

THE MASON'S CONFESSION
commonly called the
THE DUNDEE MANUSCRIPT
attributed to the year 1727

Transcribed from the Scots Magazine
for March, 1755. vol.xvii. pp 132-7.

The Scots Magazine MDCCLV Volume XVII.

Ne quid falsi dicere audent. ne quid veri non audeat.

Edinburgh; Printed by Sands, Donaldson, Murray and Cochran.

Part for March, 1755. Pages 132 to 137:-

To the author of the Scots Magazine.

SIR.

Some time ago a Mason living at a considerable distance from me, whom I knew to have the character of a religious man, sent me a long paper, all of his own handwriting, and subscribed by of the oath word, and other secrets of his craft. . When he wrote that paper, and for a good time before, he was by bodily distress; and he represents his having been brought under a His narrative is intermixed with reasonings from many texts of scripture, and otherwise, about the He considers the oath as profane and abominable, what was sinful for him to take and sinful to keep; he treats secrets which are therein sworn to, as a compound of superstitious ceremonies, ly the whole as a horrid wickedness. At the same time, he urges me to be engaged in that oath, and for warning others to beware of the snare; engaged in that oath, and for warning others to be and the Lodge he belonged to.

However, I have only drawn out his narrative, which I here offer you, in leaving the world to judge of the matter as they please.

He informs me that the account he gives is only of what he informs me that the account he gives is which he entered; without regard to some circumstantial variations they agree in substance. And indeed an absolute uniformity among th follows, the whole affair must be committed only to their memories, and share in the common fate of oral traditions.

A mason's confession of the oath, word
and other secrets of his craft.

These are to testify, concerning that oath, word and other secrets held among the corporation

taken under the same, by sundry of them gathered together and met at D_____ about the year 1727.

Concerning the oath

After one comes in at the door, he that keeps the door, looses the his breeches, and requires him to deliver any metal thing he has upon him. He is made his bare elbow on the Bible with his hand lifted up; and he swears, "As I shall answer before God at the great day, and this Company, I shall heal and conceal, or not divulge and make known the secrets of the Mason-word, bound, not to write them on paper, parchment, timber, stone, sand, snow, &c.) under out from beneath my chowks, and my heart out from beneath my left oxter, and my body buried within the sea-mark, where it ebbs and flows twice in the twenty four hours."

Immediately after that oath, the administrator of it says, "You taken under that oath, I knew not what these secrets were which I was not to divulge, having One person in the Lodge instructed me a little about their and another person in the Lodge, whom I then chused to be my instructor till that time twelve-month, many called my intender; ---- There is a yearly imposing of that oath in admissions among the said craft as it is termed, being the 27th of December.

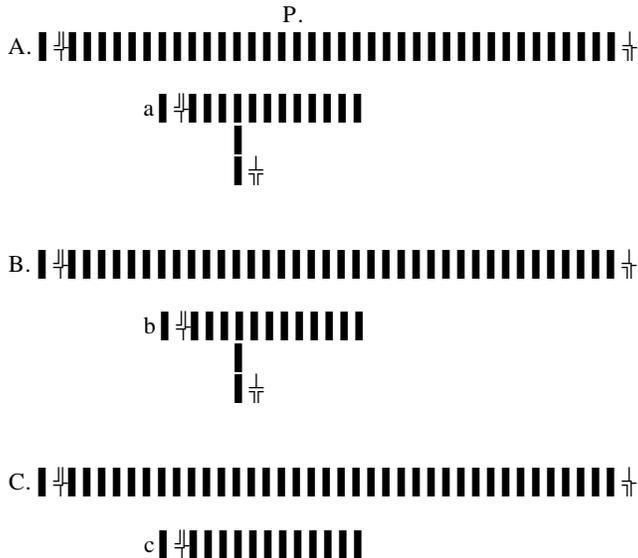
Concerning the word.

After the oath, a word in the scriptures was shown me, which, said one, is the mason-word. The w They say Boas is the mason-word, and Jachin a fellow-craft-word. The former is shewn to an entered apprentice a fellow-craft-word. T he has sworn the oath; and the latter is shewn to one that has been a higher degree in their lodge, after he has sworn the oath again, or declared his approbation of it.

Concerning the other secrets

I shall next shew a cluster of different sorts of their secrets.

First, then, three chalk lines being drawn on the floor, about an equal distance, as at A.B and C: the master of t stands at P, and the fellow-crafts, with the wardens and entered apprentices, on, and the fellow-crafts, with the wardens and entered app the last entered apprentice at p.



street,street, with his right foot at his master, a left, sword point, within strokestreet, with his right foot at his master, a left, sword point, feetfeet andfeet and an half of the lodge-door, there he prentice leaves him. And he goes to sort up thefeet and an half of the lodge-door, order; after which, he calls in the men to work.

And this is the amount of that inventer matter; or all I can remember that is material in it.

P.S. There was printed, in the year 1747 (ix.404)

A protestation and declinature from the society of Operative masons in the lodge at Torphichen, to meet atA protestat
kirk.kirk. Dec 27, 1739: subscribed, of that dat, at Kirknewton, by James Chrystie: with a subscribed adherence, at the same
place ofplace of the same date, by James Aikman, Andrew Purdie and and John Chrystie: and with another subscribed adherence,
at Dalkeith, July 27, 1747, by John Miller.

InIn that paper, they renounce the mason-oath, asIn that paper, they renounce the mason-oath, as finding the same "sinful and unlawful".
andand thereforeand therefore not binding upon their conscience." They declare, that it is imposed andand therefore not binding upon the
ceremoniesceremonies andceremonies and circumstances as are in themselves sinful and unwarrantable andceremonies and circumstance
kneelingkneeling upon their bare knees, and the naked arm upon the Bible;"kneeling upon their bare knees, and the naked arm upon the Bi
withoutwithout allowing a copy of the said oath and time duly and delwithout allowing a copy of the said oath and time duly and
thereof,thereof, or things, sworn to therein, never being under their seriousthereof, or things, sworn to therein, never being under their ser
seeingseeing the person swearing knows what he is swearing to;" -- That they "do look upon the dreadful wseeing the person sw
superstition,superstition, idolatory, blasphemy and profanation of the namesuperstition, idolatory, blasphemy and profanation of the name
to to that oath, alto to that oath, altogether to that oath, altogether unbecoming the name and professions of Christians; by the which unl
manymany are rashlymany are rashly and inconsiderately precipitated and sliely drawnmany are rashly and inconsiderately precipitated and
ereere ever theyere ever they can be aware of it." --- What "it isere ever they can be aware of it." --- What "it is an appending the seal of a
uncommonuncommon imprecations, to a blank, yea to worse, to ridiculous nonsense and superstition: nonsense,uncommon imprecations,
aggravation,aggravation, ofaggravation, of profaning the sacred scriptures, by intermixing them therewith), only fit for the amusementag
in in a winter-evening; most of the se crets being idle in a winter-evening; most of the secrets being idle stuff or lyes, and other parts of it super
andand idolaters." -- Moreover, they declare,and idolaters." -- Moreover, they declare, that the secrecyand idolaters." -- Moreover, the
world in print; concerning which, (they say)
therethere have been many lyes andthere have been many lyes and equivocations, in denying the same, though they containthere have been

I am etc.

D.B.

N.B. With With his letter, ab With his letter, above inserted, Mr. D.B. sent us the paper he mentions (132), which is dated Nov 13, 17
anotheranother of the same handwriting and subscription, dated Febanother of the same handwriting and subscription, dated Feb 20, 1752
sentent to the mason, for explaining some things in his papers, and the mason's answers. Having compared thesent to the mason
narrativenarrative with these papers, we findnarrative with these papers, we find that it is faithful taken from them; so that whatever shall
conduct,conduct, which itconduct, which it does not become usconduct, which it does not become us either to justify or condemn, the auther
