

**JEREMY LADD CROSS**  
"Renowned Author and Lecturer"

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**Jeremy Ladd Cross**  
**A Tribute from Rob Morris**

No man, since the death of Thos. Smith Webb, has exercised so wide-spread an influence upon the practical workings of Masonry in this country as he whose name stands at the head of this article. Our profoundest writers on Masonic history and Masonic jurisprudence will die and be forgotten, and their works will be forgotten, before the labors of this plain New Hampshire Lecturer will be wiped from the Masonic trestle-board of the Nineteenth Century. The oldest and soundest ritualists of the past generation . . . proudly trace their knowledge of the "Work" to Jeremy L. Cross, as irrefragable evidence of its correctness.

And yet Mr. Cross was an unlettered man. His knowledge, even of the English tongue, was extremely limited. His orthography was bad; his grammar execrable. He knew nothing at all of the history of Masonry, and cared nothing for it. To all questions outside of the mere "Work" and "Lectures", his honest answer was -and he had learned it from his master (Webb) who was much wiser than he-"When you memorize what I am teaching you, you will know as much about Masonry as I do!" What then was the secret of his success?

The answer is his literal accuracy of repetition. He always did the same thing in the same way, and repeated the same instruction in the same words. He varied neither gesture nor step, neither word, syllable or letter! He had that invariable qualification of a stage player, of doing the part as it was set down! And he made his pupils like himself. Therefore, wherever we meet them they work and lecture alike, and their pupils also work and lecture alike. This is the secret, and the only secret of Mr. Cross' success as a Lecturer, not forgetting the fact, however, that he was Webb's favorite pupil, and, in some sense, his successor.

[Rob Morris was editor of the "Voice of Masonry" in which the above paragraphs appeared in Volume I, Number 5, in August 1862, following a visit to Miss Eliza Cross at Haverhill in January, 1862. Rob Morris was a vigorous champion of uniformity of the ritual at this time, later organizer of the controversial Order of Conservators.]

## **Bibliographical Notes**

All Masonic encyclopedias since the death of Jeremy Ladd Cross carry short notices of the man and Mason, not always correct and far from complete. He also appears in the Dictionary of American Biography. Other sources of vital information were Witcher's "History of Haverhill, New Hampshire"; Rob Morris' article in the "Voice of Masonry" Vol. I, 1862; Batchellor's article in "The Granite Monthly" Vol. I n.s. (1888); and the family genealogy by R. T. Cross published in 1913.

Histories of the Scottish Rite in both jurisdictions (as well as Folger's), of Royal Arch Masonry, of the Cryptic Rite, and of the Grand Encampment, Knights Templar, have been checked. Also the Proceedings of Grand Lodges and other grand bodies in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio, as well as those of the general grand bodies.

Original minutes of lodges, chapters, councils and commanderies, whenever it seemed pertinent, have been re-examined in person or by proxy. The archives of several Grand Lodges, historical societies, libraries and universities have been explored, but certainly not exhausted.

Other records consulted were the 1790 census lists; probate, land and vital records in several communities; the New York City directories; and the memoirs of Henry Fowle in the "Freemasons Monthly Magazine" for 1865-66.

An effort is being made to check particular lodge records in New York City between 1833 and 1853 but it is not believed that any important details will be uncovered.

The compiler will be pleased to receive any additional data of value which the reader may come across.

## Foreword

The meteoric career of Jeremy Ladd Cross, "one of the most active and picturesque" among the pioneer lecturers of American Freemasonry, has long since been a matter of interest to the undersigned. During ten years of peripatetic teaching Cross propagated the work, ritual and lectures throughout nearly all grand jurisdictions then organized in the United States. His "True Masonic Chart" first trade use of pictured emblems as an aid to monitorial instruction. But after not much more than a single decade he dropped out of sight as an active instructor. The ritual, etc., which he taught and printed had such a "profound influence on the practical workings of Masonry in this country" that it still endures, nearly a century and a half later.

He had detractors, it is true. He has been called a "degree peddler", but as Lobingier points out, the cryptic degrees which he "sold" had not, up until this time, been given in regular bodies, although he established many such and thus regularized the "rite" by prescription. He was but one of numerous roving deputies or lecturers, who, with the knowledge and endorsement of grand officers, supported themselves from fees received for whatever they taught. The system may have been bad when viewed in the light of present day procedure, but at the time it was a practice generally condoned, endorsed and even approved. In Connecticut it was adopted by Grand Lodge action and financing.

The standing of Cross in the Ancient and Accepted Rite was for a time in question, but the great Albert Pike himself absolved Cross of any counterfeiting or irregularity, although all the circumstances are not yet fully revealed. His relationship to the "Atwood Council" has been explained as more or less of an imposition as will appear more fully in the text.

Why Cross retired from the floor all of a sudden, leaving the field to possibly more industrious competitors, has not been made wholly clear. Neither can we fill in, as completely as we would like to, the story of the twenty years or more he passed in New York City.

At the urging of several associates who wished to see the results of my research in a separate pamphlet, I have undertaken to bring the known facts in the life career of Jeremy Ladd Cross into better focus. This has been done by carefully trying all available printed matter, and much manuscript material, with verification at the source to whatever extent was necessary, or feasible. The results are far from complete or completely satisfactory, and some points may yet be in question. But what follows represents my considered finding at this date.

So many individuals have interested themselves in this project, and have given me help and encouragement that I refrain from trying to list them all by name. My appreciation is all the greater. The source materials for this pamphlet are listed on another page before the text, and usually referred to therein by direct mention of the author. Footnotes do not facilitate easy scanning of the text by the casual reader, for whom this publication is intended.

In the hope that this presentation may meet with general approbation, and inviting comment or criticism, the writer offers it for the judgment of the reading craft.

JAMES R. CASE.

## JEREMY LADD CROSS

New Hampshire lodges have brought to Masonic light many brethren whose influence in the fraternity was felt far beyond the borders of the Granite State. Thos. Smith Webb, that "masterful voice in Masonry" was made in Rising Sun Lodge at Keene in 1790. This "Prince of Masonic workmen" redesigned and elaborated the succession of Lodge, Chapter and Commandery degrees into the "American Rite". The "favorite pupil and successor" of Webb was Jeremy Ladd Cross, made a Mason in old St. John's Lodge at Portsmouth in 1808. A "renowned lecturer and author", he became a "foremost teacher and propagandist of the cryptic" degrees and introduced pictures of the emblems into the handbooks which he published. Both men have been accused of commercializing their talents at the expense of their brethren, but when viewed in retrospect, their accomplishments far overshadow the small financial advantage they may have gained.

Cross himself, in an appendix to the 16th edition of his monitor, explains that after the Grand Lodges of the several States had declared themselves free and independent, and the General Grand Chapter had been organized, it was deemed advisable to adopt a regular and uniform system of lecturing and work. In order to accomplish this great desideratum expert workmen from various parts of the country met together. The work was completed and adopted fully by the year 1810. Cross adds that about that time he commenced his lecturing in the New England States "with all those bright and well informed Masons". They had selected and arranged a system, taking the Ancient York Rite for a standard, selecting from the Scottish Rite those things which approximated the former, and out of the two they formed a complete and beautiful set of lectures. After some years in the New England States, Cross went South and West sanctioned as a lecturer by the General Grand Chapter officers, and those of many other grand bodies, being warmly received wherever he sojourned. Thus the mode of lecturing and work as disseminated by Cross became nearly universal throughout the United States.

While he nowhere mentions it as his native town, Haverhill, New Hampshire, was the probable birthplace of Jeremy Ladd Cross. His father, William (1743-1843), was a native of Haverhill, Massachusetts, who removed to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, sometime before the Revolutionary War, as he was credited to that town for his services as a militiaman, and was later pensioned on that basis. William married Abigail Ladd (1744-1841) at some presently undetermined time and place, but as she was one of the Haverhill, New Hampshire, Ladds, it was probably in that town. Neither the marriage nor intention show on the local records but in a new settlement there may have been an omission. The 1790 census lists William Cross in Haverhill, New Hampshire, with wife and four children. The vital records in Haverhill, Massachusetts, lack any mention of Jeremy's birth or the marriage of his parents. Since the Haverhill in New Hampshire was settled and named by pioneer families from the Massachusetts town, the confusion of the two Haverhills by some earlier biographers can be readily understood. Jeremy's birthday was 25 June 1783.

Young Cross appears to have become a hatter's apprentice and, as a fellow of the craft or a journeyman, worked in several places. He mentions residing with a religious family at Lebanon, New Hampshire, in 1801, and then apparently gravitated to Portsmouth, the social and commercial capital of the State. One authority says he became junior partner in a business venture there while yet in his teens, perhaps with a cousin Daniel Ladd. He presumably followed his trade until he found his lecturing a sustaining activity.

It was from Portsmouth in July 1807 (when he was 24 years old) that Jeremy wrote as follows to his father, then secretary of Union Lodge, No. 10, at Haverhill –

Dear Parent:

At the next Lodge in this town, I shall put in my petition to join them, and so I give you this notice. I am informed there will be no difficulty, and I think I had as well try now as ever.

This from your dutiful son,  
Jeremy L. Cross.

There apparently was no difficulty, as he was made an Entered Apprentice 2 September 1807, passed 6 April 1808 and raised 6 June 1808, the time lapse apparently being in accordance with constitutional requirements then existing in New Hampshire. He served as Steward or Deacon for the next few years, being present at Grand Lodge 26 June 1810, the only time he is named in Grand Lodge Proceedings. St. John's Lodge still has in its possession a Grand Lodge certificate of Cross' regularity, with appropriate signatures but lacking dates, partially made out but apparently not delivered. There is no mention of Cross in the minutes of St. John's Lodge after he demitted in 1813.

At that time he was about to start out as a lecturer, having a certificate under date of 1 November 1813 reading as follows -

To the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons  
Brethren: - I hereby certify that I have duly examined our trusty and faithful Bro. Jeremiah L. Cross, and find him well acquainted with the Lectures on the three first Degrees of Masonry, according to the Prestonian Arrangement as received, sanctioned and directed to be taught by the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire, and recommend him as fully competent to teach the same.

Stephen Blanchard  
Grand Lecturer of the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire.  
Hopkinton, Nov. 1, A. L. 5813.

On 27 September, 1814, he was in Lancaster, New Hampshire, and at the revival of North Star Lodge sat as Senior Deacon. October 25th the Lodge voted to discharge him as a member, but he was present on the 21st and 23rd of February 1815, and was later voted an honorarium of \$10 for his meritorious services. Writing to Blanchard, Jeremy reported that the Masons in the northern part of the State who were once blest with a few rays of Masonic light when at its meridian height, had lost it through forgetfulness and contention, but by close application he had communicated to them a part of the light and knowledge Blanchard had stamped upon his mind, and had reorganized them.

On 9 August, 1814, he had been advanced in Aurora Mark Lodge at Bradford, Vermont. On 15 July 1815 he was exalted in Champlain Chapter, Royal Arch Masons, at St. Albans, Vermont, it being agreed that he would "take his fees in lecturing on the lower degrees". According to his own statement he visited New York City during 1815, "received the Ineffable and Sublime degrees and was regularly constituted and appointed by the Supreme Council, a Sovereign Grand Inspector General, Thirty-third and last degree, and received as a member of said Council".

The lodge ritual which Cross first taught in New Hampshire and Vermont was the Webb arrangement of the Prestonian lectures, modified by Fowle and Gleason in Boston, and standard in old St. John's Lodge when Cross was made a Mason and served as Deacon. It had been introduced there by the Worshipful Master, Reverend George Richards, who with John Harris (later Grand Master) and the Grand Secretary had composed a committee to agree with Massachusetts on uniform work. The Massachusetts conferees included Henry Fowle and Benjamin Gleason.

Henry Fowle was an associate of Webb in organizing the General Grand Chapter and Knight Templary in Massachusetts and the northeast. He was also active in developing the Massachusetts ritual, demitting from the Lodge of Saint Andrew and organizing Mount Lebanon Lodge with that purpose in mind, according to his memoirs. Benjamin Gleason was a native of Boston and a graduate of Brown University at Providence in 1802. Made a Mason in the Lodge of Saint Andrew at Boston in 1801, he became a student of Webb in the latter's school of instruction which the great ritualist was conducting at Providence. He was closely associated with Fowle in Mt. Lebanon Lodge, and in 1806 was the salaried grand visiting lecturer of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. Webb was a grand officer in Rhode Island, becoming Grand Master 1812-14, but is only mentioned by name in the Massachusetts Grand Lodge Proceedings once, as a visitor. The New Hampshire Proceedings mention him only on one occasion when the sitting Grand Master made some uncomplimentary remarks about Webb's fanciful degrees.

This Massachusetts-New Hampshire work was taught in Vermont by Jonathan Nye, and also by John Barney who carried it west to Ohio, lower Canada and beyond, with his variations. It was taken by James Cushman to Virginia and to the south eastern States by Perez Snell, John Barker and Moses Holbrook. Cross carried it along the Middle Atlantic coastal States and down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. With the modifications which necessarily take place over a period of 150 years while it spread into forty or more grand jurisdictions, it is basically universal in the United States today, Pennsylvania excepted.

Masonic lecturers in the early 1800's seem to have acquired all the degrees of which they could possess themselves, and even to have invented some. In turn they conferred the side degrees on each other freely, and on others for a price. It is no different with the possessors or inventors of certain side degrees or side shows today. Gleason had obtained the Royal Master Degree (among others), probably from Thomas Lowndes in New York, and was an early visitor to Tyrian Council of Royal Masters at Hopkinton, New Hampshire, of which John Harris and Stephen Blanchard had been co-organizers in 1815. Here Cross may have obtained the Royal Master Degree, or it could have "opened to him" during a visit to Boston. No records have been found to support either conjecture. When in Philadelphia the following Summer he learned that Pennsylvania Royal Arch Masons had introduced this degree to fill the "void . . . from Master to the Arch" and this was not commented on as anything new or strange. The only mention of the Royal Master Degree in his diary is on 21 March 1818 when it was communicated (with the Select) to Companion Stowe at Middletown, Connecticut. In a memoir printed in the 1851 edition of his Monitor, Cross says that "early in 1816 . . . (he) received from Brothers Eckles and Niles, a warrant to confer the Royal and Select Degrees and to establish Councils". His memory in 1851 was probably no more accurate than matters of record in 1816.

By this time Cross had covered New Hampshire and Vermont, and now turned his thoughts and steps southward. In May 1816 he appeared at Providence in order to "perfect himself in the Chapter work". After concentrating on the ritual there, he went to New York for the General Grand Chapter convention in company with Webb, Fowle and John Snow among

others. Henry Fowle left a vivid account of the trip made by a mixed party of forty by special packet from Providence down the Sound to New York.

Cross here made the acquaintances of Philip P. Eckel from Baltimore and John Hart Lynde of New Haven, both of which were to be most rewarding. He also fortified himself with a certificate of proficiency signed by the officers of the General Grand Chapter as such, and in their several other capacities, a copy of which prefaced the first edition of his "True Monitor". This was the basis of the erroneous idea that he was a General Grand Lecturer of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, although he held no such appointment.

Cross went along to Philadelphia in the group under leadership of Webb which endeavored to effect a union with the Knight Templar organization there. This mission had no success and returned to New York to organize the Grand Encampment, Jeremy meanwhile starting out on his own. He had received the approval of the New Jersey Grand Lodge officers for his system of work, but found the authorities in Philadelphia "ignorant and obstinate". He began by "taking in all the several Lodges and Chapters in New Jersey" and passing through "Delaware lecturing in all the Lodges and Chapters".

Cross made his way to Baltimore, obtained the Select Master Degree from Eckel, and with it the authority to communicate the same to any group of nine Royal Arch Masons. He also received the endorsement of the Maryland Grand Lodge officers as lecturer on the Lodge degrees. Setting out for the West and South he left a long trail of visitations and lecturing in Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Mississippi and Louisiana. "While at Cincinnati, Frankfort and Lexington he was joined by Thomas Smith Webb and J. Snow", he stated many years later, but it may have been the other way around. One writer says he was not only interested in a uniform ritual but also in a General Grand Lodge and conferred with Henry Clay on that subject while in Kentucky. At Memphis he instituted a Chapter, organized somewhat earlier by Gleason, in his report adding the significant remark that he did not communicate the Order of High Priesthood, as he had not received it regularly. There is no record to show that Jeremy L. Cross was ever elected to preside over any Lodge or Chapter. In New Orleans he found most of the lodges modern, French or clandestine but he said, was "received and acknowledged by the Consistory, presented with a full and perfect set of all the degrees, their history, accompanied by the drawings, emblems, seals, &c."

At the end of a year he was back in Baltimore and was now empowered to charter Councils of Select Masters which he had informally organized, or those he might form thereafter. In asking for that authority he wrote significantly "There are so many of these little Degrees that are given by anyone and in any place which are of no consequence that the Brethren have but little confidence in this unless it has the appearance of some kind of sanction, and I think those who receive it would not make sufficient application to perfect themselves in the History, Work and Lectures unless there was an inducement held out for an office in the Council". Rob Morris added the comment "Is not human nature the same in all ages?".

On his way home to New Hampshire for the Summer he paused here and there, organizing a Council at Newcastle, Delaware, another at Windsor, Vermont, in July and one at Bradford, Vermont, in August. As he headed South again early in the Fall he visited old friends and associates in Hopkinton, where he says he "had formerly spent several months". Here he established a Select Master's Council and did the same at Boston, where he also received the approval of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge officers for the several Lodge degrees as he was teaching them. At Providence he again visited Webb and also obtained the endorsement of the Rhode Island Grand Lodge officers. At Hartford he failed to impress the Grand Master and Grand Secretary of Connecticut, whom he found to have little of the "Masonic fire", and then

went to New Haven for a business conference with John Hart Lynde before he headed for Virginia.

Tarrying here and there as he went along, and probably picking up his passage money, he established Councils of Select Masters at Bridgeton, New Jersey, and at Dover, Milford and Laurel in Delaware. December found him in Richmond, Virginia, where he met with the "Working committee" of the Grand Lodge and received their endorsement of his work and ritual. On Christmas Day, 1817, he organized a Select Masters Council at Richmond, the first T. I. M. being none other than John Dove, who later said Cross was paid 85 by each man who received the degree and \$40 for the charter. He was at Fredericksburg for St. John's Day and then went back to New Haven, where he was to spend the next 15 years.

John Hart Lynde had been taken suddenly by the Grim Reaper, but apparently had made an opportunity for Cross to cultivate the Connecticut field intensively, and may have been the original contact with Amos Doolittle, the engraver. During February and March Cross visited the Royal Arch Chapters and organized Select Masters' Councils at Hartford, Ashford, Norwich, New London, Colchester, Middletown and Stamford. Some idea of the financial arrangements can be learned from the entry in his diary that he received \$55 for seven days' work at New London. In Norwich he made the acquaintance of James Cushman, an apt pupil and protégé who lectured and organized Masonic bodies in Virginia and neighboring States, ending his career in New Jersey. Incidentally- Cross notes that at Middletown, Connecticut, Commodore McDonough was among his listeners, "a verry plain sociable man".

At the Grand Lodge Communication in Hartford 10 May 1818 a new Grand Master having rekindled the "Masonic fire", Cross was appointed Grand Lecturer, and authorized to visit and instruct the several lodges, the fee not to exceed \$10, which each lodge was to pay in to the grand treasury, and in return be entitled to not more than two and one-half days' instruction. Meanwhile he had engaged Doolittle to engrave a plate for a Royal Arch apron. After a brief trip to his Haverhill home he settled down in New Haven. Already planning a Monitor patterned after Webb's, but with pictures, he worked with Doolittle in drafting designs for the emblems. On 5 November 1818 he affiliated with Hiram Lodge in New Haven. He had in the few weeks preceding organized Select Masters' Councils in Canterbury, New Haven and Newtown.

Dr. Albert G. Mackey, the great Masonic authority and scholar of the mid nineteenth century says of the Monitor put out by Cross that it was, "in nearly all its parts, a mere transcript of the Monitor of Webb, the first edition of which was published in 1797. Webb, it is true, took the same liberty with Preston, from whose Illustrations of Masonry he borrowed largely. The engraving of the emblems constituted, however, an entirely new and original feature in the Hieroglyphic Chart, and as furnishing aids to the memory, rendered the book of Cross at once very popular; so much so, indeed, that, for a long time it almost altogether superseded that of Webb".

The first edition of the "True Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor" came off the press in 1819, but proved such a success that Cross himself put out as many as twelve editions, while with expiration or sale of copyright and death of the originator, many more appeared with modifications by the numerous "co-authors". In the first edition there appears in print and pictorial representation the "Weeping Virgin", which Cross is by some credited with having originated and introduced into the lectures. However, the inspiration seems to have come from the funeral insignia carried on a float at the Washington Commemorative Funeral Observance organized by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts 11 February 1800. From the language used in the explanatory lecture, it was most probably developed by Gleason, if we can judge by the classical references. The illustration used in the first printing carried the credit line "Design'd & Engraved by A. Doolittle".

It was on 18 May 1819 that the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters in Connecticut was organized, the first in all the world. Cross had combined the two degrees and the Grand Council assumed their control. Thus in Lodge, Chapter, Council and Commandery was preserved the Temple Tradition and the sequence of the Word. For a most enlightening discussion of the question of the origin, jurisdiction over, and control of these two degrees, the interested reader is referred to the History of the Cryptic Rite.

Although not named in the minutes, Cross was doubtless at the organization of the Grand Council, and the next day made his report to the Grand Lodge as Grand Lecturer. There was some difficulty in satisfying everyone concerning the \$10 assessed against each Lodge, but Cross was continued as Grand Lecturer, allowed to appear as such wherever he was called. The next day he was present at the Grand Chapter and was appointed Grand Visitor for the western part of the State. In October that year he bought out Doolittle's interest in the publishing business. From his headquarters in New Haven he continued to visit the several Lodges, Chapters and Councils throughout the State.

Jeremy Ladd Cross received some of the chivalric degrees in "an unconstitutional encampment" at Boston, the exact date undetermined, although Batchellor says it was in the later part of August 1818. How this could have happened after Cross and Grand Commander Henry Fowle had been acquainted for years, cannot be explained. On 28 September 1819 he was proposed in St. John's Encampment at Providence "on the principle of healing", created a Knight of the Red Cross in ample form and dubbed a Knight Templar. The following October he was at Colchester, Connecticut, in Washington Commandery, when Fowle was present and brought that group into the Grand Encampment fold. Cross agreed with Fowle to publish a Knights Templar Chart, Fowle to have one-third the profits! In November he gave James Cushman "the work in the valiant Orders of Knighthood". Cross affiliated with Washington Commandery 23 October 1823 using his name in full. But although New Haven Commandery was organized in 1825, Cross never affiliated with his home town associates!

In May 1820 Cross attended the several Connecticut grand bodies at their annual sessions. The Grand Lodge approved his "True Chart etc" and recommended its adoption as a text book. He was elected Grand Sentinel of the Grand Chapter and continued in his appointment as Grand Visitor. He was now sending his book all over the country, shipments running into the hundreds, and also developing a sort of Masonic supply business. His diary refers to the design and sale of aprons, costumes, regalia and equipment.

In 1821 the Grand Lodge continued his appointment as Grand Lecturer; he was elected Grand Marshal of the Grand Chapter and continued as Grand Visitor (at the expense of Chapters which might employ him) ; and he was elected Grand Captain of the Guard in the Grand Council. His activity as lecturer was at its peak, his Monitor was adopted by Grand Lodge action and financing.

In 1823 he joined with other members of Hiram Lodge in organizing an offshoot named Adelphi Lodge, No. 63. Although frequently named as a member of various committees and often in the chair of the Master and other officers as a substitute, he himself was never elected to any station. No record has ever been found of his having passed the chair in any Lodge by election and service.

Until 1824 he continued to hold minor offices in the grand bodies, was authorized to lecture on call, and was also elected T.I.M. of Harmony Council, Royal and Select. Masters in New Haven, an office he was to fill for eight years. A new constitution and by-laws adopted by the Grand

Lodge in 1824 made no provision for a Grand Lecturer, and after that year no further mention of Jeremy L. Cross appears in the Proceedings of any of the grand bodies in Connecticut! His meteoric course as lecturer and teacher came to an end, although the trail he left still glows across the starry decked heavens of the Masonic firmament.



**JEREMY L. CROSS**

From an engraving in the second edition of the Monitor. This portrait was by Munger and the engraving by Jocelyn. A few years later Cross used a likeness credited to Samuel F. B. Morse.

While home in Haverhill for Thanksgiving in November 1826, he sat as Junior Warden of Grafton Lodge, No. 46, which had been instituted the September preceding. His father, venerable Deacon Cross also appears as a visitor to the Lodge. If it was feasible to trace Jeremy into every Lodge which he visited for the next thirty years, we doubtless would find dozens of entries which would show he was carrying on wherever he went, an example of modesty who took delight, and delighted others, in his rendition of the work.

The active lecturer now settled back into the chair of the sedate publisher, and Cross took steps to solidify his position as such. His name appears among the thousand or more Connecticut Masons who signed the 1832 Declaration of Principles during the anti-Masonic excitement, but the next year Cross apparently made better business connections, since he left New Haven and located in New York City. When Adelphi Lodge surrendered their Charter at about this time, Cross became an unaffiliated Mason, and, as far as can be ascertained, remained such for twenty years.

In New York his name first appears in the city directory for 1834-5 as a "paper commission merchant". He is listed as such or as a "publisher" until the 1852-3 issue, when he is shown as connected with the (George) Bulkeley Company. No further listing of his name occurs as resident or removal. His several business, residence or boarding house addresses were on Beekman, Pearl, John, Warren and Fulton Streets.

During this period several editions of his Monitors appeared, and he continued to have manufactured "Lodge and Chapter decorations, jewels, furniture, collars, &c". "He kept a room devoted to sale of his books and Masonic items" and, according to Folger, was "the chief and most reliable dealer in Masonic books and merchandise". At that time "his character, as a man and a Mason, was unimpeachable, and there was not a single man in the whole land more highly esteemed by the brotherhood". Strangely enough he does not seem to have been conspicuously active behind tiled doors while in New York City, although the minutes of the city lodges have not been fine combed, in order to establish or determine his visits or possible affiliation.

The second quarter of the nineteenth century was a period of anti-Masonic frenzy in New England and upstate New York, and of unseemly contention among several rival factions in the many Masonic bodies and pseudo-rites of the metropolis. The Grand Lodge was rent with schism in which Henry C. Atwood, earlier associated with Cross in Connecticut, was a contentious leader. The Cerneau movement was very strong in the city and elsewhere. Cross was caught up in the controversial whirl. His earlier protégé, Atwood, was in and out of the Grand Lodge, depending on the ascendancy of a rebellious spirit or a willingness to acknowledge some authority other than his own. During one armistice in 1849 Cross sent a congratulatory letter to the Grand Lodge, along with it a complimentary copy of his Monitor in its latest edition!

But Atwood was soon again among the outs, and in 1851 Cross was persuaded to accept the post of Sovereign Grand Commander in the schismatic or recently fabricated bodies of the Scottish Rite, in which Atwood owed his standing to the original favor of James Cushman, then of New Jersey. "It was thought that the array of influential names would give a character to the body" according to Folger, and he himself interviewed the nearly 70 year old Jeremy L. Cross in an effort to obtain the latter's consent to take the post as nominal head of the "Atwood Council".

More or less in Folger's own words we learn that Cross responded by bringing forth his Patent, which had laid dormant from the time of its issue, and stated that he had never used it, because of his attachment to the ritual and the principles of Ancient York Masonry, as well as the light opinion he had entertained of the so-called "Ineffable Degrees". He was an old man. From his young days he had been educated in the "Ancient" system; he had labored earnestly through the years of his life to build it up, and was so firmly fixed in his opinions, that he saw no other Masonry in the world but that particular form, and believed that all else under the name of Masonry must be subservient and yield to the York rite precedence in all things. But at the same time he manifested a willingness to take the office, if it was clear that he could benefit Ancient York Masonry to which he was so much devoted.

He made two conditions to his consent to become Grand Commander of the Atwood Council of the Scottish Rite. The first was that it should be a fundamental law of the Council, that none but Royal Arch Masons should be received up to the 16th degree or Prince of Jerusalem. Second, that the remaining degrees would be open only to Knights Templar. Folger adds that although this was virtually closing the doors of the bodies under jurisdiction of the Council against a very large number who were desirous of being initiated, yet these conditions were acceded to, at least for the time being, and reorganization commenced. The list of officers of the "Supreme Council I or the Northern Hemisphere" headed by Cross included two long time associates from Connecticut, William H. Ellis, a Past Grand Master, and William H. Jones, a Past Grand Secretary, both of New Haven, as well as a Past Grand Master of New Jersey, and another "old man", full of honors as well as years, Reverend Salem Towne. A year or two later Cross resigned, perhaps disillusioned, and perhaps because he was called back to the family

homestead in New Hampshire, by personal choice or family affairs. At any rate he seems never to have functioned as Sovereign Grand Commander.

The date of the 33rd degree certificate which Cross held from the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in Charleston, South Carolina, is 24 June 1824. The original is in the archives of the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire and will be recognized as genuine by any Mason privileged to view it. Both its existence and its validity have been called into question at different times, but seeing is believing. The great Albert Pike himself vindicated Cross as far as any doubt of his lawful possession of the 33rd degree or the genuineness of his commission is concerned. This patent, according to Cross, came to him "by the hands of Brother Barker", an associate of Cross in Connecticut who went to Charleston and became an agent of the Supreme Council, but whose performance was not always to their complete satisfaction. In Lobingier's history there is a hint that Cross surrendered a lot of papers he had somehow and somewhere acquired (at New Orleans?), "was obligated fully", and accepted as a member of the Supreme Council. The records, for the year when Cross was appointed, unfortunately are not complete in all detail. Agreement on jurisdictional lines between the northern and southern jurisdictions was not arrived at until several years later, and Cross was therefore one of the few Northerners honored with the 33rd degree by the Mother Supreme Council at Charleston.

His saltatory career in the Ancient and Accepted Rite is not necessarily evidence of\_ any inconsistency on the part of Cross, or an indication of the value which he placed upon the possession of the degrees and his preferment. But it is remarkable that he was received in the first place by the Cerneau-Clinton-Lowndes bodies in New York; accepted without reservation in the New Orleans bodies of somewhat indeterminate allegiance and derivation; confirmed, and we might say, healed by the Supreme Council at Charleston; and then should agree to assume the dignity of Sovereign Grand Commander of the Atwood Council, knowing the circumstances. But we must remember that at this time "Ordo ab Chao" was an objective, not an accomplished fact. Union, stability, peace and contentment were not to be established for another quarter century. Significantly, Folger tells us that Cross resigned within a year "on account of ill health", which may explain a good deal that had happened. Ellis, Jones and Towne were dropped from the official list in the reorganization which followed.

The land records of Haverhill contain numerous entries of transactions where Jeremy is concerned, frequently mortgages in return for loans to his relatives. On 28 May 1853 he is listed as "of New York" but on 29 October following is "of Haverhill.". Only his sister, Eliza, was left of a long lived family when Cross came home and quietly watched the lengthening shadows drawing nigh. He was still attached to Masonry and affiliated with Grafton Lodge (46) apparently after assisting in its resuscitation. He wrote the 1857 by-laws and was the second man to sign them, immediately after the new Master. He took part occasionally in the work and at least once acted as installing officer. He is last on record in attendance on 16 June 1859. In one of his letters from Haverhill to a New York correspondent he says he had long since given up lecturing, but recommended Edmund B. Hays as a competent substitute. Since Hays had not been made until 1847 it would appear that Cross, while in New York, was lecturing to a few favorite and responsive individuals. Ebenezer Wadsworth, John Barney, Benjamin Enos and others "were all schooled by Cross".

Jeremy Ladd Cross never married, or, in his words was not to "enjoy the comforts that are derived from domestic society", although there are occasional references in his diary to some charming female who caught his eye, and turned his mind toward reflection on his single state. The same narrative (most easily accessible as an appendix to the History of the Cryptic Rite) shows a struggle with his soul during young manhood. He turned from Universalism to Episcopalianism, and perhaps other denominational preferences, from time to time, although

not at all attracted to the Methodists after encountering a few of their enthusiastic preachers in his travels. For years he seems to have feared for his ultimate salvation, but apparently found consolation in his attachment to a New Haven church, as he joined the First Church there 26 March 1820. In July 1826 he was dismissed to the Third (now the United) Church and therefrom dismissed 3 November 1833 by general letter, having removed to New York.

Cross made his final will and testament 12 November 1859 and died 26 January 1860 at the age of 77. His estate was valued at about \$11,000 and consisted of real estate in Haverhill and vicinity; stock in iron and coal companies located in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania; eighty-five shares of railroad stock worth about \$2,200 and government bonds to the value of 54,000. His sister was the sole beneficiary except for 20 shares of railroad stock left to the Congregational Home Missionary Society. The whole inventory was cancelled out by the expense of the attention Eliza needed in her declining years, for she survived another twenty.

No details of Jeremy's last few days have come down to us, nor do we know anything about his funeral at a time of year when the weather is not usually benign. Over his grave stands a headstone bearing the Scottish Rite 33' emblem, put up by some persons unknown at some undetermined date, but probably by order of his sister soon after his demise.

Folger says Jeremy Ladd Cross "was a pure minded man . . ., just in all his ways, and left behind him brethren who will long cherish his memory for acts of kindness, whatever may have been his faults ... We are fully of the opinion, based upon twenty years' acquaintance with the man, that he would not be guilty of a willful lie, even to save his life. He was, in all things, a man of stern and unflinching integrity, which made him respected wherever he was known".

When his sands finally ran out, and the Grim Reaper approached, his virgin sister stood by as his column was broken. The marble monument to his memory, while not of the finest Parian variety, commemorates "A Pattern Son and Brother", one who was eminently "amiable, distinguished and exemplary".

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