among the first to send substantial funds to the aid of San Francisco at the time of the great earthquake and fire, and to help Halifax and Pueblo at the time of their well-known troubles. During its career it has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to charitable causes. During the Great War the Temples contributed to the Red Cross and other war charities in excess of half a million dollars and purchased Liberty Bonds of nearly a million and three-quarters dollars. Recently the Shrine has sponsored a new charity on a scale which is without parallel in American fraternal history. It proposes to contribute $1,000,000 a year for the construction, equipment and maintenance of a number of hospitals for the care of destitute crippled children. These hospitals are to be located in different parts of the country and are to be built as rapidly as funds are available. Ten such hospitals, to be constructed at a cost of at least $250,000 each, have already been decided upon and will be located in such cities as St. Louis, Missouri, Atlanta, Ga., Shreveport, La., Portland, Ore., and San Francisco, Calif. Eventually all portions of the country will be served by these hospitals, which will gratuitously provide treatment to poor crippled children at the hands of trained nurses and skilled orthopedic surgeons.¹

The Shrine is well known to the public of non-Masons on account of the distinctive emblems and garb worn by the Nobles. The Turkish fez, regularly worn by all Nobles at Shrine functions, is very familiar to Americans. The

¹ See Proceedings, Imperial Council (1921), pp. 236, et seq.
several Temples of the country have adopted ornate uniforms and costumes for their respective bands and patrols. A procession of these bands and patrols, such as took place at San Francisco during the summer of 1922, at the 48th Annual Ceremonial of the Shrine, is a never-to-be-forgotten sight. All Shriners make it a point to attend these great assemblages; something like 300,000 of them met at San Francisco this year. It is easy to imagine the great power for civic righteousness and mutual helpfulness of such a large and homogeneous organization.

7. Order of the Eastern Star

Like the Shrine, the Eastern Star is no part of Masonry; it is a sisterhood composed of the wives, daughters, mothers, widows and sisters of Masons, and affords an opportunity to these women to join with Masons in the service of humanity. It made its appearance in this country about the middle of the last century and credit for its establishment is usually given to Robert Morris of Kentucky, aided by Robert Macoy of New York.\(^1\) It is, and always has been, a distinctly American institution, owing nothing to other lands.

The subordinate bodies are known as Chapters and owe obedience to Grand Chapters. In 1876 a General Grand Chapter was formed; this body meets triennially and at the present time all of the Grand Chapters in the world are affiliated with the General Grand Chapter except New York, New Jersey and Scotland. The jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter is unlimited. There are no legal Eastern Star bodies in the world which cannot show a connection with this American institution. The society has many Chapters in the United States, Canada, the Hawaiian Islands, the Philippine Islands, Cuba, India, Mexico and Scotland. A concordat or treaty agreement was made in 1904 between the General Grand Chapter and a Convention of Scottish

---

\(^1\) Mackey's History of Freemasonry (Clegg Edition), Ch. 109.
Chapters to the effect that, "The Grand Chapter of Scotland shall have supreme and exclusive jurisdiction over Great Britain, Ireland, and the whole British Dominions (excepting only those upon the Continent of America), and that a Supreme or General Grand Chapter of the British Empire shall be formed as soon as Chapters are instituted therein and it seems expedient to do so." The onward march of the society has not been entirely unchallenged. Both the Grand Lodges of England and of Pennsylvania have prohibited their members from becoming identified with the Order of the Eastern Star; in some other quarters, also, it has not been approved.¹

8. *Royal Order of Scotland*²

The Royal Order of Scotland, although a comparatively small society, is a well recognized Masonic institution. It has been in existence since about the middle of the 18th century. The first records of the order are found in England. These records show the existence of the Royal Order of Scotland earlier than any other degree worked in Great Britain and Ireland, except the first three, and with this exception it is, so far as can be determined, the oldest of all additional degrees.³ It is impossible to form any estimate of the probable antiquity of the order. Records establish the existence of at least six regular chapters of the Royal Order in London prior to 1750. The Royal Order of Scotland in England is sometimes called the parent of the Grand Lodge of the Order at Edinburgh. The latter, curiously enough, was organized by a native of Scotland who received the degrees in London and took them first to The Hague and afterwards to Edinburgh. There is no evidence that the Royal Order existed in Scotland prior to 1754, but from

---

¹ See, Correspondence Report, *Proceedings, California*, 1921.
³ W. J. Hughan, quoted by Fox-Thomas, *ubi supra*, p. 4.
that year until the present time, there is a more or less complete record of the order in that country.

In 1910 there were sixteen Provincial Grand Lodges under the Grand Lodge at Edinburgh; these were situated in China, India, Canada, South Africa, United States and elsewhere. The Provincial Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland in the United States was established in 1877. The first Provincial Grand Master in the United States was Albert Pike. The records and minutes of the Provincial Grand Lodge, printed at Washington, 1921, show that there is now a membership in the United States of 664. There is only one Provincial Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland in the United States. All of the regular Provincial Grand Lodges in the world now acknowledge the supremacy of the Grand Lodge at Edinburgh.

The Royal Order of Scotland embraces two degrees, first, that of Heredom and second, an order of the Knighthood. There is a legend to the effect that the Degree of Heredom was founded in the time of David the first of Scotland (1124-1153), and that the second degree was instituted by King Robert Bruce in return for aid given him by some Templars who fought under his banner at the battle of Bannockburn. D. Murray Lyon calls both of these stories fabulous and without historical value. The Degree of Heredom is described as “a Christianized form of the third Degree of Craft Masonry, purified, according to the claim made, of the Dross of Paganism and of Judaism.” The second degree has in it an intimate connection between the Trowel and the Sword.

At the meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge, the Provincial Grand Master delivers an “allocution”; those delivered by the late General Albert Pike were justly celebrated for their historical value and beauty of form. The Provincial Grand Lodge meets alternately in the Northern and

Southern jurisdictions. At these meetings the members wear the Star and Garter.

This is the only Masonic order in America which is under the sovereignty of a Grand Lodge of another country.

9. Order of Red Cross of Constantine

Since 1872, the year of the birth of the Shrine, there has existed in America, the Constantinian Orders of Knighthood. These Orders were brought from England and are genuinely Masonic. There are six degrees of the Constantinian Orders, three of which are worked and three of which are official. They are conferred in the following order:

1. Knight of Red Cross of Constantine;
2. Knight of Holy Sepulchre;
3. Knight of St. John of Palestine;
4. Viceroy-Eusebius;
5. Sovereign-Constantine;
6. Grand Cross of the Order.

The last-named is a decoration conferred as a mark of honor and distinction.

Tradition connects the order with Constantine the Great, who, in the year 313 was converted to the Christian faith and who is said to have organized this order as a memorial to the miracle which caused his conversion.

No more can be said of this tradition than can be said of the numerous other legends connected with Masonic institutions; as a matter of historical fact, the order existed prior to the middle of the 18th century. It is presumed that membership was restricted to Freemasons about 1788, from which year there is a continuous record of the institution.

In the year 1869 authority was given to introduce the orders into America and conclaves were established in Illinois in 1872. The fraternity grew and conclaves were organized widely in this country; in 1907 the American Supreme body, which had been in existence since 1872, became
"The Grand Imperial Council for the United States of America." It has been duly recognized by the Grand Imperial Council of England, the Mother Council of the world, as the lawful and regular governing body of the orders within this territory, having sovereign powers. An applicant for membership must be a Royal Arch Mason in good standing. Faith, Unity, and Zeal are the guiding principles of the fraternity. The orders are said to compose a beautiful system of Christian Masonry and "to furnish a most impressive allegorical sequel to the Craft Degrees."

There are, at this time, in the United States, subject to the Grand Imperial Council, more than twenty-five Conclaves, nearly every one of which bears the name of some Christian saint. The oldest Conclave is St. John,1 at Chicago, Illinois. It is interesting to note that the Order of the Red Cross of Constantine, as found in America, traces its history directly to England, whereas the Royal Order of Scotland, as it exists in this country, traces its history directly to Scotland.

In a few important aspects all of the Masonic and quasi-Masonic institutions of America are similar. Each one has grown from very small beginnings, and the practices and principles of each, which were once scant and indefinite are now fixed and comprehensive. Certain things which might have been tolerated in the early history of the Masonic fraternity could not be approved today. Masonry in America, in other words, is a growth and evolution, and any man who undertakes to define it at this time in terms of the past displays a total ignorance of the subject.

Some of these institutions have had their rights passed upon by the courts; all of them have unmistakable and readily ascertainable rights. First of all, as compared with Thomson's system, they have the right of priority. Each

---

1 See, interesting essays by Geo. W. Warvelle, *A Sketch of the Constantinian Orders of Knights* (Chicago 1911), and *Inquiry Respecting the Derivation and the Legitimacy of the Constantinian Orders of Knighthood* (Chicago 1916); *Notes on the Chivalrous Orders* (Chicago 1910); and *Legends of the Saints* (Chicago 1913).
institution has its own peculiar laws, insignia, emblems and descriptive titles, all so well-known and firmly established as to entitle their possessors to the protection of the courts. In a large number of instances the legislatures of the several states have granted charters of incorporation to the Grand Lodges and have recognized them as having the sole power to decide what things are Masonic.

Every one of these Masonic or quasi-Masonic orders is wholly benevolent in its character. Not one of them is engaged in business for profit and not one of them exists to make money for any man. They are all great voluntary associations for charitable, social and educational purposes and are not in any way financially lucrative enterprises. Generally speaking, the only persons connected with these institutions who receive regular pay for their services are Secretaries, Treasurers and necessary clerks. In some instances the officers of the several orders are allowed their expenses and a small fee while traveling on the business of the fraternity. It is against the spirit of all of these institutions for any member knowingly and deliberately to use his Masonic affiliations as a means of self-aggrandizement. Again, no solicitor ever enters any man’s home to seek a convert in the name of Masonry. An unwritten and universally recognized rule has, from the beginning, prevented a Mason from asking his best friend to join a Blue Lodge. Every applicant takes the first and crucial step of his own free will and accord.

Capitular, Cryptic, Templar, and Scottish Rite Masonry, the Shrine and the Order of the Eastern Star are all characteristically and genuinely American. Aside from the inspiration, which is born of common ideas and heritage, not one of these institutions owes a thing to any foreign country. No subordinate body of any one of them, so far as we know, ever held a charter from, or ever acknowledged fealty to, any foreign institution. It is true that some Blue Lodges and some Provincial Grand Lodges were, in colonial days,
chartered by institutions in the British Isles and France; but today no American Blue Lodge or Grand Lodge in regular Masonry is in any way bound by governmental strings to any Masonic body not on American soil. The Order of the Red Cross of Constantine and the Royal Order of Scotland both acknowledge the supreme authority of parent institutions across the Atlantic; and there are, of course, friendly relations between all the Masonic bodies here and those overseas. Almost two centuries of growth in America give these orders as prominent a place in the world’s Masonic family as the United States occupies in the family of civilized nations. Indeed, measured by numbers, invested funds and benevolent enterprises, Masonry in no country in the world is comparable to that of America.

Nothing so clearly shows the true spirit and purpose of the Masonic and quasi-Masonic bodies of America as the public charities which they foster. In addition to the hospitals for crippled children being constructed by the Shrine, there are many other hospitals in the country which are supported in whole or in part by Masons or members of the Eastern Star. The Eastern Star has hospitals in Alabama, Connecticut, Ohio and Wisconsin. The Masons of New York in April, 1922, dedicated a Soldiers and Sailors Masonic Memorial Hospital to care for some of the boys who were wounded during the Great War. The Masonic fraternity and the Eastern Star are justly proud of the homes maintained by them for dependents. Thirty-two states have forty-four Masonic and Eastern Star homes; eight states have two homes and Illinois, Pennsylvania and Nebraska have three homes each. The property values in homes is nearly $10,000,000. In thirty-six homes about 5,000 adults are being cared for, and in twenty-one of the homes 1,177 boys and 1,240 girls are being sheltered and educated. In the support of these homes nearly two and three-quarter million dollars are spent annually by Masons. Inquirers

1 *Proceedings, Grand Lodge of N. Y., 1922.*
who want to know what definite acts of charity are performed by Masons might well investigate these homes.¹

That the Masons of America compose one great harmonious fraternity is demonstrated by two recent movements in this country which are unprecedented in American Masonry. One of these is the establishment in 1918 of the Masonic Service Association and the other is the organization of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association.

In October, 1918, just prior to the Armistice, George L. Schoonover, Grand Master of Iowa, impelled by the terrible consequences of the Great War and the disorganized efforts of American Masonry to do its bit, invited all the Grand Masters of the United States to meet him for the purpose of providing some effective means for united Masonic activities among the soldiers overseas. The meeting took place at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in November after the restoration of peace. This group of men formed the Masonic Service Association, and a resolution out of which it grew contained this significant statement of its aims:

"That the first purpose of the Administration shall be the service of mankind, through education, enlightenment, meditation and relief, particularly in times of disaster and distress, whether caused by war, pestilence, fire, flood, earthquake or other calamity."

In November, 1919, eighty-eight delegates, representing thirty-four Masonic jurisdictions, met again at Cedar Rapids and considered plans to carry out the lofty aims of the Association. It was stated at this meeting that thirty-seven jurisdictions, representing 1,372,305 Masons, had adopted the Constitution.

This organization is today doing remarkable work for the education of Masons in Masonry and civic welfare and cannot fail to do boundless good in the future. It will, doubt-

¹See, Eastern Star, May, 1921; Proceedings, 1921, California, p. 120; The Builder, Anamosa, Iowa, March and April, 1916.
less, act as a central school of thought for Masonry as well as a bureau for the conducting of Masonic relief on a large scale.\footnote{Proceedings Cedar Rapids Conference (1918); Proceedings, Masonic Service Association (1919).}

The George Washington Memorial Association grew out of the desire of American Masons to build a fitting monument to the first President of the country who was a Mason, as well as to build a worthy house in which to place the Washington relics gathered by the Alexandria-Washington Lodge of Virginia. The Association was formed in 1911 and meets annually on February 22d, at Alexandria, Virginia. It has undertaken to secure one dollar from every Master Mason in the United States for the purpose of building a beautiful Temple. At the present time it has a fund in excess of $250,000. Another object in building the Temple is to provide a place where the Grand Jurisdictions, members of the Association, may perpetuate in suitable form the memory and achievements of the men whose distinguished services to the fraternity merit lasting reward. The Association hopes to increase the fraternal spirit and understanding among the several Grand Jurisdictions and Grand Bodies which are members of it.

No more complete proof of the common ideals and solidarity of the Masonic fraternity in America can be produced than the quick responses made to the requests for co-operation of both the Masonic Service Association and the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association.

The foregoing description of Masonry in America was true, except for necessary changes in numbers and other like data, during the entire time that Thomson was operating his scheme. Notwithstanding there were subordinate bodies of all these Masonic and quasi-Masonic institutions in whatever direction he turned, Thomson falsely and blatantly proclaimed unceasingly that he had the only pure and undefiled Masonry in this country, that he belonged
to the great body of Universal Masonry, and that all Masonry here except his brand was clandestine and irregular. Strangely enough, he found thousands of men who believed him and paid money to his solicitors for his worthless degrees. It seems incredible that intelligent men could be misled by his mendacious statements when all about them were evidences of the truth. The picture just given of American Masonry will, it is hoped, aid the reader in following Thomson’s devious course, and will, by contrast, make the falsity of Thomson’s representations more quickly apparent.
CHAPTER III

MATTHEW McBLAIN THOMSON AND HIS FRAUD SCHEME

Matthew McBlain Thomson, the central figure in this tale of fraud and deception, was born in Ayr, Scotland, approximately sixty-eight years ago. He grew to manhood in Scotland, and worked at his trade of paper-hanger and painter in the city of his nativity. At one time he was the licensee of a beer shop there, or, as we should say, a saloon-keeper. In 1881 he came to the United States a convert, as he himself has stated, to the Mormon Church, and settled in the country village of Montpelier, Idaho; there, he again carried on his trade as a paper-hanger and painter. At Montpelier, in 1882, he met one Robert S. Spence, a country lawyer, who afterwards was intimately associated with Thomson as the Secretary of his spurious Masonic organizations. From 1886 to 1888 Spence was District Attorney for Bear Lake County, Idaho, in which the town of Montpelier is located. It is alleged by old residents of Montpelier, that the man who was duly elected Sheriff of Bear Lake County, to serve at the same time as Spence, was unable to provide the amount of bond required of him by the County authorities, and resigned, whereupon the bond was reduced and Thomson was appointed to take the place of the man who was unable to qualify. These old-timers hint that this was all a game to secure the job for Thomson, and that he was at the bottom of it.

While holding the office of Sheriff, Thomson suddenly left Montpelier. Some of the old inhabitants of the place will tell you that he left in haste under a cloud and that shortly after his departure he was “burned in effigy” by some of the railroad workmen.

1 Universal Freemason X, p. 613.
Thomson returned to Scotland and stayed there until 1898, when he returned to Montpelier, Idaho.

Thomson has had a most unusual Masonic career. According to his own story he was made a Mason in 1874, at Glasgow, Scotland, in a Lodge which he describes as “Glasgow Melrose St. John, a pendicle of the ancient Lodge of St. John of Melrose, Scotland (the last of the Ancient Scottish lodges to give adhesion to the Grand Lodge), afterwards affiliating into another, Newton-on-Ayr St. James No. 125, on the registry of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and Patna Bonnie Doon No. 565 on the same registry.”

He was Worshipful Master for several years of Patna Bonnie Doon No. 565. In 1875, to follow his own story further, he was exalted to the Holy Royal Arch in Ayr Royal Arch Chapter and was dubbed a Knight of the Temple and Malta in Encampment No. 3. In 1876 he received the degrees of the Scottish, Mizrim and Memphis Rites. In the earlier days of his fraud scheme he claimed again and again to be a life member of Lodge Newton-on-Ayr St. James No. 125, and a life member of his Mother Chapter, Ayr Chapter, Royal Arch Masons No. 3 of Ayr, Scotland, a subordinate body of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. He was Grand Master of the early Grand Encampment of Knights Templar in Scotland, 1876-1881, and was made a Knight of the Grand Cross for faithful services in that capacity. In 1895 he was First Grand Principal Z of the early Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland and it was, so he says, during his incumbency of that office that the amalgamation was perfected whereby there was created the present Supreme Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. Before leaving Scotland the first time he had received the Thirty-third Degree in what he called the Ancient and

---

1 Who is Who in Masonry, p. 10; Universal Freemason, I, p. 123; VI, p. 266; Transcript, p. 1100.
2 Who is Who in Masonry, p. 10.
3 Universal Freemason, I, p. 123.
4 Universal Freemason, (June, 1914), VI, p. 266.
5 Universal Freemason, VI, p. 267.
6 Universal Freemason, VI, p. 267.
Accepted Rite, the Forty-seventh Degree of the Early Grand National Rite, as well as the Ninetieth Degree of the Rite of Mizriam, the Ninety-fifth Degree of the Rite of Memphis, and several other detached orders which were controlled by the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland. He had also been Sovereign Grand Commander and Grand Recorder of the Scottish Grand Council of Rites.¹

In the January, 1909, number of his little magazine, *The Universal Freemason*, appears the following statement of his Masonic honors: "He has served as Grand First Principal of the E. G. Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, Grand Master of the Temple and Malta in Scotland, Sov. Grand Master of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, is at present Grand Representative of the Grand Council of Rites in the U. S. A., Grand Representative of the Supreme Councils of Louisiana, Spain, Greece, and Argentina, and Honorary member of Lodges in Europe, Africa and America, and a Past Master of all regular Degrees known to Masonry, and last, though not least, Editor of the Universal Freemason."²

In another place appears the following paragraph descriptive of his additional Masonic distinctions: "He published, for a number of years, in Scotland, a magazine known as 'The Scottish Freemason' and had for his contributors such Masons as John Yarker, W. J. Hughan, Robert Freke Gould, and others. His name appears very prominently in the latest work of Brother Gould, just off the press of William Tait of Belfast, Ireland, in which Brother Gould acknowledges in grateful language Brother Thomson's contribution to his history. Sir Charles A. Cameron, in his work entitled 'The Origin and Progress of Chivalric Freemasonry in the British Isles,' published in Dublin in 1901, has this to say of Brother Thomson: 'I have pleasure in acknowledging the fraternal assistance in collecting materials for it which I have received from the following

¹ Transcript, p. 1100.
² Universal Freemason, I, p. 123.
Brethren: Wm. J. Hughan, P. S. G. D., Eng., Torquay; Chas. F. Matier, Grand Vice Chancellor of the Temple, London; Dr. Chetwode Crawley, P. S. G. D., Ireland; Colonel Peter Spence, G. M.; Robert Jamison, Secretary; Robert Jackson, Past Secretary, and MATTHEW McB. THOMSON, Past G. M. of the Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta, in Scotland. . . ."

Statements similar to the foregoing, purporting to tell the Masonic record of Thomson, were printed from time to time in *The Universal Freemason* and other publications.

After reading these extravagant phrases descriptive of Thomson's Masonic achievements, one is reminded of the lines of Goldsmith:

> "And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew, That one small head could carry all he knew."

When Thomson returned to Montpelier in 1898, he brought with him a demit from Lodge Newton-on-Ayr St. James No. 125, and also a patent from the Scottish Grand Council of Rites, dated April 20, 1898, and which, as will be seen hereafter, was at the bottom of all of Thomson's devices. This demit he lodged with King Solomon Lodge at Montpelier, Idaho, a regular subordinate Blue Lodge of the regular Grand Lodge of Idaho, and, on December 1, 1898, he became a member of that Lodge. In 1900 Thomson attended the Thirty-third Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Idaho, as proxy for the Worshipful Master of King Solomon Lodge, and, at that meeting, was appointed Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge of Idaho. In 1901 he attended the Thirty-fourth Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Idaho, again holding the proxy of the Master of King Solomon Lodge, and, at that meeting, delivered his address as Grand Orator. The records of King Solomon Lodge show that, between the years 1902 and 1906, he held such appointive offices as Chaplain and Marshal.2

---

1 Universal Freemason, (June, 1914), VI, p. 267.
2 See, Proceedings, Idaho, 1901 to 1906, inclusive.
During the period of his residence in Montpelier, Thomson, no doubt finding the business of painting and paper-hanging somewhat dull, as well as arduous, had sold a few Masonic degrees to the railroad men working in the village. Prior to the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Idaho in 1901, Thomson had organized, at Montpelier, what he called "De Molay Council No. 21," holding a charter from the Grand Council Rites in Scotland. It met regularly in Odd Fellows' Hall at Montpelier, and was in existence for some five or six years. Now, the members of this De Molay Council were regular Blue Lodge Masons, owing obedience to the Grand Lodge of Idaho. Most of the members of this Council were railroad men who had been swept off their feet by the high-sounding titles, parchment diplomas, and plausible talk of Thomson. In due time, news of what was going on in Montpelier reached the officers of the Grand Lodge of Idaho, and at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Idaho, held in 1901, Brother Geo. E. Knepper offered the following resolution:

"Resolved: That this Grand Lodge recognize no degrees except those conferred under the regulations of the Grand Lodges of the various states and territories of the United States, and the governments throughout the world; and, whereas, it admits the following named organizations to be regular and duly constituted Masonic bodies, namely: The General Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States; the Grand Royal Arch Chapters of the several states and territories of the United States; and the Royal Arch Chapters and other bodies under their jurisdiction; the General Grand Council of Royal and Selected Masters of the several states and territories of the United States, and the Councils under their jurisdiction; the Grand Encampment of the United States; the Grand Commanderies of the several states and territories of the United States, and the Commanderies under their jurisdiction; the Supreme Councils of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions of the United States, and the

1 Transcript, p. 1109.
various bodies under their jurisdiction. Now, therefore, it is hereby declared that any Mason who is hereafter admitted in this jurisdiction into any other orders, as Masonic, whether called the Rite of Memphis, or by any other name, is acting unmasonically, and against the advice and consent of this Grand Lodge."

A motion was made that the resolution be referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence, whereupon Thomson moved that the motion to refer to the Committee be amended by laying the resolution on the table indefinitely. Upon being put to a vote the amendment was declared lost; the original motion then carried and the matter was referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence. It is reported that Thomson's motion was argued for half a day, inasmuch as upon its determination hung Thomson's right to take regular Blue Lodge Masons of the State of Idaho into his De Molay Council. When Thomson's motion failed to carry he is said to have left the session of the Grand Lodge in high dudgeon. The Committee on Jurisprudence recommended the adoption of the resolution as presented and it was duly adopted by the Grand Lodge.¹

Thomson's oration at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Idaho in 1901 was never delivered to the Grand Secretary of Idaho and was, therefore, never made a part of the proceedings of that body. After his defeat in the Grand Lodge of Idaho, Thomson never again attended any meeting of that body and, as far as the records of the Grand Lodge show, that body paid no further attention to Thomson, although he continued to peddle his wares and to maintain clandestine lodges in the State of Idaho thereafter for more than twenty years. The Grand Lodge Proceedings from the year 1902 to 1906, inclusive, show that Thomson was active in King Solomon Lodge at Montpelier at the same time that he was selling so-called Scottish Rite degrees to Idaho Masons. The patents which he delivered

¹ See, Proceedings, Idaho, 1901, pp. 50-55.
to his customers were executed in Scotland over the names of Peter Spence and Robert Jamieson and bore the seal of the Scottish Grand Council of Rites. The regular Masons in and about Montpelier, who bought Thomson's spurious degrees, fell away one by one as it was drawn to their attention that they were violating the wishes of the Grand Lodge of Idaho by retaining membership in Thomson's body, and that charges might be preferred against them unless they renounced Thomson.

In time, therefore, it became apparent to Thomson that he could not hope to secure purchasers of his bogus High Degrees among the regular Masons of Idaho. He, undoubtedly, was familiar with the careers of Cerneau, Bayliss, and other vendors of alleged High Masonic Degrees, and he must have known of the restrictions placed upon these men by the resolutions of many American Grand Lodges prohibiting Master Masons from joining other than certain recognized bodies. He could see that if the State of Idaho carried out its obvious intention to prevent Master Masons from joining his institutions, he would soon find it impossible to dispose of his degrees for want of Blue Lodge Masons who would dare to purchase them; and that if Idaho took such a position in the matter, it was altogether likely that any other state in which he might go, would take the same stand. The brilliant idea then occurred to him to make his own Blue Lodge Masons to whom he could sell all of the degrees of all the systems which reposed in the bosom of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland.

Thomson has never told how he first became acquainted with Joseph N. Cheri, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, and has never produced his side of the correspondence between them. On September 14, 1906, Cheri endorsed Thomson's patent, as shown in the picture opposite; and it is upon this patent together with Cheri's endorstation on the back that Thomson erected his
Face of Thomson's Patent from Grand Council of Rites.
The Jo[...]
Council of th[...

[Signature]

Under this Patent by the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, extended to
cover the same degrees by indenture of the Grand Council Commanded by the
Council of Rites of America, 1847, and the Grand Council of Scotland, 1867,
the Grand Council of Rites of America, 1867.
REVERSE OF THOMSON'S PATENT FROM GRAND COUNCIL OF RITES.
entire edifice. He always claimed that he had received from Cheri his authority to confer the Craft Degrees.

On November 1, 1906, Thomson secured a demit from King Solomon Lodge at Montpelier, Idaho. The granting of this demit ended his connection with regular Masonry in the United States. This demit certified that Thomson was a Master Mason in good standing of King Solonm Lodge No. 27, A. F. & A. M., under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Idaho; that he had paid all dues; that he was in good fellowship with the brethren, and had voluntarily withdrawn from the Lodge, and recommended him to the friendship and good will of the fraternity wherever he might be.

In January, 1907, Thomson organized the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana, pursuant, so he claims, to authority given on the fourteenth of September, 1906 by the Supreme Council of Louisiana. About six months after the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana was formed, M. McB. Thomson and a few associates incorporated in Idaho the American Masonic Federation. Inasmuch as it is important to know the beginning of his fraudulent scheme, it will be well to study his own story as to the formation of the American Masonic Federation. In The Universal Freemason, June, 1908, Thomson gives a queer account of the whole matter. His principal reasons for organizing this new institution it is stated, were that the York Rite Masons were narrow and bigoted; that they had no central or connecting head, and had made but little progress, that they had failed to gain any foreign recognition and that Masonically they were a failure. The following quotation is worth careful consideration:

"... Masonry that is not universal, is useless and worthless, except in the narrow section, to which it is indigeneous. Masonry throughout the world is united into one family, with the sole exception of the adherents of the State Grand Lodges in the United States of America. With

1A Facsimile Appears in Thomson's Booklet, Copies of Some Exchanges with the A. M. F. and Other Interesting Documents.
this end in view and to carry out its purposes, the founders of the American Masonic Federation applied to the Supreme Council of Louisiana, 33d degree Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, and by that body was given authority on the 14th day of September, 1906, to organize the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana, A.'.A.'.S.'.'R.'.' symbolic from members of Universal Council 30 degree and Consistory 32d degree, working under the "Grand Council of Rites of Scotland." This delegated authority was given under the signature of the Ill. Bro. Jos. N. Cheri, 33d Degree M.'.P.'.'S.'.'G.'.'C.'.'., who appointed Ill. Bro. Matthew McB. Thomson, representative of the Supreme Council, he being the representative of the "Grand Council of Rites of Scotland" for the United States of America, its territories and dependencies. The following is the charter:


To all Masons of Whatever Grade or Rite, to Whose Knowledge These Presents May Come, Greeting, in the Name of God Everlasting:


As witness my hand and seal this 21st day of the month. Tebet answering to the 9th day of January A. H. 5667, A. D., 1907.

[SEAL]  
M. McB. Thomson,  
Representative of the G. C. of Lousiana.
The Grand Lodge Inter-Montana, thus regularly formed, according to the laws of the A.'.A.'.S.'.R.', resolved to take steps to enroll all Scottish Rite Masons in the United States, in one Federation, they, themselves being the first member thereof, on the 30th day of March, 1907, the Grand Lodge of Illinois A. F. & A. M. (incorporated), applied for and was admitted to membership, they being healed and taking the oath de fideli, to the A. A. S. R. on April 5th, 1907, five lodges in the City of Boston, which had previously worked the Rite of Memphis, were healed, took the oath fideli, and petitioned for a Grand Lodge Charter from the American Masonic Federation, this was subsequently granted, and was installed on May 11th, 1907, under the title of the Grand Lodge of New England, A. A. S. R. by the President of the Federation, Matthew McB. Thomson, assisted by the Ill. BB. Harry Good, Deputy of the Grand Orient Espanol, and P. G. M. of the Regional Grand Lodge in Philadelphia, and W. Post, a P. G. M. of the same body.

On the 31st day of August, 1907, the American Masonic Federation was incorporated under the laws of the State of Idaho, the M. W. G. M.; R. W. G. S. W.; and R. W. G. secretary of the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana, being the incorporators, the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana then gave the following charter to the American Federation:

T. T. G. O. T. G. A. O. T. U. Peace Tolerance, Concord, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity:

Unto all Regular Masons of Whatsoever Rite or Grade, Greeting, in the name of God, Everlasting:

Know ye that the Grand Lodge “Inter-Montana” A.'.A.'.S.'.R.' Symbolic, chartered on the 9th day of January, 1907, by Matthew McB. Thomson, representative of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, has granted and does by these presents grant unto the Supreme Lodge of the American Masonic Federation, incorporated under the laws of the State of Idaho, all of the Masonic powers, privileges, and prerogatives as a sovereign Masonic Power, of which the said Grand Lodge Inter-Montana is itself possessed.

As witness our hands, and the seal of the Grand Lodge, this 21st day of Elool, answering to the 31st day of August, A. H. 5667, A. D., 1907.

[Seal]

M. McB. Thomson, M.'.W.'.G.'.'M.'.
I. W. Langford, M.'.W.'.G.'.' Sec.
Since then in spite of all opposition, misrepresentation and persecution, instigated and propogated in the spirit of intolerance, the progress of the American Masonic Federation has been phenomenal. It is now represented by Grand and Subordinate Lodges in sixteen states, and on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. It is already recognized as a Regular Masonic Power, and foreign powers are exchanging representations with it. Here, at home, as an exponent of Universal Masonry it has the field to itself.1 . . . ."

In The Universal Freemason, February, 1912, (IV, 185), appears the following account (copied exactly) of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, from which Thomson pretended to have authority to confer Craft Degrees:

"... In the beginning of the eighteenth century all writers agree that Michael Andrew Ramsay was a prominent figure in Scottish Masonry in France, and in 1740 Lord Kilmarnock was at the same time Grand Master of the recently formed Grand Lodge of Scotland and of the Ancient Mother Lodge of Kilwinning (then working independent of the Grand Lodge and of the Scottish Masons of France.) In this capacity he founded the Mother Lodges of Toulouse, Montpelier and Marseilles, the latter under the distinctive title of St. John of Scotland.

It was under charter of this Mother Lodge of Marseilles that the Lodge "Polar Star" was formed in 1794, in the City of New Orleans, (Louisiana then being a French Colony). The brethren of this and other Lodges afterwards chartered from France, were erected into a Grand Consistory of Princess of the Royal Secret with control of all the lower degrees, including the three Symbolic degrees; the right of the Grand Consistory to exercise this control over the Symbolic Grades was recognized by the newly established Grand Lodge of the State by a Degree on June 8th. 1833, establishing within her bosom a Scottish Symbolic Chamber, and requesting the Grand Consistory to "divest itself of the right of constituting Scottish Lodges, and to transfer the same to the said chamber." The Scottish Lodges continued to be thus governed until the 5th of March 1850, when the Grand Lodge notified the Supreme Council of Louisiana

1 Universal Freemason, I, pp. 8 ff. (Copied exactly.)
(the Grand Consistory had been erected into a Supreme Council in 1839), "that henceforth she would not administer or constitute any other Lodge but those professing exclusively the York Rite."

In consequence of this the Scottish Lodges returned to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Council to which they have since belonged.

We will now trace the succession of Sup. Com. from the establishment of the Supreme Council in 1839 (for an account of which, as for the foregoing, relating to Louisiana, see Folger's History of the Scottish Rite), until the organization of the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana, by its authority, in 1907.

The founder and first Sovereign Grand Commander was the illustrious brother Onazio de Santangelo, from October 27th, 1839, succeeded by Jean Jacques Conti, January 29, 1842; J. F. Canonge, September 20, 1845; James Foulhouze, January 31st, 1848; Chas. Chiborne, January 7, 1854; J. J. Massicot, October 7th, 1856; James Foulhouze, (second term), . . . Jos. N. Cheri, (second term) February 23d, 1894; Ill. Bro. Cheri was still S. G. Commander of the S. C. in 1906, when authority was granted the writer under the Grand Seal of the S. C. to establish lodges of the Scottish Rite Symbolic in the State of Idaho, the consequence was the organization of the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana on the 9th day of January, 1907, and it in turn was the founder of the A. M. F."

On the 21st day of September, 1907, articles of incorporation of the American Masonic Federation were filed in the office of the Secretary of the State of Idaho. These articles were prepared under the statute of Idaho permitting corporations to be organized not for pecuniary profit. The preamble of the articles states:

"Therefore, this Association of the American Masonic Federation is organized for the express purpose of establishing Lodges of, and practicing the Rites, Ceremonies, Usages and Customs of 'The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Free Masons,' as generally practiced in Europe and America at the present time. The specific Masonic authority vested in the Association derived from and founded upon 'The Scottish Rite' of Freemasonry."
Article II provides, in part, as follows:

"The purpose for which this corporation is formed, and its chief objects and business, shall be to dispense charity to its members, to promote Harmony, Peace and Brotherly Love between Free Masons, to conduct Masonic Work, to transmit the authority to confer Masonic degrees and to confer the same, to establish, govern, and control Symbolic Masonic Lodges in locations where no Grand Lodge of the A. A. S. Rite exists, pending such time as when three or more lodges shall apply for and be granted the right to establish a Grand Lodge and the officers thereof shall be duly elected and qualified."

Immediately upon the formation of the American Masonic Federation, Thomson and his associates, Robert S. Spence, and Hebert P. Jefferson, issued a pompous proclamation to the world which sets forth the purposes and aims of the American Masonic Federation, and is as follows (copied exactly):

"T.'.T.'.G.'.O.'.T.'.G.'.A.'.'.O.'.'.T.'.'.U.'.' To the Sovereign Powers Governing Universal Masonry Throughout the World, Greeting:

Worshipful, Venerable and Very Dear BB:—In informing you, officially, of the organization of the AMERICAN MASONIC FEDERATION, A.'.'A.'.'S.'.'R.'.' we are but performing an ordinary Masonic duty, but the bare performance of that duty, without an explanation, would be very unsatisfactory. We, therefore, in a brief way, place you in possession of facts, which formed the foundation for our action.

As you are no doubt aware the "York Rite" has been in Masonic control of the United States of America since shortly after the attainment of her independence. Exercising this control has led to the most flagrant acts of tyranny and despotism, and so intolerant has it become, that Universal Masonry is practically unknown, or at least unrecognized. BB. from foreign countries, or even adjacent territories, have failed to receive recognition, and if perchance they have been permitted to pass the tyler, it has been through sufferance and not right. Admittance is more often denied than granted, no matter how bright the applicant may be, nor what credentials he carried. In adversity he is refused
MATTHEW McBLAIN THOMSON.
Taken from *The Universal Freemason*. 

Digitized by Google
Masonic aid, and at death he is denied Masonic burial. A Brother hailing from the Grand Orient of France or Spain, is denied admission to a "York Rite" Lodge. But few lodges open their doors to the Grand Lodge of France, and fewer still to the Grand Orient of Italy. So it is with nearly all European and South American Masonic powers, who practice the Scottish Rite, they are classed as irregular and their members generally denied admittance to the Lodges, while in some instances they are admitted in one state and denied in others. In every "York Rite" lodge a race test is applied and in some states a religious one.

Confronted by these conditions and in view of the fact that a careful estimate, places non-affiliated Masons, in the United States at 300,000, a very great many of whom stand well in the countries where they were made, and in view of the fact that these BB. had to either forego entirely all of the fraternal associations so hardly gained and so highly prized, or seek authority from other sources, we sprang into being. The Grand Lodges of Hamburg and Roumania, and the Grand Orients of France and Spain, at different times, granted charters to work in the United States. The Lodges thus organized, were branded by the "York Rite" as clandestine and irregular, and refused to recognize their members as Masons, and BB. working under separate constitutions, though of the "York Rite" were equally ostracised. Unable to effectively withstand the determined opposition of their Masonic enemies, they deemed it advisable to form a National organization, which, by the presentation of a united front and a determined effort, they might win for their beloved Rite the same consideration accorded it in all other countries of the world. Through these conditions there was born into the family of "Universal Masonry" THE AMERICAN MASONIC FEDERATION, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, "Symbolic," all possible care having been taken that it should be both Masonically and civilly legal.

And, now, BB. having explained to you our position, our aims and objects, and the difficulties and opposition with which we have to contend, we appeal to you for aid and assistance in our struggle for right and justice against tyranny and oppression, and in our efforts to spread the benign and elevating teachings of "Universal Masonry." This you can best do by granting us Fraternal recognition and exchanging representatives with us. This will strength-
en us by encouragement to our friends and discouragement to the enemies of "Universal Masonry."

Trusting that due and careful consideration will be given us in this regard, and our desires granted, we salute you B.ʼ.T.ʼ.N.ʼ.K.ʼ.T.ʼ.T.ʼ.E.ʼ.O.ʼ. and extend to you the Fraternal embrace, in behalf of the AMERICAN MASONIC FEDERATION.


The foregoing stilted and bombastic proclamation was sent broadcast through the mails to Grand Masonic Bodies everywhere. In most cases, without a doubt, the proclamation was promptly consigned to the waste-basket and forgotten. In some instances, however, it was sufficient to induce correspondence with Thomson and led to affiliation between his bodies and other clandestine Masonic institutions throughout the world.

Thomson's tedious account of the formation of the American Masonic Federation is here preserved for the reason that it presents all that is known of the beginning of this fraud scheme. At once a number of pointed questions occur to the Masonic student. Thomson says that he was given authority by the Supreme Council of Louisiana on the 14th day of September, 1906, to organize the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana. He does not say what was the form of this authority or what was its nature. It will be observed that the charter, pursuant to which Grand Lodge Inter-Montana was formed, is not signed by Cheri, or by the Supreme Council of Louisiana, but by "M. McB. Thomson, Repre-

sentative of the G. C. of Louisiana." Nowhere does Thom-
son print a list of the Blue Lodges or members who com-
posed Grand Lodge Inter-Montana. This is perhaps the
first instance in Masonic history where a full-grown Grand
Lodge has been created by authority of some other sovereign
body without such Grand Lodge having had, prior to that
time, any known subordinate Blue Lodges. Thomson states
that the Grand Lodge of Illinois, A. F. & A. M., Inc.,\(^1\) applied
for and was admitted to membership on March 30, 1907,
and that five lodges in the City of Boston, working the Rite
of Memphis, took the oath fidelí on April 5, 1907. The
addition of this Memphis touch doubtless appealed strongly
to the poor wights who had combined with Thomson in the
queer organization.

It is hard to conceive just what Goode, who was called to
Thomson's aid, could contribute to this Masonic hodge-
podge. He is the same man who obligingly endorsed Thom-
son's patent in the following language:

"Recognized by me October 23, 1906 E. V.
Harry Goode 33d Degree Supreme Council, Spain."

No one knows what force this was supposed to lend to
Thomson's patent. Goode was head of certain irregular
Spanish lodges in Pennsylvania, and after his death Thom-
son denounced these lodges as irregular and clandestine.\(^2\)

It will surely amuse all students of Masonic Jurisprudence
to read the "deed of transfer" from the Grand Lodge Inter-
Montana to the Supreme Lodge of the American Masonic
Federation. By showing the Masonic world the means by
which a sovereign grand Masonic body can transfer all its
powers and prerogatives to another sovereign body, Thom-
son has rendered an unprecedented service. Until this deed
of transfer was executed, it is certain that no one having
even the faintest knowledge of Masonic Jurisprudence,

\(^1\) This was a clandestine body, not the regular Grand Lodge of Ill. Proceedings have
been begun recently by the Attorney General of Illinois to annul its charter.

\(^2\) *Universal Freemason*, XI, p. 964; See, also, XIII, p. 104.
THE THOMSON MASONIC FRAUD

would have thought it legal for one sovereign body to deed its authority to another. Seriously, as all Masons know, this deed of transfer was absolutely worthless; and, assuming the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana had any powers, no transfer of any Masonic rights was effected by the delivery of this deed.

Notwithstanding the granting of all of its Masonic powers to the American Masonic Federation, the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana continued to exist and to have its part in Thomson’s scheme. Thus, in January, 1909, a year and a half after the delivery of this strange deed, Thomson speaks of himself as “M. W. G. Master of the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana.”¹ Nowhere is any explanation given of the process by which the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana was resuscitated after the transfer of all its powers.

Thomson has stated that it was to fortify themselves against legal attack that he and his associates had recourse to incorporation. As will be seen hereafter, incorporation was not the perfect shield of defense which Thomson thought it would prove to be. Thomson stated in the Articles of Incorporation that the object of the corporation was “... to dispense Charity to its members, to promote Harmony, Peace, and Brotherly Love between Free Masons, to continue Masonic Work, to transmit the authority to confer Masonic degrees and to confer the same, ...” These lofty sentiments must have duly impressed the associates of Thomson in the founding of the American Masonic Federation, but it seems a little strange that they should have been so completely overlooked during the subsequent history of the institution.

With the certificate of the Secretary of State of Idaho creating the American Masonic Federation a corporation in his possession, as well as the endorsements of J. N. Cheri and Harry Goode on his patent, not to mention his documents from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, Thomson must

¹ Universal Freemason I, pp. 124 and 157.
have felt thoroughly equipped to begin his campaign for Blue Lodge Masons. Before telling about the steps taken by him to bring the sheep into the fold, however, it may be well to explain briefly the origin of his authority to confer so-called High Masonic Degrees.

Thomson stated again and again that his authority to confer High Degrees came from the Early Grand Chapter, Early Grand Encampment and Grand Council of Rites of Scotland. This last institution, according to Thomson, dates from time immemorial. It cannot be better described than in this language taken from the preface to the Grand Council laws, repeated in Thomson’s magazine, namely:

"The Scottish Grand Council of Rites occupies a unique position among Masonic high grade bodies, claiming as it does to be self-existing, the parent of many, the offspring of none. It is the custodian and preserver of those legendary and philosophical degrees so dear to bygone generations of earnest and enthusiastic Masons, though little known to their present day successors, if we except the noble and zealous band of Masonic students who prize knowledge more than ribbons and jewels. It embraces within its bosom all Rites and Systems, which have in course of time been grafted on, or gathered around the parent stem of Scottish Masonry, excepting always the Craft, Royal Arch, and Knight Templar degrees, controlled by Grand Lodges, Supreme Grand Chapter, and Grand Encampment, and which by its constitution it acknowledges to be the property of these grand bodies, and with which it has neither right nor inclination to interfere. . . .

"The work of the Grand Council has always been conducted quietly and without ostentation or parade, and so little has been known concerning it, except by Masonic Students, that Rites and degrees which it has controlled from time immemorial have been introduced into Scotland as unoccupied territory. In consequence of such acts as these the Grand Council has resolved to assert itself, and in self-defence to put its claims as the only native Scottish high grade body before the Masonic world.

"The Grand Council controls all rites and degrees not controlled by the Grand Lodges, Supreme Grand Royal Arch
Chapter, and Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta. The Grand Council is a member of the Imperial Confederation of Rites of the World, of which J. Henri Pessina, 33, 90, 97, is Sovereign Grand Master, and is in relations of amity with the Grand Councils of America, Canada, Canary Isles, France, India, Italy, Romania and Spain.”

“The first charter granted by the Grand Council to work outside of Scotland,” according to Thomson, “was granted to Fraters in the Valley of Montpelier, Idaho, under the name Jacques DeMolay Council of Kadosh Number 21. The date of the charter is April 20, 1900. The next year another Charter was granted, also for Idaho, under the title of “Universal Council A.” With these two councils Thomson, by virtue of his patent dated April 20, 1898, formed the Federated Supreme Council. At a meeting of the Grand Council held in Glasgow, Scotland, April 23d, 1907, the Grand Council recognized the Federated Supreme Council.

In January, 1909, finding Montpelier too small for his purposes, Thomson moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. On January 3, 1912, five years after the incorporation of the American Masonic Federation, the Confederated Supreme Council of the American Masonic Federation was incorporated under the laws of the State of Utah.

Thomson described this institution as “a corporation within a corporation.” The articles themselves say that the incorporation is to form a part of the American Masonic Federation and that the new society is

“for the purpose of uniting in fraternal association worthy members of the Masonic Order and to labor according to the general by-laws to be adopted by the organization, for the mutual improvement and advancement of its members, and to combat vice, ignorance and intolerance, in all its forms and by teaching and practicing the true principles.

---

1 Universal Freemason, V, 158 (June, 1913).
2 It will be recalled that it was the formation of this body that led to Thomson’s split with the Grand Lodge of Idaho.
of Universal Masonry, and especially as it is exemplified in the advanced degrees of the system, and to that end, to organize and conduct throughout the United States of America and elsewhere as may be deemed advisable, Lodges, Chapters, Encampments, Areopagi, Temples, Consistories and other bodies necessary for exemplifying said degrees, as a member of the Confederation of Scottish Rite Bodies of the world, of which the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland is the head. . . .”

The famous patent which Thomson carried with him when he left Scotland in 1898 is, as will be seen from an inspection of the facsimile, a plain and crude instrument compared with the ornate and elaborate charters and diplomas afterwards issued by Thomson and his associates, some of which are shown in this book. It will be observed that this patent purported to give Thomson authority and power

“. . . to confer upon any Worthy Mason any degree recognized and wrought under our Grand Council and to establish Councils, Conclaves or Tabernacles for working the same in any Country where there is not already a Grand Body working such degrees. . . .”

This patent does not mention the Scottish Rite or any other specific Rite supposed to be controlled by the Grand Council of Rites. It authorized Thomson to confer degrees upon “any Worthy Mason” or, in other words, upon any Master Mason. The patent says nothing whatever about authority to confer Symbolic Degrees; hence, the authority given to Thomson related only to the Higher Degrees of Masonry. If that is so, the question very naturally arises as to what possible extension of the powers of this patent can be drawn from the endorsement of Cheri and the recognition of Harry Goode. If Cheri merely endorsed the purposes of the patent, he certainly did not increase the authority given by it. Had Cheri intended to give Thomson authority to confer the Craft Degrees generally throughout

---

1 Transcript, p. 241f.
the United States, he certainly would not have written in his letter of July 16, 1906, the following sentences:

“As far as the request of the brethren to have an A. A. S. R. Grand Lodge in order to work the three symbolic degrees I think highly of such idea and believe it will be beneficial to Scotch Rite Masonry; it does not interfere with the York Rite in no way, but to the contrary it gives a better access to both in friendly relationship. I am very glad of such occurrence and now sir; I am ready to obtain from the Gr. Council of Rites such authority to expend the symbolic degrees in all the neighboring states of Louisiana and territories and dependencies, at any time of her readiness.”

It is perfectly evident from this letter that Cheri thought he was going to get authority from the Grand Council of Rites to confer the Symbolic Degrees beyond the limits of Louisiana, and not that he was going to confer such power and authority on Thomson. The importance of carefully considering the language of this patent will be at once apparent as soon as consideration is given to the representations made by Thomson concerning his authority.

It will also be observed by a careful reading of this patent that it only gave Thomson authority and power “to establish Councils, Conclaves or Tabernacles” for working the degrees of the Grand Council of Rites “in any country where there is not already a Grand Body working such degrees. . . .” By the express language of the patent, Thomson had authority to work these degrees of the Grand Council of Rites only in unoccupied Masonic territory. If there were Scottish Rite, Royal Arch, Templar, or other genuine Masonic grand bodies already in the territory where Thomson set up his institution, obviously, he would find himself without power under this patent. Nevertheless, he went ahead and, basing all his right and power on this document, undertook to confer supposedly legitimate High

---

1 Transcript, p. 671. (Italics are mine.)
Masonic Degrees, especially of the A. A. S. R., on thousands of men in this country within the jurisdictions of old and thoroughly established Masonic organizations.

Thomson more than once called attention to the Masonic eminence of "Colonel Peter Spence, V. D. 33d Degree, xlvi, 95th Degree, 96th Degree," who signed Thomson's patent. In the Proceedings of the Sup. Council Sov. Grand Ins. General 33d Degree, Scottish Grand Council of Rites, printed in 1910, by M. and W. Walker, Newmilns, Ayershire, Scotland, appears the following account of Spence:

"Peter Spence was born in Airdrie, Lanarkshire, on 3rd January, 1847. He had the happy experience of being introduced to Freemasonry by his father when he was only nineteen years of age; his brother, William, and he being initiated in Lodge New Monkland, Montrose, No. 88, in the year 1866. From the day of his initiation he became an enthusiast. He was early in office, and in 1883, he was appointed R. W. M. of his Mother Lodge, which post he occupied for three years; and he has since been Depute Master. He was the last commissioned Provincial Grand Junior Warden, and the first elective in the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Middle Ward of Lanarkshire; the second elective Grand Senior Warden; Past Sub. Provincial Grand Master; and this year Depute Provincial Grand Master. He is Proxy Master of Lodge Strathendrick, No. 780, and a member of Grand Committee of Grand Lodge of Scotland. He was exalted a Royal Arch Mason in 1886 in New Monkland Chapter, 201, and a number of the positions he occupies in this department of Masonry are the following: Proxy Z for Chapter 251, Loudoun, Newmilns, E. G. 6; Deputy Provincial Grand Superintendent for Mid Lanark; Member of Supreme Committee; and Grand Chancellor in Supreme Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. He is a member of the Rosicrucian College, Glasgow; and a Past Grand Master of the Temple and Malta in Scotland. And now to finish off the grand list of important offices which he has filled and is still filling, we give those in connection with the Scottish Grand Council of Rites, which are of more immediate interest to our readers—M. Ill. Sov. Grand Master, xlvi Degree, Scottish Grand Council of Rites; M. Ill.
Sov. Grand Commander, Supreme Council Sov. Grand Inspectors Gen., 33 Degree, and as such head of all the rites and degrees controlled by the Scottish Grand Council of Rites.

"It will now be our duty and pleasant task to give the B. B. a brief account of our illustrious Grand Master's connection with the Volunteer movement in Scotland. He joined the 2nd-48th Corps Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers (Airdrie) at its formation in 1863. He was gazetted Sub-Lieutenant on 12th September, 1873, and Lieutenant on 12th September, 1873. Having passed his examination for a proficiency certificate in 1874, he has the letter 'P' affixed to his name in the Army List. He was present with 'D' Company at the Royal Review in Edinburgh on 25th August, 1881. He was appointed Captain in 1883, Hon. Major in 1886, and Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel in 1896. Having total commissioned service for thirty-three years, eleven months, and sixteen days, he received the Volunteer Decoration in the City Hall, Glasgow, in 1892, on the first issue. For six years he performed the duties of Acting Adjutant in the absence of the Regimental Adjutant; and he was Captain of the Regimental Rifle Association for a time. He was a member of the Regimental Shooting Team, and he won many prizes in regimental competitions, and also at Wimbledon and Bisley—in 1899, tying for first place in the St. George's competition, and gaining third prize. Although retired, he takes a keen interest in the great territorial scheme of the country. It is worthy of mention that, of his three sons, the eldest and youngest have followed their father's footsteps in their strong devotion to their country. John Spence, the eldest, served as a member of Lovat's Scouts during the Boer War, and gained the S. A. Medal and five bars. Matthew S. Spence, the youngest, is an ardent member of the Territorial Army, and is Captain of the 1st Lowland Field Co. Royal Engineers.

"Although so busily engaged with his Masonic and Military duties, Colonel Spence found some time to devote to civic and social work. For a period of twelve years he served in Airdrie Town Council, and during that time he filled, besides other offices, the positions of Bailie and Dean of Guild.

"As a sportsman, he is devoted to the gun, and has for many years gained both health and pleasure on the hills
and moors of Shotts Parish. Like a true Scotsman, he is also a keen curler.

"In business he has been successful as a Brass Founder, Plumber, Heating, Sanitary, and Electrical Engineer. He succeeded to his father's business in the company with his brother, and has since, with the able co-operation of his three sons, so developed the business that it is known not only throughout the entire County of Lanark, but over Greater Britain."

It is true that Peter Spence was made a Mason in a regular Blue Lodge in Scotland, and was at one time identified with the Early Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta and the Grand Council of Rites. He was elected head of the two bodies in 1891 and held office until 1898. He remained head of the Grand Council of Rites until after the amalgamation of the Templar bodies in Scotland, which will be hereafter explained. Recently he said to John A. Forrest, member of Grand Lodge of Scotland:

"I left the Council of Rites when it came to my knowledge that McBlain Thomson and Robert Jamieson were prostituting Freemasonry for their own ends. Everything was right up to the amalgamation. There were ballot sheets and everything was well. I resigned in 1911. After that I had nothing to do with it and know nothing of it. I worked out the thing and thought the money was disappearing. Jamieson was at that time Recorder and everything else. William Young was nominally Treasurer. I was succeeded as Sovereign Grand Commander by William Young, an engine tender in Newmilns, a decent old chap under Jamieson's thumb.

"I was also shaken by the Darius Wilson scandal. He was the Grand Commander for the S. C. of America."

Colonel Spence is now an active member of Grand Lodge of Scotland—a member of Grand Committee of Grand Lodge, and is much respected.1

---

1I am indebted for this information to John A. Forrest, Esq., Member of Grand Committee of Grand Lodge of Scotland, who came to Salt Lake City at the time of Thomson's trial.
At the trial of Jamieson in the Supreme Court in Scotland, in a case which will be hereafter explained, Spence characterized the Scottish Grand Council of Rites as "working and concerned with spurious degrees in Scotland," and as "that irregular and spurious body."

The truth is Spence knew that unless he withdrew from Thomson's spurious bodies, he would be expelled from Freemasonry by Grand Lodge of Scotland. He is now a very old man, and greatly regrets his connection with Thomson and his fraudulent enterprises. Thomson has never told in this country of the recantation of Spence, the signer of his patent.

In the same Proceedings of the Supreme Council, Thomson gives this flattering account of Robert Jamieson. Inasmuch as Jamieson was Thomson's confederate in Scotland and signed several thousand worthless diplomas and charters now scattered from one end of this country to the other, in his several capacities as Recorder of the Temple, Shrine, Scottish Rite, etc., it may be well to print this description in full:

"Bro. Robert Jamieson, who has for the past twenty years enthusiastically devoted himself to Masonry, first saw the light in Lodge St. Marnock, No. 109, Kilmarnock, and immediately he was made a Master Mason he was appointed to the office of Inner Guard. At the first election thereafter he was appointed Secretary, and the same year he was advanced to the Royal Arch and Knight Templar degrees in Hurlford Chapter and Encampment. A field for his energies presented itself in Kilmarnock at this time, and he set himself to the task with great diligence. Moira Union Royal Arch Chapter and Moira Union Knight Templar Encampment had both been for a time in a state of inactivity, and his strong desire was to see them in a strong and healthy condition. This he successfully accomplished, and in succession he filled the offices of Scribe E. and Recorder, Third Principal, Second Principal, and First Principal in

1 This information supplied by Joseph Inglis, Esq., Member of Grand Committee of Grand Lodge of Scotland, who testified at the trial of Thomson, et al., at Salt Lake City.
the Chapter, and in the Encampment the high office of Eminent Commander. He was meanwhile actively engaged in his Mother Lodge, filling the principal offices in turn, and during his reign as R. W. M. in 1900-1901 he gained the honour of having the highest number of Candidates ever presented to the Lodge in one year. This year he is Depute Master. Among other offices which Bro. Jamieson has filled may be mentioned that of Grand Scribe E. for the Province of Ayrshire, and Foreign Correspondent and Grand Recorder of the Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta in Scotland. In 1898, on the departure of M. Ill. Bro. Matthew McB. Thomson, 33, to America, he was elected Grand Secy. Gen. of H. E., 33, and Grand Keeper of Records to the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, and also elected a member of the Triplite Council of Grand Council."

"Bro. Jamieson finds an outlet for his energies in other fields of usefulness. He is at present Convenor of the Fourth Ward of the town of Kilmarnock, a Director of Kilmarnock Infirmary and Fever Hospital, a Delegate to the City of Glasgow Life Insurance Society, Treasurer to a local Sick and Accident Society, etc.

"In the field of sport, Bro. Jamieson likewise displays his well-known enthusiasm. Kilmarnock Football, Cricket, and Curling clubs all claim his attention, and in recent times he has become an ardent whacker of the wee gutty ba'."

Jamieson is in truth a timekeeper for a firm of engineers in Kilmarnock—Messrs. A. Barclay, Sons & Co., Ltd. At one time a Mason in Scotland told Jamieson that his activities in spurious Masonry would ruin him, to which Jamieson promptly replied, "I have got nothing so they can't take it." He is a man of no standing whatever in Scotland in business or Masonry, and is there regarded as the tool of Thomson.¹

During his long career of fraud in this country, Thomson was associated with many men of fair ability. The first of these was Dr. H. P. Jefferson of Boston. This is the man who brought to Thomson's banners the five lodges practic-

¹ The true facts about Jamieson were supplied by Messrs. Reid, Inglis and Forrest.
ing the Rite of Memphis in Boston. It was not long, however, before Jefferson and Thomson disagreed, whereupon Thomson promptly expelled his confederate. Jefferson is now dead.

Sometime prior to 1908, Robert S. Spence became associated with Thomson in his Masonic impostures. Spence had at one time known Thomson at Montpelier, Idaho. During the early history of the American Masonic Federation, Thomson had his headquarters at Montpelier, Idaho, and Robert S. Spence, Secretary of the organization, had his office at Evanston, Wyoming, where he was practicing law. Spence followed Thomson to Salt Lake City, and for many years these two men combined their talents in furthering Thomson's Masonic fraud schemes. A large amount of the literature distributed by Thomson was actually written by Spence. He it was, no doubt, who was responsible for the incorporating of both the American Masonic Federation and the Confederated Supreme Councils of the American Masonic Federation. He was loaded down with titles and distinctions by Thomson, and was unquestionably the ablest man who ever lent himself to Thomson's activities. Spence is also dead.

Thomas Perrot, who was for a long time Thomson's Secretary, and who was indicted and tried with Thomson, was active for many years in the American Masonic Federation. He joined Thomson's organization in the state of Washington. He there became an organizer for Thomson and was successful in selling many fake degrees in the Northwest. In September, 1916, he was elected Secretary General of the American Masonic Federation, to take the place of Robert S. Spence, who declined a renomination on account of ill health. After October, 1916, Perrot was one of the editors of The Universal Freemason.1

Perrot lived for many years in the city of Seattle. Men who have gone there to look up his record say that he

1 *Universal Freemason*, IX, pp. 541 and 551.
THOMAS FERROT.
Taken from The Universal Freemason.
attempted to work in the city as a bartender, and lives in the memory of old acquaintances there as a lover of pre-Volstead drinks.

Dominic Bergera, the Treasurer General of the American Masonic Federation during the period of its greatest activity, was formerly a saloon-keeper in Diamondville, Wyoming. In 1908, he went to Helper, a town with a large foreign population, situated in the heart of the coal-mining district of Utah, and there opened a saloon. At Helper, he organized the first of Thomson’s fraudulent Masonic lodges in the state of Utah. It is said that the organization took place in Bergera’s saloon. In October, 1913, he was elected Senior Grand Warden of the Supreme Grand Lodge of the American Masonic Federation, and in September, 1916, he became Treasurer General.¹

Thomson, at the time of the incorporation of the American Masonic Federation, had had experiences permitted in the course of events to few men. Made a Mason in Scotland, he had been the Worshipful Master of a regular Blue Lodge there, and as such, a member of the Grand Lodge of Scotland; he had also been a member in good standing of a regular American Blue Lodge in the State of Idaho, and had held an appointment as Grand Orator of the Grand Lodge of Idaho. Before coming to this country he had received the Capitular Degrees and had been an officer of the Early Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland; after the union in 1895 of the Early Grand Chapter with the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter, he had been a member of Royal Arch Chapter 250 (Early Grand No. 3), on the roll of the regular Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. He had received the Templar Degrees in the Early Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta in Scotland, which, in 1909, united with the Great Priory of Scotland, today the sovereign body in Scottish Templar Masonry, and had been, at one time, Grand Master of the Early Grand Encampment.

¹ Universal Freemason, I, p. 57; V, p. 15; VI, p. 73.
Thus, Thomson had for years been a member of regular Masonic Craft Lodges on both sides of the Atlantic and had enjoyed membership in Royal Arch and Templar Bodies in Scotland of unquestioned regularity.

Furthermore, long prior to his journey to America, he had been the Sovereign Grand Commander of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, a full-sounding title, whatever may be said of the institution, and he had been editor of "Scottish Freemason," a short-lived Masonic sheet of the scissors and paste variety, but, none the less, an actual publication.

Surely here was a man of true Masonic eminence and knowledge; his followers must have thought that if anyone in America could speak fully and accurately of Masonry in Scotland, he was the man. It was unthinkable that the friend of the careful Hughan and world renowned Gould could speak fictions. Thomson, himself, had no mean conception of his own ability. No man with independent ideas or a questioning mind could long associate with him on amicable terms; he was the arch charlatan of the group and he brooked no rivals. It was due to his knowledge of Masonic history and legends that the American Masonic Federation and the Confederated Supreme Council of the American Masonic Federation had been formed. Vain, egotistical, and loquacious, he was the guiding-spirit of the whole shady business. Without difficulty he was able to convince his victims that all of his representations were true, and all his wares genuine. He had that gift of persuasive utterance common to all swindlers and impostors. His dupes listened in wide-eyed wonderment to his tales of mystery and legend, drawn from almost a score of Rites.

In all his two decades of propaganda Thomson never found an aid who could do the business of peddling degrees as well as he could himself. To some of his followers he was an idol. Robert S. Spence, his Secretary and co-editor of his magazine, thus wrote of him in 1914:
THOMSON'S SCHEME

"Matthew McBlain Thomson is, without fear of contradiction, the brightest Mason in the United States; I put this forth as a challenge to any Masonic wiseacre who desires to take issue with the statement."1

Thomson's publications hardly justify this bold and extravagant statement. Granting that Thomson had some familiarity with Masonic writings, he was far too unscrupulous to be anything of a scholar. A close examination of the literature disseminated by him will at once place him not with celebrated Masonic scholars but with notorious Masonic impostors.

1 Universal Freemason, VI p. 266.
his victims that his Masonry was as good as that of the American Grand Lodges, his propaganda would have fallen flat. He took from the first the brazenly impudent stand that all the American Grand Lodges were clandestine and irregular. In his pamphlet *Who Is Who in Masonry and Why I am a Scottish Rite Mason*, he traces the titles of the several American Grand Lodges. He says that Freemasonry was introduced originally into this country as early as 1730 by the Grand Lodge of Ancients and Moderns of England, the Grand Lodge of Scotland, Mother Kilwinning of Scotland, and the Grand Lodge of Ireland. Then follows this statement:

"On the 8th day of March, 1777, eleven Masons, in violation of their solemn Masonic obligations, there and then broke away from the regular order of Masonry and became a Self-Constituted Grand Lodge for the State of Massachusetts, and this without the shadow of Masonic authority, and contrary to the usages of Masonry, consequently they became an irregular and clandestine organization."

Thomson goes on to say that the other twelve states, in a similar manner, organized themselves into self-constituted Grand Lodges and that

"... as a consequence thereof, they are forever barred from claiming any connection with regular Masonry from the dates of their insubordination to the Masonic authorities to which they had sworn allegiance.

From these thirteen Self-Constituted Grand Lodges all the Local Masonry of the United States has originated.

At the outset we may say that not a single Grand Lodge of the Locals of the United States can produce a Masonic Charter from any source of Masonry authorizing them to form a Grand Lodge; that all the authority which they possess Masonically is but that which they have assumed. It may be observed by any student of Masonry that, while organized in violation of the laws of Masonry, many of them have been organized contrary even to the laws they themselves have promulgated."
In the same pamphlet (p. 6) Thomson says:

"Thus it was that the thirteen original States from time to time renounced their original authority and became Self-Constituted, thus being Clandestine and irregular in every sense of the word, and from such sources all the other State Grand Lodges of so-called York, State, Modern or Card Masons have had their origin. We think that enough has been said to give any intelligent man an idea of the situation."

He finally disposes of the American Grand Lodges in the following language:

"An unbiased and full investigation into the methods in which these so-called Grand Lodges were formed will readily disclose to the reader just how irregularly they have been formed, and withal, they one and all prate considerably about regularity, and claim all other organizations of Craft Masonry to be irregular, when, as a matter of fact and of history, the shoe is on the other foot."1

In August, 1911, Thomson wrote a letter to the editor of The Tyler Keystone, in which he undertook to explain the source of his authority. In the course of this letter he said:

"We do not claim that the 'American Grand Lodges,' meaning those of the 'York Rite' are not Masonic only that they are 'irregular' inasmuch as they are local instead of being Universal, and that they have broken the Covenants and forsaken the Landmarks of Masonry; and further that they are self created and in consequence devoid of any real authority."2

Thomson has always contended that to be lawfully constituted a Grand Lodge must have authority from some other body. If a charter of authority from some other Grand Lodge is a prerequisite to regularity, then, indeed, there are few regular Grand Lodges in the world. It is plain that

1 Who is Who in Masonry, p. 7.
2 Universal Freemason IV, p. 46. See also the Universal Freemason I, p. 11, and VI, p. 266.
Grand Lodges are constituted in no such way. The authority upon which a Grand Lodge is predicated comes from below and not from above. The three Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland, which all authors concede are regular, were organized by the subordinate or Blue Lodges forming a sort of federation. It is sometimes said that three or more legitimate Blue Lodges, in territory not already occupied by a regular Grand Lodge, can meet, declare their independence and create a Grand Lodge. Honorable Charles T. Granger, one time Justice of the Supreme Court of Iowa, in a report to the Grand Lodge of Iowa in 1911, said:

"We may state, as an axiom of Symbolic Law, that Symbolic Masonry, in its organizations and workings is a law unto itself, in that it looks to no higher or foreign fraternal source for authority, sanction, or guidance, but is the creative power within itself of all needful agencies, and to this end the Subordinate Lodge is the primal source of authority and the only source from which can spring a legitimate Grand Lodge, and hence the legitimacy of the Grand Lodge as to the Grand Lodge depends, in the first instance, on the legitimacy of the Lodges that gave it birth, and, of course, in addition thereto, it must meet the limitations and requirements of the ancient landmarks of the Order."

A splendid illustration of this doctrine is the case of the formation of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1786, and its prompt recognition by the Grand Lodge of England. In 1786 the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania passed a resolution declaring its independence of all authority and a letter announcing this action was sent to the Grand Lodge of England. The latter promptly replied that it recognized the new Grand Lodge and in the letter made the following memorable statement:

"... Here we must beg leave to state that we conceive that in constituting the Grand Lodge we necessarily communicated to it the same independent Sovereign Masonic authority within your jurisdiction which we ourselves possess in ours, amenable to no superior jurisdiction under
The principle that a Grand Lodge is self-constituted has always been recognized by the Grand Lodge of England. The cases of the Grand Lodge of Canada and of South Australia are pertinent illustrations. In each case the Grand Lodge first declared its independence and then was recognized by the Grand Lodge of England. Full account of these matters appears in the *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of England*. Indeed, to provide a method by which Provincial Grand Lodges, still loyal to the Grand Lodge of England, might in due season lawfully become Grand Lodges, the Grand Lodge of England in 1897 amended its *Book of Constitutions* so as to provide a means for the declaration of independence of the new Grand Lodge and recognition by the old Grand Lodge. Thus, the steps taken by the American Grand Lodges during Colonial days have become the written law of the oldest Grand Lodge in the world.

Of course, Thomson’s victims were unable to make answer to his specious reasoning regarding the American Grand Lodges. After Thomson had disposed in this way of the standing and legitimacy of the American Grand Lodges, he turned his attention to the title of the American Masonic Federation. In his little pamphlet, *Who Is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason*, he presents a chain of title by means of which he connects the American Masonic Federation with Mother Kilwinning No. 0, generally conceded to be the oldest lodge of Masons in the world. At one time Mother Kilwinning granted charters to other subordinate lodges. She was the only Symbolic lodge in Scotland which ever exercised this prerogative. Thomson claimed that in the year 1743, the Earl of Kilmarnock, who, his story runs, was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of

---

1 Independence Celebration, 1786-1911, Memorial Volume, p. 57.
2 I am indebted to J. Inglis, Esq., member of both the Grand Lodges of England and Scotland, and to David Reid, for this interesting information.
Scotland and also of Mother Kilwinning, chartered the Grand Mother Lodge of St. John at Marseilles, France. In the year 1794, Thomson states, Mother Lodge St. John at Marseilles granted a charter to Polar Star Lodge in New Orleans, Louisiana. In time Polar Star Lodge came under the control of the Supreme Council of Louisiana which had been established in 1839 by the Marquis de Sant Angelo; and in 1906, J. N. Cheri, Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, granted a "Charter of authority" to Thomson, by virtue of which Thomson gave a charter to the Grand Lodge of Inter-Montana. Thereafter, on August 31, 1907, the Supreme Lodge in the American Masonic Federation was formed and received its charter from the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana. On the 21st day of September, 1907, the American Masonic Federation was incorporated. "This is our chain of title," proudly proclaims Thomson.¹

Thomson carefully prepared diagrams and charts to illustrate his story of the migration of the only genuine Scottish Rite Symbolic Masonry from Mother Kilwinning to the American Masonic Federation. Thomson's little pamphlet (at page 9) contained a picture entitled "Craft Tree of Scottish Free Masonry," which is shown on the opposite page. Upon careful inspection the deceptive character of this tree will be at once apparent.

Throughout the entire career of the American Masonic Federation, Thomson made oral and written representations to the effect that he had received authority to confer the Craft Degrees from the Supreme Council of Louisiana. In the very first number of The Universal Freemason, published in June, 1908, Thomson says:

"Masonry throughout the world is united into one family, with the sole exception of the adherents of the State Grand Lodges in the United States of America. With this end in view, and to carry out its purposes, the founders of the American Masonic Federation applied to the Supreme Coun-
THOMSON'S CRAFT TREE OF SCOTTISH FREEMASONRY.

Taken from *Who is Who in Masonry.*
council of Louisiana 33d Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite and by that Body was given authority on the 14th day of September, 1906, to organize the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana. . . ."

Thomson also made it perfectly clear that the Symbolic Masonry which the American Masonic Federation had obtained in this way from Scotland was Scottish Rite Symbolic Freemasonry. In the preface to the Constitution, By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation of the American Masonic Federation, A. and A. S. Rite, printed by Thomson and distributed among his customers, appears the following:

"Masonry, though one in all its essentials, is divided into 'Rites' or systems, which differ in form, but all tend to the common goal. Each of these 'Rites' is supreme in itself, so far as its internal government is concerned; all these Rites are equally regular and Masonic so long as they obey what are known as the landmarks of the Order. Of these Rites the Scottish is the most ancient and also the most universal, it being the one adopted by nine-tenths of the Grand Bodies of the world, and is the Rite practiced in the Lodges in the A. M. F."

In a little pamphlet entitled, Aims of Freemasonry, by August Spilmer, reprinted from The Universal Freemason (June, 1914), and widely circulated by Thomson, are the following sentences:

"The American Masonic Federation and its constituent Orders 'ONLY,' practice the 'TRUE SCOTTISH' Scottish Rite from the FIRST TO THE THIRTY-THIRD DEGREE, dating from time immemorial. It therefore behoves particularly the younger members to be careful. First be sure that the body styling itself Scottish, works the Scottish Rite Degrees from the FIRST to the THIRTY-THIRD degree. If such a body does not work the Scottish Rite in the first three degrees and are told that to become a Scottish Rite Mason you have to pass the first three degrees in the York Rite and only can receive the Scottish Rite from the fourth degree up, then

1 See, also, Universal Freemason, III, p. 149, p. 154; IV, p. 47, p. 185; V, p. 156; VI, p. 175, p. 254; IX, p. 504; XIII, p. 31; Tabloid History of Masonry, pp. 104 to 132.
you can be sure it is NOT of the true Scottish Rite, but only a branch of the so-called York Rite."

Thomson wanted to leave no doubt in the minds of his converts that Scottish Rite Masonry comprehended a system of thirty-three Degrees, and that this system was practiced in Scotland in its pure, uncorrupted state. It was this body of original, unadulterated Scottish Rite Freemasonry that Thomson had tapped by way of the Supreme Council of Louisiana. It is true beyond cavil that until 1920 Thomson never at any time or at any place claimed to have any other authority to confer the Craft Degrees than the power supposedly obtained from Louisiana. Moreover, Thomson constantly referred to this power as a "charter"; for example, in *Who Is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason*, he says that on September 14, 1906, Cheri "granted a charter of authority to M. McB. Thomson . . . . to form Craft or Symbolic Grand and Subordinate Lodges of Masons. . . ." If his dupes learned nothing else, they were thoroughly imbued with the idea that Thomson's authority in the Craft Degrees came from Mother Lodge Kilwinning of Scotland, the oldest Masonic Lodge in the world, by way of Mother Lodge St. John of Marseilles, Polar Star Lodge of New Orleans, and the Supreme Council of Louisiana to the American Masonic Federation. After 1920, as will be seen presently, Thomson changed this story materially.

2. The Higher Degrees

Thomson represented that he had authority to confer the advanced A. A. S. R. Degrees from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland. In the words of one of its adherents:

"It embraces within its bosom all Rites and Systems, which had in course of time been grafted on, or gathered around the parent stem of Scottish Masonry, excepting always the Craft, Royal Arch and Knight Templar Degrees controlled by Grand Lodge, Supreme Grand Chapter, and
Grand Encampment, and which by its constitution it acknowledges to be the property of these Grand Bodies, and with which it has neither right nor inclination to interfere. . . .”

This sentence was written in 1903, before Thomson had crossed swords with the Grand Lodge and Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. It is worthy of remark at this point that Thomson in this passage concedes that the Scottish Grand Council of Rites has nothing to do with Craft, Royal Arch and Knight Templar Degrees.

From the Scottish Grand Council of Rites Thomson claimed to have authority to confer Scottish Rite Degrees from the fourth to the thirty-third, inclusive, as well as other degrees.

Everyone is curious to know the origin of the Grand Council of Rites. In his *Tabloid History of Masonry. Second Part, High Degrees and Rites*, Thomson tells of the beginning of the Scottish Grand Council of Rites. He says that the charter granted by the Early Grand of Ireland to the Scottish Fraters made mention only of the Templar grades, and therefore, “it was considered wise to form a permanent and separate head for the more advanced degrees; this was accomplished by organizing the Grand Council of Rites in the Town of Kilmarnock on the festival of the Holy Cross, 1822. Provision being made for retaining the connection between the Grand Council and Grand Encampment in the proviso that the Grand Master of the latter should be the ex-officio Grand Commander of the former. . . .”

Thus, in 1822, if Thomson is to be believed, the Grand Council of Rites was created—by whom and under what authority is not stated—to take care of degrees not controlled by The Early Grand Encampment of Knights Templar. Royal Arch, says Thomson, continued to be worked

---

under the Early Grand Encampment until 1880, when the Early Grand Royal Arch Chapter was organized.¹

In this same pamphlet (p. 17) is printed a list of the Sovereign Grand Commanders of the Grand Council of Rites since 1822, as follows:

Robert Martin of Kilmarnock .................. 1822-1857
Robert Chambers, Ayr ............................ 1858
William Martin, Ayr ............................. 1857-1871
Thomas Weir, Muirkirk .......................... 1871
James Pollock, Newmilns ....................... 1871-1874
James Hodge, Kilmarnock ...................... 1874
Alexander Pollock, Stewarton ................... 1875
Mathew Pollock, Newmilns ...................... 1876
M. McB. Thomson, Ayr ........................... 1877-1881
Thos. Coquhoun, Ayr ............................ 1881-1886
William Young, Newmilns ...................... 1886-1889
John Crombie, Aberdeen ........................ 1889-1891
Peter Spence, Airdie ............................ 1891-1912
William Steel ..................................... 1912-1917

In the description of High Degrees the chain of title is summarized as follows (p. 18):

"A close observation of the Diagram will show, first, that the time immemorial degrees commenced with Mother Kilwinning, then to the Tabernacle or Council of Patriarchs, then Grand Council of Rites of Scotland and from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland by Patent to M. McB. Thomson as the representative thereof in the United States of America; then by virtue of such Patent of Authority, M. McB. Thomson formed the Confederated Supreme Councils of America, and that these Councils were duly recognized by the Grand Council of Rites on April 23d, 1907; that again by virtue of said Patent and by authority and consent of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, these Confederated Councils were incorporated and the same were filed on the 9th day of January, 1912, filed as an incorporation within an incorporation; that is to say, filed as a part of the American Masonic Federation. The Grand Council of Rites recognizing the same and extending the right and privilege to issue their own Diplomas. However,

all our Charters and High Degree Diplomas come through the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland and all such members are registered in the Grand Council of Rites. The Grand Council of Rites is a member of the Imperial Confederation of the Councils of the world. This chain of title is good enough for us, and we want none better, neither can we find any other such organization of like degrees with such a clear title, nor any of them that can justly lay down claim to be of time immemorial; in fact, the great majority of other such orders claiming to be of High Degrees are founded upon a composition of sand, and when a search is made for their foundation it rests on air.”

It was Thomson’s boast that the Grand Council of Rites, dating from time immemorial, included all rites and systems which by any stretch of the imagination could be called Masonic, excluding, of course (until 1920), the Craft, Royal Arch and Templar Degrees. Just how an institution created in 1822 could have possessed anything from “time immemorial” was never made clear by Thomson.

In the Proceedings of Sup. Council Sov. Grand Ins. General 33d Degree, of the Scottish Grand Council of Rites, published in 1908, at page 5, is the following list of Rites and Orders within the bosom and controlled by the Grand Council of Rites:

- Early Grand Rite of XLVII Degrees.
- Grand Council of Supreme Council Sovereign Grand Inspectors General 33d Degree, of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.
- Supreme Council of the Rite of Misraim 90th Degree.
- Sovereign Sanctuary of the Egyptian Masonic Rite of Memphis, 96th Degree, and the Ancient and Primitive Rite, 33d Degree.
- The Scottish Rite of Adoption.
- Order of the Sat Bhai.
- Order of Pilgrim Knights of the Palm and Shell.
- Oriental Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.
- The Adoptive Order of the Eastern Star.
- Royal Order of Scotland.

See, Universal Freemason, I, No. 5.
THOMSON'S HIGH DEGREE TREE.
Taken from Who is Who in Masonry.
Robert S. Spence, in *The Universal Freemason*, July, 1912 (V, p. 1), devotes several pages to the Royal Order of Scotland to which Thomson was always quite partial. After stating some of the legends concerning the early history of the order, Spence says that the true Grand Body of the Royal Order was the Early Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, which transferred its control to the Grand Council of Rites, but there was a spurious Council in Scotland which in 1877 had given Albert Pike a patent creating him Provincial Deputy Grand Master of the Royal Order of Scotland for America!

It is to be noted that neither Spence nor Thomson ever cites any authority whatever for these extraordinary statements about the Grand Council of Rites.

Just as Thomson constantly attacked the American Grand Lodges, calling them “Locals,” “clandestine” and “irregular,” so, also, he constantly poured out invective against the Supreme Council A. A. S. R. for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States. The abuse which he heaped upon what he called the “Charleston Council” and Albert Pike, was without limit. He repeated all the old arguments about Frederick the Great and the Constitutions. He assiduously resurrected all the vicious and harsh denunciations of the Scottish Rite and carefully printed them. To Thomson no fraud in the world could possibly be as old, as big, and as rich, as the “Charleston fraud.” The following is a fair sample of his oft-repeated slanders:

“Charleston, Rite—This Rite, which its adherents style ‘Ancient and Accepted Scottish’ in the four words, is guilty of three falsehoods, as it is neither ‘ancient,’ ‘accepted’ or ‘Scottish.’ It is not ancient, as it is nineteenth century arrangement of the eighteenth century degrees, its basis being the ‘Rite of Perfection’ (which see) with degrees added, some of which were parts of other existing rites, others detached side degrees. It is not—nor has it ever been—accepted by other Masonic Rites or historians as being what it claims to be. It is not Scottish, as the Masons
of Scotland have never practiced it, and the Grand Lodge of Scotland treated its announcement of its birth with amusement mingled with contempt. The rite from its production has been a fruitful source of trouble among the Lodges of regular Masonry wherever introduced. All Masonic historians brand its claim to legitimacy as fraudulent, one French historian going so far as to brand it ‘the great Lie of the Order,’ while another stigmatizes it as the ‘Mother of all the bastard children of Freemasonry,’ and the best that its own advocates can claim for it is that its claims are ‘Apocryphal.’ It has of late disclaimed a Scottish origin while retaining the Scottish name, and acknowledged its irregular origin by claiming to be the ‘Mother Council of the World.’ To treat of this rite through all its devious and unsavory and slimy history is too much for an encyclopedial article, therefore we commend such as curious in such things to the writings of Folger, Findel, Klause, or, in fact, any standard Masonic history, or the proceedings of the various State Grand Lodges, where it has succeeded in breeding trouble.”

Notwithstanding this hostility towards the “Charleston Rite,” Thomson represented that within the bosom of the Grand Council of Rites was “... the Charleston Rite (mis-called Scottish), derived through the Early Grand of Ireland, where it was introduced in 1808. ...”

How strange that the Grand Council of Rites should want to pollute its sanctuary with such a corrupt thing as the “Charleston Rite”!

The Supreme Council of Louisiana is a Cerneau-Foulhouze organization, and in his writings Thomson tries to defend these men. He often stated that, aside from the American Masonic Federation, the only genuine Scottish Rite body in America was the Supreme Council of Louisiana.

Thomson asserted that the Supreme Council of Louisiana limited its jurisdiction to the boundaries of that state; and

2 Tabloid History of Masonry Second Part—High Degrees and Rites, p. 18.
that his institution which operated throughout the United States, although younger, was much the larger body.

Authority to confer the Capitular Degrees was represented by Thomson to repose in the Confederated Supreme Council E. G. N. Scottish Rite A. A. F. M. in the American Masonic Federation.

In his writings he discusses chiefly the Craft Degrees and the Higher Scottish Rite Degrees, in fact, it is difficult to obtain from his publications a clear statement of his pretensions with respect to both the Royal Arch and the Knight Templar Degrees. His little book, *Tabloid History of Masonry. Second Part—High Degrees and Rites*, is a jumble of legends, fictions and ancient documents, from which it is impossible to deduce a coherent story. In this little book he tells what was done in 1895 to consummate the union of the Early Grand Royal Arch Chapter with the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. The Early Grand Chapter had long been a thorn in the side of the regular Royal Arch institution of Scotland, and in the year 1895 an amalgamation was effected. Thereafter, Thomson summarizes, legitimate Masonry was governed by four heads, viz.: Grand Lodge of Scotland, controlling the Craft Degrees; Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, controlling the degrees of Mark Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch Mason and the side degrees of Royal Ark Mariner and Knights of the East or Sword; Early Grand Mother Encampment of High Knights Templar, controlling the Templar Degrees; and Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, controlling all other degrees.¹

Although he admits the validity of the union between the Early Grand Chapter and the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter, his diplomas show that he continued to confer Royal Arch Degrees under the authority of the Grand Council of Rites.

¹ *Tabloid History of Masonry. Second Part—High Degrees and Rites*, p. 17.
In a signed article in *The Universal Freemason*, August, 1912 (V, No. 2), Robert S. Spence traces the Royal Arch to Kilwinning No. 0, which in 1779 chartered a Lodge in Dublin under the name of High Knigt Templars Lodge of Ireland. This charter was in fact granted, as Spence says, but it was in the same language as all other charters granted by Mother Kilwinning. From this Dublin Lodge sprang the organization known as the Grand Encampment of Ireland, which, according to Spence, worked both Templar and Capitular Degrees, and transferred this authority in 1822 to the Early Grand Encampment of Scotland. In 1880 the Early Grand Royal Arch Chapter was organized and then the Early Grand Encampment resigned in its favor control of the Capitular Degrees. Thomson belonged to the Early Grand Chapter and was one of its leaders. In 1895 the Early Grand resigned “all right or title it has, or claims to have, over Royal Arch Masonry in favor of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland,” the present head of Capitular Masonry in Scotland. Spence claims that the Early Grand at the time of the union had, in working the Holy Royal Arch, “accumulated three different styles (practically three different degrees), . . . .” and that, since the Supreme Grand Chapter recognizes only two as legitimate, these two only were transferred in 1895. The other degrees, says Spence, controlled by the Early Grand, were transferred to the Grand Council of Rites, “and from that source have been introduced into the United States in connection with the American Masonic Federation.” This colorable explanation will he answered hereinafter.

After the Symbolic and Scottish Rite Degrees, Thomson and his associates paid most attention to the Templar Degrees. In the pamphlet *Who is Who in Masonry and Why I am a Scottish Rite Mason*, is printed a diagram purporting

---

2 *Universal Freemason, V*, p. 5. See also, Gould’s *Collected Essays and Papers* (Belfast, 1913), pp. 199 ff., for material supplied by Thomson explaining to Gould the status of Royal Arch.
to trace the title of the Higher Degrees, or “The Early Grand National Scottish Rite Ancient and Accepted from time immemorial in Scotland to the Confederated Supreme Councils, Incorporated into the American Masonic Federation of the United States of America. . . .” In this pamphlet it is contended that the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of Ireland granted a charter to the Scottish Encampment for the government and working of the Royal Arch and Templar Degrees; the “Early Grand Encampment of Ireland, having ceased to exist as such, the Scottish Branch, both by time immemorial, and by virtue of the Irish Charters, is thus the Mother of all such degrees and the oldest in existence.” It was the Early Grand Encampment of Scotland, so Thomson claimed, which gave him the power and authority as its representative, to form Encampments in the United States of America, and elsewhere.

In a word, then, so far as the High Degrees are concerned, Thomson claimed that he had, by virtue of his patent from the Scottish Grand Council of Rites, full authority to confer the Capitular Degrees, the A. A. S. R. Degrees from the 4th to the 38th, inclusive, the Degrees of the Royal Order of Scotland, and the Degrees of all the other systems under the aegis of the Grand Council of Rites; and that he had authority from the Early Grand Encampment of Scotland to confer the Templar Degrees. The degrees of the Royal Arch, the Knights Templar, and the Royal Order of Scotland, he traced through the Early Grand Encampment of Ireland to Mother Kilwinning of Scotland. He nowhere explains the origin of the Early Grand National Scottish Rite, or the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, both of which he represented to be under the jurisdiction of the Grand Council of Rites.

1 Who is Who in Masonry and Why I am a Scottish Rite Mason, p. 22.
2 August Spilmer, Aims of Freemasonry, Universal Freemason, June, 1914.
3 Nowhere in his books or writings so far as a diligent search has revealed, does he mention or print any instrument purporting to come from the Early Grand Encampment and to empower him to confer the Templar Degrees.
ONE OF THOMSON'S KNIGHTS TEMPLAR DIPLOMAS.

It does not mention the Grand Council of Rites.
3. Concordant Orders

In order to have “all that there is in Masonry” for his customers, Thomson claimed to have authority to confer the Order of the Shrine. Thomson must have puzzled for a long time to determine just what explanation he could make of the control of the Shrine by the Grand Council of Rites. He represents that William J. Florence, between 1871 and 1875, while filling an engagement in England and Scotland as an actor, was, in the latter country, initiated an Arabian Adept, a degree then well-known overseas. In return for this favor Florence communicated to his friends a side-step which he had helped create in America, and which was known as the Mystic Shrine. Florence’s side-step was enthusiastically received by the brethren in Scotland, and an amalgamation of the rituals of the Mystic Shrine and the Arabian Adept was arranged. According to Thomson, the side-step, or degree known as Arabian Adept, had been long known in Scotland and could only be given after you had the Encampment or Grand Council of Rites degrees. In closing his account of the Shrine, Thomson says, “The question may be raised by some, when the rituals are the same, or practically so, whether worked under the Grand Council of Rites or here, ‘Why do we get our Charter from Scotland instead of here?’ The answer is simple. ‘The American branch requires its candidate to be in good standing in a lodge of the LOCAL SYSTEM’.” Thomson gave the Supreme Council of Louisiana the right to confer the Shrine Degree. Many diplomas of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, certifying the holders to be Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, have been distributed in this country; all of these diplomas have been signed by Robert Jamieson as Grand Chancellor. A facsimile of one of these diplomas is shown on the opposite page. The Shrine was usually thrown in with the 32d Degree for good measure.²

¹ Tabloid History of Masonry. Second Part, p. 108.
² See copy of organizer’s contract.
Salam Alaikum, Faithful and Enlightened ones, Greeting, in the name of the All Wise, Know Ye that Hajji, who hath in the margin hereof signed his name, hath faithfully performed the Pilgrimage enjoined upon the Faithful and knelt in the Masjid al alharam, allowing neither danger nor difficulty to deter him in his journey, and is in consequence thereof a Noble of the Mystic Shrine, entitled to all the honours and privileges thereunto belonging.

In Token Whereof be this Firmam commending him to the care and friendship of all who have in like manner performed the Pilgrimage.

Granted by us on the 25th day of the month Jumada, 1439, in the year of the Hegira 1339, answering to the 25th day of February of the Christian Era 1921.

[Signature]
Grand Chancellor.
It will interest many American Masons to read Thomson’s explanation of the manner in which the Order of the Eastern Star came to belong to the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland. Thomson concedes that the Eastern Star was the invention of Robert Morris of Kentucky. The Order was introduced by Morris into Scotland when he visited that country on his way to Palestine. While paying a visit to D. Murray Lyon, the great Scottish Historian, Morris gave the degrees to the five Masters of the Lodges in Ayr and their female relatives. “These formed a Chapter which they termed ‘Victoria chapter,’ after the Queen of Great Britain, thus forming the first organized Chapter of the order in that or any other country, and in it the writer of this sketch (M. McB. Thomson) received the degree in 1876. Victoria Chapter sought and obtained the protection of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, under which body it has since been controlled there.”

It will be impossible, for want of space, to restate all of Thomson’s representations regarding the “affiliated Rites” which he claimed to have for sale. The reader is referred to any Masonic encyclopedia for an account of such institutions as the Rites of Memphis and Mizriam, the Order of Illuminati, the Royal Order of Sat Bhai (which Thomson pretended was brought from India by some Scotch brothers and transferred to the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland), the Oriental Order of Palm and Shell; the Order of St. Lawrence the Martyr; and the Order of Saint Martin.

4. Other Representations.

Probably the most convincing argument made by Thomson and his organizers to their victims was the oft-repeated assertion that outside the United States of America, Masonry was one big family, of which the American Masonic

---

1 Tabloid History of Masonry. Second Part—High Degrees and Rites. p. 103; Universal Freemason XII, p. 165.
2 Universal Freemason VII, p. 165 ff.
THOMSON'S REPRESENTATIONS

Federation and the Confederated Supreme Councils of the American Masonic Federation were honored members. "Of course," they said, "in America we do not amount to much because the 'Locals' will not recognize us; but abroad we are the main event in the big Masonic show." In Who is Who in Masonry and Why I am a Scottish Rite Mason (p. 8), Thomson states that the American Masonic Federation is recognized by, and exchanges representatives with, more than thirty foreign Grand Masonic Jurisdictions, among which may be mentioned, "the Grand Lodge of Great Britain and Ireland, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Roumania, Turkey, Luxemburg, Egypt, Mexico, South America and others." In The Universal Freemason, April, 1916 (VIII, p. 447), Thomson published a most deceptive article regarding the foreign affiliations of the American Masonic Federation. In it he says, "So far as has been brought to our notice, the diplomas of the American Masonic Federation have been accepted in every foreign country where presented"; then he prints a most imposing list of the Grand Lodges with which he claims to exchange representatives. In a circular letter sent out by Thomas Perrot, Grand Secretary of the American Masonic Federation, September 8, 1919, is this paragraph:

"Outside of the Locals the AMF is in friendly relations with the whole world of Masonry and exchanges Gages of amity directly with Councils, Orients or Grand Lodges in Scotland, England, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland, Roumania, Turkey, Russia, Egypt, Peru, Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay, Paraguay, Haiti, Cuba, Yucatan, and San Salvador."

In April, 1920, just prior to the departure of Thomson to attend the International Masonic Congress at Zurich, he printed an editorial in The Universal Freemason, in which he said:

1 Universal Freemason, VI p. 155; VIII, p. 344.
"The matter of foreign recognition of our members has often and still is brought up among the BB. When the question has been asked of us we have always replied by giving the list of foreign powers with whom we exchange representatives, as those only of whom we are sure, but have submitted the statement by saying we know of no Masonic Jurisdiction outside of this country where recognition has been denied our diplomas. . . ."

On July 3d, 1921, one Antonio F. Notti, who had been a member of St. John's Lodge Number 21, A. A. S. R. (Symbolic), in Los Angeles, wrote to Mr. William S. Alley, Master of the Lodge, from Rome, Italy, that his Lodge was not recognized in Europe, especially in Italy, and that his Masonic acquaintances in Italy told him that he was not a Mason at all. In closing his letter he said:

"And I am sorry to state that Bro. Kowashi misrepresented the Lodge. He told me that it was Universal, which I find is not the fact. Do me a great favor to write for me to M. McB. Thomson stating this fact."

How pathetic to think of this humble Italian workman buying his way into one of Thomson's lodges, encouraged by the thought that he was becoming a member of the family of "Universal Masonry," only to learn upon his arrival in his native country that he was no Mason at all!1

Thomson always claimed to his followers that Masonry in the United States was after all a very small affair; that most of the Masons in the world were outside the United States and that, while members of the American Masonic Federation would not be received into the Lodges of the "Locals" in this country, his diplomas would be recognized everywhere abroad. He also told of the high-standing of the Grand Council of Rites in Scotland. He pictured it as the Masonic home exclusively of scholars, noblemen, and the better classes of society, possessing magnificent temples

---

1 Original letter supplied by Mr. Alley, who appeared as a witness for the United States Government. It was not put in evidence.
and rich in funds. What chances had these poor fellows against such gifts of imagination?

No words can present a true picture of the varied representations made by Thomson, both orally and in writing, to his audiences. Some of his former disciples have said that his power over an audience was wonderful. He could take a group of the middle and lower class workmen who were attracted by his advertisements, and in a short time convert them into ardent believers in his Masonic vagaries. He had all the arts of the practiced unscrupulous promoter. With equal facility he could utterly destroy the theories upon which the institutions of his opponents were justified, or construct a plausible argument in explanation of his own claims. He had humor, considerable small change of scholarship, and pleasant ways, all of which made him genuinely popular with the men who flocked to his banner. And, above everything else, he was a Mason from Scotland; no one could tell him anything about true Scotch Masonry. Had he been able to find lieutenants of the same mould, it is certain that he would have avoided many of the troubles which contributed materially to his downfall.
CHAPTER V

THE SCHEME IN OPERATION

In Thomson's proclamation to the world in justification of the creation of the American Masonic Federation, he pointed out that there were estimated to be three hundred thousand non-affiliated Masons in the United States. If he could only draw these men to his standard, he must have reflected, he would have a larger following than most of the Masonic Grand Lodges of the world. He always held out a warm welcome to all men who had received the degrees of Masonry in foreign lodges, regardless of regularity or standing. He even appealed to the clandestine Lodges of this country to affiliate with him. In November, 1909, he issued a proclamation, "Unto all Detached Groups called Masonic, in the United States, not affiliated with the State Grand Lodges of the York Rite . . ." and invited representatives of these Masonic groups to meet him at Chicago in 1910 to "concert means whereby such Groups might be drawn together in closer bonds of Union, the cause of true 'Universal Masonry' advanced, and a united front presented to the bigoted and intolerant York Rite." Thomson gained many supporters by these tactics. In issuing such an invitation indiscriminately he seems to have overlooked the possibility that some of these minor groups might also be in the class with the "clandestine and irregular York Rite Masons."

But even "Local" Masons were welcomed by Thomson. Many of them, he says, were healed into his organizations; and he often published accounts of the acquisition of such members. In the early days "Locals" were allowed to visit his Lodges, but eventually this practice was stopped. One may be permitted to inquire here what then became of his vaunted Universality.

1 Universal Freemason, X, p. 823.
Early in his career he tried to unite with several Masonic leaders of the same feather. His relations with Harry Goode have already been noticed. At one time he was associated with Darius Wilson, the familiar Masonic impostor—who was in 1904 expelled from Masonry by decision of the Commissioners of Appeals of the Grand Lodge of New York. In 1901 Peter Spence and Robert Jamieson issued a charter to Wilson authorizing him, with the aid and assistance of Thomson, to form a Supreme Grand Council of Sovereign Grand Inspectors, 33d and Last Degree, for the United States of America, their territories and dependencies. Thomson says that he did no more than hand the charter to Wilson, and that no Supreme Council was ever formed. This was an association which Thomson was doubtless glad to drop; but it none the less marks his type.

Thomson obtained most of his followers by an unblushing method of solicitation among non-Masons of the humbler classes. He sent paid organizers dupe-beagling up and down the country. For the first time in its history, probably, Craft Masonry was reduced to the level of ordinary merchandise. One of Thomson's organizers, loaded down with charters, diplomas, certificates of appointment and agency contracts, would appear in such a city, let us say, as St. Louis, Missouri. This man would forthwith print an advertisement in the newspapers to the effect that he would like to meet a number of men interested in receiving the degrees of Masonry. As usual in such cases, a number of curious individuals would respond to the advertisement. To these men the organizer would show his credentials, as well as some of the publications of the American Masonic Federation, and would tell them of the great advantages following upon membership in a Masonic order. He would then explain the origin and source of authority of Thomson's organizations and close by offering these men membership at a reduced rate, provided they would agree to get a certain

1 See Universal Freemason, I, pp. 133 et seq.
number of their friends to join. Invariably, a number of the audience would decide to accept the offer and would hurry off to interest their friends in the scheme. When a certain number of candidates had been procured, the organizer would take them to a room, communicate to them a modicum of information, and pronounce them Masons in good standing in the American Masonic Federation! Through these men the organizer would meet other men, and so on ad infinitum.

Section 110 of the Constitution, By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation of the American Masonic Federation, provided that,

"As a dispensation to conduct a Masonic Lodge and work Masonic degrees can only be given to a constitutional number of Master Masons, and in organizing new territory it is often necessary for the Deputy Organizers to exercise their prerogative as Deputy of the Supreme Master and make Masons at sight in accordance with the Ancient Landmarks of the Order, the first seven members in a new field thus made are registered as members of Alpha Lodge, and as such apply for a Dispensation in regular form."

Here was authority for the organizer to make Masons at sight and to hurry the transfer from his victim's pockets to his own of the necessary fees.

Officers would be selected from the first men who joined and a lodge under dispensation would be formed. After a time a charter would be issued to the lodge by the American Masonic Federation and it would receive a number on the rolls of that institution. After the creation of the National Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland, the new lodge would be given the same number on its roll, so that there were two Grand Bodies governing the same daughter lodges!

When the organizer had established a lodge, he would forthwith try to sell the new members all of the High Degrees they would take. When business became slow, the

1 Italics are mine.
To All whom it may concern,

Greetings. We present hereby

Who built in the margin thereof signed
his name, was regularly enrolled as
Apprentice, passed Fellowcraft,
and attaining to the sublime degree
of Master Mason in the Lodge
Reg. No. on the Register of the National
Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland. Therefore we have
granted unto him this our Diploma,
and recommend him to the care and
fellowship of all regular Masons,
of whatever Rites or Grades, we
promising on our part to extend
the same to all regular Brothers.

In Testimony whereof these
presents are subscribed by our
Secretary, and sealed with our Seal.
This 20th day of May A.D. 1909.

[Signature]
Grand Secretary.

Omnibus et Singulis
qui has elevato Salutem
iunctae cunctae Fratres saniores
qui egregiorum zoon opposit
Tuesclia sua cito gravibus
Cooperetorem faustum sec nec
nemrum Rectorem Oblivam Architec
tonumassociationem esse in
Consiliis Archetoniis notandas
Adiuvandos, sociis insigne
Nomine 244 in Oplitis
Sommati Societatis Architectonicae
Symbolicarum Scotiae.

Duxque hucusm varum
Rites fratris indicum et cunctae
egregiorum Rites et Oplitis
quae Architectonorum hanc communes
et nonam ipsi potissimum
sas eodem officio annus Fratris
legitimas esse absurdam.

In Testamento quorum clemens
habeat a Frate nostro qui est ab
Eptetelo subscripte et sigillo
nuncus mensibus symbolae hoc
die mense

Anna Dominii
Elpis Deus.

DIPLOMA ISSUED BY NATIONAL SYMBOLIC GRAND LODGE OF SCOTLAND.
organizer moved to other fields. This sort of thing occurred many times in the past twenty years. The new organization left to itself usually died in a short time for want of care and was soon forgotten. Thomson may have intended this very thing to happen.

The organizing department of the American Masonic Federation was the most important of all its many branches, and Thomson never let control of this department pass out of his own hands. Sections 58-60 of the Constitution, By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation of the American Masonic Federation, printed by Thomson, is as follows:

"The President General is ex-officio Chief Organizer, and has entire control of that department, and may appoint what Deputies are necessary to assist in the work.

Sec. 59: "Every Deputy so appointed shall execute a good and sufficient bond before entering upon the duties of his office.

Sec. 60: "Deputies in charge of districts may, with the sanction of the Chief Organizer, appoint Sub-Deputies, for whose acts the principal shall be responsible on his official bond."

Sec. 65 provided that:

"The financial resources of Daughter Lodges shall be derived from initiation and affiliation fees, Lodge dues and voluntary subscriptions."

Nothing in the fundamental law determined what should be done with the fees obtained from prospective members prior to organization. This was where Thomson made his money, for out of the sum of $45 usually paid to the organizer for the Symbolic Degrees, $15 went to Thomson and at least $20 was kept by the organizer.

Thomson had regular printed contracts which were executed by himself and the organizer. A picture of one form of contract is shown on the opposite page. It will repay close study. Although it contained a clause that after the first seven members, all degrees must be worked in full
This agreement, made and entered into this 27th Day of May, 1907, by and between the AMERICAN MASONIC FEDERATION, a corporation duly organized and doing business under and by virtue of the Laws of the State of Idaho, party of the first part, and ........................ party of the second part, witnesseth:

That the party of the first part is desirous of engaging the services of the party of the second part, and in view thereof, has formulated the following instructions and rules for the guidance and observance of the party of the second part, as follows:

Instructions for and rules to be observed by Deputy Organizers, commissioned in accordance with the Constitution of the AMERICAN MASONIC FEDERATION.

1st. Before entering upon the duties of your office you will fill out the form of surety bond supplied you and return the same to this office.

2nd. You will provide yourself with a suitable book of forms also in which you MUST keep a record of all work in your capacity as Deputy Organizer, properly entering the name, age, place of birth, occupation and residence of each of your Candidates, with the name and number of the Lodge to which they are attached. You will also supply yourself with a seal of regulation pattern with which you will attest all forms and returns. At the end of each week a return in duplicate of all work done (no matter how small) must be made on the forms supplied for that purpose, and sent in to this office. This rule MUST be complied with, a neglect of this will be cause for withdrawal of the Deputy's commission.

3rd. Each candidate for membership must, before accepting any degree or making any payment for the same, sign the regular Application Form and have fully and clearly explained to him that we are of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (Symbolic); that we work under authority of the American Masonic Federation, incorporated under the Laws of the State of Idaho, September 21, 1907, and that we have no connection with the Lodge of the American York Rite, which we consider to be a self-created and unauthorized body.

4th. As soon as seven members are admitted in a city a dispensation must be applied for to form a Lodge, and all degrees MUST be worked in full form, and officers elected.

5th. The Deputy Organizer may appoint sub-Deputies by obtaining a commission therefor from the Chief Organizer. He must be responsible on his bond for the acts of such sub-Deputies.

6th. The Deputy Organizer may allow candidates to pay fees by installments, though it is not recommended, but when this is done the first installment must not be less than $15.00, which must be returned to the Chief Organizer.

7th. The minimum fee for which a candidate may receive the Symbolic grades of R. A.-P. C.-M. M. and Mark Master is $12.50, of which he shall return to the Chief Organizer $1.00.

8th. For the first seven candidates admitted in any city the Deputy Organizer shall return to the Chief Organizer $75.00.

9th. The Deputy Organizer must give to each candidate when initiated one copy of the Laws of the Supreme Council.

10th. For each candidate admitted $5.00 must be left in the new Lodge, in the treasury, to be used in purchasing Charter and paraphernalia.

11th. The minimum fee for the 32nd degree, including the Shriner, is $12.50, and for the Knight Templar, $12.50, of which $10.00 is returned to the Chief Organizer for the 32nd degree and $2.50 for the Knight Templar. For the 32nd degree and $2.50 for the Knight Templar remains with the Treasurer of the new Council and Encampment.

12th. One copy of the Laws of the Supreme Council must be given to each candidate receiving the Council degrees.

13th. No forms or blanks of any kind shall be used by organizers except the official blanks, supplied by the Chief Organizer.

He must be careful to accept only the best material, one contentious or quarrelsome member will spoil an otherwise good Lodge.

And whereas, the party of the second part can only be accepted as such organizer by promising a strict observance of the said laws and regulations, as above set forth;

Now, therefore, the party of the second part having been duly made acquainted with the foregoing rules and instructions, does hereby covenant and agree, by and with the said party of the first part, that he will faithfully carry out the foregoing instructions, on his part, and well and faithfully serve the party of the first part, to the best of his ability, as such, Deputy Organizer, and conduct himself in such a manner as to fill his obligations and be worthy of the said trust; and for the faithful performance of his said duties the party of the second part promises and agrees to furnish the party of the first part a good and sufficient bond in the sum of one thousand dollars to be approved by the party of the first part.

This agreement shall be binding upon the party of the first part and its successors in office, and upon the heirs, executors and administrators of the party of the second part.

Witness:

[Signature]

[Signature]
form, no organizer ever paid any attention to that clause. The minimum fee for the first three degrees was by this contract fixed at $35, of which the Chief Organizer was to retain $15. In actual practice, the organizer sold the degrees for whatever he could get. The minimum fee for the 32d Degree, including the Shrine, was $135, and for the Knight Templar, $40; of which $40 was to be paid to the Chief Organizer for the 32d Degree and $15 for the Knight Templar. It was in the High Degrees that the money lay, and the organizers knew it full well. The candidate was hurried on to the advanced grades which would yield the big commissions to the solicitors.

Thomson's organizers were particularly successful in organizing lodges in Illinois, New York, California and the Northwest. For many years he had as his Deputy Grand Representative for the Northwest, one A. E. Lucas, located at Seattle, who was one of the most energetic and successful agents Thomson ever had. One has to read the correspondence between Lucas and his sub-agents to understand the real character of this sordid business. In 1910 Lucas had as a sub-organizer at Portland, Ore., one W. H. Lindsay. On November 16th, 1910, Lucas wrote a letter to Lindsay in which he said:

"No we don't want to force any one to join our Order, not unless they want to, that is something we must not do. Our order is something they should work to get in and want to join, but when you get any one that does want to join that you can close the deal with, you had better close it, if you don't give any one more than the first Degree, but give it to them thoroughly. I think you are a cautious Brother and will not cause any dissention among the State Masons, until after we get a little foothold. I will enclose you a P. O. Order for $10.00, which I am in hopes you will be able to square by taking in members. I am doing for you Brother Lindsay, something I have never done for anyone else, that is to advance money for sub-organizers, all I do is to furnish them up and give them tools to work with, and they must take care of themselves. . . ."
Your second letter has just been received and if it is that Dr. Anthony which you speak of we don’t want him for any price, but if it is another Doctor you have in mind and you think his I. O. U. is good take the I. O. U. same as I send to you and his check for 30 days, when the check is paid you can return his I. O. U. and we will send for his diploma. I am not in the habit of taking anyone in, not unless they have the money, and they make very poor members, and those who have not got $35.00 to join an Order, I think we would be better off without them, but if you can get one or two good men who are in business for themselves, and can do us good, thirty days is not long to wait. . . . There is no Masonry in the world who takes people in on notes. . . . You are there on the ground and you know more about it than I do, and I have got to depend upon my organizers who are hundreds of miles from me, but don’t go into the credit system, not unless it would be of assistance to us to get one or two in the way you speak of and the money is good.

I think I will be able to get a first class Italian organizer to handle all the Italian Lodges. They are very peculiar people and it requires some one that understands the Order thoroughly and the class of people they are getting in to organize in the Italian Lodge.”

In December, 1911, Lucas was conducting negotiations with W. H. Lindsay for the sale to Lindsay of the right to dispose of Thomson’s degrees in the State of Oregon. Lucas wrote Lindsay as follows:

“When I said I would let the State of Oregon go for $300, I was throwing off at that time $200, and if it was running for another year it would not be less, because I made up my mind to go up there and take hold of it myself, but if you want it and the office fixtures and everything for $300 within 30 days, you can have it. This is not a standing offer. You know as well as I do that I have got considerable money in there.

The Lodge itself owes me for four months rent, and the furniture and paraphernalia cost me money. Certainly they

1 Original letter is supplied by the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Oregon. It is quoted literally.
have not got so very much paraphernalia, but everything costs, and you know you owe me $100 cash besides this.

Now Brother Lindsay, this $300 can be made on six candidates from the high degrees, and if it was not for the high degrees, there would be no organizing. I have not made hardly anything out of the State of Oregon since we commenced to organize there, so I don’t see what you mean by having it less now. You can’t have it less, it ought to be more if anything. If I can’t make something on the interest of my money I don’t propose to advance any more. The trips that I made to Portland and other expenses added thereto, I don’t see how you can think for a moment that I would lose any more money on it.

The State of Oregon is a good state, and there is no reason why if it is handled properly, that there could be twelve or fifteen thousand dollars cleared from that State. I don’t mean the Blue Lodges, but I mean the Council that can be formed there.1

On January 13, 1912, Lucas again wrote Lindsay and said in the course of his letter:1

“Yes, it is the high degrees that I have to make money out of or I could not afford my expenses, not unless I lived right in the city where I am organizing. As you are, you are foot loose, and it don’t make any difference where you live. I repeat again, Brother Lindsay, that you can make money, but don’t think you can make money, not unless you work. I did not sell you the State of Oregon as you have been writing. You just return me about one-half the money that I have invested there and the Lodge has to pay you for what paraphernalia they have got, and the furniture belongs to you. The trouble I had filing the papers in that State cost me forty some odd dollars. By the tone of your letter you seem to think that I am getting something out of this, but just get that out of your head, because who ever said so I would condemn it as false.

You have got the same chance in Oregon as I had, and I have nothing whatsoever to do with the State of Oregon, nor do I ever tell my business to any one.

You will have to pay your sub-organizers out of the $20 that comes to you.

1 Original letter is supplied by the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Oregon. It is quoted literally.
THE SCHEME IN OPERATION

To be a Marksman in the State Lodges, costs from $25 to $50, allowing for the Keystone, and if it is not worth $10 it is not worth anything, and all of our Master Masons must be Marksmen, but that is a separate issue, and you have a better chance now than what I had making something on the Marksman degree, because, I never made a dollar on it, in fact an organizer now is in a better position than they were before the Supreme Lodge met. . . . I have put quite a number of State Masons in the high degrees that have affiliated with us, and one thing the matter with you Brother Lindsay, is that your ideas run too high thinking you was doing wonders what money you sent to me. I wish you had been to the Supreme Lodge then you would have known as much as I do.

Now then, you have the State of Oregon, do not have to divide the Blue Lodge and you get all there is in it for the high degrees. . . ."

Lucas had some difficulties with the courts in the Northwest and was transferred by Thomson to California, which he found to be a fertile field. Many lodges were organized in the State of California through the efforts of Lucas. By solicitation he drew to the organization some men who afterwards rose to the highest positions in the institution. One of these was P. J. Wilkie, an attorney of Sacramento, who was induced to become a member in 1917.1 Thomson had a Provincial Grand Lodge in the State of California to supervise the Blue Lodges there.

Thomson's organizers were generally crude, unscrupulous fellows who would stop at nothing to make a few dollars. Some of them conferred degrees in return for merchandise, and in such places as bar rooms, hotel rooms, and shop basements. Thomson, himself, had a good deal of trouble with them over money matters.2

Thomson boasted that his Masonry was universal and that it drew no lines on account of color or creed. In the Tabloid History of Masonry he tells of the union of his organization

1 Transcript, pp. 106 et seq., His testimony is summarized, post.
2 See, for example, post, testimony of Wilkie regarding one Vlahos.
with certain bodies of colored Masons. Some years ago the American Masonic Federation (Colored Branch) was incorporated in the District of Columbia. At the request of the colored men, so Thomson states, they were given a separate branch. Thomson's real interest in colored Masonry, beyond the shadow of a doubt, grew out of his desire to get the fees which these men were willing to pay in order to have connection with such an institution as Thomson represented the American Masonic Federation to be.

The Constitution (Sec. 109) provided that the Grand Master (Thomson) should have his transportation and hotel bill paid and allowance for expense not to exceed $5.00 a day while traveling on the business of the American Masonic Federation. Thomson traveled widely in behalf of the Federation and wherever he went he was lavishly entertained by his followers. Accounts of his travels were printed in the Universal Freemason from time to time. Although he allowed his organizers in the Eastern part of the country to confer the advanced degrees, so far as California was concerned, he for the most part kept that business in his own hands. Whenever the organizer had a group of men in California desirous of obtaining the advanced degrees, Thomson would run down himself, charge the men from $50 to $150 for the degrees, pocket the money, spend perhaps a few hours with them, and return to Salt Lake City.

He took at least two trips to Europe at the expense of the American Masonic Federation, one in 1910 and the other in 1920. He published a story of his travels each time and in them he tells of meeting on equal terms such distinguished Masons as Quartier-la-Tente, R. V. Palermi, David Reid and others. All this, of course, mightily pleased his adherents.

Everything in connection with the American Masonic Federation or the Confederated Supreme Councils of the American Masonic Federation had its price. As soon as a lodge
was started, the officers found that they had to buy a large amount of paraphernalia, which was conveniently provided by Thomson. Diplomas or patents were regularly sold by Thomson to his followers. Ordinary paper diplomas were provided by the American Masonic Federation, but parchment diplomas, signed by Jamieson, at 4 Fullerton St., Kilmarnock, Scotland, could be obtained for $5.00 and up.¹ The only possible inference to be drawn is that Thomson and Jamieson divided this money.

Thousands of these diplomas were distributed throughout the United States by Thomson and his agents. Photographs of some of them appear in this volume. They were drawn in such a way as to deceive the poor fellows who purchased them. A Master Mason’s diploma recommended the recipient

“... to the care and fellowship of all regular Masons of whatever Rite or Grade, we promising on our part to extend like courtesies to all regular Brethren.”

Thomson knew better than anyone that this recommendation and promise were only a snare and delusion.

What, pray, were Thomson’s rewards for his labors? He always represented that he worked for the love of the cause. Section 109 of the A. M. F. Constitution provides that,

“The only salaried officer in the A. M. F. shall be the Grand Secretary General, who shall receive a commission as compensation, as the same has been regulated by the Finance Committee.”

In the Universal Freemason, October, 1913 (VI, p. 84), Thomson said in an editorial:

“From letters received from the Lodges it seems that the Brethren are laboring under a misapprehension regarding the compensation received by the Grand Master (Thomson). It is true that at a session of the Supreme Lodge held in

¹ See letter from Perrot to Alley, Transcript, pp. 538ff.; also, Universal Freemason, VII, p. 44.
January last here that a salary of $100.00 was voted to the Grand Master. This was done against the wishes and advice of the Grand Master, who did not believe that it was wisdom at that time to pay salaries. Subsequent events prove his stand to be well taken, and as a fact, the Grand Master has never received one cent for his services as such. With him his labors attending to the affairs of the chartered Lodges has been a labor of love, and the same condition still prevails, as the Finance Committee decided that the Grand Master should receive no salary.”1

In the first issue of the Universal Freemason, June, 1908, appears the following:

“. . . . All moneys to pay for Degrees, dues and contributions to any of our Lodges are used solely for the upkeep of the Bodies, and all surpluses not so required are and must be used for charity. . . .”

For more than twenty years Thomson kept up this pose. The truth is that throughout his entire career he used his Masonic schemes for the purpose of making money for himself. At one time thousands of dollars poured every month into his personal bank account in Salt Lake City. It was only in recent years that the American Masonic Federation had a bank account at all. No one shared in the profits of organization but Thomson and the organizers; and all matters pertaining to organization were kept strictly in his own hands.

Every reader will be curious to know how much money Thomson has made out of this scheme. It is impossible to calculate this amount. In the past two decades thousands of men have bought degrees from Thomson and in every instance some portion of the fee has gone into his own pocket. Although the Constitution provides for an accounting every six months, no accounting ever was had. P. J. Wilkie, until 1921 Vice Grand Master Mason of the American Masonic Federation, tried in vain to have Thomson ac-

1 Italics are mine.
count for the moneys he had received. On March 4, 1921, Thomson wrote Wilkie a letter, in the course of which he said:

"Re the accounting for monies spent and getting an accounting for same at the meeting of the S. L. in August, I would sure like to have it done, I have tried my best to get it done and have failed."

This is in sharp contrast with a statement contained in Thomson's letter dated February 7th, 1921, to Harry C. Alley, in reply to Alley's request for funds with which to defend one of the organizers. Thomson wrote:

"Do not think by the foregoing that we refuse in any case to assist a Bro. who is being persecuted by the Locals, far from it, but the funds of the Federation are the property of the WHOLE FEDERATION, and we here are but the guardians of the Treasury, the trustees of the BB. to whom we expect to render an accounting of the same, and it behooves every Lodge, and every individual Brother to bear this in mind."

It is impossible to tell how many men Thomson induced to buy his alleged Masonic degrees. Thousands of men paid their money to Thomson, attended his lodges for a short time and fell away. In 1919 Perrot, as Secretary General of the American Masonic Federation, issued a circular to the members throughout the United States. This purported to be an account of the affairs of the Secretary's office for the preceding three years. Most of the account is taken up with immaterial matters, but this one paragraph is significant:

"Commencing with a membership of twelve in the year 1907 and fighting its way for a place in the Sun, the American Masonic Federation has up to the present time admitted into the order about ten thousand members and has chartered one hundred and twenty-five Lodges, and at the present time there are seventeen Lodges working under Dis-

---

1 Taken from original letter.
pensation. The record of the Third Triennial Communication of the Supreme Lodge held September 13-14, 1916, show that there were then in standing 44 Lodges and of them twenty colored and twenty-four white Lodges. There was no record of the membership in the colored Lodges. In the white Lodges the record shows that there was then a membership in good standing in the chartered Lodges of 803 members.

Some of Thomson's former associates think more than 20,000 men have joined the organization, since for every man who stayed with the institution at least one fell away.

Thomson had many ways of arousing and sustaining the interest of his dupes. He constantly led them on by offering some new form of merchandise. Occasionally he would announce the acquisition of a new Rite. Degrees of the regular Scottish Rite and the Red Cross of Constantine, which are purely honorary, Thomson closely imitated and sold for money. The esteemed 33d Degree of the genuine A. A. S. R. was open to any man who had the price. In order to spur the ambitions of the members of his bodies, Thomson had certain superlative honorary degrees and decorations of his own. The grades of Knight Companion of the Council and Knight Commander of the Council were conferred on holders of the 33d Degree; but the two most precious decorations which topped all others were the Lybic Chain and the Star of Sirius. The first was bestowed only upon the possessor of the 32d or 33d Degree; and the second was given only to one who held the highest degrees in the affiliated Rites, namely, the 33d of the Scottish Rite, the 90th of the Rite of Mizraim, and the 96th of Memphis. Therefore, in order to be eligible for these exclusive titles, a man must have purchased from Thomson the entire 219 degrees contained in the three systems!

The kind of men procured by Thomson's organizers were easily misled by all these false pretenses. In the Universal

---

1 Universal Freemason, VII, p. 81.
Freemason, from time to time, appeared the names of the office bearers of some of his subordinate Lodges. Many of these names are plainly foreign. Thomson, indeed, admitted that most of his followers were foreigners and members of the humblest classes. His solicitors sought their material in the mining and lumber camps and back streets of the larger cities. He tried to procure organizers of the same nationality as his intended dupes in order to make the conquest easier; thus, he had Italian, Polish, and Greek organizers, all seeking members among their respective countrymen. These uneducated fellows were no match for Thomson. Among all his victims there was not one who could debate with him his own theories.

A few men with strong personalities turned up among his followers; one after another all of these men were suspended or expelled by him. Wilkie and Cavitt, two California attorneys who joined his ranks, were expelled because they questioned his methods.

He had good reason to fear the inquisitive truth-seeker. He always knew that as an institution all he had was make-believe. His American Masonic Federation never in its history published an account of its funds, or a complete list of its subordinate lodges, or members. It had no books of account, no hospitals, no homes, no organized charities. The Confederated Supreme Council was only hollow pretense. It had nothing whatever but its name. To Thomson, it would appear, all the institutions, titles, degrees, diplomas, and patents, were merely so many tricks and devices to get money.

Thomson's keen desire to make money out of his institutions accounts for his retention of solicitors after he had positive proof that they were crooked. In San Francisco, at one time, he had two solicitors who initiated crowds of Greeks, Slavonians, and Italians who could hardly sign their names, let alone read and understand the applications. These men paid from $25 to $50 for the Craft Degrees and
from $125 to $250 for the High Degrees. A few years ago the head of Thomson's Shrine, and his Chief Deputy, in San Francisco, at the same time was the proprietor of a fish store and restaurant, who, being too busy to go to lodge, obligingly conferred the degrees in his basement on many impatient applicants. Thomson himself was present in the basement during some of this work. What mockery was all this! There was no fixed price for any of the gim-cracks; the organizer simply took what he could get. In one instance the fish store proprietor took some bags of sugar in return for degrees.

What did these poor fellows get for their money? Nothing. They became members of an institution which was simply a sham, and they knew no more of Masonry after they joined than before. But then, for five dollars, could they not procure from Jamieson in Scotland a parchment diploma more elegant than anything of the kind made in America? Thomson acted on the belief that for many men form is more precious than substance and no one can deny that his success justified this belief. He had a series of main and side events which would have stirred the envy of Barnum; and he had an understanding of the psychology of advertising which would do credit to the head ad writer of a metropolitan department store. But his points of strength were also points of weakness. To get a true picture of him one must observe the way in which he met some of the obstacles with which he was confronted from time to time.

1 Transcript, p. 357.
CHAPTER VI

THOMSON IN TROUBLE

Although Thomson and his associates were from one point of view very successful, persuading thousands of men in this country to believe their deceptions, the path they pursued was not strewn with roses. During the past ten years Thomson has been put in more than one tight place, and one can not help admiring the consummate skill shown by him in the explanations he has made to his admirers. He must have expected that sooner or later some “doubting Thomas” would turn up among his followers; some one who would pry into his tales about Masonry in Scotland and his own Masonic record across the water.

He tried hard to induce the members of his institution to present their inquiries to him alone. Thus, Section 98, of his Constitution, provides:

“Any Brother, not a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, who shall communicate or attempt to communicate, without the sanction of said committee, with foreign Masonic powers on matters in any way pertaining to the affairs of the A. M. F., shall be deemed guilty of a Masonic offense, of which the Executive Committee can take official notice and suspend or expel the Brother so offending.”

But even this pointed provision of the fundamental law of the order was not sufficient to deter a few keen investigators. Some men wrote directly to Jamieson, in Kilmarnock, Scotland, and the nature of his answers can easily be imagined. Other questioners took a little different course. Some of these doubters, directed by kind friends, communicated with Secretaries of regular Grand Lodges and other Masonic bodies in this country, who in turn wrote directly to Scotland for information. In these ways, an
account of the doings of Thomson in America reached the ears of the officers of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter and Grand Lodge of Scotland.

It had always been a source of great pride to Thomson and his first Secretary, Robert S. Spence, that they themselves, old Peter Spence, and Jamieson were members in good standing of regular Lodges in Scotland. In the beginning Thomson made no pretense whatever that any of his bodies had anything to do with the Craft Degrees in Scotland. It was always conceded that Grand Lodge of Scotland, of which David Reid is the present Secretary, as successor to the eminent D. Murray Lyon, controlled the Craft Degrees in Scotland.

In the early days of the fraud scheme, when any one doubted the validity of the Grand Council of Rites, sponsored by these men, the question was invariably asked: If Thomson, Spence and Jamieson are doing anything Masonically wrong, why does not Grand Lodge of Scotland expel them? For years this question quieted the fears of many men. In due time, however, the regular Masonic institutions of Scotland, of which Thomson was a member, took notice of his business in America and set about removing him from their rolls.

The first to act was the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland.

It will be remembered that Thomson had received the Royal Arch Degrees in a subordinate body of the Early Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, which in 1895 had united with the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, thereafter the only Grand Royal Arch Chapter in that country. Thomson had a membership in Ayr Royal Arch Chapter 250 on the rolls of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. In January, 1911, he made application to his Mother Chapter (Ayr 250; E. G. No. 3) for a demit. This application was considered at the quarterly meeting of the Supreme Committee of the Supreme
Grand Royal Arch Chapter, on June 7, 1912, and the Committee "were of opinion that a prima facie case had been established against the companion mentioned for being actively concerned in the working and establishment of spurious Bodies in America and elsewhere." The Committee, therefore, in the meantime declined to issue the demit. In July, 1912, formal charges were preferred against Thomson, then under suspension, to the effect that through the Grand Council of Rites and the American Masonic Federation he had formed clandestine lodges in America. Thomson wrote a long letter to the Supreme Committee but made no other appearance, and on September 20, 1912, Thomson was expelled from Royal Arch Masonry in Scotland.

In the Universal Freemason, August, 1912 (V, pp. 7 et seq.), Thomson prints the letter directed to him as well as his answer. The burden of Thomson's reply is that he had resigned from his Mother Chapter in January, 1911, at the time he requested his demit, and that, therefore, he was not a member of, and owed no allegiance to, the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. After making that statement he goes on to present a self-serving description of Masonry in Scotland and America. In his letter he makes admissions damaging enough to justify the action of the Supreme Committee without more. At another time he published in his little magazine extracts from the Proceedings of the Supreme Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, giving an account of his expulsion. He concludes this story by asking the question, "Why does a Body in Scotland take this interest in our affairs?" He then goes on to say:

"There is a reason, and it is this: There were four Masonic Bodies in Scotland of which Brother Thomson was a member, viz.—Grand Lodge, Chapter, Encampment, and Council, from two of these he demitted, the two first. The American York Rite, finding there was nothing they

---

1 Proceedings Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, 1912-1913, p. 110.
2 Ibid, p. 126.
Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. and have pleasure in giving you the information you desire. The Scottish Grand Council of Rites is the oldest body of Freemasons in Scotland conferring the High Grade Degrees of Masonry. Among others there are the Early Grand National Rite of XLVII Degrees, the A. & A. Scottish Rite of 33 Degrees, the Chivalric Grades of Knights Templar, and Knights of Malta, etc., etc.

We have chartered many Councils in America for the conferring of these Degrees, and our representative in and for America is Matthew VoB. Thomson, Grand Master of the American Masonic Federation. He and a number of Delegates have applied for their passports, and they expect to sail per Anchor Liner "Columbia", on or about the 21st of May, and will attend a Conference here before proceeding with our Delegates to Switzerland to attend another Masonic Conference there.

The Higher Degrees of Masonry which we control are mainly of interest to the Masonic Student and our Membership is mainly made up of that class. We do not, in any way, canvass for Members.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Secretary.
Ill. Sir & V. D. Brother:—

Your letter of the 31st Ult. reached me this morning and I note fully your remarks as therein contained.

Brother Lindsay, you will kindly follow out my instructions and make your report to me each week and let your report be sent out on Wednesday so that the same may reach me early on Friday.

Bro. Lucas, has placed me in charge of the Northwest Territory and any Deputy who cannot or will not follow out my instructions will discover that I shall have someone in charge of said office that will endeavor to so.

Kindly govern yourself accordingly.

As I have before stated, you will please make a report to me of any fairly good prospects that you have so far been unable to obtain application therefrom, give me name and Post Office address and I shall endeavor to assist you to obtain their membership.

It is possible that money may be scarce, if so, the greater reason why an organized system should be established whereby greater results may be obtained, such organization would materially assist you and result in your better success and therefore I trust that you will hereafter co-operate with me in my efforts.

With best wishes for your success, I am,

Paternally yours,

Thomason Perrott

W. H. Lindsay, Esq.,
Portland, Oregon.

June 1, 1911.
could do in the shape of open persecution, or secret machination in this country to stop the progress of the A. M. F. and entertaining the mistaken idea that to strike at Brother Thomson was a blow dealt at the A. M. F., they approached the Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter of Scotland with appeals for help. The Grand Lodge, though showing favor from the position it once held, and willing to help its American allies as far as it dare, balked at staging the childish farce of professing to expel a man who was not a member of their Body. The Chapter proved a more willing tool. In the first place they had no reputation to lose, so were not bothered on that score, in the second place, their Grand Secretary is being at the present time sued in the Scottish courts by the Grand Encampment of Scotland for the restitution of funds and other property misappropriated by him."

Thomson bargained without his host when he said that Grand Lodge of Scotland was unwilling to take action against him. Reports of Thomson’s activities in America in due time reached the officers of Grand Lodge.

For a time Thomson was able to make it appear to his adherents that nothing would come of complaints about his activities lodged with Grand Lodge of Scotland. In Universal Freemason, April, 1911 (III, p. 147), he gives an account of his visit to Europe, in which he says he called on the Grand Secretary of Grand Lodge, was received cordially by him, showed him charters upon which the American Masonic Federation was predicated, and explained to the satisfaction of the Grand Secretary all that he was doing in America.2

But Grand Lodge was not persuaded by Thomson’s visit that all was well. After some preliminary investigations, the Grand Committee of Grand Lodge of Scotland, on July 29, 1914, preferred formal charges, in which it was alleged that Thomson was engaged in the business of organizing

---

1 A full explanation of this suit was made during the trial of Thomson by J. Inglis, Esq., Solicitor, of Edinburgh, who drew the deed of amalgamation between the Early Grand and the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter and represented the latter in this suit. The trial resulted in the crushing defeat of Thomson, Jamieson, and the Early Grand adherents.

2 Grand Secretary Reid and J. Inglis, Esq., at Thomson’s trial gave another version of this visit.
Thomson was cited to appear before the Grand Committee September 17, 1914, to answer these charges. He did not appear but sent a long letter to Grand Secretary of Grand Lodge, dated August 15, 1914, in which he admitted participating in the organization of lodges in America under the jurisdiction of the American Masonic Federation, and alleged that he had demitted from his Scottish lodge and that, therefore, Grand Lodge of Scotland had no control over him in Masonic matters.¹

Thomson concluded his letter with the following paragraph:

"I have been seriously thinking of having you and the Grand Committee expelled from all Masonry by the American Masonic Federation on the grounds that you personally have misused the position you occupy as Grand Secretary to write misleading letters to people in America in which you infer that the A. M. F. had sought for, or claimed to have authority from the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and the Grand Committee foolishly allowing themselves to be made parties to this fraudulent prosecution—you know that it is against rule to admit fools to the lodge. Therefore it ought to be against rule to keep them in. You might say that would be nonsense, as you and they do not belong to the

¹This contention of Thomson's was effectively disposed of by the testimony of J. Inglis, Esq., at Thomson's trial. See the testimony of Mr. Inglis, Chapter VII, post.
A. M. F. But then, neither do I belong to the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

A word of advice in closing: 'Keep yer braith tae cool yer ain parritch.' In other words, mind your own affairs and don't let others make a cat's-paw of you. If I can read signs of the times aright, you will soon have trouble enough at home, and the American York Rite Masons won't be able to help you either."

Grand Lodge had a hearing on September 17. Evidence was presented and Thomson was by unanimous resolution "expelled from Scottish Freemasonry."

The hint contained in the last paragraph of Thomson's letter, had reference to the creation in Scotland of a clandestine Grand Lodge, known as the National Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland. An account of the creation of this body is given in its first proclamation which is printed in The Universal Freemason (VII, p. 118). This new institution made its appearance two months after Thomson's expulsion by Grand Lodge of Scotland.

In this proclamation is set forth a brief history of Grand Lodge of Scotland, which is roundly condemned for its recognition for the first time in its history of certain High Degree Bodies to the exclusion of others. Of course, the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland was not one of the bodies recognized by Grand Lodge. The proclamation declared that Grand Lodge had forsaken the landmarks and broken the covenants made by its predecessors, and that it was no longer the successor of the Grand Lodge formed in 1736, and that therefore no Scottish Mason owed it further allegiance. It went on to say, "The National Symbolic Grand Lodge invites all Scottish Masons to assist in the work of renovating Scottish Masonry to clear it from the weeds.
and tares that have sprung up and threatened to choke it, to make it as it was of old, the bulwark of Masonry, an un-compromising enemy of un-Masonic innovations."

The National Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland was only another fabrication of Thomson and company. More will be said of it hereafter, but it should be noted at this time that it was formed in Scotland by Jamieson, Wm. Young, and a few other of Thomson's tools in Kilmarnock.

Thomson always denied that Grand Lodge of Scotland had any jurisdiction over him and called the proceedings by which he was expelled a nullity for the reason that he had taken his demit when he came to this country. This explanation seemed to satisfy those of his adherents who learned of the action of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. In America, a demit, as a rule, severs a man's relations with his lodge, and removes him from the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge; but in Scotland nothing can sever the tie of the Mother Lodge. Besides, when Thomson came to America he had a demit from but one of the lodges to which he belonged over there. All of this will be explained by the testimony of Mr. Reid and of J. Inglis, Esq., given at Thomson's trial.

In 1915, one Spencer S. Ranson was operating openly in St. Louis, Mo., as an organizer for Thomson. He was arrested by the police of that city upon the charge of obtaining money by false pretenses. The police promptly saw that the case was too complicated to be handled by them and called to their assistance the United States Attorney at St. Louis, who promptly turned over the case for investigation to Post Office Inspector Monte G. Price. To this man, more than any other, must be given the credit for uncovering the fraud which lay at the bottom of Thomson's schemes. Mr. Price is one of the oldest Inspectors in the service, and for more than twenty-five years has devoted practically all of his time to the investigation of mail fraud cases. He had barely begun his investigation of Thomson
when he was called to other duties on account of the war. Had it not been for the interruption caused by the Great War, Thomson and his confederates would have been brought to the bar of justice several years sooner. Price kept the case in his charge, and when he was released from the special duties given him on account of the war, once more turned his attention to this case. In the meantime Ranson was released and went about his business as an organizer for Thomson. In his little magazine Thomson boasted of this further victory of the American Masonic Federation in the courts; but the victory was really of small moment, for Ranson's arrest in St. Louis lead ultimately to Thomson's undoing.

Other organizers working for Thomson had difficulties, particularly in the Northwest. As soon as Thomson's men made their appearance in the state of Oregon, the Grand Secretary of that jurisdiction, Mr. James F. Robinson, began an open and determined attack upon these peddlers of fake Masonry. He published many statements in the newspapers of Portland, exposing the fallacious claims of Thomson. Finally, in 1916, Thomson in his own name sued Grand Secretary Robinson for libel and asked judgment in the sum of fifty thousand dollars. Thomson boasted to his subordinates that he would once and for all settle the matter of his authority in a court of record, and that such victory would put an end to the attacks of "the Locals." The case came on for trial before a jury and two days were occupied in the presentation of evidence. Mr. Robinson had published in the press of Portland that the American Masonic Federation was a clandestine body, conferring spurious degrees of Masonry, "that they had procured money from their victims who were given to understand that they were legitimate Masons and would be recognized as such and be permitted to visit Masonic Lodges anywhere; that they had no legitimate authority from any Masonic body for doing
January 8/17.

Spencer S. Hanson 32.
Hotel Calvert N.Y.

Dear Bro. Hanson,-

Replying to your Letter of the 3d. I note what you say about Haladas lodge, I think that they will help you all right.

I am not surprised that so few of the old Wilson crowd want to go on, they have been done so badly before, still there might be a few of them got, it is not so much the number you get of them, as it is the introductions you might get through them. I have had a letter from Passaic, they want to have an Organiser now for the state, I told them if they had not said that they could do it all themselves, we could have had one there before, and asked if they could not help you the open up Newark or Patterson.

About your ad. I do not see that it will do any hurt and it might be productive of good, as you say there must be thousands of unaffiliated masons there.

I have read Maroney's letter, he is a stickler.

Law has started a new Lodge in Birmingham Alabama with good prospects of success, that will be another new state for us.

with wishes for your success.

Fraternally

What more about Dr. Riedel?

[Signature]
Masonic work or for conferring Degrees of Masonry; and that Thomson was an expelled Mason," etc.

The jury were out but twenty minutes and returned a verdict in favor of Mr. Robinson.

Thomson said nothing about this defeat in his magazine, and went on with the game.¹

Thomson, for many years, was closely affiliated with the Supreme Council of Louisiana. He visited New Orleans frequently and there associated with the members of the Supreme Council. J. N. Cheri, who endorsed Thomson's patent, was succeeded by Geo. U. Maury, as Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Louisiana. Both Thomson and Perrot wrote many letters to the men in New Orleans in the interest of the American Masonic Federation. Thomson played up as much as possible his connection with the Supreme Council of Louisiana and led his adherents to believe that the Supreme Council was composed of Frenchmen, and was an independent Masonic Body, having the most perfect title of any Masonic institution in the country.

Although Thomson had always pretended that he had a charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana, authorizing him to work and confer the Symbolic Degrees, there must have been a shade of doubt in his mind as to the validity of his contentions in this regard. In 1917 he wrote Maury a letter asking him to sign a certificate in the name of the Supreme Council of Louisiana to the effect that the Supreme Council had "granted to the Ill. Bro. M. McB. Thomson 33d degree by endorsement on the Patent granted him by the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland Authority to establish Lodges of Craft Masons, and a Grand Lodge of the same in the State of Idaho and the Rocky Mountain Region; that the Grand Lodge thus formed and the American Masonic Federation formed by it has ever since and is now in close relations with the Supreme Council." Maury

¹I am indebted for an account of this trial to correspondence between the Grand Secretary of Utah and Mr. Robinson.
THOMSON IN TROUBLE

did not sign this certificate and Thomson, for a time, dropped the matter. In 1918, just prior to the visit of Maury to Salt Lake City, Thomson and Perrot conceived the happy plan of absorbing Polar Star Lodge, which was under the control of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, and through which Thomson claimed to make connection with Mother Kilwinning of Scotland, into the American Masonic Federation. Polar Star was dormant at this time.

On March 8, 1918, Thomson wrote Maury a letter in the course of which he said:

"I note what you say about Polar Star Charter, there is no doubt but that the Locals would like very much to get possession of that Charter but of course you will not give it up, I thought that you were going to get it to work again? Have you not been able to get sufficient of the old members of Polar Star together to revive the Charter? I have been thinking of a plan suggested by your letter that if it meets with your approval, would be of great advantage to both you and us, and Universal Masonry generally. It is this, to place the Polar Star Charter in the American Masonic Federation, the plan to be something like this: Sufficient of the old members (at least 7) to meet under the Charter, affiliate seven of our members, enough to hold the Charter, and we would see that it would never die again, we would pay all the expense incurred, think this over and let me know what you decide."¹

On June 29, 1918, after Maury’s visit Perrot wrote Metoyer proposing a plan of union between the A. M. F. and the Supreme Council of Louisiana.² On September 28, 1918, Perrot wrote Maury in this vein:

"The more I think of it, the more I am impressed with the idea, that by a closer union of the Supreme Council of Louisiana with the Supreme Council in the American Federation, the better it would be for Masonry, and personally, I believe thereby it would give you much greater strength in Louisiana because you would then be in direct connection with all of our exchanges, etc. and we, to some extent, would

¹ This letter was not introduced at trial, but has been in my possession.
² Transcript, pp. 681ff.
be benefited by the Sentimental use of the Polar Star Charter, keeping it alive and using it as a live force never to become dormant—if we had the Polar Star Charter—right now we could place hundreds of members into it—and I think it is worth thinking about.”¹

The members of the Supreme Council of Louisiana were apparently not pleased with this scheme, for nothing came of it at the time. Both Thomson and Perrot, however, had that front of brass which is the dearest possession of all makers of fraud schemes, and returned to this matter again and again, as we shall see later on.

In August, 1919, M. G. Price, St. Louis Post Office Inspector, to whom an investigation of the American Masonic Federation had been assigned, relieved from his special war duties, came to Salt Lake City in search of evidence. He called on Thomson and Perrot in their Temple at 161 South Second East Street, Salt Lake City, Utah, and there received from these men a first-hand explanation of the whole affair. Mr. Price told of this conversation at Thomson’s trial. After he had gone away Perrot wrote him a letter over the seal of the American Masonic Federation, in which he undertook to explain the authority and work of the American Masonic Federation.²

The letter explained the purposes of the A. M. F. and contained these illuminating paragraphs:

“Our chain of title for the Craft or Blue Degrees may be briefly set out as follows:

The oldest known Lodge of Masons in the world ‘Mother Kilwinning No. ‘0’ of Scotland, through its Right Worshipful Master Lord Boyd of Kilmarnock of Scotland (Lord Kilmarnock), who was at the same time Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, in his capacity as Right Worshipful Master of Lodge Mother Kilwinning No. ‘0,’ granted a Charter to the Mother Lodge of St. John of Scotland at Marseilles, France in the year 1743 Circa. This Mother Lodge at Marseilles in turn Chartered Lodge Polar Star

¹ This letter was not introduced at trial, but has been in my possession.
² Transcript, pp. 36 et seq.
in New Orleans, Louisiana in the year 1794. Louisiana being ceded to Spain and in turn ceded to the United States of America, thus left Lodge Polar Star in Louisiana as the sole heir and representative of the Mother Lodge of St. John in France, afterwards the Mother Lodge in France went to slumber and the Lodge Polar Star as the sole daughter of the Mother Lodge in France thus became the heir and representative not only of the Lodge at Marseilles but likewise that of Mother Kilwinning of Scotland, inheriting all the rights and privileges of its Mother and Grand Mother in a Masonic sense.

This Lodge Polar Star with several other Lodges in New Orleans formed the Craft or Blue Degrees for the State of Louisiana, working the accumulated Rites 'Scottish, French, etc.' and eventually the Lodge Polar Star with other lodges eventually became what is now known as the Craft Chamber in the Supreme Council of Louisiana, this Supreme Council having been itself Incorporated something over Seventy years ago.

In order to come legally and masonically into the possession of the right to create Craft or Blue Lodges and to confer the Degrees of Craft or Blue Lodge Masonry, a Charter of Authority was obtained from the Supreme Council of Louisiana through its Grand Commander Joseph N. Cheri, this charter was granted to Matthew McBlain Thomson by ENDORSAION on the reverse side of a Patent that had been issued to the said Matthew McBlain Thomson by the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland on the Twentieth day of April, 1898.

Matthew McBlain Thomson, through the authority given him Masonically by the Supreme Council of Louisiana, formed and granted a Charter to the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana, this Grand Lodge of Inter-Montana in turn with two other Grand Lodges formed the American Masonic Federation which Federation was Incorporated under the laws of the State of Idaho on the 21st day of September, 1907.

To make matters more clear to you it may be said that the American Masonic Federation does not claim to have a Charter from the Lodge Polar Star of Louisiana (though Masonically it might well do so in accordance with the ancient rights and privileges of Mother Lodges), but claims a Charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana giving
the right to Enter, Pass, Raise Masons, form Lodges, etc. and uses Polar Star only as a connecting link in the chain of succession showing its lineage from Mother Kilwinning No. '0' of Scotland, then to the Mother Lodge in France at Marseilles, then to Polar Star of Louisiana.

The Endorsation of Patent by Joseph N. Cheri, has again been endorsed by his successor George U. Maury the present Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Louisiana.

The original authority for conferring the Higher Grades of Masonry was granted to Matthew McBlain Thomson by the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland on the Twentieth day of April, 1898—a copy of this Patent of authority you may find in the pamphlet of 'Exchanges.' Through this Patent from the Grand Council of Rites Matthew McBlain Thomson formed eventually what is known as the 'Confederated Supreme Council for North America' which Council has been Incorporated on January 9th, 1912 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

To make matters more clear to you would state that this Incorporation of Supreme Council had the endorsement of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland and it immediately recognized the new Council for North America, indeed this new Supreme Council for North America immediately became a part of the Imperial Confederation of the world which has for its head the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland.

In both the Craft and the Advanced Degrees of Masonry Matthew McBlain Thomson has surrendered all the rights which he possessed by Patent.

Briefly the foregoing is our chain of authority.

* * * *

In conclusion would state that you have personally investigated here for yourself and will know in a general way the foregoing mentioned items and also that in our Magazine, all our writings, instructions, Application blanks, etc., we make it known specifically that we have nothing in common with the bodies here known in the Craft as the A. F. & A. M. or F. & A. M. as the case may be, that in the Advanced Grades we make it known also that we have nothing in common, that is, our Confederated Supreme Council practices the degrees of the Early Grand National Scottish
Rite, Ancient and Accepted Free Masonry, and in the Templar Degrees, our system is so much different from the Knights Templar of the United States that even though we show the difference there is really no necessity for doing so because our work, our degrees, our Costume is in almost every particular different; also the titles of Office-Bearers, etc."

Some passages in this letter will not bear comparison with subsequent statements of Thomson as to the source of authority to confer Craft Degrees, and at his trial he, no doubt, wished Perrot had never written it. This letter, however, unquestionably states the theories entertained by Thomson and communicated by him to his victims throughout his career antedating this communication to Mr. Price.

After paying this visit to Thomson and Perrot, and consulting with the United States Attorney at Salt Lake City, Mr. Price went to New Orleans to learn something of the Supreme Council of Louisiana. At New Orleans he learned from the officials of the Supreme Council itself that it was composed almost entirely of colored gentlemen—a most astonishing piece of information which Thomson had carefully concealed for nearly twenty years from his followers. The second thing that he learned was that the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana made no pretense of any connection with Mother Lodge St. John of Scotland at Marseilles, through which Thomson pretended to have historical connection with Mother Kilwinning of Scotland. In the third place, Mr. Price learned that the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana denied that they, Cheri, or the Supreme Council itself, had, at any time, given Thomson or any of his organizers, any authority to confer Craft or Symbolic Degrees. This was the first positive proof acquired by Mr. Price of the fact that Thomson and his confederates had, for almost two decades, wilfully and deliberately deceived their followers.

The call which Mr. Price, as representative of the United States Government, made upon Thomson and a certain cool-
ness in the attitude of the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana towards his request either for more close association or more authentic proof of the authorization to confer the Symbolic Degrees, must have worried Thomson not a little, and he must have pondered many hours to hit upon some theory which would harmonize all his statements.

The following quotations from Thomson’s letters and authorized publications prove conclusively the truth of Montaigne’s statement, “It is not without good reasons said, that he who has not a good memory should never take upon himself the trade of lying.”

On April 16, 1912, Thomson wrote a letter to one W. H. Lindsay, an organizer, which contained the following paragraph:

“As per your request I send you some more report cards, the Photo of our ‘Charter from Louisiana,’ we never had a Charter from Louisiana, what we did have was the authority granted by the Symbolic branch of the Supreme Council of Louisiana endorsed on my Scottish Patent giving me the authority to organize Blue Lodges that it before gave me to establish bodies of the Higher Grades, these things should be clearly borne in mind to avoid mistakes and bad breaks, all this has been explained over and over again, the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland gave me a Patent authorizing me to confer all the degrees recognized by it, being those from the 4th, up, in the several Rites, it could not give me the power in the first three because it did not work these, when it was decided to work the Blue, I applied to the Supreme Council of Louisiana to supply the deficiency, this they did: and the Grand Lodge Inter-montana was the result, and the Grand Lodge Inter-montana surrendered its power as an independent body to the Supreme Lodge of the A. M. F.”

In Who is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason, compiled by Perrot in 1917, but bearing the signed authorization of Thomson, is the following sentence (p. 8):

---

1 Of Liars, Essays, Bk. I, Chapter IX.
2 Original, which I have seen, is in possession of Grand Secretary of Oregon.
April 16/12.

W.H. Lindsay Jas. Dear Bro. Lindsay—

Your letter of the 13th, to hand and contents noted, the Diploma ordered will be at once attended to.

As per your request I send you some more report cards, as the photo of our "Charter from Louisiana" we never had a Charter from Louisiana, what we did have was the authority granted by the Symbolic branch of the Supreme Council of Louisiana endorsed on my Scottish Patent giving me the authority to organise Blue Lodges; that it before gave me to establish bodies of the higher Grades, these things should be clearly borne in mind to avoid mistakes and bad breaks, all this has been explained over and over again, the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland have so a Patent authorising me to confer all the degrees recognised by it, being those from the 4th up, in the several Rites, it could not give me the power in the first three because it did not work these, when it was decided to work the Blue, I applied to the Supreme Council of Louisiana to supply the deficiency, this they did, and the Grand Lodge Inter-montana was the result, and the Grand Lodge Inter-montana surrendered its power as an independent body to the Supreme Lodge of the A.W.P.

I have replied to queries about Bro. Brotnnages Diplomas until I am tired, it was made out in the name given to me, to alter it a new Diploma will have to be issued, for this Duplicate the Grand Secretary General charges a fee of 10/ (£2.50), had the mistake been mine or his he or I would have borne the loss, as it was not, I do not feel like paying for another mistake.

Your "Strath" Lodge is now "Kilwinning," I will not be in W. Coast until on in the summer.

Commissions for Sub-deputies cost £6 each, I have to know the name of the Bro., to whom they are to be given, and the length of time for which they are given, to keep my record complete.

Fraternally,

M. M. THOMSON

R. S. SPENCE

Scottish Rite, W. York
On September 14, 1906, Joseph N. Cheri, Supreme Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Western Hemisphere, located at New Orleans, Louisiana, granted a Charter of authority to M. McB. Thomson (himself being a member of the Supreme Council and also Grand Representative of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland) to form Craft or Symbolic Grand and Subordinate Lodges of Masons, and by virtue of that Charter and also as a Representative of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, he (Thomson) granted a Charter to the Grand Lodge of Inter-Montana.

In December, 1919, Thomson wrote a letter to one J. H. Friedman, of Brooklyn, New York, containing this paragraph:

"Much of the matter I then sent him was from an editorial in this month's Magazine, by it it will be seen that we in no way depend upon La. for authority in the Craft Degrees as we had the authority from the S. C. of Naples to work them in the Rites of Mizraim and Memphis, and only sought the endorsement of the S. C. of La. because according to the terms of my Patent from Scotland, I could only establish Lodges in a country where there was not already a governing body working any of the Rites that my Patent covered. Without their endorsement."

The futility of trying to confine Thomson to the truth is demonstrated by the foregoing quotations.

In October, 1919, just prior to writing his letter to Friedman, Thomson returned to his old scheme to have the Supreme Council of Louisiana issue him a certificate recognizing the authority which he pretended had been given him by Cheri. On October 31, 1919, he wrote a letter to Maury in which, after paying a few flattering compliments to Maury, he said:

"Do you know anything of some people that claim to have charters from an irregular Grand Lodge in Spain? It seems that there are some of them in New York and they have tried to cause trouble with our BB. there by telling

1 Introduced at trial. Transcript, p. 1196.
It is some time now since I wrote to you, or received a letter from you, probably the trouble was the same with both of us, too busy.

For some time before the Triennial meeting of our Supreme Lodge I was busy getting ready for it, and during the three weeks since it finished, I have been busy clearing up the work it left.

Bro. Parrot, Bergera and I were re-elected, the other offices were changed considerably. The meeting was the best attended and largest that we have yet had, we had also meetings of the Grand Consistory, Supreme Council and Grand Encampment of Knights Templar and the Ladies of the Scottish Rite of Adoption put on some of their work for the benefit of the visitors, but you will see a full account of all that in the October Magazine.

What was to me the most interesting item was communications from Lyons, France from the Grand Master of the Martinist Rite appoint-ting me Grand Master of the Rite for the U.S.A. with power to found working bodies, the Supreme Lodge decided to hold the Grand Lodge Martiniste in its bosom, but as an independent body with its own officers, we hope to make it a via media where members of either the Scottish, or American Rites can meet, and it is my intention to nominate the Thirty Thirds of your Jurisdiction as Charter Members of the Martinist Grand Lodge for the U.S.A. That is, if it is agreeable to you.

The other item was an invitation from the Supreme Council of Switzerland to take part in a World Masonic Congress to be held there in the 18th. of July next year, the invitation was accepted and I was chosen to go there and the necessary funds voted for the purpose.

I took the liberty of writing to the Grand Commander of Switzerland informing him of the existence of the S.C. of La. requesting that an invitation be sent to it also to attend the Congress, I gave him Bro. Metoyer's address to send the invitation to.

This will be a great thing for universal masonry especially in this country, and your Council being represented at it will for all time kill all opposition to it and make those B.B. who have been foolishly misled into seceding from it, pray for restoration.

I would like to have your opinion on these matters.

With regards to all the B.B.

Fraternally,

[Signature]

October 9/19.
them that Brother Cheri as Sov. Gnd. Com. of the Sup. Co. of La. never gave me the authority to establish the Symbolic Grades of the Scottish Rite in Idaho by indorsing my Patent from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, you know the old saying that a lie can travel faster on foot than the truth can go on horseback, therefore to confute these troublemakers I wish you would make a certificate something like the enclosed, on the official letter head of your Council seal and send it to me and I will have it photographed and sent to the New York Lodges, as I cannot send my Patent to show, it is too valuable to risk in other hands."  

How absurd for Thomson to suggest that he would like to have the certificate photographed when it would be just as easy for him to have the patent photographed! Indeed, a picture of the patent already appeared in his publication entitled Some Exchanges. The certificate enclosed by Thomson was almost in the identical language of the certificate sent in April, 1917, and which has been described earlier in this chapter.

Finding that Maury was not moved by flattery, Thomson thought he would try other means to secure such a certificate. On December 2, 1919, he wrote a letter to Maury in which he insinuated that certain members of the lodges in the obedience of the Supreme Council of Louisiana charged that the present Supreme Council was irregularly constituted. In this letter, one day after the writing of the letter to Friedman quoted above, Thomson said:

"When I received the Patent from the Scottish Grand Council of Rites empowering me to establish Lodges, Chapters, Councils or Areopagi of the degrees worked, or recognized by it in the U. S. A. or elsewhere where there was not a regular governing body for the same, I found but one such Body existing, viz.—the Supreme Council of La. which worked in the A. A. S. R. In 1906 prevailing circumstances convinced me that the time had arrived for me to act

1 This letter was introduced in evidence at Thomson's trial and is set out in full in the indictment. Transcript, p. 627.
under my Patent, and to the end that everything I did should be regular and in order, I applied to Bro. Cheri to endorse and extend the power granted me by it, this he did, and all technical obstacles being thus removed, on the 9th of January 1907, I organized the Lodge of St. John in the City of Montpelier, Idaho, and subsequently other lodges eventually forming the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana.”

On January 16, 1920, Thomson again wrote a letter to Maury in which, after reciting at length his version of the relations between himself and Cheri, he said:

“I have an article for the February number of our Magazine severing all connection with the S. C. of La. and the A. M. F. this I will publish unless I have a letter from you before it goes to press (no later than the 25th of this month) Acknowledging what Bro. Cheri did and that he had the power to do it.

This letter must be plain and to the point, it must acknowledge that the endorsement on my patent was written by Bro. Cheri, that it was done for the purpose of allowing me to organize Scottish Rite Lodges in the State of Idaho, and must be signed and sealed officially.

Failing to receive such acknowledgment from you there will be no need to reply to this letter, and we will consider all relations between the S. C. of Louisiana and the Supreme Lodge of the A. M. F. definitely broken off, and I will feel at liberty to grant charters that have been requested of me to work in New Orleans.”

The officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana never replied to this letter and in the February, 1920, number of The Universal Freemason, on the first page appeared this notice:

“SUSPENSION OF RELATIONS.

Pending inquiry into complaints made to us, fraternal relations between the Supreme Lodge A. F. & A. M. of the Scottish Rite (Symbolic) and the Supreme Council, A. A. S. R. for the State of Louisiana is temporarily suspended.”

1 Transcript, p. 642.
2 Transcript, p. 653.
At the very time Thomson was trying to procure a certificate from the Supreme Council of Louisiana, he was trying to construct a new theory.

In the February, 1920, number of Light, appeared a letter over the signature of Thomson in which he attempts to explain the source of his authority to confer the Craft Degrees. In the course of the letter he says:

"The 'Charter or Patent' you mention as emanating from the 'Grand Council of Rites of Scotland' bore date April 20, 1898, and gave me power to confer all the degrees of the several Rites controlled by it, and to establish working bodies for the same in any country where there was not already a regular body of that rite. In the U. S. A. there existed no Masonic power claiming or exercising control over the Craft Degrees of the rites of Mizraim or Memphis, and but one that controlled the Craft Degrees in the Scottish Rite, viz: the Supreme Council of Louisiana at New Orleans, and that all things might be done regularly and in order, when events made it necessary to create Craft Lodges working in the Scottish Rite, to avoid danger of conflicting jurisdiction, I applied for and obtained a waiver of jurisdiction from the New Orleans Council before acting under my patent. This was given by the Sov. Gnd. Commander, Joseph N. Cheri, over the grand seal of the Council on the 14th of September, 1906, and granted no additional powers to those conferred by the Scottish Patent, simply waiving the right of prior possession of the territory and transmitting an ancient historical connection with Scotland, and with the exception of continued friendly relations, here began and ended the connection between the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana and the New Orleans Council, with A. M. F. perse there was never any connection other than the friendly relations existing between two Masonic powers in amity with each other."

Thomson in this communication completely reversed his theory of the origin of his authority to confer the Craft Degrees in America. Prior to the visit of Mr. Price to Salt Lake City in August, 1919, his published writings and letters are filled with the statements that the Scottish Grand Council of
Rites had no right to confer the Craft Degrees, which were under the control of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and that in order to get the right to confer such degrees, Thomson had applied to the only legitimate Scottish Rite body in America, namely, the Supreme Council of Louisiana, which had given him a charter of authority to confer the Craft Degrees.

Some of the steps by which he reached this new position are easy to follow. Until he was expelled by the Grand Lodge of Scotland from "Scottish Freemasonry," Thomson had been proud of his connection with that body, and had respected its position in Scotland. After his expulsion, he and his confederates in Scotland created the clandestine National Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland, which pretended to have control over the Craft Degrees in that country.

In December, 1918, Thomson, while in Philadelphia, was shown certain letters from the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, in which they denied that they had ever given him the right to confer the Craft Degrees. These letters were afterwards, early in 1920, published in the Masonic Bulletin, printed at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. One of these letters was dated August 6, 1907, and was signed by Rene C. Metoyer, Secretary-General, and was approved by Joseph N. Cheri, Sovereign Grand Commander, of the Supreme Council of Louisiana. Certain questions had been asked of the Supreme Council of Louisiana by a correspondent in Chelsea, Massachusetts, and Metoyer and Cheri undertook to answer these questions. The following question and answer appear in the letter.

"Second. When did the Supreme Council of Louisiana agree to permit Brother Thomson to transfer his authority to the A. M. F.?

"The Supreme Council of Louisiana has never agreed to permit Brother Thomson to make such a transfer, and if such a transfer has been made this Council repudiates such action, as Brother Thomson only held authority from the M. P. S. G. C. of this Council (under his official seal) to

---

1 See testimony of Ranson, Transcript, pp. 282 et seq.
heal and make regular, in the ‘three symbolic degrees’ these Masons in the Valley of Boston who were considered clandestine or irregular. This authority is endorsed on the back of Brother Thomson’s patent which he holds from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, he had no power or authority to make such transfer, or to substitute or depute anyone else in his stead, without first surrendering his muniments of title to the person so deputed by him. This I am sure he has not done. You are aware of course, that this authority was granted to Brother Thomson before the formation of the A. M. F. and granted as I have said, solely for the purpose of making regular, these irregular bodies in the Valley of Boston, preparatory to the formation of a Grand Lodge A. A. S. R. in said Valley. As you seem to have this matter well in hand I need go no further therein.”

These letters made so pointed a denial of Thomson’s claims that he had received authority from the Supreme Council of Louisiana to organize Blue Lodges, that they were unquestionably the inspiration of some of his letters to Maury asking for a certificate or letter confirming his pretended authorization.

Worried by the existence of these letters, he first tried to induce the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana to effect a union between the Supreme Council and the A. M. F., or at least to surrender Polar Star Lodge to the roll of the American Masonic Federation. When he found it impossible to have either thing done, he tried to coax from the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana a certificate stating that Cheri had given him authority to confer the Craft Degrees. At the end, when all his efforts to get proof of his connection with the Supreme Council of Louisiana had failed, he decided to cast off that connection, declare the present Supreme Council irregular and explain his relationship with the Supreme Council on a theory of waiver of jurisdiction. This was the point he had reached when he wrote his letter to the editor of Light which was published in February, 1920.
THOMSON IN TROUBLE

From the time of the visit of Mr. Price, in the summer of 1919, to the day of his trial in the United States Court at Salt Lake City, Thomson was trying to evolve a theory in explanation of his authority which would harmonize with his past utterances and also withstand the white light of a Government investigation.

Some of the steps taken by him have already been related. During the year 1920, prior to his departure for Europe, Thomson prepared and distributed a new edition of the compilation of *Who is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason*. In the early part of this booklet he retained the statement to the effect that on September 14, 1906, he had received a "Charter of authority" from Cheri, but, towards the end of that portion of the pamphlet entitled *Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason*, of which Thomson himself was the author, he interpolated several additional paragraphs as follows:

"While the Scottish system of Masonry, in its degrees as in its government, is without doubt the foundation on which all other Masonic systems is built, it is an acknowledged principle in Masonry that as all higher degree systems have the Craft degrees for a basis, and as the Craft degrees are practically the same in all systems, that a Master Mason of one rite is entitled to recognition as a Master Mason in any other, no matter how much they may differ in the teaching of their advanced degrees. To quote from 'Mackey's' Encyclopedia: 'Hence arises the law, that whatever may be the constitution and teaching of any Rite as to the higher degrees peculiar to it, the three symbolic degrees being common to all the rites, a Master Mason, in any one of the rites may visit and labor in a Master's lodge of any other rite, it is only after that degree is passed that the exclusiveness of each rite begins to operate.'

Thus the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland had within its bosom in addition to the native Scottish Rite of XLVII degrees (the higher degrees of which alone it controlled) the Rites of Mizraim of 90. Memphis of 95. and the Franco-Scottish of 33d in all their degrees of these Rites. The three last had been received from various sources and worked by the
Grand Council from early in the nineteenth Century and its title thereto confirmed and renewed when it became a member of the confederated Supreme Councils of the world of which the late Ill. Bro. G. B. Pessini of Naples, Italy, was at the time Grand Hierophant. Authorized copies of the rituals of these Rites certified by the seal of the 'Imperial Grand Council General' at Naples, Italy and signed by G. B. Pessini 97., Grand Master; G. G. deMarinis, 33, 90, 96, Grand Secretary General, and A. Di-Domenico, 33. 90. 96, Grand Chancellor General, and dated the IX of the X Masonic month, Egyptian, Pagni. A de V. L. 000.000.1900, corresponding to the 9th day of December, 1900, sent to the Grand Council of Rites. These were given by the Grand Council of Rites to Bro. M. McB. Thomson for the progress of the work in the U. S. A.

Thus the patent given Bro. Thomson by the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, referred to above, gave him the power to establish High Degrees under the Early Grand National Scottish Rite of XLVII degrees, and the Craft and higher bodies under the Mizraim; Memphis and A. A. S. Rites, he and the BB. associated with him in the formation of the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana (and subsequently of the Supreme Lodge for the U. S. A.), preferred to work the latter, but as there was already a governing body of the A. A. S. Rite in the U. S. A. recognized by and in affiliation with the Scottish Grand Council, viz., the Supreme Council of Louisiana, and as his Patent only gave power to establish bodies in territory not already occupied, it was necessary to have the endorsement and consent of the Body already in possession. This was accomplished by the Sovereign Grand Commander of the Sup. Co. of La., the late Ill. Bro. Joseph N. Cheri, on, September 14th, 1906, making the requisite endorsement on Bro. Thomson's Scottish Patent as before mentioned. This was the beginning and the end of the connection between the A. M. F. and the S. C. of Louisiana.

Of powers subsequently acquired by the A. M. F. over the Craft Degrees from different Rites may be cited the following:

In 1907 the Grand Lodge 'Atlantis,' working the Craft degrees according to the Rite of the Illuminati of Bavaria, united with the Supreme Lodge A. M. F., the union being
ratified by the Grand Magus and Custos Illuminati for the U. S. A., the Ill. Bro. Alexander F. Riedel.

In 1909 authority was given to work the Spanish National Rite of 7 degrees over the signature of the Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of Spain, the Ill. Bro. Isidro Villarino del Villar.

In 1911 the Grand Orient of North America, having its East in New York City, working in the French Modern Rite and incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, united with and became a part of the Supreme Lodge in the A. M. F.

On the 25th of July, 1919, by patent from the Ill. Bro. Jean Bricaud, Grand Master General of the Rite of St. Martin, a Rite dating from 1775, that ancient Rite was also attached to the Supreme Lodge.

And this present year, 1920, the Supreme Lodge is in receipt of a charter of acknowledgment from the National Grand Lodge of Scotland, confirming it in the right to confer the Craft degrees according to the Ritual of that Grand Lodge.

And finally, the Supreme Lodge has been invited to attend and take part in the World's Congress of Universal Masons, to be held in Zurich, Switzerland, in July, 1920. And the Grand Master Mason and Grand Secretary General have been appointed Honorary Organizing President and Secretary for the Congress."

These paragraphs give practically the same explanation already published in Thomson's letter to Light both of the meaning of the endorsement by Cheri on Thomson's patent and of the source of his authority to confer the Craft Degrees. How completely Thomson had reversed his position when he wrote these passages will be apparent from a comparison of them with the earlier statements in The Universal Freemason and other published writings, and in his correspondence. It will be well for the reader to compare this latest explanation with the statements contained in his letters to W. H. Lindsay and Dr. Friedman, which are set out, in part, earlier in this book.
Nothing in the new edition of *Who is Who in Masonry* and *Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason* in any way indicated that it had been enlarged or amended; in fact, at the beginning of that portion of the pamphlet entitled *Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason*, towards the end of which the new paragraphs were inserted, appeared the following: "(From The Universal Freemason, March 1915)," the object of this being, without question, to make it appear that the article was in the original form in which it had been published in the magazine.

Again in *The Universal Freemason* for October, 1921, just one month prior to his arrest and at a time when he did not know that he had been indicted, Thomson printed an article entitled, "Is It Ignorance or Malice," which is as follows:

"The full account of the origin and organization of the American Masonic Federation has been so often published in the columns of the 'Universal Freemason,' and in pamphlets and leaflets published and sent broadcast by the Supreme Lodge that there is no excuse for anyone being ignorant who desires to be informed on the subject. Through ignorance some of our own members make loose and unauthorized claims which, being incapable of historical support or proof, are maliciously seized upon by our enemies, refuted, and claimed as disproving our whole claim to regularity of descent and Masonic standing. Among these unauthorized claims is that the Supreme Lodge works by authority of a charter granted to it by the Supreme Council of Louisiana. A variation of this story claims that this charter was granted by the Lodge Polar Star of New Orleans, La. Needless to say, both these stories are erroneous, and whether the result of well-meaning zeal on the part of ill-informed BB. or malicious perversion on the part of our Local enemies, the effect is the same, equally hurtful. Following we give the official version of our origin taken from a pamphlet which was printed for and circulated by the Supreme Lodge twelve years ago that should leave no room for misconception: . . . ."

After the above quotation, follow two of the paragraphs interpolated in the 1920 edition of *Who is Who in Masonry*,
THOMSON IN TROUBLE

printed above, which begin "The Grand Council of Rites of Scotland had within its bosom in addition to the native Scottish Rite of XLVII degrees * * *" and ending, "This was the beginning and the end of the connection between the A. M. F. and the S. C. of Louisiana."

It is submitted that the foregoing provides indisputable proof of Thomson's fraudulent intent in forming his so-called Masonic institutions and in selling his wares throughout the country.

No doubt convinced in his own mind that he had at last settled on an irrefutable theory, in the summer of 1920 Thomson made a trip to Europe to attend the meetings of what he called the "International Masonic Federation," held at Zurich. He had, for a long time, led his adherents to believe that eventually a world-wide federation would be created which would control Masonry and of which Thomson and his associates would be the leaders. A full account of his travels and experiences in Europe was published in The Universal Freemason.

The congress held at Zurich, as explained by Thomson, was for the purpose of taking up the work of the first Congress of International Freemasons held in Paris in 1908, for the purpose of starting a Universal Federation of Freemasons. The meeting at Zurich, held in July, 1920, recognized Matthew McBlain Thomson by making him Honorary President. A signed article by Thomson, telling of the work of the International Masonic Congress, as well as what purport to be minutes of the Congress, are printed in The Universal Freemason for December, 1920. This issue of the magazine also contained a picture showing the delegates attending the Congress. There are five men in the picture! This International Masonic Federation is a beautiful example of a man trying to lift himself by his own bootstraps. A list of the bodies represented at the Congress and their delegates follows:

1. American Masonic Federation . . . . M. McB. Thomson
The Scottish Grand Council of Rites is conspicuous by its absence; but the National Grand Lodge of Scotland was there. Thomson himself represented the first three organizations. John Anderson, a law clerk of Ayr, Scotland, and an expelled Freemason, represented the fourth; August Spilmer, described as Thomson’s private secretary and interpreter, and who went from Utah with him, represented one body. Reuss, who represented four of the bodies, withdrew his representations and left the Congress.1

One of the important resolutions adopted by the Congress was: “The Congress acknowledged unanimously that The Early Grand Council of Rites of Scotland (note the change of name), is head of the first and original Scottish Rite and is therefore, the Mother Lodge of Scottish Freemasonry.” After the organization of this world Masonic power Thomson had

---

1 See Universal Freemason, XIII, p. 125.
2 See Universal Freemason, XIII, p. 129.
his tools in Newmilns, Ayrshire, organize the Premier Lodge of the International Masonic Federation.¹

Among the resolutions adopted by the Congress of the International Masonic Federation was one to the effect that "Countries where the International Masonic Federation is not organized are considered free territory for the establishment of Grand Lodges and Lodges after an invitation to the existing Bodies has been tendered and refused."

It is certain that the International Masonic Federation never extended an invitation to the Grand Lodges of England or Scotland. It is equally certain that the International Masonic Federation never extended an invitation to the Grand Lodge of Utah. Notwithstanding this oversight, in the fall of 1920, articles of incorporation of the International Masonic Federation were filed with the Secretary of State of the State of Utah. Thomson heralded this event in the following language:

"'The King is dead, long live the King.' Exit the American Masonic Federation. Enter the International Masonic Federation. * * * * The old initials A. M. F. will always have a warm corner in their (the members') hearts, a lasting impress on their memory, and only the greater field opened for our activity will reconcile them to the change, which is not so much of a change as an advancement. The Banner we fight under is the same, with the freshly emblazoned record of a new victory inscribed thereon, like the battle flag of a victorious army which bears the name of every victory gained, and each battle won."²

The intense satisfaction which Thomson must have felt over the organization of the International Masonic Federation was short-lived. Some of his most faithful supporters questioned the propriety of organizing in Utah the International Masonic Federation to take the place of the American Masonic Federation. To some of them it looked like a

¹ See Irvine Valley News, Friday, May 6, 1921; reference kindly supplied by J. Inglis, Esq., of Edinburgh.
² Universal Freemason, XIII, p. 100.
move on Thomson's part to transfer all the assets of the American Masonic Federation to this new body without an accounting having been made. Thomson had sent a circular letter to all the daughter lodges calling a special meeting of the Supreme Grand Lodge to be held at Salt Lake City, Utah, December 2, 1920, to pass on the proposal that the American Masonic Federation should surrender its charter and form a new corporation under the name of the Supreme Lodge of the International Masonic Federation of America to work under the authority of the International Masonic Federation of the world. Thomson was able to bring about the creation of this new institution, but in so doing he sewed the seeds of revolt.

The formation of the new corporation and the conduct of some of his organizers in California, together with his admissions to Mr. Wilkie, hereinafter explained, were the principal causes of such dissension among his California followers that before long practically all of the lodges in California went to pieces. In June, 1921, Wilkie, then Provincial Grand Master of California, told the members of the Provincial Grand Lodge at Los Angeles, California, of what he had discovered with respect to the methods of Thomson and Perrot. As soon as news of Wilkie's speech reached Thomson, he promptly suspended Wilkie. In August, 1921, Wilkie came to Salt Lake City to attend the regular meeting of the Supreme Lodge, only to be denied admission at the door. Had Wilkie been allowed to enter the meeting and to receive a trial on the floor of the Supreme Lodge, the Convention would, no doubt, have broken up in a riot. As it was, by his treatment of Wilkie, Thomson alienated the good will of many of his loyal followers. Wilkie had been an able and popular leader in the state of California and had defended Thomson's organizers successfully in practically all the actions brought against them for obtaining money under false pretenses. This move, however, was characteristic of the way in which Thomson
always handled such matters. He would be Caesar or nothing.

In the meantime, quite unknown to Thomson, a Grand Jury had met at Salt Lake City and had returned an indictment against him, Bergera, Perrot, and Jamieson for conspiring to violate the United States mail fraud statute. Shortly before Thanksgiving Day, 1921, Thomson and Perrot were arrested at Salt Lake City upon warrants held by the United States Marshal. While under arrest Thomson granted an interview to a reporter of the Salt Lake Tribune and carried matters off with a superior air:

"Mr. Thomson said his lodge is the oldest in the world, though the youngest in the United States. 'Originally the other lodge of Masons,' he said, 'was the same as the others of the world, but it apostatized from the others, and became independent, with self-constituted authority.' He declared none of the Grand Lodges, other than his own body, have charters from a superior source, and that the so-called regular lodge in Utah was established by an anti-Mormon society. 'Our lodge is not religious, as is this other body,' he said. 'Mormons and Catholics belong to our lodge, and these are in good standing. I am a Mormon myself, and I think I am in good standing. I am not worried about the results of this case. It is brought simply to annoy us, and the charge will amount to nothing.'"

The indictment is a long document containing ten counts, each charging the defendants with conspiring to violate, or with directly violating, the United States mail fraud statute. In brief, the indictment charges that the defendants conspired to make certain fraudulent and deceptive representations regarding the authority, chain of title, power, and history of the American Masonic Federation and Confederated Supreme Councils of the American Masonic Federation, and that the defendants have generally made these false representations to the public throughout the United States between the first day of May, 1918, and the 23d day

---

1 *Salt Lake Tribune*, Nov. 23, 1921.
of April, 1921, for the purpose of inducing men to join these corporations. The indictment alleges that the defendants pretended that these two corporations were the only regular, legitimate, and true Scottish Rite Masonic bodies in America; that the American Masonic Federation had the right to confer the Craft Degrees and to create Craft Lodges throughout the United States by virtue of a charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana, which traced its history to Mother Kilwinning of Scotland; that the Confederated Supreme Councils of the American Masonic Federation derived its authority to confer the 4th to the 33d Degrees from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, which was represented to be the oldest High Degree body in the world, embracing within its bosom all Rites and systems gathered around the parent stem of Masonry, and that it was a regular, legitimate, High Degree body of good reputation and unquestioned authority. It was also charged that the defendants pretended that these two corporations were the only organizations in America which were in regular possession of the Scottish Rite Degrees and that defendants alone in America could confer true, genuine, and regular Scottish Rite Degrees from the first to the 33d, inclusive. The methods by which the defendants disseminated these representations and their purpose to make money thereby, were stated, and the indictment specifically denied the truth of each and every one of these representations.

In the following chapter an account of the trial and a summary of the testimony introduced in behalf of the Government and the defendants will be presented.
CHAPTER VII

UNITED STATES V. THOMSON, ET AL.

On May 1st, 1922, the case of the United States v. Thomson, Perrot, Bergera and Jamieson, came on for trial before Honorable Martin J. Wade, United States District Judge, in the United States District Court for the District of Utah, at Salt Lake City. Judge Wade is Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Iowa, but was named to preside at this trial in place of Honorable Tillman D. Johnson, Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Utah, who, being a member of the Masonic fraternity, felt that he was disqualified. 1

When the court crier arose to announce the opening of court, he saw before him a much larger audience than usually attends the sessions of the Federal Court in Salt Lake City. Many persons interested in the defendants, a few interested in regular Masonry, and many merely curious men and women crowded into the small court room and adjacent hall. Here was a real cause célèbre about to be heard, and the audience was all agog. Aside from the interested parties, very few in the court room knew what it was all about. But the newspaper headlines promised much. Perhaps some of the mysteries of Masonry would be revealed; perhaps some of the great men in the Masonic fraternity here and abroad would be called to the stand as expert witnesses! Every one present was on the qui vive to catch all that happened.

There were rumors in the air that the attorneys had burned the midnight oil for months in an effort to master the intricacies of Masonic nomenclature and history, and

1 Honorable Martin J. Wade was born at Burlington, Vermont, October 20, 1861. He is a graduate of the State University of Iowa (1886), where for many years he was a lecturer on law. He served throughout the 68th Congress, and was appointed United States District Judge in 1915. He is a member of the Catholic Church.
that before the case was done a battle of great Masonic scholars would be staged.

Robert Jamieson, of Kilmarnock, Scotland, although included in the indictment, was not arrested, and made no appearance at the trial.

Throughout the trial Thomson, who wore a patch over one eye, and presented rather a seedy appearance, kept his head lowered and seemed to take little interest in what was going on about him. Ferrot and Bergera, while trying to present a studied air of indifference, were plainly much interested in the proceedings.

The Government was represented by Honorable Charles M. Morris, United States Attorney for the District of Utah, and John Jensen, Esq., Special Assistant to the Attorney General of the United States, appointed to assist in the trial of this case. The defendants were represented by M. E. Winder, Esq., and C. S. Price, Esq., both of the Utah bar.

The first day was occupied in the selection of the jury. Of the jurors who tried the case, it has been reported that one is a member of the Catholic Church, perhaps eight are members of the Latter-Day Saints, or Mormon Church, and the balance are not members of either of these Churches. It is interesting to note that no person who had an active part in the trial of this case, as Judge, juror, or attorney, is a member of the Masonic fraternity in any of its branches.

On Tuesday, May 2, 1922, after the jury had been duly sworn, Mr. Jensen made a brief opening statement in behalf of the Government. He explained the charge as laid in the indictment and explained to the court and jury the proof which would be adduced in behalf of the Government to show that the defendants had actually engaged in a conspiracy to violate the mail fraud statute of the United States.
A. M. F. TEMPLE AT 131 SOUTH SIXTH STREET, SALT LAKE CITY.
Immediately after the print the walls will be painted out.
The first witness for the Government was Mr. M. G. Price, of St. Louis, Mo., the Post Office Inspector who had investigated the case for the Government. Mr. Price related the conversation which he had with Thomson and Perrot at their offices in Salt Lake City, on August 6, 1919. At that time, Mr. Price testified, Thomson displayed his patent from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland and stated that it was all the authority he had for conferring the degrees from the 4th to the 33d inclusive; he also said that his authority for conferring the Craft Degrees was by indorsement on the reverse of the patent. When he first saw the patent, Mr. Price said, the only endorsements on the reverse of the patent were those of Cheri, Maury and Goode; and that there was no writing below those signatures. Thomson also asserted on that occasion that the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland was "the origin and source of all Scottish Rite Masonry in the higher degrees." Thomson showed Mr. Price about the building at No. 161 South Second East Street, Salt Lake City, in the rear of which Mr. Price saw the printing plant at which Thomson's literature was printed. Thomson told Mr. Price that he was the President General and Grand Master Mason of the American Masonic Federation, and that the Confederated Supreme Council was a part of the American Masonic Federation. At the close of the interview, Mr. Price requested a letter from Thomson, over the official signature and seal, reciting what his claims were. Mr. Price said that he afterwards received such a letter over the signature of Perrot, a portion of which has heretofore been quoted, and thereupon this letter was introduced in evidence. Mr. Price then identified copies of Who is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason, Some Exchanges, bound vol-

1 Direct examination by Mr. Jensen.
2 Transcript, p. 31.
3 Transcript, p. 32.
4 Transcript, p. 33.
5 Transcript, p. 34.
6 Transcript, p. 36 ff.; see, ante, p. 128 ff.
umes of The Universal Freemason, and other writings which had been given him by Thomson and Perrot.

While Mr. Price was on the stand, Mr. Jensen read generous excerpts from the writings of Thomson in support of the Government's contention that Thomson claimed to have authority to confer the Craft Degrees from the Supreme Council of Louisiana. These extracts were taken from Who is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason, The Universal Freemason, and the Tabloid History of Masonry. Other extracts were read by Mr. Jensen showing the history and authority of the Scottish Grand Council of Rites. Furthermore, selections from these same publications were read to the jury presenting Thomson's contentions with respect to his affiliations with foreign Masonic powers. Two drawings, on a very large scale, of Thomson's trees, which are pictured elsewhere in this book, were introduced in evidence by the Government and remained visible in the court room throughout the trial.

On cross-examination, Mr. Price testified that he was a Mason, subject to the jurisdiction of Illinois, having taken the 32d Degree in the Scottish Rite and the last in the York Rite. Mr. Price also stated that he had gone abroad for the purpose of securing evidence and had visited England, Scotland and France.

By stipulation of counsel the original Thomson patent was thereupon introduced in evidence.

Peter J. Wilkie, Esq., an attorney of Sacramento, California, testified that in response to solicitation by one A. E. Lucas, an organizer for the American Masonic Federation, he had joined the Federation in the latter part of 1917. In 1918, Mr. Wilkie said, he had a conversation with Thomson.

---

1 Transcript, pp. 58-74.
2 Transcript, pp. 75 et seq.
3 Transcript, pp. 78 et seq.
4 Conducted by Mr. Wilson.
5 Transcript, p. 92.
6 Transcript, p. 97.
7 Direct Examination by Mr. Morris.
8 Transcript, p. 106.
in his law office, at Sacramento, during which Thomson admitted that Lucas was one of his organizers. Before joining, Wilkie had studied *Who is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason*, which had been presented to him by Lucas, he had also read a little book produced by Lucas, entitled *Calendar of Scottish Rite Freemasons*, in which appeared a list of lodges all over the world, and their patrons. Among these patrons were the names of King Edward and a great many of the nobility of Great Britain. In a list of officers of some of the Grand Bodies mentioned, was the name of M. McB. Thomson. Mr. Wilkie stated that he was told by Lucas that there were other bodies of Masons, but that this was the real Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite body. During the conversation with Lucas, Mr. Wilkie was informed that he would be allowed to come in for a reduced sum, as a lodge was being chartered, and Wilkie received the Craft Degrees for $25. Subsequently Mr. Wilkie took the degrees from the 4th to the 33d, inclusive. He received the degrees from the 4th to the 32d on one Sunday afternoon, and paid for them the sum of $45. A month or six weeks later he received the 33d Degree from Thomson himself, and paid him the sum of $50 for it. Wilkie said he was surprised that he was required to pay for this degree, inasmuch as it was given for merit. Wilkie said that he had been Eminent Commander of the Council, First Lieutenant Grand Commander, Vice Grand Master of the Federation (the second highest position in the organization), and Provincial Grand Master for California.

He identified a number of diplomas and documents bearing the signatures of Thomson and Jamieson, given him in proof of his membership in these institutions.

1 Transcript, p. 114.
2 Transcript, p. 115.
3 Transcript, p. 116.
4 Transcript, p. 122.
5 Transcript, p. 122.
6 Transcript, p. 124.
7 Transcript, p. 130 et seq.
Wilkie said that the one thing the men were most in doubt about was Thomson's authority to confer Craft Degrees. Many of the boys used to come to him for information. *Who is Who in Masonry* was confusing in regard to Louisiana, and Mr. Wilkie took up the matter with Thomson in the presence of other members of the order so as to have him verify statements made by Wilkie as to the source of his authority.

"Q. What did he say?"

"A. Well, he stated that his authority to confer the Craft Degrees or Blue Degrees had come direct from Kilwinning, by way of St. John of Marseilles to Polar Star Lodge of Louisiana through the Supreme Council of the Western Hemisphere to the American Masonic Federation by a charter granted to him in 1907, I think that is the date; however, that is all set out in *Who is Who*, and was often referred to by us, and Mr. Thomson has repeatedly said that we would find that all set out in *Who is Who in Masonry*. It was the closing argument, the closing matter on these questions on nearly all occasions."

Often challenged about authority to confer other degrees and anxious to know the truth about the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, Mr. Wilkie inquired of Thomson himself for the facts about this institution. This is Wilkie's recollection of the conversation:

"I can tell you the substance of the conversation in this far that I asked him where he received his authority to confer the higher degrees, and he replied that his authority came to him by patent from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, and that he had such a patent. I asked him what the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland was. I didn't know anything about the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, and neither did the rest of the members. We were informed—I was informed personally by Mr. Thomson that the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland had control of all the higher degrees from the 4th to the 33d, and was the custodian of all the higher degrees in Scotland. I asked him as to any other

---

1 Transcript, p. 154 f.
higher degree bodies, and what recognition the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland had by higher degree bodies throughout the world. Mr. Thomson told me that they were recognized the world over. It made no difference where you traveled, if you were a high degree Mason, having received your diploma from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, which is the oldest body of high degree Masons in the world, that you would be recognized as a Mason on the strength of your diploma, and admitted to any higher degree lodge outside of the United States of America. There were some countries he said as I recollect that were not in affiliation with the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, but the majority of countries were in affiliation, and their visitors were recognized or their members were recognized wherever they went.

Q. Do you recall whether he said anything as to whether or not Scotland was in affiliation or amity with the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland?

A. The Grand Council of Rites is the only high degree body in Scotland. . . . There is a Grand Lodge for craft degrees, which I understand from him was located at Edinburgh, Scotland, and they had control of the craft degrees and won't recognize any high degrees. The Grand Council of Rites of Scotland issued all of the high degrees in Scotland to the members of our organization and others who were in affiliation."

Mr. Wilkie said he had repeated these things to many of the members in California, often in the presence of Thomson, who had never questioned any of his statements.1

In the month of December, 1920, while Wilkie was Vice Grand Master Mason, he and Thomson went to Turlock, California, where, at a meeting, attended by Wilkie and Thomson, a number of men complained that they had paid amounts ranging from $75 to $290 to an organizer and had received nothing in the way of diplomas or degrees. Wilkie said:

"The checks had been made out to the American Masonic Federation and had been endorsed on the back, 'American

1 Transcript, pp. 163-165.
Masonic Federation, by C. Vlahos.' Mr. Thomson had with
him a list of the candidates whose names had been forwarded
to Salt Lake City, as near as I can recollect, and he asked
these men what their names were and on hearing the names
he referred to this list and said that the American Masonic
Federation didn’t know anything about it, they had heard
nothing of it whatever, and so far as he was concerned
they were not Masons. The American Masonic Federation
hadn’t received their money and they would have to look
to Mr. Vlahos, who had received their money, for any re-
dress in the matter.”

Wilkie then arose and explained that the American Ma-
sonic Federation could not evade responsibility for this
man’s acts, whereupon Thomson stated that he would see
to it that some redress was obtained for these men.

Shortly after this, at Stockton, California, Thomson and
Wilkie again visited a lodge, where practically the same
thing was repeated. Vlahos was present and Wilkie wanted
to have him arrested, but Thomson didn’t feel that that
would be the proper thing to do.

Mr. Wilkie said that in July, 1918, he had attended a
convention of the Supreme Grand Lodge at Salt Lake City
when the Temple at 161 South Second East Street, Salt
Lake City, was dedicated; that all three of the defendants
were present as well as Mr. Maury, the head of the Supreme
Council of Louisiana; that at that convention there was an
agitation to oust all of the executive officers and, in fact,
men were elected to take the places of Perrot as Secretary
General and Bergera as Treasurer General, but the newly
elected officers withdrew when Thomson stated that these
men had been with him for years and knew his business
and understood it, and it would take him too long to teach
new men the work of the offices.

---

1 Transcript, p. 170.
2 Transcript, p. 171. While on the stand Thomson did not explain what had been done
about this.
3 Transcript, p. 172.
4 Transcript, p. 186.
5 Transcript, p. 186.
In the month of December, 1920, after the visit of Thomson and Wilkie to the lodges at Turlock and Stockton they had a conversation at Wilkie's office in Sacramento. Wilkie says he at that time informed Thomson that he had received from Ranson, who had then been expelled, two copies of a magazine; that he had read these copies and discovered in them a denial over the signature of the head of the Supreme Council of Louisiana of Thomson's authority to do any of the things which he claimed to have the right to do from Louisiana.

"... I asked Mr. Thomson if there was any truth in such a statement. I can give you his words as he gave them to me. 'Brother Wilkie, I never claimed to have any authority from Louisiana.'

The Court: From what?
A. Louisiana.
Mr. Morris: What then occurred?
A. I asked him from whence he had received his authority. He replied that he had received his authority from the Rite of Mizraim and Memphis through the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland. . . .
Q. Mr. Wilkie, what degrees were you talking about?
A. We were talking about the fundamental degrees of the organization, the Craft degrees. There are no other degrees to be considered if you are not a Mason of the Craft degrees, the high degrees amount to nothing so far as you are concerned."

During the same conversation Mr. Wilkie asked Thomson some questions with reference to the financial condition of the American Masonic Federation. Wilkie's account of the event follows:

"The conversation came about by my requesting a payment for services rendered for the organization in a case which was before the courts in San Francisco. At that time

---

1 These were copies of the Masonic Bulletin, published in Philadelphia, for the months of April and May, 1920.
2 Transcript, p. 187.
3 Transcript, p. 188.
I was informed by Mr. Thomson that the funds of the Association were depleted, there was no money with which to pay for my services. I called his attention to the fact that at the last convention of the Grand Lodge we had organized—or passed a resolution rather to the effect that a defense fund should be created within the order for the purpose of taking care of such cases as those where my services were necessary. I also told him that certain bonds had been sold, and money had been returned to the organization in accordance with that resolution.

Q. Did you specify the amount?

A. Specifying somewhere about eight thousand dollars as near as I had information; that was only hearsay.

Q. Did you state that to Mr. Thomson.

A. I did. I asked Mr. Thomson what had become of the funds of the organization, of the Federation. He said, 'I don't know.' I said, 'Well,' I said 'it is time that we had an accounting.' I am not giving you word for word what our conversation was, I am giving you the gist of it, what seems to me at this time to be the principal matters we spoke about. He said, 'Well,' he said, 'Brother Wilkie, if you can get an accounting,' he said, 'you will do more than I have been able to do.' 'But,' I said, 'you have had an accounting.' He said 'No, I have not.' I recalled his attention or his mind to the fact that at the convention held in 1919 in Salt Lake City already referred to, that the Secretary General had made a report to the delegates in convention, that in that report he had given us a statement of the assets and the liabilities of the Federation and presumably informed us of all of those matters concerning the financial condition.

I asked him was that a correct report, had the books been audited before that report was made, and was the report good. He said it was not. He said, 'I am sorry to say that that report was not a correct report.' I said, 'do you mean to tell me that it was simply a statement made by Brother Perrot for the purpose of handing out something to cover up what was not correct?' He said, 'Brother Wilkie, I am inclined to feel that way.' He said 'I never doubted Brother Perrot, but I feel there is something wrong.' He said, 'I have never been able to get an accounting from Brother Perrot in seven years.' But I said 'Brother Thomson,' I said, 'according to the constitution and by-laws of
the Federation you are entitled to an accounting every six
months.' He said 'I have not been able to get it.' 'Well,'
I said, 'I will get it . . . .'

. . . . I said, 'I will give you every assistance in my
power.' I offered to come to Salt Lake City for the De-
cember special convention to help him in the auditing and
the making up of the books and finding out and getting
an accounting from Brother Perrot of the things that I felt
we were entitled to have.

Q. Did you come to Salt Lake for that purpose?
A. I did not.
Q. Why not?
A. Brother Thomson at the time we had the conversation
in my office said that he would let me know in time so
that I could be there when the books were audited. I wrote
to him on at least two different occasions asking him when
the audit was to be made, and to let me know, but I did not
receive any reply in respect to when the audit was made
until sometime afterwards when I was informed that it was
now too late."

Mr. Wilkie then related the circumstances connected with
his expulsion by Thomson. He explained that in his opinion
and judgment he considered the special convention called
for December, 1920, to pass upon the propriety of incorpor-
ating the International Masonic Federation, as well as cer-
tain things done at the convention of 1919, to be irregular,
and that he had charged these things against Thomson and
in return had been expelled.3

Section 7 of the Constitution provides that to enforce the
decisions of the President General, "he may summarily sus-
pend any charter granted by the Federation, or any mem-
ber thereof, pending the final action of the Supreme Lodge."
This was a prerogative often exercised by Thomson, and he
used it in the case of Wilkie.4

At the meeting of the Supreme Council held in Salt Lake
City in the summer of 1921, Wilkie was given no opportunity

1 Transcript, pp. 189 et seq.
2 Transcript, p. 192. Thomson's letter to Wilkie, dated July 29, 1921, containing the
charges, appears at page 195 of Transcript.
3 Transcript, p. 197.
to appear and be tried by the Supreme Lodge, as he claimed was his right, but was expelled without a hearing before that body.¹

At the time that Thomson visited Mr. Wilkie at Sacramento in 1920, Wilkie asked whether or not it would be possible “to check up on Brother Perrot by the warrants and receipts in the possession of the Treasurer General.” “‘Why’ he said, ‘Brother Wilkie, Brother Bergera has never had a receipt book and has never received one penny of the funds belonging to the Grand Lodge or to this organization.’ ‘Then,’ I said, ‘Who handles them?’ He said, ‘They came to Brother Perrot.’ I said, ‘Then so far as Brother Bergera is concerned, his title as Treasurer General of the Grand Lodge was simply an empty title and carried nothing with it and he did nothing to fill that office?’ He said, ‘Yes, that is true.’”²

On cross-examination,³ Mr. Wilkie testified that he was born in Scotland; that he had made application for citizenship papers, but that the application had been denied by a Superior Court of California, and that he had prosecuted an appeal to the Supreme Court of the state. He also said that he had been a salesman as a young man and had educated himself for the law. He said he had represented members of the order a number of times in the courts. The first case in which he appeared was to defend an organizer named C. A. Perkins. He was never paid for his services, although Perkins was acquitted.⁴ He also told of libel actions begun by him in behalf of the American Masonic Federation against two San Francisco newspapers; the object of these was, in Mr. Wilkie’s words, “to assert and prove our authority to do business, that is the one thing we were principally looking for. We wanted to have it decided in California by one of the higher courts whether or not the Am-

---

¹ Transcript, pp. 198-199.
² Transcript, p. 200.
³ Conducted by Mr. Wilson.
⁴ Transcript, pp. 201-208.
American Masonic Federation had the right and authority to do the work which it was doing. One of these cases was settled out of court; but the other was dismissed. Mr. Wilkie stated in court that there was a sum of money due him from the American Masonic Federation, but that he could not fix the amount exactly; and that he had brought an action for his fees. He also said that he was no longer convinced that Thomson was right in his contentions relative to the order; and that this conviction was born of the conversation he had with Thomson in his office in December, 1920.

Spencer S. Ranson, formerly one of Thomson's favorite organizers, was called as a witness for the Government. Beginning with the year 1912, he said, he had worked as an organizer in the states of Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, New York and Pennsylvania. In doing this work of organizing, he charged different prices for the Craft Degrees; in Illinois, he established a lodge for a fee of $25 a man; in St. Louis, he charged $40; in Pennsylvania, $50, and in New York, $55. Out of the money paid by each man, $15 was sent to Thomson, $5 was set aside to buy paraphernalia for the lodges, and the balance was kept by Ranson. All money transactions were between him and Thomson. He said he had to sign a regular contract as an organizer and give a bond to Thomson. During the period that he worked for Thomson, he stated that he had paid to Thomson about $8,000. Mr. Thomson, as Chief Organizer, was Ranson's employer, and he was responsible to him alone.

Mr. Ranson identified certain certificates, over the name of Thomson, appointing him a deputy, "with power to con-
fer on qualified candidates the several degrees of the E. G. Scottish National Rite of Ancient and Accepted Freemasonry from the Fourth to the Thirty-second inclusive, as well as all other degrees or orders practiced by the Grand Council of Rites. . . ." Each one of these certificates was for a particular state.

A copy of a contract between Ranson and Thomson, dated May 27, 1914, was identified and introduced in evidence. This contract is in form the same as the contract shown elsewhere in this book. (See page 103.)

After he had served Thomson for a number of years and had proved his worth, Ranson was given a certificate empowering him to organize lodges “at large,” and was allowed to confer all the degrees which Thomson pretended to possess.

Mr. Ranson said he remembered a conversation between himself and Thomson in New York concerning P. J. Maznr, who was acting as an organizer for Thomson. Mr. Ranson stated that at that time he told Thomson he knew Maznr was crooked and a defaulter, that he had mortgaged a house which he didn’t own. Thomson said that he would not give Maznr any further authority to work for the Federation, but later Ranson saw a regular commission signed by Thomson in the name of Maznr.

Mr. Ranson told of the interview which he had with Thomson regarding the letters in the possession of Mr. Donato, of Philadelphia, written by the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, denying that they had ever given him the right to practice the Craft Degrees, and that they had ever recognized any of the members of Thomson’s lodges as Masons. Mr. Donato produced the letters in the presence of Ranson and Thomson, and the latter read them. All Thomson said was that he didn’t understand how Brother Cheri could

1 Transcript, p. 254.
2 Transcript, p. 259.
3 Transcript, p. 267.
4 Transcript, pp. 280-292.
write such letters.¹ The two letters shown to Thomson by Mr. Donato, and published in the *Masonic Bulletin* of Philadelphia in April and May, 1920, were identified by Mr. Ranson and introduced in evidence. One of these letters, written in 1909, says:

"The only authority Mr. McB. Thomson ever had from this Sup. Council was the authority to heal and make regular the Brothers in and around the valley of Boston. He had no authority whatever from the Sup. Council to form the A. M. F. or organize any other body of Masons, as the powers granted him ceased when he had performed the act of healing."²

A portion of the other letter which was approved by J. N. Cheri, denying that Thomson ever had authority to organize the American Masonic Federation has been heretofore set out.

While attending a general meeting, at Salt Lake City, Mr. Ranson had a conversation with Perrot in which Perrot told how "the old man (meaning Thomson) had slipped it over Price (the Post Office Inspector). . . ."

". . . . He said while Price had been there Price told him he said, 'there is so much here, I can't keep this all in my head;' he said Mr. Price wanted him to write it, so he went to file and got the letter that he wrote to Price. He says 'I think this letter will hold him for a while,' and he gave me the letter."³

With reference to Thomson's authority to confer the Craft Degrees, Mr. Ranson stated:

"I heard him make the statements in open lodges, lectures, public lectures that we conducted, that he was working directly under a charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana. That was the claim that was always made. . . . I remember one time in particular, we had a public lecture in

¹ Transcript, pp. 283-284.
² Transcript, p. 287.
³ Transcript, p. 297.
the city of Detroit, where people, members and their wives and their sweethearts and prospective members were invited to attend. Mr. Thomson was slated to give a lecture, which he gave, which was practically a verbatim copy of “Why Am I a Freemason.”

After the September meeting in 1919, Mr. Ranson went back to New York and the members there sent him to Louisiana for the purpose of investigating the letters in the possession of Mr. Donato. The morning after he returned to New York, he met Mr. Perrot, who asked him what the trouble was in New York.

“. . . I told him I had just returned from New Orleans—I first asked him ‘why are you here, what do you know about this,’ ‘why didn’t Mr. Thomson come?’ ‘Mr. Thomson is the man that is responsible here.’ I says, ‘You don’t know any more about it than I do; you don’t know much.’ Mr. Perrot says, ‘Oh, Mr. Thomson had to go west to charter a Lodge in Frisco.’ I said, ‘Pretty soft for him.’ I said, ‘This is the place.’ Then I told him, I said ‘I have just got back from New Orleans, and those people down there deny they ever gave the American Masonic Federation any right or any claim of title or anything at all. They repudiate the whole outfit,’ and Perrot says, ‘Well, I have got it here.’ I said, ‘By gosh, you want to have it’. . . . and with that I left.”

Afterwards Dr. Friedman, Provincial Grand Master of the State of New York, called together a delegation of members of the seven Blue Lodges in New York. Mr. Ranson made his charges about New Orleans, but he had said very little when Perrot arose and said, “By virtue of the prerogatives vested in me, as Grand Secretary General, you are expelled,” and he reached into his inside pocket and produced a letter dated eight days previous to any offense committed by Mr. Ranson and signed by Thomson, and handed it to Dr. Friedman, giving notice of Mr. Ranson’s expulsion.

---

1 Transcript, p. 298.
2 Transcript, p. 300.
3 Transcript, p. 301.
The members present, however, insisted that Mr. Ranson present his report and he went on with his story. Perrot asked the members present to sign a paper declaring their loyalty to the American Masonic Federation. The men wouldn't do it. Mr. Ranson testified he concluded his statement before the meeting in New York with the words, "As far as I am concerned, I am done; the whole thing is a fake and a swindle."

Mr. Ranson was asked by counsel for the Government if he had ever had conversations with Thomson about the Higher Degrees. Mr. Ranson stated the substance of these conversations in the following language:

"Well, he all the time claimed that the Grand Council of Rites was the oldest known body of high degree Masons in the world, it was composed of the leading Masons of Scotland, men who were the most interested in Masonry, students of Masonry, students, men of that kind and class. . . . . He would always extol it to the skies, praise it up."

On cross-examination, Mr. Ranson stated that he joined the American Masonic Federation in 1911, became an organizer in 1912, and worked exclusively at that business until 1919. Prior to 1911 he had worked principally as a sailor and as a house man at hotels.

Mr. Ranson said that he had made a proper accounting to the A. M. F. for all the funds he had ever received.

When his attention was again called to the reverse of Thomson's patent showing the indorsation of Cheri, Mr. Ranson said he never thought that that indorsation had anything to do with the Symbolic Degrees. He thought that referred only to the upper degrees of Masonry and that Thomson had a charter for the Craft Degrees.
Arthur S. Bier,\(^1\) stated that he was solicited to join the American Masonic Federation by a Dr. Biel, in Detroit, Michigan. Dr. Biel gave him a copy of *Who is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason*, which he read, and thereafter signed an application to join.\(^2\) Mr. Bier received all the degrees of the Scottish Rite, as far as the 33d, and all the degrees of the affiliated Rites. He identified a diploma, dated August 23, 1917, signed by Thomson, certifying his membership as a Master Mason in Lodge Kopernik, No. 103, Detroit, Michigan, in the obedience of the *American Masonic Federation*,\(^3\) as well as a diploma, dated May 3, 1918, signed by Robert Jamieson, Grand Secretary, and certifying that Mr. Bier was a Master Mason in Lodge Kopernik, No. 103, *on the Registry of the National Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland*.\(^4\) He also identified diplomas signed by Thomson certifying that he was a 32d Degree Scottish Rite Mason, Noble of the Mystic Shrine, a Sovereign Grand Inspector General, 33d and Last Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Rite, “an Absolute Grand Sovereign (90th and Last Degree),” of the Rite of Mizraim, 96th Degree of the Rite of Memphis, and that he had been decorated with the Lybic Chain.\(^5\) He said he had paid $50 for the Craft Degrees, $65 for the Higher Degrees, $25 for the Knights Templar, and $42.50 or $45 for the 33d.\(^6\)

Mr. Bier became an organizer for Thomson in the states of California, Oregon and Washington, with authority to confer “all degrees of the E. G. Scottish Rite of Ancient and Accepted Free Masons from the 4th to the 32d; of the Rite of Mizraim from the 4th to the 86th; of the Rite of Memphis from the 4th to the 90th, and all other Orders controlled by the Grand Council of Rites or Confederated Supreme Council, including the Mystic Shrine, upon properly qualified

---

\(^1\) Direct examination by Mr. Morris.
\(^2\) Transcript, p. 366.
\(^3\) Transcript, p. 370.
\(^4\) Transcript, p. 374.
\(^5\) Transcript, pp. 370-386.
\(^6\) Transcript, p. 387.
SCOTTISH GRAND COUNCIL OF RITES.

From the East of the Supreme Grand Council of the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, National and Accepted Masons, entitled to 33 Degrees, held within the bounds of the Scottish Grand Council of All, under the C.R. of the E.S. over the B.S., answering to 33° 57' N. Latitude and 7° 15' West Meridian of Greenwich.

To all Illustrious, Infallible, and Sublime Freemasons, of whatever degree or the surface of the globe. Greeting. Know ye, that we have entered, Well-beloved, and Illustrious Brothers, who had been before entered as Apprentices, passed Fellowcraft, and raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason, by us inducted into the Degree of Art Masons, Master Masons, Master of the Arch, Master Masons, Master Architect, Master Masons, -

In testimony of the truth hereof we have issued these Letters Patent, subscribed them with our hands, and sealed them with the seal of our Supreme Grand Council, due in the Valley of Glasgow, in the Kingdom of Scotland, this... day of... month... year... A.D. 19... answering to the... day of... month... year... A.D. 19... 31° Grand Soy. of N.S.

COPY OF 32D DEGREE DIPLOMA.
candidates, for the purpose of establishing Lodges, Chapters, Councils, Temples and Areopagi.

Mr. Bier said that he came to Salt Lake City the summer of 1918, as the representative of Polish-speaking lodges of Detroit, Toledo and Cleveland, to find out whether the American Masonic Federation really had a regular standing and also to learn something about the financial affairs of the Federation. He had a number of conversations with both Thomson and Perrot about these matters. He was asked:

"Q. Now, what did Mr. Thomson say with reference to authority for the Craft Degrees?
A. Why, he always made the statement that the authority of the Masonic Federation to practice the Craft degrees comes by the dispensation of authority from the Polar Star Lodge, which was a portion of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, it was a direct connection."

Perrot said the same thing.

Mr. Bier was asked these questions regarding Thomson's statements about the Grand Council of Rites:

"Q. Did he say anything with reference to its organization in Scotland?
A. Why, he said that the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland is not recognized by the Grand Lodge of Scotland. I don't know of any other high degree body in Scotland.
Q. Well, the Grand Lodge of Scotland is a Craft body?
A. Is a Craft Degree body? Yes sir.
Q. Did he say anything with reference to the standing of the Grand Council of Rites in Scotland?
A. Well, that it was the most respected high degree body in Scotland, that is about all.

* * * *

Q. Was anything said about the recognition of the Grand Council of Rites throughout the world?
A. Yes sir.
Q. What was that?

1 Transcript, p. 393.
2 Transcript, p. 398.
A. He said the Scottish Grand Council of Rites is in amity and affiliation with a majority of the high degree bodies throughout the world.  

Mr. Bier said that during his investigation he was shown Thomson's patent, but that neither Thomson nor Perrot at any time said that it was upon the indorsation of Cheri that they rested the claimed authority from Louisiana for the Craft Degrees.

Herman Dickman, called in behalf of the Government, stated that he was a mining engineer, at present residing in Seattle, who had received the Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft Degrees in an English Lodge in South Africa. When he came to Seattle, he saw a man wearing the emblems of the 32d Degree and asked him if he belonged to a lodge in Seattle. Mr. Dickman then told his acquaintance that he was waiting for a demit in order to take the 3d Degree. Afterwards, he was introduced to the Master of Trinity, No. 44, who explained to him that by joining this lodge he could not visit any lodge in the state of Washington, but in any other place on the face of the earth he could enter lodges, and that, moreover, this difference was to be rectified at a meeting in Switzerland of the Masonic order. Mr. Dickman then joined Trinity Lodge No. 44, paying $40 for the Craft Degrees, which were conferred upon him de novo. Mr. Dickman identified his diploma, which certified that he was a member of Trinity No. 44, Seattle, under the jurisdiction of the American Masonic Federation. The Secretary told Mr. Dickman that if he wanted a further diploma, he could have it for $2.50. The witness said he paid this sum of money and received a diploma, which was admitted in evidence, signed by Robert Jamieson, certifying that Mr. Dickman was a Master Mason, "in the Lodge Trinity, Seattle, No. 44, on the Registry of the National Symbolic Grand

---

1 Transcript, pp. 399-400.
2 Direct examination by Mr. Morris.
3 Transcript, p. 405.
Lodge of Scotland.” He also received a photographic print of a certificate of the National Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland, in the following language:

“Unto All To Whom These Presents May Concern; Greeting: This certifies that the Supreme Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the Scottish Rite (in the American Masonic Federation) for the United States of America, of which MATTHEW McBLAIN THOMSON is at present Grand Master Mason, and of which THOMAS PERROT is Grand Secretary and D. BERGERA is Grand Treasurer, is now and for many years past has been in Affiliation with the National Grand Lodge of Scotland, and has had and still has power and authority to work the Degrees of Craft Masonry as practiced and authorized by the National Grand Lodge of Scotland.

As witness our hands and the seal of the Grand Lodge, done at Kilmarnock, Scotland, this 15th day of January, in the Year of Grace 1920 and of Masonry 5680.

WILLIAM YOUNG, Grand Master Mason,
WILLIAM STEEL, Grand Senior Warden,
WILLIAM M. GALLOWAY, Grand Junior Warden.

Grand Secretary ROBERT JAMIESON,
Grand Treasurer HUGH SLOAN.”

Francis Joseph Blust, called to testify in behalf of the United States, said that he had known Thomson well since 1911, in which year he joined a lodge in the A. M. F. In all these years of his acquaintance with the American Masonic Federation, it was his opinion that there had been about 1,000 members in Los Angeles.

Thomas Chtyrko, testified that he resided in San Francisco and had taken all the degrees to the 32d Degree in the American Masonic Federation and had paid for these the sum of $215. He was induced to join by Richard

1 Thomson began giving these photographs to his members for the first time early in 1920.
2 Direct examination by Mr. Jensen.
3 Direct examination by Mr. Jensen.
4 Transcript, p. 459.
MASTER MASON DIPLOMA OF A. M. F.

Compare with diploma of National Symbolic Grand Lodge, ante, page 101. Both certify the holder to be a Master Mason in Kilwinning No. 24.
Gordon, son of Eli Gordon, who told him that if he had the High Degrees he could go into any lodge in the United States and throughout the world. Mr. Chtyrko stated that he had received the three degrees from Eli and Richard Gordon, and that it took one evening. Eli Gordon gave him the advanced degrees.

Abraham Frankel, of San Francisco, called to testify for the Government, said that, after having been solicited by A. E. Lucas, he joined one of Thomson's lodges. He paid Lucas $25 for the Craft Degrees, but took no other degrees.

In response to questions by counsel as to what he had heard Thomson say about the authority of his institutions, Mr. Frankel testified:

"... Mr. Thomson always used to tell the members about the splendid condition in which the order was, about the affiliations and some of the members got up and they asked Mr. Thomson whether it was true that we belonged to the higher bodies in Europe. Mr. Thomson said we belonged to the highest body of Masonry in Scotland, naming the Scottish Grand Council of Rites.

Q. Did he say anything about belonging to the order in Scotland?
A. From his speeches I could understand it all nice people belonged there, the noble people, families, nice people.

Q. Did he say anything about whether if you went to Scotland you would be received there in Masonic bodies?
A. From his speech I got the understanding any member of the Masonic Federation could travel in the entire world and he would be admitted to the lodges and he is recognized with the exception of the United States.

Q. Did he say anything about being recognized in the United States?
A. Well, he admitted that in the United States we are not recognized, but all over the world we are recognized.

1 Transcript, p. 427.
2 Transcript, p. 435.
3 Direct examination by Mr. Jensen.
4 Transcript, p. 438.
5 Transcript, pp. 439-440.
William S. Alley, of Los Angeles, testifying in behalf of the United States, said that in 1916 he had been approached by members of the organization who asked him to join. An inspection of the application showed him that there were two different kinds of Masonry; thereupon he began to inquire as to which one was right, and was referred to Mr. Beverly, the Lodge Deputy of St. John's Lodge. He was asked:

"Q. What did Mr. Beverly say?
A. I asked Mr. Beverly to explain what that meant, as up until that time I was under the impression that there was only one Masonry in the world and I wanted to know if I went into his order or to that order, the American Masonic Federation, if I could visit—be admitted anywhere; and he gave me to understand anywhere in the world outside of the United States."2

After further investigation he became a member of the order. He said he had been the Master of his lodge three times. He had heard Mr. Thomson say that he had received his authority to confer the Craft Degrees from Polar Star Lodge, Louisiana, tracing title from Mother Kilwinning to St. John's Lodge of Marseilles, France, to Polar Star Lodge, Louisiana.4

In the month of May, 1921, Thomson visited St. John's Lodge at Los Angeles and approximately 65 or 75 men were there to meet him. A Mr. Dunton then asked Thomson:

"... did you or did you not receive your authority from Polar Star Lodge, Louisiana?
Q. What was Thomson's answer?
A. Mr. Thomson's answer was, 'Let it be clearly understood that at no time did I ever state that I received my authority from Polar Star Lodge of Louisiana.'
Q. Now, was there anything further said at that time?
A. He asked him where he got his authority from.
Q. What did he say?
A. The Rites of Mizraim and Memphis and a couple of other Rites which I don't remember.
Q. Did he say through what source he got his authority for Mizraim and Memphis?
A. He did.
Q. What?
A. From the Grand Council of Rites.”

Mr. Alley said that he attended the sessions of the Supreme Lodge at Salt Lake City in August, 1921, when Wilkie was expelled. When Thomson elected a committee to try Wilkie, Mr. Alley said that he took the floor and told Thomson that he believed the committee should be picked by the delegates and not by one man. Thomson replied something to the effect that he was supreme, and appointed the committee.

Mr. Alley identified a copy of a circular letter, which was introduced in evidence, summoning members of St. John No. 21, Los Angeles, to meet Thomson in Los Angeles for the purpose of hearing complaints. Mr. Alley attended the meeting, which was open, and at the request of the men present, began to explain some matters to Thomson, when the latter stopped Mr. Alley, telling him that he had paid for the hall and wouldn't have such talk. Rather than have trouble with Thomson, Mr. Alley desisted in his efforts to state his case. Thomson then asked all those who wished to remain with the Federation to be seated; and those who did not, to leave.

“Q. What happened?
A. There was a little over one hundred walked out.
Q. And I take it then that you had no further conversations with Mr. Thomson on that occasion?
A. Not since that date.

1 Transcript, pp. 469-470.
2 Transcript, p. 475.
3 Transcript, p. 478.
4 Transcript, pp. 481-482.
Q. Do you know how many remained?
A. From eight to ten, not any more.¹

On cross-examination by Mr. Wilson, Mr. Alley testified that in his talks on Masonry, Thomson had made it clear that he had no connection with the York Rite in the United States.

Concerning Thomson's definition of Universal Masonry, Mr. Alley stated on cross-examination:

"Q. What did he tell you?
A. Universal all over the world.
Q. Admitted everywhere, everyone?
A. Outside of the Locals in the United States.
* * * *

Q. Well, did he explain to you that they were admitting any reputable person without regard to what religion he belonged to?
A. That was his teaching."²

Mr. Alley insisted that Thomson said he had a charter from Louisiana.³

W. Grant Fairfield, a hotel manager, of Los Angeles, called in behalf of the Government,⁴ stated that he joined the American Masonic Federation in Los Angeles. He received the advanced degrees at the hands of Thomson and paid for them the sum of $165.⁵ He said he had heard Thomson make statements about the Grand Council of Rites and the chain of title of the American Masonic Federation. He recalled that Thomson represented the Grand Council of Rites to be the highest authority in the world in Masonry,⁶ and that the members could travel anywhere in the world and be recognized as Masons, except in the United States, where they were barred on account of the two Rites here.⁷ Mr. Fairfield also attended the meeting of St. John

¹ Transcript, p. 482.
² Transcript, p. 496.
³ Transcript, pp. 498-499.
⁴ Direct examination by Mr. Jensen.
⁵ Transcript, p. 518.
⁶ Transcript, p. 519.
⁷ Transcript, p. 520.
Lodge held May 18, 1921, when Dr. Dunton presented his questions to Thomson inquiring as to the true source of authority to work Craft Degrees. He remembered that Thomson denied saying he had authority from Polar Star and claimed to have it from Mizraim and Memphis.¹

Other witnesses from Los Angeles testified substantially to the same effect as Mr. Alley and Mr. Fairfield.

H. C. Alley, called to testify for the Government,² said that he was Secretary of St. John’s Lodge No. 21 at Los Angeles, and that he is totally blind. One letter, signed by Perrot, and sent to Mr. Alley, states that he had that day mailed to Mr. Alley fifteen Master Mason diplomas at $6 and seventeen Mark diplomas at $5. Another letter, also signed by Perrot, dated May 7, 1920, contains these paragraphs:

"The Price of parchments has advanced fourfold and hereafter or until further notice price of Parchment diplomas will be as follows: Master Mason $7.00; Mark $6.00; Installed Diplomas $4.00.

Each Lodge will kindly bear in mind that in Ordering Diplomas and other supplies that the necessary cash should accompany the Order, otherwise it will not be given any attention.

Each Lodge and member thereof who wishes to advance the very best interests of the A. M. F. should try and purchase some of the A. M. F. Bonds, which are sold in denominations of $10.00; $25.00; $50.00 and $100.00. These Bonds are sold only to members of the A. M. F., interest is seven per centum, payable December 1st of each year and subject to be called in at any time within ten years from December 1st, 1919."³

In a letter signed by Thomson, addressed to Mr. Alley and introduced in evidence, dated February 7, 1921, is the following paragraph:

"I omitted to mention in my letter of even date, that the custom in our Lodges, and one that I have always recom-

¹ Transcript, p. 523.
² Examination in chief by Mr. Morris.
³ Transcript, p. 540.
mended in case where a Candidate wishes to withdraw before any degrees are conferred. Is to return his money, making him sign a receipt acknowledging the receipt, and that the money was returned to him owing to him having been black-balled or his application rejected.”

Edward Stoop, called in behalf of the Government, stated that he lived in Pasadena, California, was an automobile salesman, and prior to March 5th of this year (1922) lived in Stockton, California. He was induced by one Vlahos, an organizer, to join the American Masonic Federation. Mr. Stoop testified that he was informed by Vlahos that the Masonry which he was joining "was recognized everywhere, not only outside of that state, but even in Europe, all over, it was a lodge of the royal families, the Emperor of Germany belonged to it."

Mr. Stoop said he received the first two degrees in the hotel room of Vlahos in Stockton. The 3d Degree he received in a lodge room from Thomson himself, who conferred degrees on a good many members the same night. Mr. Stoop stated that the day after he received the 3d Degree, he took the 32d, including the Knight Templar and the Shrine. All these degrees he received in Dr. Vishi’s office in Stockton in the presence of Thomson. Concerning this transaction he was asked:

"Q. How long a period of time, did it take to confer the degrees from the 4th to the 32d and the Knight Templar and Shrine? . . .
A. Well Mr. Thomson was in a hurry, so it didn’t take long. I believe about fifty minutes. . .
Q. Did he himself confer them?
A. Yes sir.”

The Government introduced in evidence that portion of the October, 1921, number of The Universal Freemason, en-

---

1 Transcript, pp. 561-562.
2 Direct examination by Mr. Morris.
3 Transcript, p. 592.
4 Transcript, p. 596.
titled, "Is it Ignorance or Malice?", which has heretofore been set out in full. Mr. Morris then called the attention of the court and jury to the fact that the original edition of "Who is Who," etc., did not contain the paragraphs quoted by Thomson in that article in which he said Cheri's indorsement was merely a waiver of territory and that actually his authority to confer Craft Degrees came from the Grand Council of Rites.¹

George U. Maury, a witness for the Government,² stated that he lives at No. 1551 No. Derbigny Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, and is a blacksmith and horse-shoer by trade. He said he was Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Louisiana,³ having held the position since 1916. Mr. Maury said that he knew defendants Thomson, Perrot and Bergera, but knew nothing of Jamieson; that he first met Thomson in 1917 at New Orleans; and that he had had correspondence from time to time with both Thomson and Perrot. He produced a letter signed by Perrot, dated March 23, 1918, addressed to himself, in which Perrot said that they had just purchased a building in Salt Lake City at a cost of something like $12,000, which they were going to dedicate as a temple on June 23d, 1918. The letter extended a pressing invitation to Maury and assured him that the A. M. F. would pay his railroad fare and hotel expenses while in Salt Lake City.⁴

In another letter, introduced in evidence, dated June 3, 1918, signed by Perrot, and addressed to Mr. Maury, Perrot expressed his pleasure that Mr. Maury had accepted the invitation to attend the dedication of the temple, and continued:

"While coming here I think it would be a great card if you could bring with you the Polar Star Charter and some of the early minutes of the Polar Star Lodge—the oldest

¹ Transcript, p. 614.
² Direct examination by Mr. Morris.
³ Transcript, p. 615.
⁴ Transcript, p. 617.
minutes—thus the brethren assembled here could feel them even if they were unable to read the contents—I understand they all are or were written in French.

Bro. Thomson told me something about those ancient Jewels and if you brought them along to wear here we could perhaps make things very, very interesting. You know best what you have in the matter of records that would prove of much interest and while it might be some bother and some trouble for you, however, as I said before Bro. Maury, do not let expense interfere with your good work."

Mr. Maury went on to say that he attended the convention at Salt Lake City, in June, 1918. He was asked:

"Q. Now, in what capacity did you attend that convention?
   A. As a personal individual.
   Q. Upon a personal invitation as indicated by these exhibits?
   A. By the American Masonic Federation.
   Q. Who paid your expenses and railroad expenses, hotel expenses, etc., covering that trip?
   A. The American Masonic Federation."

"Q. Did you officiate in a lodge capacity at any time?
   A. No sir."

Mr. Maury then identified Thomson’s letter to him, dated October 31, 1919, in which Thomson asked for a certificate to the effect that Cheri had given him authority “to establish the Symbolic Grades of the Scottish Rite in Idaho by endorsing my (Thomson’s) patent from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland. . . . . ”

Mr. Maury went on to say that he had never signed this certificate, or one in substance and effect the same as this certificate, and that he had never given any such certificate to Thomson or his associates.

---

1 Transcript, p. 622.
2 Transcript, p. 624.
3 Transcript, p. 625.
4 Transcript, p. 628.
Mr. Maury also produced a letter signed by Perrot, addressed to Maury, dated at Salt Lake City, December 27, 1918, in which Perrot says, "The present indications are that during the year 1919, the A. M. F. will do more than double its membership. . . . ." Perrot also presented his plan in this letter for the absorption by the American Masonic Federation of Polar Star Lodge, which, he said, could be used by the Organizing Department for the reception of all members obtained by the organizers prior to the creation of a lodge. Mr. Maury did not reply to this suggestion.1

He identified a letter, signed by M. McB. Thomson, dated December 2, 1919, in which Thomson stated that he had heard that there was trouble in the Supreme Council of Louisiana, and in which he set forth his explanation of Cheri's endorsement of his patent.2 Mr. Maury was then asked:

"Q. At this point, Mr. Maury, your lodge is composed of Creoles, is it not?
   A. Of Creoles, yes sir.
   Q. No white people at the present time?
   A. At the present time we have three or four white men in there, yes sir.
   Q. But chiefly designated and known as a Creole Lodge?
   A. Known as a Creole Lodge."

Mr. Maury also identified a letter signed by Thomson, dated January 15, 1920, in which Thomson said that unless Mr. Maury wrote him a letter acknowledging that the endorsement on the Scotch patent was written by Cheri for the purpose of allowing Thomson to organize Scottish Rite Lodges in the State of Idaho, Thomson would publish an article in the February number of his magazine, severing all connections between the A. M. F. and the Supreme Coun-

---
1 Transcript, p. 636, cf. Thomson's letter shown at page 231, post.
2 This letter is set out in full in the indictment and has been commented on, ante.
3 Transcript, p. 661.
U. S. v. THOMSON

Mr. Maury said that he had never replied to this threatening communication.

Mr. Morris then read to the court and jury an extract from the February, 1920, number of The Universal Free-mason, entitled, "Severance of Relations," in which Thomson said that for months past there had been trouble brewing among the Louisiana brethren, the more progressive among them desiring that the Craft Degrees should be made independent of the Supreme Council by the establishment of a Craft Grand Lodge for the State, and that failing to secure the consent of the Supreme Council to this, these brethren threatened to withdraw and seek charters from the A. M. F. Thomson went on to say that his good offices to mediate between the two factions had been rewarded by a threat from the Supreme Council to charter lodges outside of the state of Louisiana in defiance of the agreement which he had with Cheri. He closed this article by saying that relations between the two powers were severed pending further and complete investigation.

Mr. Maury admitted that he had signed the reverse of Thomson's Scotch patent. This was done in the office of Mr. Metoyer, in December, 1918. Mr. Maury was then asked these questions:

"Q. Did Mr. Thomson say anything to you before you affixed the signature?
A. No sir.
Q. Did he ask you to affix your signature?
A. Yes sir.
Q. What words did he use when he asked you?
A. Mr. Thomson said, 'Now, Brother Maury, I want you to put your signature under Brother J. N. Cheri's to verify his signature, so as the signature can be identified,' and I done so."

---

1 This letter has been discussed in the preceding chapter. It will be recalled that this letter to Maury must have been written about the same time as the letter which was published in the February, 1920, number of Light, in which Thomson set forth the Mizraim and Memphis theory of the origin of his authority to confer Craft Degrees.

2 Transcript, p. 657.
3 Transcript, pp. 658-659.
4 Transcript, p. 664.
Q. Did he say anything about any authority or a waiver of rights or anything of that sort?
A. No sir, no sir.
Q. Either before or after you affixed your signature?
A. No sir, none whatever.
Q. And that is all that was said by him with reference to that subject matter on that occasion?
A. Yes sir.”

On cross-examination, Mr. Maury testified that the signature of Cheri on the reverse of Thomson's patent was genuine. He admitted the sending of a letter, dated December 10, 1919, to Thomson in reply to the latter's letter of December 2nd. In the course of this letter (Exhibit 125), he said:

"If the B. B. who you say, claim, that they are the regular Supreme Council of Louisiana — think they are, the courts of Louisiana are open to them to prove it. Not only to them but to any other body in the United States, for the Supreme Council of Louisiana, stands today not only as it stood in 1906-1915, but as it has stood for the past seventy-five years, and is the same Supreme Council with which the A. M. F. is affiliated, not only affiliated but as you know, the A. M. F. owes its masonic existence."  

Mr. Maury then proved three letters signed by J. N. Cheri, addressed to Thomson, and written in the year 1906. Part of one of these letters indicated Cheri's notion that he was to receive from the Grand Council of Rites authority to "expend" the Symbolic Degrees in neighboring States.

On re-direct examination, Mr. Maury was asked:

"Q. Mr. Maury, I call your attention to Exhibit 125, wherein you used the words in substance, 'that among other things the American Masonic Federation owes its Masonic existence to the Supreme Council of Louisiana,' will you please state now in what sense you used that expression?
A. The American Masonic Federation owes its existence to the Supreme Council of Louisiana because Mr. Thomson

---

1 Transcript, p. 664.
2 Conducted by Mr. Wilson.
3 Transcript, p. 669.
4 Conducted by Mr. Morris.
had been deputized to form a lodge over in Boston, Mass., and he formed the lodge, and instead of turning over that lodge to the Supreme Council of Louisiana, he put the lodge in the American Masonic Federation. . . . . "

Rene C. Metoyer, an attorney at law and notary public, of New Orleans, called to testify for the Government, said he was Grand Secretary or Grand Chancellor of the Supreme Council of Louisiana. He became a member of the Supreme Council in December, 1906, and continued to be a member thereafter except for the years 1912 to 1918, when he was inactive. He said he was present in December, 1918, when Thomson and Mr. Maury came to his office in New Orleans, at which time Maury signed his name on the reverse of Thomson's patent. He corroborated the testimony of Maury as to what happened.

Mr. Metoyer produced a letter, dated June 29, 1918, signed by Perrot and directed to him, enclosing an official communication, also signed by Perrot, and bearing the same date. This communication was introduced in evidence, and proposed a closer union between the American Masonic Federation and the Supreme Council of Louisiana. It contained this clause:

". . . . that while the Supreme Council of Louisiana may retain—if they so desire—their Incorporative Charter from the State of Louisiana with their civil identity, that Masonically they should become, an incorporative part of the American Masonic Federation, ranking as a provincial Grand Lodge and Council therein."

Mr. Metoyer then read and translated from the French language, Title IX of the Constitution of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, as follows:

"All letters patent, briefs and diplomas shall be delivered to each consistory, council, chapter, or lodge to each of
its members who shall make application therefor, and shall be signed by the first four officers and the secretary of the respective parties, but no letters patent, no briefs, no diplomas, shall be valid and given full credit if they are not signed by the first four officers and the Grand Secretary of the Supreme Council and vested with the seal of the Supreme Council.\(^1\)

This provision, said Mr. Metoyer, was in force throughout the years 1906 and 1907 (when Cheri endorsed Thomson’s patent). He also said that he had written the letters (afterwards published in the *Masonic Bulletin*, of Philadelphia, and several times mentioned elsewhere in this book), in his official capacity at the direction of Joseph N. Cheri. Mr. Metoyer then identified the form of charter, written in French, which the Supreme Council of Louisiana issues, and has always used in the past.\(^2\)

Mr. Metoyer said that the Supreme Council did not now have in its possession the original charter of Polar Star; that it had been destroyed by fire, together with other records.

On cross-examination,\(^3\) Mr. Metoyer explained the connection of Thomson with the irregular lodges in Boston and Thomson’s conduct after having been authorized by the Supreme Council to heal these lodges. The Supreme Council, said Mr. Metoyer, “simply repudiated the action of Mr. Thomson in Boston, Mass.”\(^4\)

Mr. Metoyer said that he had examined the records of the Supreme Council relating to the origin of Polar Star. He was asked:

“Q. Why were you so much interested in the Polar Star that you would go back to the inception and examine all of its records up to the present time?

A. For the reason about 1917 Mr. McB. Thomson came to the city of New Orleans and he partly enlightened us on

\(^1\) Transcript, p. 687.
\(^2\) Transcript, pp. 688-689. Thomson produced no such charter at any time.
\(^3\) Conducted by Mr. Price.
\(^4\) Transcript, p. 686.
the matters of the Polar Star of things that we younger fellows didn't know and Mr. Thomson was very anxious to see the Charter of the Polar Star and Mr. Thomson in company with Mr. Maury and myself went to the home of the then custodian of the documents of the Supreme Council and made a search there for almost an entire evening for the charter of the Polar Star and Mr. Thomson and his then deputy Mr. Lew Stapleton, that was what interested me in the matter."¹

In making a search for the records of Polar Star, Mr. Metoyer said that he had examined all the records of the subordinate lodges under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Council which had ceased functioning.²

He identified a copy of a letter, dated May 7, 1917, sent to him by Thomson, in which the latter said he was glad that Metoyer had got some of the old members of Polar Star sufficiently interested to take up the charter again.³

In the course of the letter, Thomson quotes the endorsement on his patent and says:

"This taken in connection with the Patent itself and the letters from Bro. Cheri show what was meant by the endorsement, viz.—to extend the power of my Patent to include the Symbolic Degrees as the Scottish Patent gave me power from the 4th up, only, the Symbolic grades in Scotland being governed by the Grand Lodge, and the higher grades only, by the Supreme Council."⁴

Charles Poulos, sworn in behalf of the Government,⁵ said that he is the proprietor of a hat store in San Francisco, where he joined the American Masonic Federation in 1918. He said he was given the first degree by Bier in Bier's office in San Francisco, and that a week later he received the 2d and 3d Degrees in the same place from the same man in the presence of one Indrieri, who had invited him to join.

¹ Transcript, p. 698, f.
² Transcript, p. 701.
³ Transcript, p. 712.
⁴ Transcript, p. 714.
⁵ Examined in chief by Mr. Morris.
A. E. Lucas gave him the advanced degrees, for which he paid $145, in two hours' time.¹

He was asked:

"Q. Do you recall whether or not you ever saw Mr. Thomson in Gordon's Fish Market in the basement of his fish store?

A. I did, I received a card for that.

Q. When was that, do you remember?

A. I couldn't tell you exactly. That was about 1919, that is the closest I can call. I don't know what month it was.

Q. Well, what sort of place was that?

A. It was a place—a fish market, a restaurant. I saw Thomson down in the basement.

Q. What were they doing down there?

A. They was giving degrees.

Q. How many were present, do you remember?

A. Ten to fifteen, I should judge.

Q. What degrees were given, and by whom?

A. There was given from—some of the members had up to the 14th Degree, and some of the members had up to the fourth degree, and the ones that had the fourth degree, gave them to the fourteenth; then they gave the entire members up to the 32d degree, including the Shrine, by Mr. Thomson.

Q. He himself did that?

A. Yes.

Q. And was that all done the same evening?

A. After that they was supposed to give the Knight Templar Degree, which I was called for to take and I refused it; I had enough."²

W. C. Cavitt, of San Francisco, lawyer, a witness for the Government,³ said that he joined the American Masonic Federation in 1907; and had held all the principal offices in a daughter lodge and had been Eminent Commander of the Council of Kadosh, Eminent Knight Commander of the San Francisco Encampment of the Knights Templar of Malta,

¹ Transcript, p. 717 f.
² Transcript, pp. 722-723.
³ Direct examination by Mr. Jensen.
Commander of the Consistory, and Provincial Grand Master of the state of California.

He testified that he had had an intimate acquaintance with Thomson over a period of eleven years; that he had traveled with him through the state of California visiting lodges and that he had heard Thomson say many times that he had a charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana to confer the Craft Degrees, that the Supreme Council of Louisiana traced its descent from St. John's Lodge of Marseilles, France, through Polar Star Lodge, and that St. John's Lodge of Marseilles went back to Mother Kilwinning. In all the years of his association with Thomson he had never heard Thomson say that the Supreme Council of Louisiana was composed largely of Creoles or colored men; Thomson always said the Supreme Council of Louisiana was French.1 Mr. Cavitt said he had never heard Thomson mention any other source of authority for the Craft Degrees than the charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana.2 Thomson's only employment, according to Mr. Cavitt, was the business of organizing lodges. Mr. Cavitt stated the substance of a conversation between himself and Thomson in Cavitt's office, in the fall of 1914, during which Cavitt showed to Thomson a clipping from a Scotch newspaper, telling of a court decision in that country. Mr. Cavitt's version of the conversation follows:

"... I said, 'Brother Thomson, you have always held up to me Brother Jamieson as the Grand Recorder of the Council of Rites of Scotland as one of the highest Masons and best Masons in the world with an unblemished reputation. Now, I said, in this clipping, is a decision written by Lord Ormidale, and at a hearing in a trial in Scotland, he brands Brother Jamieson as a crook and as a thief, and brands the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland as issuing spurious degrees. Now Brother Thomson, will you please tell me what my Knight Templar degree is worth, signed by Brother Jamieson when this decision also recites that he

1 Transcript, p. 758.
2 Transcript, p. 763.
stole the charter from Moira Union Lodge Number 4 in Scotland. I said, Brother Thomson, when I read this decision my heart just sank within my breast. I said, I want to especially direct your attention to one thing, Brother Thomson. I examined my Knight Templar diploma and at the very beginning of this decision it says that about a year or two years before Brother Jamieson in Scotland signed my Knights Templar diploma that there had been an amalgamation of the Knights Templar and Grand Encampments in Scotland under the early Grand, and if that decision be correct, well, then my diploma was worthless to me and my Knight Templar means nothing to me.' He said 'Brother Cavitt, you look at it in the wrong kind of light,' he said, 'You make a mountain out of a mole-hill' . . . he said, 'Now Brother Cavitt, we are going to take an appeal from that decision and we are going to reverse it and we are going also to bring a suit to establish our authority so that there can never be any question about it.' Now, I want to make a request of you as Provincial Grand Master of California and as a member that has always been highly interested in this Order. I want you to promise on your Masonic oath that you will not divulge anything about this decision or this proceeding to any of the brethren in the state of California, I said, 'Brother Thomson, you can have that promise on my Masonic oath that I will never divulge it to anybody until you have had ample time to take this question up and determine it. He said he thought it would take at least three or four years to accomplish it.'

Thereupon Mr. Cavitt identified his Templar diploma which bears the title "Grand Encampment of the Temple & Malta for Scotland" and the signature of Robert Jamieson, Grand Recorder, and is dated March 14, 1910.

The newspaper clipping shown by Mr. Cavitt to Thomson was taken from the Glasgow Herald under date of April 10, 1914, and was introduced in evidence. The clipping recites the decision of Lord Ormidale in the case brought by the Grand Encampment of the Temple and

---

1 No appeal was taken and the decision became a final judgment. See testimony of J. Inglis, Esq., post.
2 Transcript, pp. 767 f.
3 Transcript, p. 770.
4 Transcript, p. 781.
Malta in Scotland against the Great Priory of the Religious and Military Order of the Temple and Malta in Scotland. In this case it was alleged by the Grand Encampment that the resolution adopted in February, 1909, approving the amalgamation of the Grand Encampment and the Great Priory was illegal, that the Grand Encampment had never validly executed the agreement of amalgamation and that the pretended execution of the agreement was null and void. Judgment was asked establishing the right of the Grand Encampment to exist as a separate society and that the Great Priory be ordered to deliver the archives and insignia of the Grand Encampment, and to account for the funds of the Grand Encampment in their possession. Lord Ormidale gave judgment for the defendant. The whole purpose of the action was to have the amalgamation set aside. The amalgamation was effected April 3, 1909. What purported to have been the first meeting of the Grand Encampment after the amalgamation, was held in Ayr, in 1910 and was attended by about twenty persons representing five subordinate Encampments. Out of these twenty persons present, eighteen were members of three Encampments. Jamieson testified in this case, and admitted that he had called to the meeting only those he thought were in sympathy with his views. Lord Ormidale was of the opinion that this meeting of Jamieson was without power or authority to transact business. A portion of this clipping referring to His Lordship’s opinion deserves special consideration.\(^1\) It follows:

"There remained for consideration the title of Mr. Jamieson. His Lordship had no sympathy with his attitude or conduct in this matter, and regarded his evidence as unreliable where it was in conflict with that of the defenders’ witnesses. It was unnecessary to go into the question of his connection with the bestowal of spurious degrees. It was enough that he took away the Moira Union charter on a false representation that he proposed to get it photographed and that he had retained it ever since. He sued

\(^1\) Transcript, p. 783.
as a member of Moira Union Encampment, and it was for him to prove that he had paid his fees to date. If it were necessary, His Lordship would hold that he was not a member of Moira Union in good standing either at the date of the amalgamation or when the present proceedings were raised, and that according to Masonic law and practice he was not entitled to take action as a member of Moira Union Encampment. The mere fact that he held the Moira Union charter could not help him. It was obtained by him by a fraudulent device and had been irregularly withheld by him. No member of Moira Union supported him, and in any event he was bound by the constitutional assent of his encampment to the amalgamation. He must first challenge and set aside that arrangement before he could pose as an injured individual.

His Lordship had examined the question of title critically, because he thought the present proceedings had not been raised in good faith from a real sense of wrong or injury suffered or truly in the interest of Templar Masonry. His Lordship was satisfied that amalgamation was eagerly desired by a vast majority of Grand Encampment Templar Masons. One of the moving causes was undoubtedly the failure on the part of those associated with Grand Encampment to obtain recognition from similar bodies, but in other parts of the world and notably in America. The fact of his non-recognition was clear; the reason for it was not so clear, although it was impossible to ignore that the working of spurious degrees by a body called the Scottish Council of Rites, several of whose officers were members of the Grand Encampment, was to some extent at least prior to 1906 the cause of it. It was unnecessary, in the view his Lordship took, to decide the question raised on the defenders' plea that the pursuers were barred by Moira as a separate plea. But he would sustain the plea in the case of all the pursuers. They did not represent a dissentient majority who had prior to April 3 entertained an honest doubt as to the expediency of union and who continued to express the doubt by protest or otherwise; they were not ignorant of, but indifferent to, the progress the amalgamation was making, the terms on which it was finally adjusted and carried into effect; and they remained silent in the full knowledge of all that had happened, and had acquiesced in
the union for such a length of time as, in his judgment, to bar them now from challenging it."

Mr. Cavitt said he then and there told Mr. Thomson that it was his judgment that the American Masonic Federation ought not to issue any further High Degree diplomas from the Knights Templar, especially until this decision was either reversed or their authority straightened out.

Mr. Cavitt said he had heard Thomson, many times, discuss the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland.

"Q. What did he say on those occasions?
A. He said the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland was the oldest high degree body in the world, and composed of the highest and most respected Masons in the world and the only high degree body in Scotland that issued these diplomas to us. . . . He stated to us that that was the oldest high degree body in the world and that it was the only high degree body in Scotland issuing these diplomas for these degrees under the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

Q. Did he say anything about the size of the order?
A. Well, he did not answer specifically the number of members, but he said it was a large organization and had been in existence for many, many years in Scotland; he did not designate any number as to membership. I recall—if I recall correctly—my best recollection is that he stated at one time that he either had been a member of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland or that he was a member of the Grand Lodge Ancient, and Accepted Scottish Rite in Scotland. . . .

Q. Did you ever ask him if he had been expelled from the Grand Lodge of Scotland?
A. I did.
Q. What did he say?
A. He said no, he had never been expelled, but he would have been expelled if he had not taken his demit.

Q. Did you ever hear Mr. Thomson make any statements on the lodge floors as to the effect of expulsion from the Craft Lodge?
A. He always made it perfectly plain and stated to us that when we lost by reason of non-payment of dues, ex-

1 The opinion is quoted in full in Transcript, pp. 942 et seq.
pulsion or otherwise, unless we went within a certain time into another lodge, that we had no further standing in the high degree body.

Q. Did you ever hear him say what the effect of a man being expelled from the Blue Lodge or from the Craft Degrees, what effect that had on his standing in Masonry?
A. That destroyed his Masonic standing entirely and all his rights in the high degree body. The whole thing rested on the daughter lodges, commonly called the Craft lodges."

Mr. Cavitt said that at one time he had a conference with Thomson about Peter Spence; the first three 33d Degree diplomas which Mr. Cavitt had seen in San Francisco, were signed by Spence, after that they were signed by Jamieson. He asked Thomson why it was Spence no longer signed the High Degree diplomas. Thomson said, "Brother Spence has been in the harness twenty-one years; he is getting old, and has retired."

Whenever Mr. Thomson visited San Francisco and went around to the various lodges, he was lionized. Mr. Cavitt told of many complaints which he had lodged with Thomson, about the kind of organizers employed in California, and of things which they were doing, but that Thomson never did anything to rebuke or remove them.

On cross-examination he said that he also had been expelled, but he was unable to tell why. No charges were ever preferred against him; no hearing was ever had, and he was never told the reason for his expulsion.

Mr. Cavitt said he was familiar with the fact that there were "Local" or American Grand Lodges, the members of which would have nothing to do with the American Masonic Federation; and also that he found out, while a member of the order, that there were a great many Scottish Rite Masons in the United States who would not recognize him.

---

1 Transcript, pp. 772 f.
2 Transcript, p. 775.
3 Transcript, p. 776.
4 Transcript, pp. 776 to 779 inclusive.
5 Transcript, p. 790.
David Reid, seventy years of age, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, was called as a witness for the Government. He said he had been Grand Secretary for twenty-two years, and that he had never been out of office since the year 1874. He said that Masonry was a subject very near to his heart, and that he had tried to perfect himself in its rules and customs. He testified that the Grand Lodge of Scotland was organized in the year 1736, and since then had taken care of all its daughter lodges, both those which it had chartered since its inception and those formed prior to its organization. Approximately, there are 530 lodges in Scotland with a membership of 300,000. There are no Blue Lodges in Scotland not under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge unless, he said, you take into cognizance the two bits of things that the Thomson party had tried to inflict upon Grand Lodge.¹ He had first heard of these two Craft Lodges, he said, within the last eighteen months. There was an attempt in the year 1876 to work some fake Masonry in Glasgow, but it came to nothing, and with those two exceptions, all the Craft or Blue Lodges in Scotland, have been under the Grand Lodge.

Matthew McBlain Thomson, said Mr. Reid, had been made a member of a subordinate lodge of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1889, prior to which time he had been associated with several men like himself who were making money out of spurious Masonry. Mr. Reid then recounted the circumstances connected with the expulsion of Thomson from Scottish Freemasonry and produced documents in support of his evidence. His testimony was substantially that of Mr. Inglis who followed him as a witness. Mr. Reid said that it was a matter of common Masonic law that there should not be any solicitation of a member to join; Grand Lodge does not have organizers and they would not be permitted. Mr. Reid then read section 149 of The Constitution and Laws of Grand Lodge of Scotland to the effect that all

¹ Transcript, p. 816.
lodges holding meetings under jurisdiction of the Grand Lodges are required to have a fixed and customary place of meeting.

Outside of the salaries paid to the officers who devote their exclusive time to the business of Grand Lodge, all the funds of Grand Lodge are conserved and applied to charitable funds. There is no money-making whatever about it; there is no profit or revenue to anybody connected with Grand Lodge. The only persons connected with Grand Lodge who receive any pay are the Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer, and the clerical staff.

Mr. Reid categorically denied Thomson's account of the interview between them in Edinburgh. Mr. Reid said that Brother Joseph Inglis was present at the meeting, which lasted a very few minutes; he remained standing throughout. Thomson showed no charters, explained nothing, produced no publications, and said nothing about the history or authority of the American Masonic Federation. Mr. Inglis corroborated this statement.¹

Mr. Reid said that he first heard of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland in 1911, and that he was not aware of any temples, buildings, or lodge rooms which it had in Scotland; it has no standing; it is there considered spurious, and all regular Masons would have nothing whatever to do with it.² He stated that he has been, since 1875, a member of Mother Kilwinning No. 0; that the persons who received the Blue or Craft Degrees in the American Masonic Federation would not be admitted to Mother Kilwinning, which is a daughter lodge of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and subject to its rules and regulations and to the common law of Masonry. Since his expulsion, so stated Mr. Reid, Thomson would not be admitted into Mother Kilwinning Lodge or any other Craft lodge in Scotland. Robert Jamieson was expelled by Grand Lodge of Scotland after service of

¹ Transcript, pp. 929 et seq.
² Transcript, p. 846.
citation, at the same time that Thomson was expelled, and he would not be received in Mother Kilwinning or any other lodge in Scotland under the Grand Lodge.

In Scotland, continued Mr. Reid, outside of Grand Lodge, there was never any other lodge, except Mother Kilwinning, that had chartering powers. He said that Mother Kilwinning, in her long history, had never granted chartering power to any of her daughter lodges, and this is shown by the terms of her own charters; and after she became a member of Grand Lodge she gave up her chartering power. In Scotland, Mr. Reid stated, lodges working under Grand Lodge, must have a charter and it is a general rule that the charter must be present at a meeting of the lodge. In concluding his direct testimony, Mr. Reid said he had not heard of the National Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland until about a year or eighteen months ago.

On cross-examination, Mr. Reid said that he was made a Mason at the age of twenty and had been studying Masonry ever since; at that time men were permitted to join at eighteen years of age and upwards. As Secretary, Mr. Reid said he drew a salary of $5,000 per year; he said he was not a member of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite and had no intimate acquaintance with it. The Grand Treasurer of Grand Lodge of Scotland draws a salary of about $4,000. There are no other salaried persons connected with Grand Lodge except the clerical staff composed of about ten clerks and typists.

Mr. Reid stated that charges had been preferred against Thomson pursuant to Section 156-a, enacted February, 1912, of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge, which is as follows:

"No Brother of any Lodge on the Roll of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, or whose Diploma as a Master Mason issues

---

1 Transcript, p. 850.
2 Transcript, p. 852.
3 Transcript, p. 856.
4 Conducted by Mr. Wilson.
5 Transcript, p. 863.
THE THOMSON MASONIC FRAUD

from Grand Lodge, shall take part in or be concerned with the working or promulgation in any manner of way of any Degrees, or Rite, or Order, purporting to be Masonic, which is not authorized by Grand Lodge, or by one of the other Masonic Grand Bodies with whom Grand Lodge is in amity; and any Brother acting in breach hereof, or who shall join or countenance any Body or Society, purporting to be Masonic, not sanctioned by Grand Lodge or other Masonic Grand Body in amity with it, shall be liable to suspension or expulsion either at the instance of his Lodge, or at the instance of Grand Committee."

He said that, so far as he knew, Thomson never had taken a demit from Lodge 565 Patna Bonnie Doon, of which Thomson was Master, for Mr. Reid had never signed such a demit and a demit is of no value without the Grand Secretary's signature. Mr. Reid said further that he had no knowledge as to whether or not Thomson had taken a demit from St. James 125; that by Scottish Masonic law, although a member of a Scotch lodge takes a demit, he still is a member of his Mother Lodge in Scotland; that membership in the Mother Lodge can only be ended by expulsion or death.3

Mr. Reid said that Lodge Melrose St. John never granted any charters forming other lodges and that she had not in 1874 chartered several lodges in Glasgow.4

On re-direct examination Mr. Reid was asked the names of the individuals concerning whom he had chiefly heard the words "spurious and clandestine" mentioned in connection with Masonry in Scotland. In the year 1876, he replied, in Glasgow there was Masonry being worked which was considered spurious and clandestine and Mr. Thomson was one of the men associated with those working and deriving profit therefrom, and continued:

"... I heard nothing more of it until in the year 1880 when the Grand Committee which is our judicial body, received information that Mr. Thomson had been admitted into

---

1 Transcript, p. 866.
2 Transcript, p. 870.
3 Transcript, p. 875.
4 Transcript, p. 875.
a Lodge in Ayr. An investigation was set on foot, and the lodge books were produced, and it was there found, as could be shown from the records which are in our possession now, if the court will allow it to be read, you will find the decision of the Grand Committee on the point, and the Lodge Ayr 138 was dealt with. It was suspended in 1882.

Q. Why?
A. Because it had admitted Mr. Thomson into its membership when he was not a regular Mason, and the lodge was suspended, at that time and is still suspended, has not been allowed to work since 1880, forty-two years ago.

Q. Now what other spuriousness coming up through the years?
A. Well, it was about 1910 or 1911, that we heard reported from a small district in Ayrshire that this Grand Council of Rites and some of the other fantastic degrees, if I might be allowed to use the expression without any disrespect to the court, we found they were being worked there, and our members were warned that such was not to be tolerated, and the action then went to the Grand Committee who took the matter up, and then following upon that we framed a law 156-a. . . .¹

Q. I will ask you—counsel asked you about the spuriousness you had to deal with in the last thirty years. Did you have occasion to take the matter up with Mr. Spence, Mr. Peter Spence?
A. No; he resigned entirely from that Council of Rites.

Q. From the Grand Council of Rites?
A. Yes.

Q. What happened?
A. Nothing happened, because he repudiated this body, would have nothing more to do with it.”²

Joseph Inglis, sixty years of age, of Edinburgh, Scotland, was called to the stand in behalf of the Government after Mr. Reid had given his testimony.³ He stated that by profession he is a writer to His Majesty’s Signet, that is to say, a solicitor, or attorney, and has had a very close connection with Masonry in Scotland for more than a quarter

---

¹ Transcript. pp. 881-882.
³ Direct examination by Mr. Jensen.
of a century, having been, for practically all of that time, a member of Grand Lodge; for the past sixteen years he has been a member of Grand Committee and Chairman of the Petitions, Complaint and Appeals Committee of Grand Lodge. This latter Committee, which is chosen from what is called the Grand Committee, has in charge all of what might be called the jurisprudence of Grand Lodge, all legal questions affecting Grand Lodge, all its laws and all its members, and affecting questions between Grand Lodge and the sister Grand Lodges abroad—all these matters of jurisprudence are under this special Committee, and, as a special Committee, they have to be practically experts in it. His duties in connection with this Committee have required a careful study on his part of the common law of Masonry, as it involves the relations of Masonic bodies the world over. In Grand Lodge, Mr. Inglis is also Senior Warden, and is a Provincial Grand Master of Kinkarvineshirt. He was, until March, 1922, Grand Prior of the Great Priory of Scotland with which he has been connected since about 1898. Prior to 1909 this body was known as the Chapter General of Scotland; also, he holds a 32d Degree in the Supreme Council of Scotland of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Scotland. In Scotland there are only nine 33d Degree Masons, all of whom are members of the Supreme Council.

Mr. Inglis stated that his firm acted for the Great Priory of Scotland in the case brought by the Early Grand Encampment to set aside the amalgamation between that body and the Chapter General; and that he, with counsel on the other side, drew the deed of amalgamation. After the date of the deed of amalgamation, in April, 1909, Mr. Inglis went on to say, there existed no Templar body whatever under any name other than that amalgamated body (the

---

1 Transcript, p. 887.
2 Transcript, p. 887.
3 Transcript, p. 887.
4 Transcript, p. 890. In Scotland there are but twenty-seven 32d Degree Masons.
5 Transcript, p. 891.
Early Grand Mother Encampment of High Knights Templar in Scotland.

GREETING, Unto all Knights of the Noble and Magnanimous Orders of the Temple of Jerusalem and of St. John of the Hospital and of Malta. Be it known, that our trusted and well-beloved Status who had previously been Entered as Apprentice, Passed a Fellow of the Craft, and Raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason in a regular Craft Lodge, and received all other degrees in Masonry entitling him thereto, was received as a Pilgrim and dubbed a Knight of the Temple of Jerusalem, of the Order of St. Paul as Mediterranean dass, and of the Hospital of St. John, later known as of Malta, in Universal Encampment of Craft No. A on the Registry of our Grand Mother Encampment, and as such we recommend him to the care, fellowship, and protection of all status of these illustrious Orders wherever found.

In Testimony of the verity whereof, we have caused this Diploma to be sealed with the seal of Grand Encampment, and attested by our Grand Recorder. Done on the Field of Encampment this 4th day of February in the year of our Lord 1877, and of the Encampment 3.

[Signature]
Grand Recorder.

ANOTHER KNIGHTS TEMPLAR DIPLOMA.
The Early Grand became extinct in 1909.
(See page 202.)
Great Priory), and there certainly did not exist the Early Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta because that body had been fused in this deed of amalgamation. On the 14th day of March, 1910, there was in Scotland no such body as a Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta of Scotland. In the litigation between the Early Grand and the Great Priory, that amalgamation was confirmed. Mr. Inglis thereupon identified a copy of the opinion of the court rendered in the suit brought by Thomson and Jamieson in the name of the Early Grand against the Great Priory. Robert Jamieson, so Mr. Inglis testified, was a witness in the case; that is to say, the same Jamieson who lives at No. 4 Fullerton Street, Kilmarnock, Scotland, and who is Secretary of the Grand Council of Rites, Scotland. Mr. Inglis said he had known Jamieson since 1909 and that he is a time-keeper to a firm of engineers, Barclay, Sons & Co., Ltd., at Kilmarnock.

Shortly after 1910, Mr. Inglis began an investigation of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland and has continued his study of it since that time. Regarding this matter he was interrogated as follows:

"Q. Just state what you have done pursuing this study and investigation?

A. First of all I have travelled a good deal in Scotland on business, Masonic business and my own business, and wherever I thought I could get information I made inquiry. I failed entirely to find any temple, or any lodge room, or any headquarters whatever. I have inquired locally in Ayrshire more particularly; I have found no such place of abode of this Grand Council of Rites, and the result of my inquiries, result of my search for the place was to find only a small dwelling house of Robert Jamieson at No. 4 Fullerton Street, Kilmarnock, that is as regards place."

1 Transcript, p. 893. It will be remembered that this was the date of the Templar diploma given by Jamieson to Cavitt.
2 Transcript, p. 894.
3 Transcript, p. 896.
4 Transcript, p. 899.
5 Transcript, p. 900.
Mr. Inglis then identified a photograph of the quarters at 4 Fullerton Street, Kilmarnock, Scotland. He said: "This is a photograph of what we call a tenement of houses entering by a common passage and stair at No. 4 Fullerton Street, and consists of four small houses of about two or at most three rooms and a kitchen with a separate tenant to each floor. . . ." Jamieson's house, Mr. Inglis said, was the upstairs part to the left; he occupies a quarter of what is shown in the picture.\textsuperscript{1} Mr. Inglis was then asked:

"Q. Have you been able to find any other place, building, lodge room, or quarters occupied by the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland?
A. Nothing whatever except that I was able to locate the printing house that prints these diplomas, and matter that is circulated by the Scottish Grand Council of Rites so-called in Scotland, and the diplomas that are printed and signed by Jamieson.
Q. Where is that printing—
A. It is at Newmilns, a small place in Ayrshire and the printer is W. W. Walker, who is also a member of the organization.
Q. Is the Grand Council of Rites a large body?
A. Very small in Scotland.
Q. What membership?

A. So far as my investigations have shown, and that included inquiries of their members, under fifty at the present moment."\textsuperscript{2}

Mr. Inglis said that recently a number of regular Masons, who had joined the Grand Council of Rites, had appeared in open Provincial Lodge and declared their recantation and asked to be forgiven.\textsuperscript{3} The first batch of these recanters appeared personally before Mr. Inglis and his Committee in Grand Lodge last year.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1} Transcript, p. 901.
\textsuperscript{2} Transcript, p. 902.
\textsuperscript{3} Transcript, p. 905.
\textsuperscript{4} Transcript, p. 906.
Mr. Inglis testified that the reputation of the Grand Council of Rites among Masons in Scotland throughout the period of time that he has known it, is that it is spurious, of no authority whatever, and of no standing whatever.¹

He was asked:

"Q. And you have read the literature put out by the defendants on the various degrees which are controlled by the Grand Council of Rites?
A. I have.
Q. I will ask you if there is any parallel to that in Masonry in Scotland.
A. Absolutely not. That is the manufacturing store of everything they could put in."²

Mr. Inglis testified that Grand Lodge is the sole governing body of what are known as the Craft Degrees; he continued:³

"Grand Lodge is the governing body. It itself does not work the degrees. It charters lodges; those lodges are called daughter lodges, and it is they who admit Masons and confer on them these degrees. There is a certain method of approaching a lodge in order to get admission. That method is by an application for admission. That application must be asked for by the party wishing to be admitted. The first step must come from the party wishing admission. He signs this application form, but before it can go to the lodge, it must be signed by two Master Masons in full standing of that lodge who sign as proposer and seconder. Still before it can go to the lodge, that application must then go before a statutory committee of inquiry of the lodge consisting of certain office bearers and certain members elected, what we say, from the floor, ordinary members. That Committee of Inquiry must make full inquiry in the character and qualifications of the applicant, and must satisfy themselves that he is worthy of being received as a brother into the family of this lodge. Thereafter the report of that Committee is read to the lodge

¹ Transcript, p. 908.
² Transcript, p. 909. The last sentence was stricken on motion.
³ Transcript, p. 911.
in open meeting, application for membership and the names, so everybody has notice of it. Then the name is read out from the chair, and the members present proceed to ballot, yea or nay, admit or reject. If there are three black balls, the applicant's name is rejected; he can go no further. That is the mode of coming into a lodge; that is how Masons are made; and all these lodges with their family, their own family of Masons, members of the lodge, are governed by Grand Lodge, and Grand Lodge has exclusive control, no other body in Scotland, except Grand Lodge of Scotland, can control Craft Masonry in Scotland, or does.

Q. Now, can subordinate lodges under Grand Lodge grant charters?
A. No, they are daughters; they are not governing or granting bodies, chartering bodies.

Q. Under the common law of Masonry in Scotland, how is solicitation regarded?
A. With abhorrence.

Q. Is there any profit connected with Masonry?

* * * *

A. Do you mean pecuniary profit?
Q. Yes.
A. Absolutely not. There is profit, but it is of a mental and spiritual character.

Q. Does Grand Lodge or any of its subordinate lodges tolerate organizers?
A. Not for one moment.

Q. Is there any common law requirement as to how Masons are to be made?
A. Certainly.

Q. What is that?
A. They must be made in open lodge after notice of the meeting has been got.

Q. Any requirement as to the number who must be present?
A. Yes, there is a number—a lodge cannot be held unless there are certain Master Masons present, cannot have a lodge, cannot hold a lodge.

Q. Now, I will ask you if Grand Lodge is in amity with Grand Lodges in the United States.

The Court: Now explain amity, so we will understand.

A. Amity means that any Master Mason, any qualified Mason from Scotland may on giving the proper credentials
enter one of those lodges, say the Grand Lodge of Utah, and be welcome as a visitor if he has proper credentials from Grand Lodge of Scotland. Also Grand Lodge of Scotland is represented here in Utah by a special envoy, shall I call him, special representative, Brother Macmillan. These lodges in America here entertain those representatives. Then conversely a member of the Grand Lodge of Utah, or any of these Grand Lodges in all the states of America, may come over to Scotland, present his credentials, and get the right hand of fellowship, is welcomed as a brother from overseas in the lodges.

Q. Does that include any member of any daughter of the Grand Lodge of Utah or any other Grand Lodge in any other state?
A. Certainly, certainly.

The Court: As I understand it, every member of a daughter lodge is a member of Grand Lodge through his local organization?
A. Your honor, he is not a member of Grand Lodge, so far as voting power is concerned. Every lodge is represented in Grand Lodge, but he is under control of Grand Lodge, and he has everything that Grand Lodge can give him in the way of diplomas and certificates, enables him under the aegis of Grand Lodge of Scotland as a member of his own daughter lodge to visit any daughter lodge of any other Grand Lodge in America.

Mr. Jensen: And the same thing applies to any member of a daughter lodge of any Grand Lodge in the United States visiting in Scotland?
A. Certainly. I do not know the names of the lodges in Salt Lake City, but take a lodge in Salt Lake City held under the Grand Lodge of Utah, if one came with his credentials from that lodge issued by the Grand Lodge of Utah, as his certificate would be, and presented them to one of our lodges, to the lodge that I am past Master of, we would welcome him and honor him.

Q. Now, I will ask you, if in any of the Craft lodges in Scotland, any member of the American Masonic Federation or any of its daughter lodges would be received?
A. Not for one instant.

Q. Now are you a member of any English lodges?
A. I am.
Q. I mean in the Craft.
A. In the Craft.

Q. I will ask you if what you have said about amity and about recognition in America applies equally to the English situation.
A. It does."

Mr. Inglis explained that he was a member of Grand Lodge of England; that a Scotch Mason may belong to more than one lodge and he is a member of eight Scotch lodges as well as of two lodges in London. In Scotland there are no Craft lodges which are not under the Grand Lodge of Scotland except two little spurious things that are dying, started by one of the defendants. Mr. Inglis testified that in Scotland the Templar Degrees of Knight of the Temple, Knight of Malta, and Priestly Order of the Temple, are controlled by the Great Priory which recognizes the Grand Encampment of the United States and all the daughter Commanderies. Members of the Commanderies of America visit in the Templar Bodies of Scotland and *vice versa*. No holder of Thomson’s Knight Templar Degrees can visit any of the bodies under or recognized by the Great Priory in Scotland. The Grand Lodge of Scotland and the Great Priory recognize each other.¹

The Scottish Rite Degrees, said Mr. Inglis, are controlled in Scotland by the Supreme Council for Scotland of the A. and A. S. R., which was in existence long prior to 1906, and is in existence now. It confers no degrees except those from the 4th to the 33d. It is in full amity with the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions of the United States and all their subordinate bodies. Mr. Inglis said that the same customs with respect to visitation, mutual recognition and attitude towards Thomson’s bodies, applied to this institution as well as to Grand Lodge.²

¹ Transcript, p. 916.
² Transcript, p. 918.
Mr. Jensen then read from the printed proceedings of the Scottish Grand Council of Rites, a statement of the Rites held within its bosom, and asked Mr. Inglis if there was any parallel to that in Masonry as he knew it in Scotland. Mr. Inglis replied: “It is ludicrous, no body, a Masonic body, ever could and certainly has never claimed, unless that one, to confer a hodge-podge of degrees like that. The thing sounds like comic opera instead of Masonry, if it was not serious.” On motion by counsel, the last part of the answer was stricken.

Mr. Inglis stated that he had read and studied the minutes of Mother Kilwinning from the year 1642 onward, as well as histories of the lodge; he said he had made a particular investigation with a view of discovering whether or not Mother Kilwinning ever granted a charter to a lodge in France, and said that as a result of his investigations he found that Mother Kilwinning never had granted a charter to a lodge anywhere in France, and particularly, she never granted a charter to Lodge St. John of Marseilles, France. Mr. Inglis also said that in the year 1743 the Earl of Kilmarnock was neither Grand Master of Grand Lodge of Scotland nor Master of Mother Kilwinning. Mother Kilwinning from its inception, as shown by its minutes, and all through its history, was a lodge working the Craft Degrees only.

So far as the membership of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland is concerned, Mr. Inglis said it has never included what one would call the nobility, or men of social standing in Scotland; the membership consists of engine-tenders and miners mostly, and one, or two, or three of a little different and higher social position, but very few.

According to the Masonic law of Scotland, Mr. Inglis said that a demit is merely a certificate of good standing of a brother in whose favor it is issued; its effect is to transfer

---

1 Transcript, p. 920.
2 Transcript, p. 923.
3 Transcript, p. 924.
the name of the brother in the lodge books to a non-active list; it does not sever his connection with his lodge; at any time, he can come back, and on payment of the current fee, resume his full membership; the tie is never broken and the converse of that is that the lodge and Grand Lodge always retain him on the roll and he is subject to their jurisdiction and laws notwithstanding he has a demit.\textsuperscript{1} The Constitution, Statutes, and General Regulations of the Supreme Council of the S. G. I. G. 33d Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite within the Bosom of the Scottish Grand Council of Rites, produced by Mr. Inglis, themselves provide: "No Brother can of his own volition, separate himself entirely from his Mother Lodge, Chapter, Council, or Consistory. Residence in another city or province may render it expedient that he connect himself with another body of the Rite, but the claim of his mother upon him can in no way be abridged and he can return to her bosom at any time."

By the common law of Masonry in Scotland, Grand Lodge can try a member even though he has demitted from his lodge and joined some other lodge outside of Scotland. Mr. Inglis said that he was a member of Grand Lodge of Scotland and participated in the proceedings which resulted in the expulsion of Thomson in 1914. "The effect of the expulsion," said Mr. Inglis, "was to render Matthew McBlain Thomson an outcast from Freemasonry; no one could admit him or deal with him as a Freemason; all his Masonic Degrees fell from him; he was divested of them all by that expulsion." He could not, thereafter, do Masonic work legally. Mr. Inglis then read a clause from the Constitution, Statutes and General Regulations of the Grand Council of Rites in the following terms:

"Expulsion from a Craft Lodge shall carry with it a loss of membership in all the grades of Rite."\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1} Transcript, p. 927.
\textsuperscript{2} Transcript, p. 933.
Mr. Inglis said that in the common law of Masonry there was a principle known as territorial integrity by which one Grand Lodge will not charter a daughter lodge in territory governed by another Grand Lodge; pursuant to this rule Grand Lodge of Scotland would not undertake to charter a subordinate lodge in the United States of America nor could America come to Scotland. Mr. Reid said the same thing.¹

Mr. Inglis said that by the common law of Freemasonry, every daughter lodge had to have a charter and that during his experience in Masonry he had never heard of a lodge being formed under what is called "indorsation."

The opinion of Lord Ormidale, in the case brought by The Grand Encampment of the Temple and Malta in Scotland, Robert Jamieson and others, against the Great Priory of the Religious and Military Order of the Temple and Malta in Scotland, was then read into the record.² His Lordship stated that the object of this suit was to have set aside the amalgamation effected in 1909 between the Grand Encampment and the Chapter General of Knights Templar. The first point made by His Lordship was that the Grand Encampment and its officers had no standing in Court; the next point made by him was that the agreement of amalgamation was binding. The substance of the opinion is not really pertinent to this inquiry but is worthy the attention of all students interested in such matters. No appeal was taken from this judgment and it, therefore, became binding law.

Mr. Inglis said that he was acquainted with one John Anderson, who, according to the *Universal Freemason*, represented the National Grand Lodge of Scotland at the International Masonic Federation congress held at Zurich; that he was an expelled Mason. Mr. Inglis said further that no one of the so-called Grand Bodies represented at the

¹ Transcript, p. 843.
² Transcript, pp. 942 f.
conference was in amity with Grand Lodge of Scotland or with any of the other regular Masonic bodies in Scotland.¹

On cross-examination,² Mr. Inglis said he had been practicing law in Edinburgh since 1885. He said that his expense in coming to this country had not then been paid, but that the United States Government had subpoenaed him and he was here as a witness for the Government. He holds the Craft Degrees, being a Past Master of two lodges, holds the 32d Degree Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, and is a Knight Grand Cross of the Temple, which is a life appointment. The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, according to his study of its history, came to Scotland in 1846 from France; the books say that it came from Charleston, S. C., in the United States, to France, and that it had its origin in Charleston in 1801. None of the High Degrees was native to Scotland, none of them, Mr. Inglis said. He was asked:

"Q. So, so far as calling it a Scottish Rite, that is a misnomer, is it not?
A. That name Scottish Rite was not given it in Scotland.
Q. It was given to it at Charleston, South Carolina, when founded?
A. It probably was."³

Mr. Inglis said that no man could withdraw from the Grand Lodge of Scotland.⁴ Mr. Inglis first heard of the Grand Council of Rites about 1878-1880 in Scotland; he made no investigation of it at that time. He first began to inquire into it in 1909 or 1910; he read numbers of The Universal Freemason which came into his possession in Scotland; for the purpose of making his investigation, he hunted everywhere in Scotland for knowledge of this body. He did this by instruction of Grand Lodge.⁵

¹ For list of bodies attending the Zurich conference in July, 1920, see Universal Freemason, XIII, p. 123, et seq.; also, ante, pp. 145-146.
² Conducted by Mr. Wilson.
³ Transcript, p. 989.
⁴ Transcript, p. 986.
⁵ Transcript, p. 992.
After joining Grand Lodge of Scotland, Mother Kilwinning withdrew in about 1744 and remained out of the Grand Lodge until 1807, because she was dissatisfied with the place she was going to have on the roll. When she withdrew she took with her all her members and all her own daughter lodges. During the period that she was not on the roll of Grand Lodge her members continued to do regular Masonic work independently of Grand Lodge of Scotland.

At the time Thomson was expelled he was given a trial; he was cited to appear but did not; nor did anyone appear to represent him, but a letter from him was read; evidence was taken and the whole matter was laid before Grand Lodge,¹ which approved the action of Grand Committee.

The Earl of Kilmarnock, so Mr. Inglis testified, was Grand Master of Grand Lodge from November, 1741, to November, 1742, and he was Master of Mother Kilwinning from December, 1741, to December, 1742; he was not Master of either body in 1743.

Grand Lodge of Scotland does not recognize the Rite of Mizraim as belonging to Masonry at all, nor does it recognize the Rite of Memphis.

On re-direct examination,² Mr. Inglis said that not any of the so-called High Degrees in Masonry are native or indigenous to Scotland; they are all importations. In Scotland today under Masonic law no member of Grand Lodge could withdraw as Mother Kilwinning did.³ At the time she withdrew there was no Masonic Jurisprudence and during the past 150 years Masonic law has grown just like the laws of countries.

P. J. Young, a resident of Montpelier, Idaho, employed as a boilermaker for the Oregon Short Line Railroad Co., was the last witness for the Government.⁴ He said he joined the organization in 1916, becoming a member of St. John No. 1.

¹ Transcript, p. 995.
² Conducted by Mr. Jensen.
³ Transcript, p. 1007.
⁴ Transcript, p. 1012.
He also had the 32d Degree and the Shrine; he had paid but $10 for the Craft Degrees and $45 for the balance.¹

At the conclusion of the testimony of Mr. Young, the Government rested. Mr. M. E. Wilson, for the defendants, made a brief opening statement.

Dominic Bergera, one of the defendants, was called to the stand to testify in his own behalf.² He said that he had lived in Helper, Utah, since 1908, and that he had been in the United States for thirty-one years.³ Prior to coming to Helper, he lived at Diamondville, Wyoming, where he joined the American Masonic Federation. He received the first three degrees in a lodge in Diamondville, and he afterwards “was obligated from the 4th to the 32d” by Thomson.⁴ He told of the steps which he had taken at Helper which preceded the organization there of Thomson’s first lodge in Utah.

He said he became acquainted with a circular put out by the Grand Lodge of Utah, and wrote a letter to Mr. Christopher Diehl, the Grand Secretary of Utah. The circular, afterwards admitted in evidence, was simply a warning in the name of the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Utah, that one Dominic Bergera was assuming to organize a lodge at Helper, and called upon the Masons of Utah to crush this interloper in its incipiency, and to warn in a quiet way all their fellow citizens not to participate in any meeting called by Bergera. Bergera said that he then wrote a letter to the Grand Secretary of Utah in which he said he would deposit $500 in a bank to cover the expenses of the Secretary and Grand Master if they would come down to Helper and tell them why they were spurious and clandestine.⁵ He received no reply to that letter, but afterwards had a conversation with the Secretary at Salt Lake City,

¹ Transcript, p. 1015.
² Direct examination by Mr. Price.
³ Transcript, p. 1038.
⁴ Transcript, p. 1040.
⁵ Transcript, pp. 1084-1086.
during which the Grand Secretary said he could not accept this offer.

Bergera said that he made an investigation to determine the merit of the institution by going to Europe and finding out what he could learn. He went to Scotland to attend a meeting of the Grand Council of Rites to be held March 25, 1913. He said he is an Honorary member of the 33rd Degree of that body and that his credentials admitted him to this meeting. The meeting was held in the town of Kilmarnock. He then went to Ayr to visit St. James Lodge No. 125, because it was the Mother Lodge of Brother Thomson, and was admitted to that lodge. He showed his credentials, he stated, and also went through the worst test he ever saw in any place in his life. He was then admitted as a Masonic brother. He couldn't remember the name of the Master of the lodge, and said that the members were called together by telephone. He visited another lodge on the 3rd or 4th of May, 1913, in London. He went with the proprietor of his hotel. He couldn't remember its name, but this lodge practiced the same Rites of Masonry as his own lodge. After leaving London he went to Paris and visited another lodge there. In Paris he went with the proprietor of a restaurant; he couldn't give the name of that lodge. He gained admission as at the other places by going through an examination and showing his credentials. He then went to Italy and visited several lodges there. He was not refused admittance to any of them. In each one he exhibited the credentials and diploma given him by Thomson.

Summarizing, Bergera said he visited two lodges in Scotland, one in London, one in Paris, and several in Italy.
On cross-examination, Bergera said he did not call at the Grand Lodge of Scotland, although he went over there to make this investigation. He said his object in going over was that some men offered to bet him $10,000 he could not visit St. James No. 125, he desired to go and visit St. James No. 125 and that was all the object he had. They backed out, they did not bet, he said. He said he did not know what Craft lodge Jamieson belonged to at that time, but Jamieson accompanied him to Lodge St. James No. 125 and introduced him. He attended a Lodge at Kilmarnock. The meeting was held in a place called Kilmarnock Lodge, but he couldn't give its name. He said he recollected the street where the building was, but didn't know its name.

He was asked these questions:

"Q. What sort of building was it?
   A. It was a nice lodge room, just like as any other room I see, any lodge room I see.

Q. Was it upstairs?
   A. Upstairs.

Q. Do you know the name of the building?
   A. No; just marked up there, Kilmarnock Lodge; I don't remember."

He said his best recollection was that the meeting of the Grand Council of Rites was held in the same place. One evening he visited the lodge, and the next afternoon he visited the Council of Rites in the same place. The meeting of the Grand Council of Rites lasted from 2 until 5:30 o'clock in the afternoon; he could recollect the names of only four men, namely, Jamieson, Will Young, William Steel and Wilson, out of the twenty-two who were present. He was the only foreigner present.
He was asked these questions:

"Q. Was there any building in Kilmarnock used and known as the building of the Grand Council of Rites? A. Nothing that I know of; I was only in the lodge. Q. You didn't see any such building? A. No."

He said he could not remember the names of the lodges he visited in London or Paris. He didn't visit the Grand Orient of France because he had no business with it.1 He did not visit or attempt to visit the Grand Lodge of England in London. He didn't want to investigate that.2

He was asked by Mr. Morris on cross-examination:

"Q. Now, Mr. Bergera, in all your travels in Scotland on this trip of investigation, did you find any temple or building of the Grand Council of Rites? A. I find a lodge room, that is all I see."

Bergera said that in Diamondville, Wyoming, he had had a store and a saloon, and that in Helper he had had a saloon. He was the promoter, he stated, of the lodge formed by Thomson at Helper.

Bergera admitted he is the Treasurer General of the American Masonic Federation and of the Confederated Supreme Councils. He was asked these questions by Mr. Morris:

"Q. During the period of time from May, 1918, to April, 1921, as Treasurer General of these two organizations that I have named, . . . . did you sign checks for these two organizations? A. I didn't do it after we built the Temple and they had so many things to pay. I said it was no use to let me go to the expense of using stamp back and forth and I let them as the Treasurer General to handle. Q. Did you, during that period of time issue any receipts to any of these organizations for money received?"

1 Transcript, p. 1069.  
2 Transcript, p. 1070.
Q. Well, during that period of time you have received no money from the American Masonic Federation or the Confederated Supreme Council?
A. Well, for which time did you say?
Q. May, 1918, to April, 1921?
A. I don't think so.
The Court: What was that?
A. I don't think so, because it was handled up here, everything was handled from this office.
Q. Handled from Salt Lake City?
A. They send me a statement at the end of the month.
Q. That is all you have to do with it?
A. That is all.1
Q. In other words you discharged no duty whatsoever during the period of time mentioned by virtue of your office as Treasurer General of these two organizations?
A. Well, I did discharge my duty, whatever it was.
Q. Well, what was it?
A. Whatever I was called.
Q. Well, that is what I am trying to find out. What did you do?
A. I practically—I have not done—I make arrangements to handle the things in here because there was too many things.
Q. Answer the question, what did you do?
A. I was doing it if I was called, but it never was necessary to do anything.
Q. As a matter of fact then, you didn't do anything.
A. Practically.
Q. Well, did you or did you not?
A. I did not, sometimes.2

Mr. Morris later asked Bergera if he had ever seen Thomson's patent, which was then shown to him.

"A. I saw a copy of it.
Q. Have you ever seen the original paper which I now show you that is marked Exhibit 16?"

1 Transcript, pp. 1075 f.
2 Transcript, pp. 1077-1078.
Matthew McBlain Thomson took the stand in his own behalf. He said he was sixty-eight years of age, had resided at Salt Lake City since 1910, and was one of the defendants. He was born in the town of Ayr, Scotland, and resided in Scotland until 1881, in which year he came to the United States. About six years thereafter he became a citizen of the United States. About 1886 or 1887 he returned to Scotland and remained until 1898. He then took up his residence in Montpelier, Idaho, where he lived until his removal to Salt Lake City. He stated that he became a Mason in 1874 in Lodge Glasgow Melrose St. John. First he took the Craft Degrees, but before leaving Scotland he took the 33d Degree in the Ancient and Accepted Rite, the 47th of the Early Grand National Rite, the 90th Degree of the Rite of Mizraim and the 95th Degree of the Rite of Memphis, with several other detached orders practiced by the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland. In Montpelier, Idaho, he affiliated with King Solomon Lodge No. 17, holding under the Grand Lodge of Idaho. Before leaving Scotland, he had taken a demit from Lodge Newton-on-Ayr St. James No. 125. He was asked:

"Q. To what extent have you studied Masonry?
A. Well, I have read pretty considerably about it. I have edited a Masonic magazine for a good time, both in Scotland and America. I believe my opportunities have been about as fair as most people's and I have taken such advantage of it as my opportunities and education would permit."
SCOTTISH GRAND COUNCIL OF RITES.

T.G.O.T.G.A.O.T.T.

From the East of the Supreme Grand Council of the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the 33d and last degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, held within the lessor of the Scottish Grand Council of Rites, under the E. C. of the N. near the N.B. answering to 55° 31' N. Latitude 4° 15' West Meridian of Greenwich.

Unto all Perfect and Sublime Masters, Knights, Princes, and Scholars of Masonry. Greeting, Know, Ye, that our Most Illustrious and Well-beloved Brother, 32°, who hath in the margin hereof signed his name, was on the 27th day of July, A.D. 1844, Crowned and Enthroned a Sovereign Grand Inspector General 33rd and last degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, a Member of our Grand Council, invested with all the Powers, Privileges, and Honours pertaining to that Exalted Position.

In witness whereof we have issued these Letters Patent and set therein our hands and the seal of our Grand Council, done in the Valley of Haggis, in the Kingdom of Scotland, the 27th day of the Holy Month of August, A.D. 1844, answering to the 13th day of

EARLY 33d DEGREE A. A. S. R. DIPLOMA.
Observe date and signatures.
He then named some familiar Masonic books. He also said he had studied Masonic Jurisprudence. He was asked:

"Q. Do you know what is known by the term, 'Common Law of Masonry'?  
A. The first time I ever heard the term used was yesterday."1

He said that expulsion of a member meant Masonic death; that it was the universal custom in all countries to withdraw and become a member of some lodge in some other country; but that Scotland has a peculiar law of its own allowing a dual membership. He said, however, that the control of the Mother Lodge in Scotland continued only while the member was in Scotland or in a British colony where the Grand Lodge of Scotland has a Provincial Grand Lodge.2

He said he voluntarily withdrew from King Solomon Lodge because of an argument which arose in the lodge relative to Masonry. He then explained the resolution introduced in the Grand Lodge of Idaho in 1901 which was leveled at a Council of Kadosh in Montpelier holding a patent from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland. After the debate in the Grand Lodge of Idaho, Thomson said he reported to his brethren that the resolution was certain to become law and it was for them, as well as for him, to decide what they wanted to do. He further said that a difficulty arose among the membership of King Solomon Lodge because some members said that a Mormon was a clandestine Mason and he objected to that, and when he was twitted about it, he said there might come a time when he couldn’t take a joke, and he took his demit.3

He testified that pursuant to a charter from the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, he had organized De Molay Council No. 21 at Montpelier. He then explained the or-

---

1 Transcript, p. 1102.
2 Transcript, p. 1103.
3 Transcript, p. 1108.
ganization of the American Masonic Federation and named the men who aided him. Speaking of the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland and what it was in 1898, Thomson said:

“It was what it had always been since the year 1822, it was a higher branch of what we termed, the Early Grand Scottish Rites, this was a system of Masonry that had been practiced in Scotland since the latter part of the 18th century governed most of that time by what was termed Encampments of Knights Templar and in 1822 a new organization of that body was effected and from this organization they divided this into two, one body keeping control of the Knight Templar degrees and the degrees below that and the other having delegated to it the degrees above that, and that was termed the Grand Council of Rites, the connection between the two being retained to this extent, that the Grand Master of Knights Templar was Ex-officio Grand Master of the other.”

He was asked:

“Q. What degrees in Masonry did the Grand Council of Rites have power to confer in April, 1898?
A. All of the degrees of the Early Grand National Scottish Rite, from the 4th degree up to and including the 47th degree and later it was reduced to 33 degrees, it had also control of all of the degrees of the Rites of Memphis and Mizraim and the Franco-Scottish or the Ancient and Accepted Scottish, I use that term to differentiate it from the real Scottish and call it this Franco-Scottish because it came around by France.

* * * *

Q. Was there any other Lodge that had authority or power over the Grand Council of Rites?
A. None whatever, there was no other power in Scotland working the same degrees, no other power in Scotland working the same degrees.”

He then said that when he came to America with his charter there was only one body in America that worked the

---

1 Transcript, p. 1110.
2 Transcript, pp. 1112 f.
3 Transcript, pp. 1113-1114.
Memphis Rite and that was called irregular, but that there was a body in New Orleans, named the Supreme Council for the Sovereign and Independent State of Louisiana, its Territories and Dependencies, which was perfectly regular. This body had received its authority from a body called the Cerneau Body in New York, which worked the system of the Grand Orient of France.

He said he first corresponded with Cheri in 1904, and from this correspondence came the letters already introduced in evidence.

He was asked:

"Q. Did you finally send this patent, Exhibit 16, to J. N. Cheri?
A. I did."

Mr. Wilson then showed him the patent, and after reading the endorsement of Cheri thereon, asked:

"Q. Were those words and that signature upon the face of the patent when you sent it to Cheri?
A. No sir.
Q. Were they on the patent as I read when it was returned to you?
A. They were.

* * * *

Q. Mr. Thomson, does the word 'indorsation' have any particular significance in Masonry?
A. Yes sir.
Q. Do you know what that significance is?
A. Yes sir.
Q. Do you know why and when that term should be used and what method should be used?
A. Yes sir.
Q. Now, tell the court what significance in Masonry this word has.
A. It means a permission granted by another party for what had been granted by one before; he endorses it, grants his permission or his sanction to what the other parties done before.

1 Transcript, p. 1116.
U. S. v. THOMSON

Q. What was the occasion of your obtaining the indorsation as represented from J. N. Cheri?

A. To form Scottish Rite Lodges and Grand Lodges within the mountain district, that was all I intended to do at the first, there was no idea of reaching further.1

Thomson then said he gathered together a few who had like ideas with him and healed them by virtue of his authority, and subsequent to his patent and the indorsation, created a lodge "which ultimately branched out into the Grand Lodge Inter-Montana and from that into the American Masonic Federation."2

He was asked:

"Q. You have mentioned the term, 'Universal Freemasonry,' what do you mean by the use of that term as distinguished from other Masons?

A. Masonry that knows no creed, save the one belief in the All Father, whom as we express it, is The Great Architect of the Universe, the Creator, and leaving to every man his own opinion after that, that takes no stock in what country a man may be born in, what language he may speak or his politics and things like that or anything except that he be a good man and a true one.

* * * *

Q. Now in what respect is Universal distinct from such Masonry as is practiced by the Charleston Scottish Rite Masonry?

A. One is the antithesis of the other."3

Thomson then said that he believed that the principles of Masonry as he stated them were the true principles and that he had entertained that belief since 1874.4

He said he came to Utah in 1910 and organized the Confederated Supreme Council.5 For ten years prior to its incorporation, it had been working the Higher Degrees under his patent. He said that in Utah there was one Blue lodge in

1 Transcript, p. 1119.
2 Transcript, pp. 1119 f.
3 Transcript, p. 1120.
4 Transcript, p. 1120.
5 Transcript, p. 1121.
Ogden, three in Salt Lake, one in Bingham, and one in Helper; elsewhere they had lodges in Idaho, Wyoming, California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut; and that there was a Grand Lodge in Central America.1

Thomson recited the offices which he holds: Grand Master Mason in the Supreme Lodge of the American Masonic Federation, Grand Commander of the Confederated Supreme Council, ex-officio Chief Organizer, Associate Editor of *The Universal Freemason*, and President of the International Masonic Federation of the World.2

Further, he stated that he represented directly the Grand Lodge of Roumania, the Grand Orient of Germany, the Grand Orient of Switzerland, the United Grand Orient of Italy, the United Grand Orient of France, the Grand Orient of Rio Grande D’Sul in Brazil, the Grand Lodge of Peru, and the Serene Grand Lodge of Cuba.

Asked where the Supreme Council of Louisiana got its Masonic power, Thomson said that its Masonic ancestry went to France; that one lodge under the Supreme Council, called Polar Star, came from the Mother Lodge of Marseilles in France.

He was asked:

"Q. And whence came the Masonic power of the French Lodge in Marseilles?

A. That is explained in different ways by different writers; some ascribe it to a traveling Scotchman; another French writer says that it was a Scottish nobleman in the train of Charles Edward Stuart, who was then a political exile in France, but we have a tradition in the part of the country where Lord Kilmarnock came from, . . . . that it was he that had done this while he was in the train of Charles Edward Stuart in France, the year before he was beheaded for adherence to that cause. At that time Lord Kilmarnock was the Master of the Mother Lodge of Kil-
winning and the Grand Master of the recently created Grand Lodge of Scotland.¹

* * * *

Q. What connection does the Supreme Council of Louisiana, Polar Star Lodge, have with Mother Kilwinning?
A. According to this tradition—a tradition in Masonry when it goes back over 200 years, a tradition very often supplies the place of history, and tradition has it that Lord Kilmarnock, while he was in France in the train of Charles Edward Stuart, in his double capacity created or chartered or constituted a lodge in Marseilles which exercised similar powers to that of the Mother Lodge in Scotland, by granting charters. It never claimed to be a Grand Lodge, but just after the fashion that Kilwinning claimed to be a Mother Lodge and granted charters."²

Thomson said that he had never at any time claimed to any person that he had a charter from Polar Star Lodge, and that he had never claimed any other authority than that given by his patent with the indorsation thereon for the organization of the American Masonic Federation. He said: "I have other powers, but not for that."

"Q. What other powers have you?
A. I had the power under the Rite of Mizraim, the Rite of Memphis, and the Rite of St. Martin, and the Ancient Accepted Rite, but I only exercised these in the higher degrees, although I had the power to have exercised them had it been desired in the lower."

Thomson then gave an explanation of the Rites of Memphis, Mizraim and St. Martin. The Rites of Memphis and Mizraim in the Higher Degrees were practiced in Scotland, he stated.³

Thomson admitted he had appointed organizers throughout the country, to whom he had given printed instructions, but denied that he had ever told them to make any repre-

¹ Transcript, pp. 1125-1126.
² Transcript, p. 1126.
³ Transcript, p. 1128.
⁴ Transcript, p. 1130. Cf. testimony of Mr. Inglis, ante, p. 212.
sentations to the effect that he had a charter from Polar
Star Lodge of Louisiana. He did tell them, however, that
he had authority from the Supreme Council of Louisiana by
endorsement.¹ These men in their organization of lodges,
solicited members, Thomson conceded.²

He was asked:

“Q. I will ask you whether under Masonic customs and
practice, as you understand them, that is the proper prac-
tice or not?

A. That is a proper procedure and is adopted in most all
countries that ever I have heard of. Professedly, it is not
done in the United States. Actually, it is.”³

He went on to explain the methods used by his organizers
in creating a lodge.⁴ A deputy organizer goes into a field,
seeks good men, explains what he has, and after seven mem-
bers are obtained, a dispensation is granted. In the larger
cities it was required that there should be fifty members
before a charter could be delivered. Customarily, they
charged $35 for the first three degrees, but it might be
less. In some cases men were admitted into lodges without
fees. For the Higher Degrees $135 were customarily
charged. That took the men through the 32d Degree and
the Shrine.⁵

In explanation of his statement in St. John Lodge No. 21,
Los Angeles, he continued:

“I said we had authority under four different Rites, that
we could have exercised, that the Scottish Rite was our
Rite, and it came from the Supreme Council of Louisiana,
not from the Polar Star Lodge.

Q. Go on, give the rest.

A. That we had the right under the Rite of Memphis,
under the Rite of Mizraim, under the Rite of St. Martin, but
the Scottish Rite was our Rite on the Blue Degrees and our

¹ Transcript, p. 1131.
² Transcript, p. 1131.
³ Transcript, p. 1131.
⁴ Transcript, p. 1131.
⁵ Transcript, p. 1134.
authority was from the Supreme Council of Louisiana, of which Polar Star had at one time been a constituent member, but was now dead—I don’t know if I entered specifical-ly into that, but I mentioned about Polar Star being only one link in a chain connecting us with Marseilles and tra-ditionally with Mother Kilwinning.¹

Q. What, if anything, did you say with reference to Polar Star?
A. That Polar Star was a link between them, a link in the chain showing the descent.
Q. What did you mean by that, so that we can under-stand it definitely?
A. That Mother Lodge of Marseilles chartered the lodge Polar Star; that Polar Star was one of the principal factors in the forming of the Supreme Council of Louisiana in its Symbolic branch that had brought her the authority from this mother in Marseilles, who was dead. That was it.”²

Mr. Thomson was then allowed, over the objection of counsel for the Government, to tell what he knew about the origin of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite as prac-ticed in the Southern Jurisdiction; and he stated his views regarding the origin of that body, and how it was taken to Scotland in 1846.³

He also gave his version of the circumstances attendant upon the meeting with Mr. Donato in Philadelphia, when he saw the letters written by the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana.

Thomson was asked by his counsel:

“Q. Now, some testimony has been given here relative to the length of time it takes to confer the degrees, say from the 4th to the 32d. I will ask you what is the usual Ma-sonic practice about that?

¹ Transcript, pp. 1136-1137.
² Transcript, p. 1139.
³ Transcript, pp. 1145 et seq.
THE THOMSON MASONIC FRAUD

A. I simply administer the obligations to them, leaving it to a future time for instruction upon the degrees.

Q. When the obligation is administered, what effect has that upon the candidate?
A. Makes him a full member of the Rite.

Q. What do they do afterwards, what does the candidate who takes the obligation, what does he do in the way of study ordinarily?
A. He either has the opportunity of attending the Council and Lodge meetings or he is supplied with written instructions."

His attention was called by Mr. Wilson to the signature of Maury on his patent and he was asked:

"Q. Why did you get that signature of Mr. Maury?

A. To attest the authenticity of the signature of Joseph N. Cheri."

Q. There was some testimony here given about your writing for a certificate through Mr. Maury. Do you recall that testimony?
A. Yes sir.

Q. Why did you do that; what did you do with reference to that?
A. For the simple reason that some people denied that it had been done unless I produced the diploma which was not always convenient. They were not satisfied, and I requested to have a formal attestation of the authenticity of that signature, a verification of it, that I might photograph it and send it out broadcast.""
voted to *Masonic Common Law*, and he then said that he had never heard either of Roscoe Pound or of the Harvard Law School, of which Mr. Pound is Dean. He was asked by Mr. Jensen:

"Q. So that we may have no misunderstanding, Mr. Thomson, you claim that you got your authority for the Craft Degrees from the Supreme Council of Louisiana?
A. Through indorsation upon my patent from Scotland, yes sir.
Q. And you published as the tree of your Craft title this exhibit, showing that your title came from Mother Kilwinning to the mother lodge of St. John of Scotland, Marseilles, France, then through Polar Star which was merged in the Supreme Council of Louisiana, and then you came through the Supreme Council of Louisiana?
A. Yes sir.
Q. That is your chain of title?
A. That is our chain of title.¹

* * * *

Q. And said you had always claimed title in the Craft Degrees through the Supreme Council of Louisiana?
A. Yes, using Polar Star only as a link in the chain.
Q. Now, of course, Mr. Thomson, you knew you had no Charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana?
A. Never claimed to have."²

Mr. Jensen then exhibited to Thomson a copy of *Who is Who in Masonry*, showing the paragraph beginning, "On September 14, 1906, Jos. N. Cheri, Supreme Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Western Hemisphere, located at New Orleans, granted a Charter to M. McB. Thomson . . . . to form Craft or Symbolic Grand and Subordinate Lodges of Masons . . . ." This colloquy followed:

"Q. You did, Mr. Thomson, claim to have a charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana, did you not?
A. With all due deference to your better knowledge of the thing, I did not.

¹ Transcript, p. 1160. See tree, ante, p. 79.
² Transcript, p. 1161.
Court: No, answer this question.
A. I did not, your honor.
Q. Doesn't this language say that Joseph N. Cheri granted a charter of authority to M. McB. Thomson?
A. It does.
Q. And that statement was not true; is that right?
A. That is not right.
Q. Will you produce the charter from Joseph N. Cheri?
A. I never said I had a charter from Joseph N. Cheri.
Q. Does this statement say you had such a charter?
A. It does, but I never said it.
Q. You never said it?
A. No; that is given as a summary by my co-editor. I am perfectly willing to accept it and explain it, but it is not given by me."

Mr. Jensen then called Thomson's attention to the statement on the inside cover of the pamphlet that it was "published by authority of the Supreme Lodge of the American Masonic Federation," and showed him the seal of the Federation and a facsimile of his own signature. He was then asked if he had any phrase any place in Cheri's indorsation saying "extending the powers of said patent to cover the Symbolic Degrees," and he replied, "No, I did not, but I had in the letters accompanying it."

Mr. Jensen then showed to Thomson letters written by Perrot suggesting a closer union between Polar Star Lodge and the Supreme Council of Louisiana, and Thomson stated that he had not seen these letters before but approved the plan contained in them. His letter of March 8, 1918, and quoted on page 127, ante, shown herewith, shows his own plan to have the A. M. F. absorb Polar Star. Thomson was then asked:

"Q. Let me ask you, Mr. Thomson, did you ever, during the ten years that you have published your magazine, publish the fact that the Supreme Council of Louisiana was a colored or Creole body?

1 Transcript, pp. 1162-1163.
2 Transcript, p. 1166. No letters to this effect were produced by Thomson.
March 8/18.

Gee, U. Maury 35.90.9n.


Yours of the 15th ult., got here while I was in the East as far as Akron Ohio, where I had gone to heal and bring into the Scottish Rite a Lodge of the A.F. & A.M. of Ohio. I also formed them into a Council of Kadosh and believe that it will be a perfect suc. I was also with another Lodge of the A.F.A.A.W. in Cleveland Ohio, and explained to them what the Scottish Rite and Universal Masonry meant generally, and what it would mean to them if they would come in with us, they were highly pleased with the case as I presented it and have agreed to come in with us and be healed as Scottish Rite Masons.

I also while away Chartered a new Lodge and Council of our own in Cleveland composed of good representative men of the City. This Lodge had been before working under Dispensation. I also granted Dispensations for three new Lodges, one in New York and two in Michigan.

Thus you will see that universal masonry progresses, and I hope the time is not far distant when there will be Lodges of Universal Masonry in every State in the Union.

I rejoice to learn from your letter that Madame Maury has recovered from her sickness and again is in good health which I hope she will long continue to enjoy.

I note what you say about Polar Star Charter, there is no doubt but that the Locals would like very much to get possession of that Charter but of course you will not allow it to work anymore, I thought that you were going to get it to work again if you had not been able to get sufficient of the old members of Polar Star together to revive the Charter. I have been thinking of a plan suggested by your letter that if it meets with your approval would be of great advantage to both you and us, and Universal Masonry generally. It is this, to place Polar Star Charter in the American Masonic Federation, the plan to be something like this; sufficient of the old members (at least 7) to meet under the Charter, affiliate seven of our members, enough to hold the Charter, and we would see that it would never die again, we would pay all the expense incurred, this over and let me know what you decide.

With regards to Bro. Metoyer and all the B.B., and compliments to Madame Maury and Family.

A. Twelve years I published the magazine. You give me credit for two years too little.

Q. Will you answer the question?
A. No; never did I consider it necessary."

Mr. Jensen then asked him to produce the pamphlet referred to in the article in *The Universal Freemason* of October, 1921, entitled "Is it Ignorance or Malice," wherein he had published supposedly twelve years earlier the story about Memphis and Mizraim. Thomson admitted that the quoted paragraphs were not in the pamphlet as it was published twelve years ago, but that they were first inserted in a new edition put out in 1920.²

Thomson acknowledged that the language on the reverse of his patent beneath the signatures, was in the handwriting of Perrot and was put there at his (Thomson's) instance.³

Thomson said that prior to commencing this work, he was a contracting painter and that was partly his business in Scotland; also that he had run a hotel in Scotland and was a licensed victualler, "what in this country you would term a saloon keeper, and I was in the speculative building business, building and selling buildings."⁴

Regarding his work as Chief Organizer, he was asked:

"Q. Did any part of the organizing fees come to you?
A. Here, in Scotland, or America?
Q. I am talking about America.
A. Oh, yes.
Q. That was exclusively your profit?
A. It was."⁵

He was asked where the American Masonic Federation had its bank account, and said he couldn't tell, it was none of his business. These questions were asked:

¹ Transcript, p. 1176.
² Transcript, p. 1183. See ante, p. 141 ff. for paragraphs, and p. 144 for article.
³ Transcript, p. 1189.
⁴ Transcript, p. 1198.
⁵ Transcript, p. 1199.
“Q. Don’t you know where the funds of this organization were kept?
   A. It is none of my business, I tell you.
   The Court: Answer the question.
   A. No, I don’t know, your honor.
   Mr. Jensen: Isn’t the reason that you don’t know where the funds of this concern were kept was because you got them?
   A. No, that would be wrong to say that. I would have to think a minute—use short words—it was not.
   Q. Will you explain to this jury how it is if the American Masonic Federation had a bank account you don’t know where it was?

   * * * *

   A. The reason was because I had nothing to do with the money matters, there was a Secretary and a Treasurer and they conducted the financial affairs of the Federation, and I had nothing to do with it, I was the administrator—not in the financial affairs.”

Mr. Jensen continued:

“Q. You have made out of this business since you have been engaged in it from one to three thousand dollars a month, have you not?
   Mr. Wilson: I object to that as not proper cross-examination.
   The Court: Overruled.
   Mr. Wilson: Exception.
   A. No sir.
   Q. You haven’t?
   A. I have not.
   Q. How much have you made per month?
   A. It is none of your business.
   Mr. Wilson: I object to that on the ground that it is immaterial and not proper cross-examination.
   The Court: He may answer as to what he has made out of this organization.
   A. I have made on an average, I have not calculated it, an average of two hundred to two hundred and fifty dollars a month. Some months I made ten dollars and some months

---

1 Transcript, p. 1200.
I have got as low as five dollars and it went as high as three and four hundred dollars because it was a commission.”

Thomson admitted that since 1913 he has given up all of his time to the work of the Masonic Federation.

In explaining the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, Thomson stated that if a man had secured a demit from the Grand Lodge of Scotland and had moved to America, the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge ended. He said that he did not now claim the right to visit his Mother Lodge in Scotland because the Grand Lodge went through the form of expelling him, whether it was right or wrong; but before his expulsion he would have claimed the right to visit his Mother Lodge when he was in Scotland. Prior to his expulsion he was the child of his Mother Lodge and would have claimed then the right to visit her. Expulsion from Blue Lodge is Masonic death.

He acknowledged that he had claimed while living in America a life membership in his Mother Lodge. He was asked:

“Q. Do you mean, Mr. Thomson, that in 1912, 1913 and ’14 you could claim the life membership in your lodge in Scotland and still the Grand Lodge was powerless to expel you.

A. If I was outside of Scotland, sure.

Q. If you were outside of Scotland, in other words, your opinion is, that Masonic jurisdiction ended with the borders of Scotland?

A. The same as did with the borders of Utah if it was in Utah.”

Mr. Jensen then produced the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Scotland for the year 1880 and propounded this question:

---

1 Transcript, pp. 1202-1203.
2 Transcript, pp. 1207-1208.
3 Transcript, p. 1211 et seq.
4 Transcript, p. 1211.
"Q. I read from a minute of the Grand Committee held on Thursday, the 29th day of April, 1880, 'A memorial anent the clandestine introduction of Matthew Thomson into Lodge Operative Ayr No. 138 and the issuing of a diploma in his favor. Committee having considered the whole case find that Matthew Thomson is not a Free Mason and that he could not, therefore, be affiliated with the Lodge Operative Ayr. Find that certain of the office bearers of that Lodge knew that Mr. Thomson was not a member of the Order when they pretended to affiliate him. Find that the return made by the Lodge to Grand Lodge dated June 12, 1876, certifying that Mr. Thomson was entered, passed and raised in that Lodge was false and fraudulent; find that the Lodge has produced no regular books and that such as have been produced in many places written in pencil and mostly irregular and contain no evidence of Thomson's pretended affiliation, therefore, recommend Grand Lodge instruct the name of the said Matthew Thomson to be deleted from the register of intrants and ordained him to deliver up the diploma of membership on 12th June, 1876, and further recommend that Grand Lodge suspend the Lodge Operative Ayr No. 138 and debar it from meeting for Masonic purposes until it is the pleasure of Grand Lodge to withdraw its suspension. Further, instruct the Grand Secretary to call for delivery of the charter and minutes and other books of the Lodge, if any such exist, and retain the same in his possession.'

I read next from a meeting of the Grand Committee held on Thursday, 24th of June, 1880.

'Grand Secretary produced the diploma which had been issued to Matthew Thomson under false return and name of the Lodge Operative Ayr No. 138—June, 1876, and tabled a letter from the Lodge St. James Ayr, No. 125, anent the admission of said Matthew Thomson by affiliation or otherwise as Grand Committee may direct. Remitted to the Petitions and Complaints Committee to consider and report.'

I read next from a minute of the Grand Committee held Thursday, the 29th of July, 1880.

'On the recommendation of the sub-committee on Petitions and Complaints, Grand Secretary was instructed to
direct the Lodge St. James Newton-on-Ayr 125 as to the admission of Mr. Matthew Thomson, referred to in the minutes of Grand Committee of date June 24, last, and being satisfied that the conditions on which the applicant’s admission is authorized have been complied with to issue a new diploma to the said Matthew Thomson.

I will ask you if those minutes do not correctly state the facts with reference to your membership in any lodge in the Grand Lodge of Scotland?

A. No sir, the statement is not correct, not entirely. You may read correctly from the minutes, but the minute is not correct.”

Later Thomson admitted that he had signed an application which was presented to a meeting of Lodge Newton-on-Ayr St. James No. 125 on the night of March 29, 1889. He claimed, however, that he was affiliated on the several degrees.

He was asked by Mr. Jensen to produce the history or the written record other than his own wherein it was stated that Mother Kilwinning ever granted the first link in his chain of title.

He was asked: 

“Q. Calling your attention to Government’s exhibit 33, page 7 thereof, where you are giving the Craft link chain of title, you have there this statement: ‘Mother Kilwinning, being one of the thirty-three lodges forming the Grand Lodge of Scotland, still retaining her ancient rights to charter Craft and High Degree Lodges’—then you go on—

A. That is correct.

Q. ‘In the year 1743, the Earl of Kilmarnock, who was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and also of Mother Kilwinning, by virtue of the authority in him vested, Chartered three Mother Lodges in France, one of which was the Grand Mother Lodge of St. John at Mar-

seilles, France.’ I will ask you to show me a book or a history dealing with the history of Masonry which says that

1 Transcript, pp. 1221 et seq.
2 Transcript, pp. 1224-1225.
3 Transcript, p. 1230.
Mother Kilwinning chartered the Grand Lodge of St. John at Marseilles, France.

A. I did not say so. Read it right. I did not say so at all.

Q. Can you produce any book—

The Court: He says he did not say that.

A. I did not say that that you quote, you don't quote me correctly. I say that Lord Kilmarnock did it. I didn't say Mother Kilwinning did it. Quote me correctly.

Q. In your tree you go back on your Craft title right to Mother Kilwinning?

A. Yes.

Q. Now, will you show me a history any place which supplies the link granting a charter from Mother Kilwinning to the Mother Lodge of St. John of Scotland, Marseilles, France?

A. That is a matter of tradition as I have said, well credited tradition.

The Court: Listen to the question. He asked if you could show him a book or reference.

A. No, I have no book.

Mr. Jensen: Can you supply no book making that statement?

A. I said so.”

Mr. Jensen asked:

"Q. I will ask you if you did not desire the reader to understand from this language, ‘It (the A. M. F.) is in amity with and recognized by Grand Lodges and Councils in Scotland,’ that you were in amity with and recognized by the Grand Lodge of Scotland?

A. No sir.

Q. You did not?

A. Did not. I meant it to be understood that we were recognized by lodges, Grand Lodges, etc. in those separate countries. I didn't specify any particular country.

Q. What Grand Lodge in Scotland did you want your reader to understand you were in amity with and recognized by?

A. The National Grand Lodge of Scotland.

Q. Why didn’t you use the term ‘National Grand Lodge,’ then?

1 Transcript, pp. 1230-1231.
A. Well, I didn't have you to instruct me, counsel, at that time."

Thomson was asked in continuation of the cross-examination:

"Q. Has the Grand Council of Rites in Scotland any building for its headquarters in Scotland?
A. It has not that I know of.
Q. Not that you know of?
A. No sir.
Q. Can you give me the address of a single lodge hall that it has in Scotland?
A. I don't know that I could. I haven't been up in the history of it for a while.
Q. Can you give me any address where it holds forth, except the living quarters of Robert Jamieson at 4 Fullerton Street, Kilmarnock?
A. That it holds forth?
Q. Yes.
A. Does it hold forth there?
Q. Yes.
A. I am not aware of it if it does.
Q. That is where all of the high degree diplomas come from?
A. It may be possible, it may be the Secretary's office, of course.
Q. Yes.
A. But not necessarily where Council sits.
Q. Will you give me an address in Scotland of a single lodge room that belongs to the Grand Council of Rites, or its address?
A. No sir, he said where it met before, that was one trouble."

Thomson acknowledged that he had claimed that the Grand Council of Rites "was the oldest high degree body in Scotland and the only regular one."

Mr. Jensen then asked him:

"Q. Isn't it a fact that in the year 1880 you and a few of your associates gave birth to this Grand Council of Rites?"
A. It is not.
Q. Will you name me a Scottish historian that mentioned the Grand Council of Rites?
A. That is a question that you will have to ask in another way, counsel.

Q. Does D. Murray Lyon mention the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland?

A. No.
Q. He does not?
A. No sir, in those words.
Q. Does he any place in his book have these words, ‘Grand Council of Rites of Scotland’?
A. No sir.

Q. Does Lawrie in any place mention the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland?
A. It didn’t exist when Lawrie wrote his history.
Q. Didn’t exist?
A. No sir.”

He later said that the Grand Council of Rites existed from time immemorial as part of another body, namely, the Early Grand Encampment, but that in itself it had existed only since 1822.2

Thomson was asked on cross-examination if he had not learned from Mr. Cavitt prior to the employment of A. E. Lucas, the California organizer, that Lucas had been convicted in the United States Court of impersonating an Internal Revenue officer. He replied that he had not.3 He was asked:

“Q. Didn’t Mr. Cavitt tell you that?
A. I found it out but not from Mr. Cavitt, but from Mr. Lucas himself, who told me before I appointed him organizer, gave me all the particulars.
Q. After that you employed him as an organizer?
A. I considered the explanation he gave was sufficient.”

1 Transcript, pp. 1249-1250.
2 Transcript, pp. 1248-1252.
3 Transcript, p. 1259.
4 Transcript, p. 1259.
Thomson confessed that he was the author of "Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason," the second part of the pamphlet entitled *Who is Who in Masonry and Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason*.¹

He admitted that at the meeting of the International Masonic Federation at Zurich there were only six or seven men present.²

On re-cross-examination⁸ Thomson said that he had at one time been a member of two lodges in the Grand Lodge of Scotland, namely, Newton-on-Ayr St. James No. 125 and Patna Bonnie Doon, No. 565, and that he had never taken a demit from the latter.⁴

In rebuttal, the United States recalled to the stand Mr. Joseph Inglis, who said that he was acquainted with Kilmarnock, Scotland, and that there was no lodge in Kilmarnock in 1913 by the name of "Kilmarnock Lodge," and that there had been in that town no lodge by that name since 1913.⁵

Mr. David Reid, recalled by the Government, testified to the same effect.⁶

When Mr. Reid left the stand, both the Government and the defendants rested, and no more evidence was introduced.

The trial of this case began Monday, May 1st, 1922, and was continued from day to day until the evening of Friday, May 12th, 1922. Arguments of counsel were presented to the jury on Saturday, May 13th and Monday, May 15th. These arguments, as printed in the record, are exceedingly interesting and are entitled to careful consideration, but space does not permit printing them in full, and to quote any part of them would be very unfair to counsel. The time was equally divided among the four attorneys in the case, two occupying one hour each for the Government

¹ *Transcript*, p. 1267.
² *Transcript*, p. 1270.
³ Conducted by Mr. Jensen.
⁴ *Transcript*, p. 1273.
⁵ *Transcript*, p. 1283. This was in answer to Bergera's statement.
⁶ *Transcript*, p. 1286.
and two, one hour each for the defendants. After the arguments of the attorneys, Judge Wade delivered his instructions to the jury. At noon on Monday, May 15th, the jury retired in the custody of an officer to deliberate and at 4:45 o'clock, in the afternoon, returned into court and announced their verdict of guilty as to each of the ten counts of the indictment and as to each defendant.¹

On Tuesday morning, May 16th, 1922, the defendants were called into court for sentence. Asked if they had anything to say why sentence should not be imposed, Perrot, who had not testified and who had said no word in the case until that time, replied: “I would like to say for myself that I am not guilty in any part, portion or share, I am only a victim of circumstances in having been Secretary for the organization.”

Judge Wade then addressed the defendants and in no uncertain terms told them what he thought of the case. He said:

“Well, nobody can hear this evidence in this case without being convinced, absolutely convinced, that this thing has been a fraudulent scheme from the beginning. I can see where an ignorant person might find some possible excuse for the methods employed in this case, but for intelligent people and experienced people to try to convince this court that this organization and this plan and this work that had been going on is on the square, it ca’nt be done.”

He said he was astounded when he heard Mr. Thomson testify that there was no record of a charter from Mother Kilwinning to Mother Lodge St. John of Marseilles and that the connection existed only in tradition.

“I,” he said, “realize that some things can be proven by tradition, but tradition cannot exist with one man. . . . .”

He said he was surprised when he learned that the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland had only a few years of record behind it.

¹ Transcript, p. 1441.
The trip taken by Bergera on investigation, the court said,

"has all the appearance of being a plan or scheme that he might come back here and state to those whose membership was sought his capacity to enter the lodges of Europe, to support their claim that the members immediately on getting across the water would have the doors wide open to them. . . .

It was a pretense, gentlemen, you can't come to any other conclusion. If Bergera went over there for the purpose of confirming what these organizers were representing, which is not denied here, he certainly would have gone to the Grand Lodge of Scotland, or England, or France, or Germany, or somewhere, to find out whether the doors would be opened to these fellows that were joining their ranks. . . . The head of this organization testified before the court that he didn't know, and in fact, had some difficulty in recalling, whether there was ever a bank account of the organization in a bank anywhere in the world.

As far as the Secretary is concerned (there is) no suggestion on his part that this business was conducted as an honest organization, not one word.

So that, gentlemen, there is only one thing for the court to do. If it were not for the age of Mr. Thomson at this time, there would be a long prison sentence, because I think he is the chief actor. I think he is more responsible than any one else. As far as Bergera is concerned, of course I cannot understand at all how a man would assume to parade himself as the Treasurer General of the organization of ten thousand members which had received from them in the neighborhood of a million or more dollars, and never handle a cent of the money. . . .

. . . . This court hasn't really any power to impose a penalty here which would be adequate punishment for this thing that has been going on when we stop to think of the honest fellows who parted with their fifty dollars, or seventy-five dollars, or one hundred and fifty dollars for membership in this organization. So far as the evidence in this case is concerned, not one dollar of it was ever used for any of the business of the society, except to carry on this work of getting members. Not a word of charity, or charitable funds or anything of that kind before this court. . . .
The judgment of this court is that each one of you serve a period of two years in Fort Leavenworth Prison, and each one of you pay a fine of five thousand dollars and costs.

The court indicated that the sentence was imposed on each count, to run concurrently. Bond on appeal was fixed in the sum of $15,000.

After the pronouncement of sentence, the defendants were taken into custody by the United States Marshal. Thomson at once produced $15,000 in Liberty Bonds in order to make his bail. He said nothing whatever about a bond for Perrot or Bergera; the former was unable to give bail and was taken to the County Jail. Bergera, who owns considerable property in Carbon County, Utah, soon made arrangements to procure the necessary surety bond prescribed by the court's order.

Perrot could not secure bond, and shortly after the trial was taken to the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth to serve his sentence.

At the close of the case the defendants were granted an extension of time in which to prepare their exceptions and indicated that they would appeal to the Circuit Court of Appeals.
CHAPTER VIII.

CONCLUSION

The direct testimony given by Thomson, and his admissions on cross-examination, under oath, concerning the American Masonic Federation and the Grand Council of Rites, must have greatly disappointed his ardent supporters. In the light of his arrogant and boastful representations in the past, and of his impudent claim that all he wanted was a chance to vindicate himself in a court of record, his actual performance on the witness stand was nothing less than pitiful. Scores of unanswered questions must have passed through the minds of his followers in the court room as he left the witness stand. His disciples will look in vain in the transcript of the testimony for a solution of the many knotty problems which constantly beset them.

The defendants produced no historical works, no minutes, no proceedings or records of any bodies, either in this country or in Scotland, no ancient documents, no Masonic books of any kind in support of their tenuous theories. Thomson exhibited no written evidence whatsoever to substantiate the omnibus claims of the Grand Council of Rites. Not an instrument was introduced in evidence proving recognition of him or any of his organizations by regular Grand Masonic Bodies. Not a witness or deposition in his behalf was brought from Scotland to prove his bold assertions; old Peter Spence, signer of his magical patent, and Robert Jamieson, Secretary of an infinite variety of institutions, contributed nothing in aid of Thomson. No recognized Masonic treatises and no Masonic scholars were introduced to corroborate Thomson's most extraordinary views regarding solicitation in Masonry, territorial integrity, the meaning of a demit in Scotland, and the significance of indorsation
on Masonic instruments. Nothing was said by defendants about temples, libraries, invested funds or charities; it was not even hinted that these things had any place among defendants' objects and purposes. Indeed, on their direct examination, neither Thomson nor Bergera said one word about the finances of their several institutions. It was only on cross-examination, over the objection of counsel, that a few pertinent facts about the money side of their transactions were dragged from them. The reader will search the record, however, unsuccessfully for an explanation of what became of the defense fund, the proceeds of the sale of bonds, and all other moneys collected by the defendants. Viewed in the light of its omissions, the testimony of Thomson makes a sorry defense. Is it possible that he had become so accustomed to having his ex-cathedra opinions accepted implicitly that he believed he could unaided conquer both court and jury?

It may not be out of place here quickly to pass in review his principal contentions and their obvious answers, and to present some facts not shown at the trial. The foundation of his entire structure was his authority to confer the Craft Degrees, and if that authority fails him, his gaudy edifice must tumble like a house of cards. With respect to these degrees, we all know now that at first he pretended to have a charter from the Supreme Council of Louisiana empowering him to confer them; that later he denied positively that he was dependent upon Louisiana in any way, and pretended that he had all the time had authority from the Rites of Memphis and Mizraim; and that in the end, when he was on the stand and under oath, he testified that he had received from Louisiana authority to confer the Blue Degrees and that this authority sprang from Cheri's indorsation on his Scotch patent.1 His explanation of the theory of descent by which he connected Mother Kilwinning with the American Masonic Federation is most astounding, and is

---

1 See ante, p. 227.
the one thing which gives him his proper place as a Masonic fraud. He candidly admitted that there was no competent proof of his claim that Mother Kilwinning had a direct connection with Mother Lodge St. John of Marseilles, and asserted that this fact must be established by the tradition existing in Ayrshire, Scotland, that the Earl of Kilmarnock, in 1743, while Master of Mother Kilwinning, had given a charter to Lodge St. John.

Mr. Inglis effectually disproved the claim that Lord Kilmarnock was Master of Mother Kilwinning in 1743 and fortified his statements with Grand Lodge records. He went further and testified unequivocally that in her long and honorable career Mother Kilwinning had never created a daughter lodge in France and had never, at any time, given to any of her daughters the power to create other lodges. This must finally dispose of Thomson's nonsensical claims regarding the connection between Mother Kilwinning and Mother Lodge St. John of Scotland. A few additional facts, however, about this lodge in Marseilles may be interesting to American readers.

Reputable historians concede that there was in the 18th century at Marseilles a lodge by the name of Mother Lodge St. John of Scotland; and it is generally conceded that nothing is known about the origin of this lodge. Thory, in his storehouse of Masonic learning, *Acta Latomorum*, published in 1815, says that in 1751 (not 1743, as Thomson alleges), a traveling Mason established at Marseilles Lodge St. John of Scotland, which took before the French Revolution the name of Mother Lodge of Marseilles and after the Revolution that of Mother Scotch Lodge of France, and that she established several lodges in the Orient, in the colonies and even in Paris.¹ Ragon, writing in 1853, uses almost identically the same language as Thory.² Thomson submitted to the court and jury no proof at all to rescue from

² *Orthodoxie Maconique*, (Paris, 1853), p. 120.
oblivion the name and titles of this traveling Mason who was responsible for the establishment of Mother Lodge St. John of Scotland. This first link in Thomson's chain of title must, therefore, fail as matter of historical fact.

But, assuming for the sake of the argument that Mother Lodge St. John of Marseilles had some traditional connection with Mother Kilwinning, as Thomson asserted, there is not a scintilla of trustworthy proof to be adduced that this lodge created Polar Star Lodge at New Orleans. It is clear that Thomson obtained the idea that there was some connection between these two bodies from Folger, one of his favorite writers,1 who incorporated in his The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (New York, 1862), a "Report on the Difficulties Which Exist Between the Grand Lodge of the York Rite for the State of Louisiana and the Supreme Council of Scottish Rite for the same State," etc., by Le Blanc de Marconnay.

This report contains the following sentence in explanation of the establishment of Masonry in Louisiana:

"The Second Lodge was established in 1794, after the Scottish Rite, by the Grand Mother Lodge of Marseilles, in default of the Grand East, which, at the time, was not at work, in consequence of the French Revolution. This Lodge took the name of 'Polar Star,' which cumulated afterwards the Modern, Scottish, and York Rites."

Neither Folger nor de Marconnay cites any authority for this statement and, in fact, it is pure fiction. In his little book, Outline of the Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Louisiana (New Orleans, 1912), James B. Scot has shown conclusively that Polar Star Lodge was founded in 1794 through a provincial charter granted a number of brethren of the French or Modern Rite by Provincial Lodge "La Parfaite Sincerite" of Marseilles. These men first applied to the Grand Orient of France, but this application proved futile because the Grand Orient had suspended its activities,

---

1 See Universal Freemason, IV, p. 185, cited ante.
owing to political agitation. In 1803 the application was taken up by the Grand Orient, and a charter was granted to Polar Star Lodge. The records themselves of Polar Star Lodge, under the control of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, of which Maury is the present head, bear out the conclusions of Scot; both Maury and Metoyer say that Polar Star comes from Lodge Perfect Sincerity of Marseilles.¹

The original Polar Star Lodge is today on the roll of the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. Readers who are interested in the history and Masonic status of Polar Star Lodge on the rolls of the Supreme Council of Louisiana, with which Thomson claimed connection, should consult Scot's monograph. There can be no doubt, therefore, that whatever connection Mother Lodge of Marseilles had with Kilwinning, Polar Star Lodge of New Orleans had no connection of any kind with Mother Lodge St. John of Marseilles.

For this second reason, then, Thomson's claim is utterly baseless.

The testimony of the officers of the Supreme Council of Louisiana was conclusive that Thomson never had any authority of any sort from that body, by charter or otherwise, except to heal certain lodges in Boston, that the much overworked indorsation was given for this purpose, and that instead of healing these lodges into the Supreme Council of Louisiana, he persuaded them to join his own American Masonic Federation. It must have seemed silly to the jury that Thomson should claim to have authority to confer degrees or create lodges by virtue of Cheri's endorsement on his patent.

¹ Post Office Inspector M. G. Price, in his official capacity, caused a search to be made of the records of the Grand Orient of France, to see what they would disclose concerning Perfect Sincerity Lodge and the establishment of Polar Star Lodge. This search was first made by the Secretary of Grand Orient early in 1921 at the request of the American Consul General in Paris, and showed that Perfect Sincerity had always been on the rolls of the Grand Orient of France and confirmed Scot's finding that Perfect Sincerity constituted Polar Star in 1794, owing to suspension of work by the Grand Orient. The same conclusion was also reached by M. Rene Raymond, Sovereign Grand Commander, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of France, who had a search made at the personal request of Mr. Price, and who gave Mr. Price the additional information that Perfect Sincerity Lodge is of English, not Scotch, descent. Perfect Sincerity Lodge was organized in 1767 by the Ancient Grand Lodge of France, which, in 1806, became merged in the present Grand Orient of France.
In at least three ways, then, it is proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that Thomson never had any authority from Louisiana and could make no historical connection with Mother Kilwinning. It is equally true that Thomson at all times knew that he had no authority from Louisiana and that his several false representations concerning his power to confer Craft Degrees were deliberately and cunningly designed to deceive his followers. With the collapse of his Craft Degree theory, Thomson is nothing less than a Masonic pariah.

It is not necessary here to call attention to the Masonic doctrine that no man can pass on to another the Craft Degrees, that these can be conferred only in a regular lodge having a proper charter. After 1914 Thomson was an expelled Mason and was Masonically dead.

Thomson, it will be remembered, traced his title for the Higher Degrees also to Mother Kilwinning, who, he claimed, in the 18th century chartered a lodge in Ireland under the name of High Knights Templars of Ireland Kilwinning Lodge. The men having this charter assumed by virtue of it to confer Higher Degrees, but as Mr. Inglis states, they had no authority for so doing inasmuch as the charter is exactly like all others granted by Mother Kilwinning. In time the Irish brethren, Thomson continues, created the Early Grand Encampment of High Knights Templar to control the Higher Degrees in Ireland, and this body granted patents to men in Scotland to form encampments. In 1822, with the consent of the Irish Early Grand Encampment, Thomson asserts, the Scotch brethren formed the Early Grand Mother Encampment of Knights Templar of Scotland, which undertook to confer both Knights Templar and Royal Arch Degrees. In 1822, Thomson testified, the Early Grand divided its jurisdiction with the Grand Council of Rites, and in 1880 the Early Grand Chapter was formed to control the Royal Arch Degrees. This is Thomson's story

1 *Tabloid History of Masonry. Second Part, passim.*
and skilfully blends truth and fiction, but it is well to see what support Thomson has for his conduct even if this account were wholly true.

The evidence introduced at the trial disposed of any questions about his right to confer the degrees of Knights Templar. The decision of Lord Ormidale settled once and for all that the Early Grand Encampment under which Thomson purported to give the Knights Templar Degrees, was merged in 1909 in the Great Priory, and at once passed out of existence. Thomson thereafter had no more right or power to confer Knights Templar Degrees by virtue of authority from the Early Grand Encampment than a broker would have to sell stock in a dissolved corporation. Thomson said that this lawsuit did not affect him at all, because the Grand Council of Rites controlled the Templar Degrees. But he gave no explanation of how they got from the dead Early Grand Encampment to the Grand Council of Rites, and it is indisputable, therefore, that certainly after 1909 Thomson was wholly without authority to confer Knights Templar Degrees in the name of the Early Grand Encampment, and that his Knights Templar diplomas given after that time were altogether valueless.

If it is conceded that Thomson’s account of the early history of the Grand Encampment has some foundation in fact, nevertheless, the decision of Lord Ormidale declaring that the Early Grand Encampment passed out of existence in 1909, made all of Thomson’s Knights Templar Degrees conferred subsequent to that year spurious. Mr. Cavitt was right when he told Thomson not to confer Knights Templar Degrees after that court decision had been rendered; and the true character of Thomson is shown by the fact that he did not heed this very good advice, but continued to sell such degrees.

The same reasoning applies to the Royal Arch, for, in 1895 the Early Grand Chapter united with the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter in order to make one governing
Scottish Grand Council of Rites.

In the Name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, We, Sir...


Junior Grand Warden, unto all Knights Companions of the Royal Order of the R.S.Y.C.S.

Greeting: this certifies that our Trusty and Well beloved Brother, Sir...

Master Mason of Lodge: King Solomon No. 27, holding of the Grand Lodge of Montpelier. He has been advanced to the Order of H.R.D.M. of K.L.W.N.G., by the Characteristic of 1856 and promoted to the Honourable Order of R.S.Y.C.S.


Given under our Hand and Grand Seal of our Council, this 16th day of September, A.D.


Robert Jamieson, J.L.C. Grand Secretary.

EARLY ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND DIPLOMA.
Issued in year of Thomson's defeat in Grand Lodge of Idaho.
body in Capitular Masonry in Scotland. Robert S. Spence contended that just prior to this amalgamation the Early Grand Chapter worked several Royal Arch Degrees which were not worked by the Supreme Grand Chapter and which were not, therefore, taken over by the Supreme Grand Chapter at the time of the union; and that after the union the Early Grand Chapter conveyed its rights in these degrees to the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, which, in turn, authorized Thomson to confer them in America.¹ It can be said without fear of successful denial that the union of the two Chapters in 1895 was as complete as the union of the Early Grand Encampment and Chapter General in 1909, and that Thomson had no authority whatever to confer Royal Arch Degrees in America or elsewhere. If there were any truth at all in his contentions, would he not have produced minutes, charters and proceedings from these bodies in support of his claims?

Mr. John A. Forrest, Secretary of the Royal Order of Scotland, was in Salt Lake City during the trial, but, because of the course which the proof took, it was unnecessary to call him as a witness in behalf of the Government. He was prepared to state quite plainly that Thomson never had had the degrees of the Royal Order of Scotland conferred upon him in a regular body, and that he had no right whatever to confer those degrees in this country. The little book by E. Fox-Thomas, History of the Royal Order of Scotland (1910), puts to rest any claim by Thomson that the Grand Council of Rites had authority to confer these degrees. The Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland, of which Mr. Forrest is Grand Secretary, is recognized by and is in amity with the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and is the Mother of the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland in this country. Any diplomas given by Thomson in the Royal Order of Scotland are merely so much waste paper. Here,

again, Thomson has not explained how these degrees came to belong to the Grand Council of Rites.

So far as the Shrine is concerned, Thomson hasn't today and never has had the slightest right or authority to confer the Shrine degrees. He never was a member of any Shrine Temple in the world and his claims, in this regard, are altogether preposterous. The case of *Faison v. Adair*,\(^1\) in which it was determined in the state of Georgia that the colored Shrine had no right to the Shrine titles, insignia, emblems and characteristic dress, completely disposes of Thomson’s pretensions. This decision establishes the principle that the present Imperial Council Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine has complete and unqualified control of that order. Thomson can show no connection whatever with this American organization. It is safe to say that were it not for the great popularity and high standing of the Shrine as a fraternity, Thomson would never have tried to persuade his dupes that his Shrine diplomas were worth purchasing.

Furthermore, there can not be any dispute about the falsity of his representations that he had authority to confer the degrees of the Order of the Eastern Star. There is now and has been throughout all these years of Thomson’s activity in this country, a body of the Order of the Eastern Star in Scotland, recognized by and in affiliation with the regular Order of the Eastern Star in America. As with the Shrine, not a particle of honest proof can be produced by Thomson showing that he was justly entitled to confer the Eastern Star Degrees.

What, after all, was this psuedo-Masonic monster, the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland? It was established by the testimony of the Scotch witnesses and admitted by Thomson that it has no buildings or lodge rooms in Scotland. Does it exist only in the minds of Thomson, Jamieson, and M. & W. Walker, Newmilns, printers? How came

---

\(^1\) See Chapter II, *The Shrine*, ante, p. 29.
it to possess title to all the strange Rites listed in its *Proceedings*? What devices did it use to induce the Rites of Memphis, Mizraim and St. Martin to repose peacefully under the same roof? Where are the patents, deeds, or instruments which prove its right to all these conflicting systems? Where are the records, minutes or histories which tell what it has done since 1822? Thomson was silent about all these matters, and Mr. Inglis said that after diligent inquiry he found that it was the creature of Thomson, Jamieson, and associates; that it was regarded in Scotland as spurious; that it had no temples or buildings or funds, and that it had a membership of perhaps fifty misguided workingmen.

It has not been possible to determine exactly what was the origin of the Grand Council of Rites. It is submitted that it was probably invented about 1880 by Thomson and his associates at the same time that the Early Grand Mother Chapter of the Royal Arch made its appearance.\(^1\) In *Gould's Collected Essays & Papers Relating to Freemasonry*, in an essay written in 1894, Gould says that in 1880 a resolution of the Grand Encampment was adopted delimiting the powers of the Grand Encampment and the Grand Council of Rites, enumerating the degrees to be held by each, and handing over the control of Red Masonry to the Early Grand Mother Chapter. Gould acknowledges his debt to M. McB. Thomson for all this information and says that he bases his statement on Thomson's authority and books and documents obligingly forwarded by Thomson.\(^2\) Gould states that he does not vouch for the accuracy of these statements, but cites them as resting entirely on the good faith and credibility of the compiler. We now know what broken reeds both were. Was not this a play of Thomson's to court respectability by inducing the generous Gould to put him in a book?

The only other mention of the Grand Council of Rites which a diligent search has revealed, is contained in A. E.

---

1 Mr. Inglis is of this opinion, and so declared himself while on the witness stand.
Waite's *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* (II, p. 233), where this language is used:

"It is recorded by the **EARLY GRAND RITE OF FORTY-SEVEN DEGREES** that in a rearrangement belonging to the year 1880 there took place what was called rather obscurely a delimitation of powers, in virtue of which the control of Red Masonry was transferred to an **EARLY GRAND MOTHER CHAPTER**, that of Black Masonry to the **GRAND ENCAMPMENT** and the Green and White Series to a **SCOTTISH GRAND COUNCIL OF RITES**. The delimitation seems to imply a change of locality as well as transfer of powers. . . . As in other cases, so under this obedience, 'the soldiery of the Temple' were divided into **KNIGHTS COMPANIONS**, **KNIGHTS COMMANDERS** and **KNIGHTS GRAND CROSS**. According to official description, the style and title of 'the Supreme Governing Body for the Orders of Knights of the Temple of Zion and the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem'—otherwise Knights of Malta—in Scotland, was the **GRAND ENCAMPMENT OF THE TEMPLE AND MALTA IN SCOTLAND**. . . . In so far as this general and summary account, which is frankly partisan, can be regarded as accurate, or may so be proved on shifting, it follows that the **GRAND ENCAMPMENT** was the first Constitutional Body of the **ORDER OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR** in Scotland, while for a period of twenty years there was no other working under a Masonic aegis. There came, however, a desirable end to the whole debate, some twelve or more years ago, when the **GRAND ENCAMPMENT** was merged in the **CHAPTER-GENERAL**, so that there is one faith and one obedience among Knights Templar in Scotland."

No authority is cited in support of these statements. In view of the positive evidence given by Mr. Inglis concerning the Grand Council of Rites, it must be patent to everyone that the first sentences of the above quotation are entitled to no credence whatever.1 This language so closely resembles that of Gould that the inference is irresistible that Waite consulted the same documents as Gould, which must have been provided, directly or indirectly, by Thomson or his confederates. We come back, then, to the positive

---

1 Thomson did not mention either of these references during the trial.
testimony of Mr. Inglis that the Grand Council of Rites first put in an appearance in Scotland about 1880, and that it and all its works are figments of the minds of Thomson and his partners who were engaged in spurious Masonic enterprises in Glasgow as early as 1874. The Grand Council of Rites will never recover, it is hoped, from the effects of the destructive evidence given by Mr. Inglis after his ten or more years of painstaking search for its habitat and works. This institution has done no good either in this country or in Scotland, and it will be well if it is completely swept from the memories of all men.

Matthew McBlain Thomson did not receive the degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in a regular Scottish Rite body. There are thirty Supreme Councils of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite which are regarded as regular; not one of these recognizes Thomson or the Grand Council of Rites, or the Confederated Supreme Council, or the American Masonic Federation. It is submitted that the venerable Grand Lodge of Scotland should know what is real and what is spurious Masonry in Scotland. Thomson can by no effort explain why the Grand Lodge of Scotland recognizes these thirty Supreme Councils (including the Supreme Council in Scotland), but brands the Grand Council of Rites as clandestine and spurious.

Judge Wade thought that Thomson's celebrated conference at Zurich was alone sufficient to condemn the whole scheme as a fraud. In truth it is strange that all the great world assemblies of Masons have somehow overlooked this Masonic bounder. For years Quartier-la-Tente of Switzerland preached Universal Masonry and published a little annual of Universal Masonry throughout the world. It contained a list of all the presumably regular Masonic bodies in all countries. No one of his annual books mentions Thomson, the National Symbolic Grand Lodge of Scotland, the American Masonic Federation, the Grand Council of Rites of Scotland, or any of Thomson's organizations; but every
one gives place to the Grand Lodge of Utah, of which S. H. Goodwin is the present Secretary, and to all other regular Grand Lodges. One can be sure that Thomson was advisedly omitted.

Immediately after the close of the Great War the Grand Lodge of England invited delegates from the Grand Lodges of this country and elsewhere to meet in London in celebration of the declaration of peace. No invitation was sent to Thomson, or to any of his bogus institutions, to attend this conference, in person or by representative. The Grand Lodge of England, oldest in the world, organized in 1717; the Grand Lodge of Ireland, created in 1730; and the Grand Lodge of Scotland, established in 1736, all fail to mention any of Thomson’s organizations in their publications. Is not this final proof of the worthlessness of his degrees?

In 1922, at Geneva, a conference was held for the purpose of forming an International Masonic Association. Representatives of the Grand Lodge of New York and from many European Grand Lodges attended this conference. Matthew McBlain Thomson was not there, nor was any representative of his many spurious organizations.

In May, 1922, the Third International Conference of the Supreme Councils of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, was held at Lausanne, Switzerland, to consider all matters relating to the legitimate and regular Supreme Councils and their organization, to protection against any irregular and clandestine organizations, and to unification and uniformity of the Rite. Nineteen of the Supreme Councils of the world were represented; but the authorized transactions of the Conference make no mention of Thomson or his institutions. The only possible deduction is that this omission was intentional.

Of course, Thomson was not invited to attend any of these assemblies, because in the eyes of regular Masons everywhere he is an outcast and a cheat. When Grand Lodge of Scotland expelled him from Freemasonry in 1914, accord-
ing to his own doctrines, he was no longer a Mason, and all his High Degrees fell from him. He was without any Masonic standing and was powerless to confer any degrees. All his charters and diplomas in the Rites of Memphis, Mizraim and St. Martin (if they had any value at all), could not restore to him what he had lost.

So far as his institutions are concerned, since he himself received no authority from the Supreme Council of Louisiana, the A. M. F. had no authority in the Craft Degrees. And, since the Grand Council of Rites never had any authority to confer Royal Arch, Templar or Scottish Rite Degrees, to mention no others, the Confederated Supreme Council of the A. M. F. had nothing.

One cannot help speculating about the motives which lay back of all of Thomson's spurious Masonic enterprises. After reading most of his writings and his testimony, the conclusion is irresistible that in truth he had no genuine interest in the fraternity or in the welfare of his fellow men, and that his paramount reason for engaging in this business was to make money for himself.

Mr. Jensen, during his cross-examination, touched Thomson nearly when he asked him how much money he had made out of his connection with the American Masonic Federation. Thomson replied that it was none of Mr. Jensen's business, but the court compelled him to answer. For years, as has been pointed out, Thomson made it appear that he got nothing for his services. In 1914, he testified at Vancouver, British Columbia, in behalf of two of his organizers who had been arrested. On cross-examination he was asked:

"Q. What do you pay your officers?
A. We have only one salaried officer; the Secretary receives $200 per month; the Secretary of the Supreme Lodge.
Q. He is the only paid officer in the Masonic Federation?
A. Yes; the deputy organizers receive a commission but there is no salaried officer except the Grand Secretary. I,
myself, receive no salary but when I am away from home my expenses are paid.”

In response to questions asked by Mr. Jensen, however, he was compelled to admit that he had made money out of the American Masonic Federation through its organizing department.

Some might see in his unpleasant business a motive for revenge. It will be recalled that the Grand Lodge of Idaho took such steps that it was impossible for Thomson to peddle the degrees of the Grand Council of Rites in that state to regular Masons; it will also be remembered that Thomson was expelled from both the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland and the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Is it not possible that there was some desire in his heart to retaliate for these affronts to his self-conceit? Thomson lacked nothing in self-esteem. He gloried in the hollow pomp and mock glory that went with his multitude of large titles. Some of his former disciples say that he fed upon flattery like a mediaeval king, and that the fawning sycophant was the only person who stood any chance of winning his favor. All the high positions were reserved for Thomson. It is arguable that one of the principal motives back of all of his activities was a consuming desire to satisfy this colossal vanity.

His motives in carrying on this fraud for so many years were probably mixed and all these springs of action, at times, were responsible for his conduct.

It is easy to prove the insincerity of the man. At all times he was willing to associate with anyone who would pay a price and strike hands with him in his organizations.

It is ridiculous to speak of brotherly love in connection with Thomson. Anyone who challenged his word was instantly deposed and thrust out of the institution. Dr. Jefferson, head of the misguided Boston lodges, and one of

---

1 See, transcript of testimony in case of Rex v. John B. Gateman and Thomas Houston, in the County Court Judge's Criminal Court, Vancouver, B. C., Feb. 12, 1914.
the first three editors of the magazine; P. J. Wilkie, Vice Grand Master Mason; W. C. Cavitt, one time Provincial Grand Master of California; Spencer S. Ranson, organizer "at large;" Aug. S. Johnson, Chicago organizer; Dr. J. R. Biel, of Detroit; and Abraham Frankel, who committed the egregious sin of writing abroad for information without consent, were all expelled without a hearing. All his words about charity were mere traps for the unwary. Perrot, his diligent Secretary and constant companion for years was, after conviction, allowed to go to jail in default of bond. Although it is certain that he received the lion's share of the profits of the institution, Thomson put forth no efforts to assist his associate. No single thing that Thomson ever did in connection with this business can be credited to good faith and honest purpose.

It is a little difficult to know just what place to assign to Thomson among the Masonic impostors of the past. Would that captivating company of charlatans who, in different ages, have sported with the follies of men, be offended at the thought of having Thomson added to their number? First, was Cagliostro, that entertaining Masonic mountebank, whose tales of Egyptian Masonry fascinated a continent for many years. In his schemes

"Some truth there was, but dash'd and brew'd with lies, To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise."

He would have admired the magnitude and sweeping design of Thomson's schemes, but would have despised the petty tricks which he used to execute them. Old Balsamo at least swindled the fine ladies and titled gentlemen of his day; he would have thought it beneath his talents to defraud with his cunning devices the poor, ignorant working men. Bayliss would have shuddered at Thomson's unblushing prostitution of the Symbolic Degrees. Cerneau would have been keenly interested in his theories, but would not have accepted him as a confederate because Thomson's overbear-
ing egotism would have spoiled his usefulness as an ally. Where Thomson surpassed them all was in the comprehensiveness of his scheme, and had his executive capacity equalled his imagination, undoubtedly he would have been the world's greatest Masonic fraud. As it is, perhaps no man ever commercialized the Craft Degrees so successfully as Thomson, and upon this ground alone, whether the captivating company of charlatans welcome him or not, he will always have his place among the notorious pseudo-Masonic characters of the world.

THE END.
## INDEX

### A

- Accounting, of A. M. F., 160 f.
- Admission into lodge, 204.
- *Aims of Freemasonry* (Spilmer), cited, 90.
- Alley, Harry C., letter to, 111; witness, 178.
- Alley, William S., witness, 175.
- American Masonic Federation, formation, 49; incorporated, 53; purposes, 54; proclamation of, 54; title to Craft Degrees, 77-81; affiliations, 96 f.; foreign recognition, 96; paid organizers, 99, 226, 232.
- Amity, explained, 206.

### B

- Balsamo, 260.
- Bnyliss, 260.
- Bergera, Dominic, career, 69; trial, 151; as Treasurer, 162; witness, 212; trip to Europe, 214.
- Bier, Arthur S., organizer, 168; at Salt Lake, 170.
- Blust, F. J., witness, 172.
- Bonds, A. M. F., 178.

### C

- Cagliostro, Count, 260.
- California Lodges, 148.
- Capitular Degrees, *see* Royal Arch.
- Cavitt, W. C., witness, 188.
- Cerneau, 260.
- Chapter General of Scotland, merged in Great Priory, 201.
- "Charleston Council," 86.
- "Charleston Rite," 86-87.
- Charter, necessity of, 197.
- Cheri, Jos. N., endorses Thomson's patent, 48; letter of, 62, 128, 166.
- Chtyrko, Charles, witness, 172.
- Circular of G. L. of Utah, 213.
- Colored Masons and A. M. F., 108.
- Confederated Supreme Council of A. M. F., 60.
- *Constitution A. M. F.*, cited, 80, 100, 108; quoted, 102, 115.
- Craft Degrees, Thomson's representations, 73 ff.; 141 ff.; 156 ff.; 166, 170, 188.
- Craft Masonry, 12.
- Craft Tree, Thomson's, 79.
- Creoles, compose S. C. of La., 182, 198.
- Cryptic Degrees, 18.

### D

- Defense fund, 180.
- Demit, significance in Scotland, 198, 208 f.
- Dickman, Herman, witness, 171.
- Diplomas, sold, 109; price, 178.
- Donato, has Cheri letters, 164.

### E

- Early Grand Chapter, 59; unites with Sup. G. R. A. Chapter, 88, 250.
- Early Grand Encampment, 59, 88-90; union with Great Priory, 190; suit against Great Priory, 201; extinct, 250.
- Early Grand National Scottish Rite, 90.
- Early Grand Rite of XLVII Degrees, 84.
- Eastern Star, Order of, 32; under G. C. of R., 84; Thomson claims, 84; baseless, 253.
- Expulsion, Thomson, 117; 122; 208; effect of, 193; *Constitution of G. L. of Scotland*, Sec. 156-a, 197 f.; *Constitution, G. C. of Rites*, 209.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>Faiso'nv. Adair, cited, 29, 253.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fees, 102, 104.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Market, 188.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisgen, W. Grant, 177.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forrest, John A., Secretary, Royal Order of Scotland, 252.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankel, Abraham, witness, 174.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freemasonry, origin, 10; purposes, 11.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedman, J. H., letter to, 134.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goode, Harry, endorser of Thomson's patent, 57.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon, Eli, 174; Fish Market, 188.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Council of Rites, 59; in Idaho, 56; origin, 52; Mr. Inglis investigates, 203 ff.; Lord Ormidale's opinion of, 192; Rites controlled, 59, 84, 88, 146; M. M. diplomas, 168; Mr. Reid's opinion of, 196; statements by Thomson about, 167, 170, 174, 177, 193; 234 Degree diploma, 169; truth about, 253 ff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Encampment, see Early Grand Encampment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Lodges, creation in America, 14; Thomson's explanation of, 74-75; true theory of formation, 76-77.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Lodge of England, birth of, 10; peace celebration, 257.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Lodge of Idaho, resolution recognizing High Degree bodies, 46.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Lodge Inter-Montana, 49, 56; deeds authority to A. M. F., 51, 67.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Lodge of Ireland, 10.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Lodge of Scotland, 10; expels Thomson, 122; Mr. Reid's description of, 195 f.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Priory, description of, 201; degrees, 207.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H</th>
<th>Helper, lodge in, 213.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Degrees, regular, 15 ff.; not native to Scotland, 211; Thomson's authority, 61, 81-90; tree, 85; representation concerning, 167, 170, 193; Thomson's claims answered, 249 ff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Indictment, 149.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inglis, Joseph, witness, 199.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Masonic Association, 257.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Masonic Federation, Zurich, 146 f.; in Utah, 147 f.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>J</th>
<th>Jacques DeMolay Council, 60.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamieson, Robert, 66; Lord Ormidale on, 190.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson, Dr. H. P., co-organizer of A. M. F., 54, 67.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jensen, John, Special Assistant, 152.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury selected, 152.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>Kopernik Lodge, 168.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kilmarnock, Earl of, 77, 208, 212, 246.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilwinning, Mother, No. 0, Thomson's claims concerning, 77; chartered lodges, 77; in relation to Royal Arch, 89; Mr. Reid on, 196 f.; Mr. Inglis on, 208; relation to Polar Star denied, 246 ff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knights Templar, in America, 20 ff.; Thomson claims, 89 f.; union in Scotland, 190, 250.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L</th>
<th>Langford, J. W., co-organizer, A. M. F., 50.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Libel suit, Thomson defeated in, 214.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light, letter to, 137.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsay, W. H., organizer, 104; letter to, 132.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Locals,&quot; 96; accepted by Thomson, 96; 124; 177; 194.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas, A. E., organizer, 104; letters, 104-107.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lybie Chain, 112.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>Marconnay, de, cited, 247.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masonic Bulletin, 128.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masons, distinguished, 12; how made, 206.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDEX

Masonry, origin, 12; in America, 13, 37.
Master Masons, number, 12.
Maury, George U., witness, 180.
Masnr, P. J., organizer, 164.
Memphis, Rite of, 84, 134; Thomson claims, 176; not recognized in Scotland, 212.
Metoyer, Rene C., 139; witness, 185.
Mizraim, Rite of, 84, 134; Thomson claims, 176; not recognized in Scotland, 212.
Mother Kilwinning, No. 0, see Kilwinning, Mother.
Mother Lodge St. John of Scotland, at Marseilles, truth about, 246 ff.
Mystic Shrine, origin, 28; Imperial Council, 30; Thomson claims, 92; his claims refuted, 253.

N
National Symbolic Grand Lodge, 122 f.; 139; certificate to A. M. F., 172; diplomas, 171.
Notti, Antonio F., letter, 96.

O
Oregon, Thomson in, 124.
Organizers, 93 f.; contract, 103; fees, 104; methods, 107, 113; not tolerated in Scotland, 206; Thomson admitted, 226, 232.

P
Palm and Shell, Order of, 84.
Patent, Thomson's, see Scotch Patent.
Perfect Sincerity Lodge, Marseilles, charters Polar Star, 247 f.
Perrot, Thomas, career, 68; trial, 151; letters of, 178, 180, 182, 185.
Polar Star Lodge, 52, 78, 127; Thomson's claims concerning, 170, 175, 178; charter burned, 186; source of charter, 247 f.
Poulos, Charles, witness, 187.
Price, M. G., 123, 128; witness, 153; investigations in France, 248 n.
Proclamations of A. M. F., 54; to unaffiliated Masons, 96.

Q
Quartier-la-Tente, annuals of, 256.

R
Ranson, Spencer S., in St. Louis, 123; witness, 153.
Raymond, Rene, 248 n.
Red Cross of Constantine, Order of, 35; Thomson claims, 112.
Ragon, J. M., cited, 246.
Reid, David, witness, 195.
Robinson, J. F., sued, 124.
Royal Arch, 15; degrees, 16; origin, 16; Grand Chapter, 17; Thomson's claims concerning, 88-89; refuted, 250.
Royal Order of Scotland, 33; under G. C. of R., 84-86; truth about, 252.

S
St. John's Lodge No. 21, Los Angeles, 176.
St. John Lodge, Montpelier, 136.
Scot, James B., Outline, cited, 247.
Scotch patent, Thomson's, 48; Cheriendorses, 48; meaning, 61; letter to Maury, 182.
Scottish Grand Council of Rites, see Grand Council of Rites.
Scottish Rite, 22; origin, 23-24, 211; in Scotland, 211.
Sentence imposed, 243.
Shrine, see Mystic Shrine.
Solicitation, methods of Thomson, 99; how regarded in Scotland, 155, 206.
Spence, Peter, 63, 194, 198.
Spence, Robert S., 42; co-organizer of A. M. F., 54; career, 95.
Spilmer, August, Aims of Freemasonry; at Zurich, 146.
Star of Sirius, 112.
Stockton, 158.
Stoop, Edward, witness, 179.
Supreme Council of Louisiana, 53, 78; status, 87; plan to absorb, 127; certificate, 134; letters to, 134 ff.; severance of relations, 157, 183; Thomson's claims concerning, 165, 170, 189; composed of Creoles, 182; Constitution, quoted, 155.
Supreme Council, R. A. Chapter of Scotland, 116; expels Thomson, 117.
Supreme Council, So. Juris., Thomson’s attacks on, 86.
Symbolic Degrees, Thomson’s right to confer analyzed, 246 ff.
Symbolic Masonry, see Craft Masonry.

T
Tabloid History of Masonry, 72; cited, 107.
Tabloid History of Masonry. Second Part, 72; cited, 82, 83.
Territorial integrity, 210.
Testimony, see Witnesses.
Thomson, history, 42; Masonic affiliations, 43; attends G. L. of Idaho, 45; member of King Solomon Lodge, Montpelier, Idaho, 47; career in genuine Masonry, 69; representations, 72 et seq.; Chief Organiser, 102; rewards, 109, 258; expelled by Sup. Gr. R. A. Ch., 117; by G. L. of Scotland, 122; defeated in libel suit, 124; asks certificate of Maury, 134; indicted, 149; trial, 151; letter to Metoyer, 187; clandestine beginnings, 198; witness, 218 ff.; motives, 258 ff.
Trinity Lodge, 171.
Turlock, 157.

U
Universal Council “A,” 60.
Universal Freemason, origin, 72.
Universal Masonry, 55, 96, 98; Thomson claims, 177.

V
Victims, number, 111 ff.
Vishi, Dr., degrees in his office, 179.
Vlahos, organizer, 179.

W
Witnesses:
Government:
H. C. Alley, 178.
William S. Alley, 175; cross, 177.
A. S. Bier, 168.
F. J. Blust, 172.
W. C. Cavitt, 188; cross, 194.
Thomas Chtyrko, 172.
Herman Dickman, 171.
W. G. Fairfield, 177.
Abraham Frankel, 174.
Joseph Ingla, 199; cross, 211.
George U. Maury, 180; cross, 184.
Rene C. Metoyer, 155; cross, 186.
Charles Poulos, 187.
S. G. Price, 153; cross, 154.
S. S. Ranson, 163; cross, 167.
David Reid, 196; cross, 197.
Edward Stoop, 179.
P. J. Wilkie, 154; cross, 162.
P. J. Young, 212.
Defendants:
Dominic Bergera, 213; cross, 215 ff.
M. McB. Thomson, 218 ff.; cross, 228 ff.
Wade, Judge Martin J., 151; address to defendants, 211.
Waite, A. E., New Encyclopedia, quoted, 255.
Who is Who in Masonry, etc., published, 72 f.; cited, text, 71, 81, 89, 96; new edition, 141, 144.
Why I Am a Scottish Rite Mason, 73 n.
Wilkie, P. J., joins A. M. F., 107; expelled, 148; witness, 154 ff.; offices, 155.
Wilson, Darius, scandal, 65; and Thomson, 99.

Y
York Rite, includes what, 16.
Young, P. J., witness, 212.