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*M. W. J. S.*

First Master of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection  
Installed November 3, 1808





ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE

---

ONE HUNDRED YEARS  
OF  
**AURORA GRATA**  
1808 - 1908

BY  
CHARLES A. BROCKAWAY, 32°  
=



BROOKLYN, N. Y.  
AURORA GRATA CONSISTORY  
1908

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CHARLES H. LUSCOMB

IN TRUST FOR AURORA GRATA CONSISTORY  
ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE

WAVERLY PRESS  
WILLIAMS & WILKINS COMPANY  
BALTIMORE

TO ILL. HENRY L PALMER, 33°  
"THE GRAND OLD MAN OF FREEMASONRY"  
THIS VOLUME IS FRATERNALLY DEDICATED

## SUPREME COUNCIL 33° A. A. S. RITE

FOR THE NORTHERN MASONIC JURISDICTION OF THE U. S.  
OFFICE OF THE M. P. SOV. GRAND COMMANDER

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, February 4, 1908.

CHARLES A. BROCKAWAY, 32°,  
Brooklyn, New York.

My dear Brother:

I received in due time your manuscript of "One Hundred Years of Aurora Grata, 1808-1908," together with your letter of the 20th ultimo relating thereto. I have read every word of it, from the title page to the conclusion, and finished the reading last night. So far as I have any personal knowledge of the transactions of the Aurora Grata bodies, and so far as I have any means of verifying them, the statements contained therein seem to be absolutely correct. I have found it an exceedingly interesting production. I had a personal acquaintance with so many of those who were connected with these Bodies that I found this history as fascinating as the most exciting work of fiction I have ever read.

You have done a wonderful work in gathering together so accurately the facts connected with the history of these Bodies. For the sake of the present members of the Bodies themselves, and of the Rite in our Jurisdiction, it should be published and thus permanently preserved for the future. I appreciate and thank you for the grand work you have accomplished.

Yours truly,            H. L. PALMER,  
Grand Commander.

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## INTRODUCTION

**C**OINCIDENT with the Masonic revival in the early part of the Eighteenth Century there sprang up a desire for a deeper research into the arcana of Freemasonry and a thorough knowledge of the secret history and doctrines of the order. The most brilliant minds of Europe were enticed by so fascinating a study, and devised beautiful ceremonies or degrees for the purpose of exemplifying those subtle mysteries so little known even to Masons, and embracing the historical, philosophical, and chivalric. For a considerable time there were apparently no governing bodies for these new degrees, and they were for the most part what we now call "side" degrees. Efforts were made to establish separate and distinct organizations wherein these sublime truths might be revealed and cultivated, but nearly all of these attempts were ephemeral. In 1754, however, twenty-five of these degrees (including the three Symbolic degrees) were arranged in a series called the Rite of Perfection or H-R-D-M, and a governing body was promptly formed; but the spirit of frequent change still reigned over Masonry, and five years later we find these same degrees conferred under authority of a body styled the Council of Emperors of the East and West, having its Grand East at Paris.

On the 27th of August, 1761, this body invested Stephen Morin with power to carry the Rite of Perfection to America. He established bodies in Santo Domingo and at Kingston, Jamaica, and at the latter place Henry Andrew Francken was admitted to the high degrees. Francken was commissioned by Morin a Deputy Inspector General, with power to carry the Rite to the Continent of America. He came to New York and on the 20th of December, 1767, gave a patent of authority to a number of brethren residing at Albany, where they immediately established Ineffable Lodge of Perfection. That body continues to work to this day under authority of that original warrant, sanctioned by the Supreme Council of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.

The Council of Emperors of the East and West adopted Grand Constitutions in 1762, a copy of which Morin furnished to Francken, who in turn left a copy with the Albany body. Both Morin and Francken had power not alone to appoint Inspectors General, but to invest them with equal powers with their own, and in the exercise of this power Francken appointed Moses M. Hayes and several others to this grade. A second Lodge of Perfection was constituted in Philadelphia in 1781, and parts of the early records of this body have been preserved. The following year Joseph M. Meyers, who had been appointed by Hayes, established a Council of Princes of Jerusalem at Charleston, South Carolina, and in 1783 Isaac Da Costa, who also owed his appointment to Hayes, established a Lodge of Perfection at the

same place. In January of 1797, a Grand Council of Princes of the Royal Secret was established in Charleston under authority of a body of the same rank at Kingston, Jamaica.

The Rite of Perfection, however, was burdened with inherent defects of organization and government, and in 1786 the "Frederick Constitutions" were published to the world for a new system, the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, which appropriated outright the degrees of the Rite of Perfection and added eight more, thereby bringing the number up to thirty-three. By the terms of these Constitutions succession in the government of the Rite after the death of Frederick the Great, supreme head of the order, was provided for by investing his power in a Supreme Council in each nation, excepting in the United States, where there were to be two Supreme Councils for the government of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite. In 1801, Colonel John Mitchell, commissioned an Inspector General by Barend M. Spitzer, who had received a commission from Hayes, took steps to form a Supreme Council of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite in exact accordance with the provisions of the Constitutions of 1786. Frederick Dalcho, D.D., was raised to the grade of Inspector General and the degree was communicated to others until the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States was completed on the 31st of May, 1801, the first Supreme Council organized in the world conformably to the Constitutions of 1786.





## THE FOUNDING OF AURORA GRATA



**A**MONG the Masonic curios collected by the Grand Lodge of the State of New York there is a certificate dated the 22d of July, 1782, signed by Paul Revere, Master of the Lodge of Saint Andrew in the Town of Boston, and afterwards Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts. This certificate reads that "our worthy Brother Abraham Jacobs has been duly initiated into the second degree of Freemasonry. As such he has been received by us, and being a true and faithful brother is hereby recommended to the favor and protection of all Free and Accepted Masons wherever dispersed." Jacobs was raised to the degree of Master Mason in Lodge No. 1 at Charleston, South Carolina, under the jurisdiction of the

Athol Grand Lodge of England (Ancients). In 1788 the Sublime degrees were conferred upon him up to and including the "Grand and Sublime Degree of Perfection," or Grand Elect Mason, and one of the signers of his certificate was Brigadier-General Mordecai Gist, then Deputy Grand Master of Masons in South Carolina and Grand Master in 1790. Jacobs was promoted to the degree of Knight of the Sun, in Jamaica, in the spring of 1790, and he returned to Savannah, Georgia, in November of the same year.

Learning of the recent establishment of the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third degree at Charleston, Jacobs and eight others petitioned the Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem on the 21st of November, 1802, for authority to found a Lodge of Perfection at Savannah, and a warrant of constitution passed the seal of the Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem for the establishment of a Sublime Grand Lodge of Perfection at Savannah, which was constituted on the 30th of December, 1802, as Grand Elect and Sublime Grand Lodge No. 2 under the jurisdiction of the Sublime Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem at Charleston.

In 1804 we find Jacobs in New York, and on the 4th of October of that year he wrote in his diary:

Bro. Joseph Jacobs, an old Royal Arch Mason, having signified by letter his desire of receiving the Sublime degrees, taking into view the uncertainty of life and death, and in case of the latter not knowing into whose hands my papers may fall, determined to confer the Sublime degrees upon him, on his being qualified to receive my papers in case of death and return them to the Supreme Council at Charleston, South Carolina.

During the next four years Jacobs conferred the Sublime degrees upon nineteen brothers all told, most of them being Past Masters of their Lodges. In October, 1808, these brethren formed themselves into a convention in order to elect the officers for a Council of Princes of Jerusalem and a Sublime Grand Lodge of Perfection, and Jacobs decided to promote the officers of the Council and the Master and Deputy Master of the Lodge of Perfection to the degree of Knight of the Sun, agreeably and in conformity to the Constitutions. Let us copy from his diary for October, 1808:

It was moved and seconded that the brethren present form themselves into a convention, which was unanimously agreed to. Present:

THOMAS LOWNDS  
SAMPSON SIMSON  
BENJAMIN SHOTWELL  
WILLIAM T. HUNTER  
JOHN E. RUCKEL

ABRAHAM JACOBS  
RICHARD RIKER  
BENJAMIN AYCRIGG  
STEPHEN SCUDDER  
JOEL HART

ANDREW SITCHER  
 JOHN CLOUGH  
 JOHN PHELPS

MORDECAI MYERS  
 WILLIAM STEWARD  
 JOSEPH JACOBS

It was moved and seconded that Bro. Abraham Jacobs take the chair, which was unanimously agreed to. It was moved and seconded that Bro. — act as secretary to this convention, which was unanimously agreed to. It was moved and seconded that the officers to fill the Council of Princes of Jerusalem be elected out of the brethren present, which was unanimously agreed to. The brethren then proceeded to vote, when it appeared that the following brothers were duly elected by unanimous vote officers of the proposed Council of Princes of Jerusalem:

RICHARD RIKER, Esq., Attorney-General, M. E.  
 SAMPSON SIMSON, Esq., Attorney at Law, Scribe  
 COLONEL ANDREW SITCHER  
 DANIEL BEACH, Esq.  
 JEREMIAH SHOTWELL.  
 JOSEPH JACOBS, Tyler.

The brethren then unanimously nominated and appointed the following brethren officers of the Sublime Lodge of Perfection:

MORDECAI MYERS, S. G. M.  
 JOHN E. RUCKEL, D. S. G. M.  
 WILLIAM T. HUNTER, S. G. S. W.  
 WILLIAM F. STEWARD, S. G. J. W.  
 BENJAMIN AYCRIGG, S. G. T.  
 SAMUEL RIKER, S. G. S.  
 JOEL HART, G. O. and K. S.  
 JOHN CLOUGH, Capt. of the G.  
 STEPHEN SCUDDER, Asst. Capt. of the G.

It was then agreed that all the brethren should meet at the Washington Lodge room in Whitehall street on the 3d of November ensuing to obtain certificates and sign their submission, and that the officers of the Council and Lodge be then installed.

During the next few days Jacobs conferred the degrees to and including Knight of the Sun upon the officers of the Council of Princes, the Master and Deputy Master of the Lodge of Perfection, and upon Thomas Lownds, High Priest of Jerusalem Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. On the 3d of November, seventeen brethren met at the rooms of Washington Lodge, of which Mordecai Myers was Past Master, when the certificates of the brethren were properly signed and they all subscribed their names to the "submission" or oath of fealty. The Council of Princes of Jerusalem was duly opened and organized under the name of Concordia Crescimus, the officers were installed and the Council was closed. The Lodge of Perfection was then opened by Abraham Jacobs, after which Richard Riker was placed in the chair. Riker installed Mordecai Myers as Sublime Grand Master of the Sublime Lodge of Perfection, who in turn installed the other officers and closed the lodge.

The next day, Friday the 4th of November, 1808, the following advertisement appeared

in the New York Gazette and General Advertiser:

*Lux ex Tenebris*

HEALTH, STABILITY AND POWER

At a convention of the Grand Elect, Perfect and Sublime Masons P. J. K. S. &c., held at the Washington Lodge room, in the City of New York on the 13th of the month Hesvan 4493 corresponding to the 3d of November 1808, a grand Council of P. J. was duly chosen, and inducted into office according to the usages of this sublime and ancient institution. Whereupon it was resolved that this public notice be given.

By order of the Grand Council,

RICHARD RIKER, T. E.

Attest:           SAMPSON SIMSON, P. J. and G. S.

nov 4, 3t

Two days later, Sunday the 6th of November, the Council of Princes Concordia Crescimus was again opened at the Washington Lodge room, the following brethren being present: Abraham Jacobs, Thomas Lownds, Andrew Sitcher, Jeremiah Shotwell, Mordecai Myers, Daniel Beach, Sampson Simson, Richard Riker, John E. Ruckel, Joel Hart, and Joseph Jacobs. Ill. John Gabriel Tardy, Deputy Inspector General, attended the Council in company with Ill. Bros. John James Joseph Gourgas and Moses Levy Maduro Peixotto. Bro. Tardy produced his warrant and other cre-

dentials, investigated the proceedings of the brethren, sanctioned and approved them, and promised his protection and every assistance in his power. He placed in the chair Richard Riker, Thrice Equitable, delivered to him the Constitutions and invested him with all the powers and prerogatives relating thereto by an instrument under his hand and seal, which was delivered in the presence of Ill. Bros. Peixotto, Gourgas, and John Baptist Desdoity.

A committee of five, consisting of Bros. Tardy, Peixotto, Gourgas, Simson, and Abraham Jacobs, was appointed to correspond with all Supreme Councils and Sublime lodges; and a committee of three, consisting of Bros. Beach, Sitcher, and Abraham Jacobs, was appointed to prepare a code of by-laws for the Council.

#### THE LODGE OF PERFECTION CHARTER

At the same session, 6th of November, 1808, a warrant of constitution or charter passed the seal of the Council of Princes of Jerusalem Concordia Crescimus to the Sublime Grand Lodge of Perfection, under the name of **AURORA GRATA** No. ONE—the first charter and apparently the only one granted by this Council of Princes. The text of that warrant is as follows:

## AD MAJOREM SUPREMI ARCHITECTI GLORIAM

*Lux ex Tenebris*

HEALTH, STABILITY, &amp; POWER.

From the East of the Grand Council of the Most Illustrious & Most Valiant Princes of Jerusalem, &c.: &c.: &c.: under the Celestial Canopy of the Zenith which answers to 40 degrees 23 Min. N. L.

To our Illustrious, Perfect and Sublime Knights of the East, & Most Excellent Princes of Jerusalem &c.: &c.: &c.: over the surface of the two Hemispheres.

Know Ye, that We the Council of Princes of Jerusalem, by the name of Concordia Crescimus No.: One in the City of New York, State of New York, North America . . . . .

.....SEND GREETING:

By and Virtue of the Powers vested in Us, by the Most Illustrious and Most Puissant Brethren John Gabriel Tardy, Sovereign Prince of the Royal Secret, Deputy Inspector General & Grand Master over all Lodges, Chapters, Councils & Grand Councils, John Baptist Desdoity, John James Joseph Gourgas & Moses Levy Maduro Peixotto, Sovereign Princes of the Royal Secret, &c.: &c.: &c.: and under the special protection of the Most Puissant Princes and in their Place and Stead, at the request of Our Worthy and Well Beloved Brethren Mordecai Myers, John E. Ruckel, William F. Steward, William T. Hunter, Joel Hart, Stephen Phelps, Stephen Scudder, John Clough, Benjamin Aycrigg, Samuel Riker, Junr. & Joseph Jacobs; Have founded, established & Constituted & by these Presents, Do found, establish & constitute, a Sublime Lodge of Perfection to be held in the City of New York, State of New York, or within Seventy-five Miles of it, under the Distinct Name of AURORA GRATA, NUMBER ONE & in order to reward their

**FAC-SIMILE OF CHARTER**  
**AURORA GRATA LODGE OF PERFECTION**







Zeal, Fervor & Constancy in the Great Works of the Royal Art, Have Nominated, Constituted and appointed, & Do hereby Nominate, Constitute & Appoint, the said our Well Beloved Brethren to be and compose the aforesaid Sublime Lodge of Perfection, approving, ratifying and confirming the Choice they have made unanimously, of our said Brethren Mordecai Myers, Sublime Grand Master; John E. Ruckel, Sublime Deputy Grand Master; William F. Steward, Sublime Grand Senior Warden; William T. Hunter, Sublime Grand Junior Warden; &c.: &c.: &c.:, with Power, Strength & Authority to them and their successors for ever to admit and Initiate Master Masons of the Blue Lodge &c.: &c.: &c.:, Nominate, Elect & Install their Officers, &c.: &c.: &c.:, And Generally Do all such Things as to Sublime Lodges of Perfection Do belong & in any ways appertain, Conforming Themselves to all the Rules, Statutes and Regulations for the Government of Sublime Lodges, &c.: &c.: &c.: which have or may be hereafter handed to them by the Supreme Tribunal of the Sovereign Princes of the Royal Secret, &c.: &c.: &c.:

Given under our hands and Seal of Our Council in the City of New York, State of New York, United States of America, the Sixteenth day of the 8th Month called Hesvan in the Year 5569, of the Restoration 2339, and of the Vulgar Æra the Sixth day of November, 1808.

A. SITCHER

M.: E.: R- K.:S.:

THOS. LOWNDS

M.: E.: R- & K.:S.:

JEREMIAH SHOTWELL

G.:O.: R- & K.:S.:

R. RIKER

T.:E.: R- & K.:S.:

DANIEL BEACH

G.:T.: R- & K.:S.:

By Order of the Council,

SAMPN. SIMSON, Gr. Secy.

R- & K.:S.:

(Seal)

This original warrant or charter is the patent of authority under which Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection is working today, and it is in a remarkable state of preservation considering the handling to which a lodge charter is necessarily exposed. The handwriting is that of Ill. John James Joseph Gourgas, and it is penned with patient care and precision, not the least detail of punctuation, abbreviation, or Masonic characteristic being slighted in any particular.

This document is believed to be the oldest purely Scottish Rite charter in existence today, issued with full knowledge of the Frederick Constitutions of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite. It is true a warrant was granted in 1802 for a Sublime Grand Lodge in Savannah, but that body has been dead these hundred years. The warrant of Ineffable Lodge of Perfection at Albany, bearing date of the 20th of December, 1767, was granted under the old system or Rite of Perfection, and was confirmed and continued in force by the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.

The size is nineteen by twenty-four inches and the material is parchment. It shows the stains and creases of a century of service, but the texture is as firm as the day the document was written, and the handwriting is as legible as

when it was placed in the zealous care of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection on the 6th of November, 1808.

In granting this warrant Concordia Crescimus Council of Princes of Jerusalem acted entirely within its powers and jurisdiction. At that time Princes of Jerusalem were vested with many privileges and prerogatives by virtue of their high rank. In the Grand Constitutions of 1786 it was declared that "The power of the Supreme Council does not interfere in any degree below the Seventeenth, or Knight of the East and West," and Councils of Princes of Jerusalem not only granted charters for and controlled Lodges of Perfection, but governed the Symbolic degrees of the Scottish Rite in those jurisdictions where no Grand Lodge was established.

The advertisement in the New York Gazette and General Advertiser was changed on Tuesday, 8th of November, 1808, to read as follows:

*Lux ex Tenebris*

HEALTH, STABILITY AND POWER

TO all whom it may concern, be it known, that a Grand Lodge of ineffable and sublime Masons has been duly constituted and established under the jurisdiction of the Grand Council of K. S. &c. &c. &c. of the state of New York

for the purpose of conferring the ineffable degrees of Masonry.

By order of the Sublime Grand Lodge,

M. MYERS, T. P.

A. R. 2339

S. RIKER, Jun., S. G. S.

17th Hesvan 5569

nov. 7-3t

This advertisement appeared in the issues of Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday of that week.

NOTIFICATION TO CHARLESTON SUPREME  
COUNCIL

Within a week a letter was addressed to the Supreme Council at Charleston in the following terms:

NEW YORK, 14th of November, 1808.

HEALTH, STABILITY AND POWER

*Most Respectable and Illustrious Brethren:*

It is with pleasure I inform you that I have, by request some of the most respectable citizens, Master Masons of the Blue Lodge, and many of them members of the Royal Arch Chapter established in this community, conferred on them the Sublime degrees of Masonry and established a Council of Princes of Jerusalem in this city on Thursday, the 13th day of Hesvan, 5569, answering to the 3d inst., which proceedings have been sanctioned by the T. Ill. John G. Tardy, K. H., Deputy Inspector General by full Patent and Power invested in him, which he has produced to our satisfaction, and is in possession of every requisite for

establishing the Council of K. H., &c—who, in company with our Illustrious Brethren John James Joseph Gourgas, Moses Levy Maduro Peixotto and John Baptist Desdoity, K. H. and P. of the R. S., attended our Convention on the 6th inst, when our Ill. Bro. John G. Tardy, acknowledged our proceedings legal, by granting dispensation under his hand and seal as Deputy Inspector General, authorizing our Council to put a Sublime Lodge in operation in this city under our jurisdiction, which proceedings were also confirmed to be legal by a Certificate of Approbation under the hands and seals of the Illustrious Brothers Gourgas, Peixotto and Desdoity, K. H. and P. of the R. S., at the foot of said Dispensation, by virtue of which power we are now established and congregated. I've transmitted you a list of the members composing our Council and Lodge, and from their respectability no doubt will be pleasing to your Supreme Council. As a Mason, I think we shall become one among the most respectable Sublime Councils and Lodges now in operation.

I commenced this business on the 4th of October, 1804, and have been regularly progressing until its present accomplishment, on which we immediately advertised in the daily papers, to which refer you. A Committee has been appointed by this Council, to address your Supreme body; they will transmit you our proceedings which are now in hand to forward for your inspection, and flatter myself, from their legality, you will give your assent and support to the infant institution in this metropolis, which will afford us much satisfaction. By request of the members, I am desired to inform you that we shall be happy in holding a brotherly correspondence, and when opportunity offers, be much gratified by a visit from any of your respec-

table Council, or their recommendation. Your approbation of our proceedings and brotherly reply to this as soon as convenient by post, will be deemed a favor conferred on Illustrious Brethren.

Your affectionate Brother,

ABM. JACOBS, K. S., &c.

To the Thrice Illustrious and Respectable Colonel JOHN MITCHELL, Grand Commander of the Thirty-third, Officers and Members composing the Supreme Council in the Grand East of Charleston, South Carolina.

#### THE FOUNDERS OF AURORA GRATA

Most of the founders of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection were Past Masters, and many of them trod even higher rounds of "the ladder which leads to fame in our mystic circle."

MORDECAI MYERS, first Master of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection, held many offices in the Grand Lodge of the State of New York. He was Deputy Grand Master from 1829 to 1835, and Grand Master of the Phillips Grand Lodge from 1852 to 1856, when he became an Honorary Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York. In the Grand Royal Arch Chapter he was Deputy Grand High Priest for three years and Grand High Priest in 1834.

He was born in 1776 in Newport, Rhode Island, but he resided principally in New York State,

where he rendered military service on the northern border throughout the War of 1812. A severe wound received in the Battle of Chrysler's Field, where he lost nearly a third of his command, caused his transference to the retired list in 1815. For six years he represented an influential constituency in the Legislature, and he served two terms as Mayor of Schenectady, where he died in 1871 at the age of ninety-four.

Major Myers was possessed of a clear mind and a strong will, and the fact that with all the hardships incident to the life of a soldier in the War of 1812, he lived to be nearly ninety-five years of age, is evidence that he had a robust constitution. Physically he was of very large proportions, and he had a clear and keen black eye, giving evidence of the strong intellectual power of the man.

On the 8th of November, 1808, Ill. Bro. Tardy raised Bros. Mordecai Myers, Daniel D. Thompkins, Richard Riker, Sampson Simson, and Abraham Jacobs to the Grade of Sovereign Prince of the Royal Secret, Thirty-second degree, and delivered to them patents as such. These patents also are in the handwriting of Ill. Bro. Gourgas, and they bear the same seals as the Aurora Grata Charter. The patent issued to Bro. Myers reads:

UNIVERSI TERRARUM ORBIS ARCHITECTONIS  
PER GLORIAM INGENTIS\*

DEUS MEUMQUE JUS

*Ordo ab Chao*

From the East of the Grand, of the most Puissant Council of the Most Valiant Princes & Sublime Masons of the Royal Secret &c. : &c. : &c. : Under the Celestial Canopy of the Zenith, which answers to 40 Degrees 23 Minutes North Latitude.

To our Illustrious & Most Valiant Knights & Princes of Free, Accepted & Perfect Masons of all Degrees, over the Surface of the Two Hemispheres, Greeting:

We, John Gabriel Tardy, P. : M. :; Grand Elect, Perfect & Sublime Mason; Knight of the East; Pce. of Jerm.; &c. : &c. : &c. :; Patriarch Noachite; Knight of the Sun; & of the White and Black Eagle; &c. : &c. : &c. :; Sovereign Pce. of the Royal Secret, Deputy Inspector General, & Grand Master over all Lodges, Chapters, Councils, Colleges & Grand Councils of the Superior Degrees of Ancient & Modern Masonry over the Surface of the Two Hemispheres, by Patent from the Grand Council of Princes of Masons at Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, One of the United States of America, &c. : &c. : &c. :; Under the Special Protection of the Most Puissant Princes and in their Place and Stead, Do Certify and Attest unto all Free & Valiant Princes of Free and Accepted Masons &c. : &c. : &c. : that our dear Brother Mordecai Myers of New York, aged Thirty-two, is known to be a P. : M. :; Grand Elect, Perfect & Sublime Mason; Knight of the East; Prince of Jerusalem; Knight of the Pelican or Rose- &c. : &c. : &c. :; Patriarch Noa-

\*See fac-simile in the Appendix.

chite; & Knight of the Sun; & That having with firmness & constancy sustained the Brightness of the Grand Luminary, given us the most Solid Proofs of his Fervency, Constancy and Zeal in the Support of the Royal Craft and of his Submission to the Supreme Tribunal of the Sovereign Princes of the Royal Secret; We have elevated and initiated him to the Sublime Degrees of Knight of the White and Black Eagle; & Sovn. Prince of the Royal Secret.

We therefore Pray All Respectable Brethren, Knights and Princes of Masonry to receive our dear Brother Mordecai Myers in his Respectable qualities and to entertain him favourably in every thing relative to them; Promising to have the same regard to those who shall present themselves to us, furnished with Proper and authentic Titles.

To which We, John Gabriel Tardy, have hereunto subscribed our Name and affixed our Seal at arms, as also the Grand Seal of Princes of Masons in this Place where the Greatest Treasures are deposited, the Beholding of which fills us with Comforts, Joy & acknowledgment of all that is Great and Good, Near the B.:B.: and C.:C.:, at New York, State of New York, this Eighteenth day of the Eighth Month called Hesvan of the Year 5569, of the Restoration 2339 & of the Vulgar Æra the Eighth day of November, 1808.

J. G. TARDY

(Seal)

Dy. Gr. Insp. Gal.

(Seal)

SAMPSON SIMSON, Past Master of Clinton Lodge No. 143,\* was elected and installed Grand Treasurer of the Grand Lodge in 1811 and served

\* United with St. John's No. 1 in 1834.

for three years. He was defeated for that office in 1814 by Bro. John W. Mulligan, but in June of the succeeding year the same brethren were again put in nomination and Bro. Simson was elected. Upon the formation of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction in 1813 he became Lieutenant Grand Commander, and upon the death of Most Ill. Daniel D. Tompkins in 1825 became the second Sovereign Grand Commander, an office which he held until 1832, when he was succeeded by Ill. John James Joseph Gourgas. His death occurred in New York in January, 1857, in his seventy-seventh year.

RICHARD RIKER was the first District Attorney of New York, serving as such from 1801 to 1814 inclusive, with the exception of a brief period. The office at that time included the counties of New York, Kings, Suffolk, Richmond, and Westchester. He was Recorder of the city of New York in 1815–1819, 1821–1823 and 1824–1838, and his portrait as such hangs in the Criminal Court Building, New York.

#### THE SUBLIME GRAND CONSISTORY

On the 24th of November, 1808, officers were elected in the Sublime Grand Consistory of

Sovereign Princes of the Royal Secret which had been established in the city of New York on the 6th of August, 1806, and certificates of their election and appointment to office were delivered to them. These certificates are of peculiar historical interest for the reason that they are among the earliest existing original documents in which occur the words "Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the Thirty-third Degree."

The text of the certificate issued to Bro. Mordecai Myers is as follows:

UNIVERSI TERRARUM ORBIS ARCHITECTONIS  
PER GLORIAM INGENTIS\*

DEUS MEUMQUE JUS

*Ordo ab Chao*

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From the East of the Grand, of the Most Puissant Council of the Most Valiant Princes & Sublime Masons of the Royal Secret, &c. &c. &c. Under the Celestial Canopy of the Zenith, which answers to 40 D. 23 M. N. L.

To our Illustrious, Most Valiant & Sublime Princes of the Royal Secret, Knights of K-H., Illustrious Princes and Knights, Grand, Ineffable & Sublime, Free & Accepted Masons of all Degrees, Ancient & Modern over the Surface of the Two Hemispheres.

\* See fac-simile in the Appendix.

To all Those to Whom these Letters shall come:

We the Sublime Grand Consistory of Sovereign Princes of the Royal Secret of the 30th.°, 31st.° & 32d.° Degrees, duly and legally Established at and in the City and State of New York, one of the United States of America

SEND GREETING

Know Ye, That We, the said Sublime Grand Consistory &c.° &c.° &c.°. By and in Virtue of our Rights and Prerogatives, as also of the Powers vested in Us, Have this day at High Meridian unanimously Nominated, Elected and Appointed Our Worthy and Well Beloved Brother Mordecai Myers to be Our Grand Introducator, in our said Sublime Grand Consistory For and During the Space of Three Years, Which office he having been pleased to accept of, We have installed him with all Honors and according to our Ancient Usages, & Do hereby Approve, Ratify and Confirm Whatever our said Illustrious Brother may Do, which belong or in any ways appertain to his above Specified Eminent Situation amongst Us, conformable however to all the Rules, Statutes & Regulations of all the Different Degrees, which have or may be enacted hereafter, By the Supreme Tribunal of Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the 33d Degree.

Given under our Hands & Grand Seals of Princes of Masons, in the Place where the Greatest Treasures are deposited, the Beholding of which fills us with comforts, Joy and Acknowledgment of all that is Great and Good, Near the B.°B.° and C.°C.° at Our Grand Council Chamber, in the City and State of New York, this Fourth day of the Ninth month called Kislev of the Year 5569, of the

Restoration 2339 and of the Vulgar Æra this 24th day of November, 1808.

R. RIKER

S.·P.·R.·S.· & G.·W.·

J. G. TARDY

Depty. Insp. Gal.  
Sov. of Sov.

JOHN B. DESDOITY, Lt. Com.

R-✠ K.·H.·S.·P.·R.·S.·

Depty. Ins. Gal. &c. &c. &c.

SAMPN. SIMSON

K.·H.·S.·P.·R.·S.·  
& G.·C.· OF G.·

MOS. L. MAD. PEIXOTTO

Depty. Ins. Gal. Gr. Treasurer

AB. JACOBS

R-✠ K.·H.·

S.·P.·R.·S.· GD. AT.

By Order of the Subn. Gd. Consy.

J. J. J. GOURGAS,

Gd. Secy., &c. &c. &c. R.·✠

Eco. K-H, S.·P.·R.·S.· (Seal)

Depty. Insp. Gal. &c. &c. &c.

(Seal)

On the 2d of April, 1809, the Grand Consistory made endorsement on the back of the Lodge of Perfection warrant in the following terms:

UNIVERSI TERRARUM ORBIS ARCHITECTONIS  
PER GLORIAM INGENTIS

DEUS MEUMQUE JUS

*Ordo ab Chao*

We the Sublime Grand Consistory of Sovereign Princes of the Royal Secret of the 30th., 31st. & 32d. Degrees duly & legally established at and in the City and State of New York, one of the United States of America

Do hereby Approve, Ratify and confirm in its full force, the Warrant of Constitutions, on the other side granted on

the Sixteenth day of the Eighth month called Hesvan of the Year 5569 By our Most Illustrious Council of Princes of Jerusalem, by the Distinct name Concordia Crescimus No.: One; To the Lodge of Grand Elect, Perfect & Sublime Masons, by the Distinct Name of AURORA GRATA, No.: ONE, held in this City of New York

In Testimony Whereof, We have delivered the Present under our Hands and Grand Seals of Princes of Masons in the Place where the Greatest Treasures are deposited, the contemplation of which fills us with Comfort, Joy and Acknowledgment of all that is Great and Good, Near the B.:B.: and C.:C.: at our Grand Council Chamber in the City and State of New York, this Sixteenth day of the first Month called Nisan of the Year 5570, of the Restoration 2340 & of the Vulgar Æra the second day of April, 1809.

R. RIKER

S.:P.:R.:S.:&G.:W.:.

K.:H.:S.:P.:R.:S.:  
&G.:C.:OFG.:.

J. G. TARDY

Depy. Insp. Gal., Sov. of Sov.

MOS. L. MAD. PEIXOTTO

Dy. Insp. Genl., G.:Treas.:.

SAMPN. SIMSON

M. MYERS

K.:H.:S.:P.:R.:S.: & G.:I.:.

By order of the Subn. Gd. Consy.

J. J. J. GOURGAS

AB. JACOBS

R.:K-H.:S.:P.:R.:S.: Gd. At.

Gd. Secy., &c.:&c.:&c.:.

THOMAS LOWNDS, Engr.

R.:K-H.:S.:P.:R.:S.:.

(Seal)

(Seal)

JOEL HART

K.:H.:S.:P.:R.:S.:G.:H.:.

THE SUPREME COUNCIL, N. M. J.

The New York brethren were not without their trials from the start. In 1806 Joseph Cerneau

**ENDORSEMENTS ON CHARTER**  
**AURORA GRATA LODGE OF PERFECTION**

Universi Terrarum orbis Archiducatus per Hieronymum Argentum

Deus Imperator Augustus

Ordo 1<sup>us</sup> Chao

We the Emperor Augustus, in the name of the Holy Roman Empire, do hereby appoint and confirm in its full power...

...of the Holy Roman Empire, do hereby appoint and confirm in its full power...

...of the Holy Roman Empire, do hereby appoint and confirm in its full power...

Handwritten signatures and notes at the bottom of the page.





received a patent from Mathieu Dupotet creating him a Deputy Grand Inspector of the Rite of Heredom for the northern part of the Island of Cuba, with power to initiate Masons in the degrees of the Rite of Heredom from the Fourth to the Twenty-fourth, provided they were officers of a lodge, and upon one only each year. A few months later Cerneau arrived in New York, and finding much ignorance on the part of Masons generally as to the Rite of Heredom he disregarded the limitation in his patent and induced a large number of Masons to receive at his hands degrees which he had no authority to confer. In 1807 he issued a warrant for a Consistory in New York, which was not organized however until late in 1808. This was a Consistory of the Rite of Heredom of Twenty-five degrees. In a document issued by this body on the 5th of May, 1812, the title used is "Grand Consistory for the United States of America, Territories and dependencies, of Supreme Chiefs of Exalted Masonry, according to the Ancient Constitutional Rite of Heredom." There is nothing to show that up to this time this body claimed to be anything other than its title pretends—a Grand Consistory of the Rite of Heredom. A controversy arose between the Grand Consistory of the Rite of Heredom which claimed jurisdiction over Twenty-five degrees,

and the Sublime Grand Consistory of the Thirtieth, Thirty-first and Thirty-second degrees, acknowledging allegiance to the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third degree of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite at Charleston, and in 1813 Cerneau created his "Supreme Council of Grand Inspectors General of the Thirty-third Degree" and soon adopted the scale of degrees of the Scottish Rite. This "Supreme Council" had only a nominal existence, for it was declared in their published documents that "the sole power of granting constitutional charters for Masonic institutions within the United States of America, their territories and dependencies, from the Secret Master, Fourth Degree, to that of Grand Inspector General, Thirty-third, exists only with the Sovereign Grand Consistory of the Supreme Chiefs of Exalted Masonry." The document from which this is quoted bears the seal of his "M. P. Sov. Gr. Consistory," and the word Scottish is inserted in the title so as to read "the Ancient Constitutional Scottish Rite of Heredom."

In a circular dated the 28th of February, 1814, and issued over the signatures of seven members of the bodies organized by Cerneau, it was asserted that the Council of Princes of Jerusalem Concordia Crescimus and Aurora Grata Lodge

of Perfection were irregular, and that "some individuals who had assisted in these irregular proceedings, convinced of their error, applied for and received the degrees depending on this Consistory." The "some individuals" consisted of Thomas Lownds, who had been installed Grand Master of the Lodge of Perfection and who violated his obligation by going over to the Cerneau camp and taking with him the charter of the Lodge. His name appears promptly thereafter as "Grand Inspector of the Thirty-third degree" among the "Supreme Chiefs of Exalted Masonry," and there are those who surmise that this rank among them was the price paid for broken faith. This episode is treated in the following words in a document issued by the Supreme Council at Charleston under date of the 5th of September, 1814: "Those acts of some 'individuals' as alluded to in the elaborate pamphlet, when investigated, will be found to be the proceedings of one individual, who may be noted by his having repaid kindness by going over to Mr. Cerneau's Grand Society, and refusing afterwards to give up and return the warrant then in his possession as Grand Master of the Sublime Grand Lodge of Perfection the Aurora Grata." Opposite the name of Thomas Lownds in the register kept by Ill. John James Joseph Gourgas

is the word Traitor in Bro. Gourgás's own handwriting.

Owing to these irregularities and the controversies to which they gave rise Ill. Emanuel de la Motta, Treasurer-General H. E. of the Charleston Supreme Council, deemed it advisable to establish the second Supreme Council for the United States as provided by the Constitutions of 1786 of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite. On the 5th of August, 1813, he met in New York Ill. Bros. Sampson Simson and John James Joseph Gourgás, informed them of his determination to establish another Supreme Council in conformity to the Frederick Constitutions, and invited them to assist in that all-important duty. De la Motta made them acquainted with the Thirty-third degree and proclaimed them as lawful Most Puissant Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite. They three then formed themselves into a provisional Supreme Council of the Thirty-third degree, as follows:

EMANUEL DE LA MOTTA, M. Puis. Sov. Gr. Commander.  
SAMPSON SIMSON, M. Ill. Ins. Lieut. Gr. Commander.  
JOHN JAMES JOSEPH GOURGAS, M. Ill. Gr. Secretary-  
General H. E.

They then introduced separately, one after

the other, the following Most Illustrious Brethren:

DANIEL D. TOMPKINS, Rose Croix, K-H., S. P. R. S.  
RICHARD RIKER, Rose Croix, K-H., S. P. R. S.  
JOHN GABRIEL TARDY, Deputy Gr. Inspector General.  
MOSES L. M. PEIXOTTO, Deputy Gr. Inspector General.

When they had severally and singly gone through the regular order and form of reception they were formally acknowledged and proclaimed lawful Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the Thirty-third degree.

By virtue of priority Ill. Bros. Simson and Gourgas were privileged to fill the first two offices of the Supreme Council, but they waived their right and prerogative and the first officers of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States were selected as follows:

DANIEL D. TOMPKINS, M. Ill. Sov. Gr. Commander.  
SAMPSON SIMSON, M. Ill. Inspector Lieut. Gr. Commander.  
JOHN G. TARDY, M. Ill. Gr. Treasurer-General H. E.  
JOHN JAMES JOSEPH GOURGAS, M. Ill. Gr. Secretary-General H. E.  
RICHARD RIKER, Ill. Gr. Master of Ceremonies.  
MOSES L. M. PEIXOTTO, Ill. Captain of the Guard.

Ill. Bro. De la Motta then proclaimed them as "lawfully formed, organized and established at the Grand East of the City of New York, State of New York, and the only Grand and Supreme Council of the Most Puissant Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the Thirty-third degree which may legally and constitutionally exist for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States of North America; and for them as such and their legal successors ever to enjoy in future all and every their sovereign powers, rights and prerogatives lawfully pertaining to them as Supreme Chiefs of Ancient and Modern Free and Accepted Masonry, over the surface of the two hemispheres, conformably to the Grand Constitutions, etc."

On September 21st of the same year, Ill. Bro. De la Motta published another proclamation, this one referring specifically to the establishment of Concordia Crescimus Council of Princes of Jerusalem and Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection:

*To all to whom these letters shall come:*

**UNION, CONTENTMENT, WISDOM**

Know ye, That we, the undersigned Emanuel de la Motta, K-H, Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret, Sovereign Grand Inspector-General of the Thirty-third degree, Illustrious Treasurer-General of the Holy Empire, in the

United States of America, by and in virtue of our high powers, rights and prerogatives, also under the immediate and special protection of the aforesaid Grand and Supreme Council of the Most Puissant Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the Thirty-third degree, sitting at Charleston, S. C., and in their place and stead: Having been applied to by our most Illustrious and well-beloved Brethren, John James Joseph Gourgas, John Gabriel Tardy, Moses Levy Maduro Peixotto, merchants, Deputy Inspectors General and Grand Masters (under the old system of 1762); His Excellency Daniel D. Tompkins, Governor of the State of New York, Richard Riker and Sampson Simson, Counsellors at Law, all of them Masters and Past Masters of Symbolic Lodges, etc., etc., etc., Royal Arch Masons, Grand Elect, Perfect and Sublime Masons, etc., etc., etc., Princes of Jerusalem, etc., etc., etc., Sovereign Princes of R-~~X~~ of H-R-D-M, etc., etc., etc., to examine and investigate particular:

*First*, Their patents, powers and other documents by means of which the Thrice Illustrious Brethren John Gabriel Tardy, John B. Desdoity, John James Joseph Gourgas, Pierre Adrien Du Peyrot and Lewis De Saulles, R-~~X~~, K-H, S. P. R. S., Inspectors, etc., etc., etc., on the 6th day of August, 1806, did first form and establish in this City of New York a sublime Grand Consistory of Sublime Princes of the Royal Secret, 30th, 31st and 32d degrees;

*Secondly*, That on the 3d day of November, 5808, the Grand Council of the Most Excellent and Most Valorous Princes of Jerusalem was lawfully opened in the City of New York by and in the presence of the Thrice Puissant and Most Illustrious Brethren John G. Tardy, John B. Desdoity, John James Joseph Gourgas, Moses Levy

Maduro Peixotto, R-~~X~~, S. P. R. S., Deputy Inspectors General K-H, aided and assisted by nine Most Excellent Princes of Jerusalem;

*Thirdly*, That on the 6th day of November, 5808, a warrant of constitution passed the seal of the aforesaid Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem for the establishment in this City of a Sublime Grand Lodge of Grand Elect, Perfect and Sublime Masons under the distinct appellation of Aurora Grata;

*Fourthly*, The several communications relative thereto which at different times had been addressed by them to the Grand and Supreme Council of the Most Puissant Sovereigns, Grand Inspectors General of the Thirty-third degree at Charleston, S. C.;

*Fifthly and finally*, Their proceedings during the very unpleasant and delicate circumstances which had paralyzed them, as it were, from their commencement and prevented them through prudence, caution and the good of the illustrious Order in general from getting into full operation until the period at which they might with every propriety make good and ensure their claim, sanctioned by lawful authority;

In consequence whereof I do hereby most solemnly declare that having found the whole of their patents, powers and other documents relative thereto perfectly lawful, their conduct and proceedings in every point of view regular and praiseworthy, and having been waited upon by a grand deputation, I, the undersigned, in my aforesaid capacity, attended a meeting of their Sublime Grand Consistory at which, after a minute investigation and full inspection of all things whatever relative thereto, being independent of all other things, fully convinced that

they were the oldest possessors and real founders of the Superior Degree of Masonry at this Grand East of New York, I signed their registers, patents and all other papers and documents thereto belonging, on the 5th day of August, 1813.

Interest in the new bodies was limited in extent, for it was intended that the higher degrees of the Scottish Rite should be conferred only on the zealous Mason and student capable of appreciating the higher arcana unfolded in them. In 1822 Giles Fonda Yates became interested in Ineffable Lodge of Perfection and the Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem founded at Albany in 1767, and established four other Lodges of Perfection in neighboring towns. In 1824 a Consistory was organized at Albany, and bodies of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite were established at Boston in the same year. The following year Joseph McCosh, a special deputy of the Southern Supreme Council, conferred the Thirty-third degree upon Yates, who in 1828 took the oath of fealty to and became a member of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.

“THE RUTHLESS HAND OF IGNORANCE”

In 1826 a book entitled *Illustrations of Freemasonry* was printed at Batavia, New York, and

one William Morgan was credited with its authorship. A short time afterward Morgan disappeared, and the Fraternity was charged with his murder. The disappearance of Morgan was eagerly and successfully seized upon by a number of local politicians who sought preferment by raising a hue and cry against Masonry. From western New York State the anti-Masonic excitement spread until it became a mighty political wave, wreaking destruction on the Order on every hand. No less than a hundred and forty anti-Masonic newspapers sprang up throughout the country, and the hysteria seized upon hundreds of thousands of men on every level of political, social, and commercial life. Among the most violent defamers of the Craft were those who withdrew from their lodges, and for political advancement and popular applause reviled their Masonic brethren and joined rabidly in the cry against the institution. Cadwallader D. Colden, Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge for five years, and who owed much of his professional and political success to members of the Fraternity, threw himself into the arena and denounced the institution in the severest terms; but he failed to reach the goal of his ambition—the office of Governor of the State. The following figures tell the extent of the havoc: In 1826

there were about five-hundred lodges on the roll of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York; in 1846 there were but sixty-five. In 1835 only forty-nine lodges were represented in Grand Lodge. In Vermont every lodge either surrendered its charter or became dormant.

#### EMERGING FROM THE ECLIPSE

Sublime Freemasonry did not escape the fury, for Masons professing the high degrees were even more to be persecuted than members of Symbolic lodges only. As early as 1841, however, Ill. Bros. Gourgas and Yates conferred together and opened correspondence with others of the Rite with a view to resuming active work. Gourgas had become Sovereign Grand Commander and Yates Lieutenant Grand Commander under the law of succession of the Scottish Rite, and in 1844 they crowned four Sovereign Grand Inspectors General and proclaimed them members of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. Other members were added in 1845, charters were granted for new bodies and dormant lodges were revived.

At the meeting of the Supreme Council held the 4th of September, 1851, Ill. Bro. Gourgas resigned as Grand Commander and was succeeded

by Yates. The following day Yates resigned the office of Grand Commander and Edward A. Raymond was installed as his successor.

In April, 1852, the Supreme Council published the following decree :

Whereas by a resolution heretofore adopted Grand Councils of Princes of Jerusalem were required to inspect and watch over Lodges of Perfection within their respective districts; and whereas since the adoption of such regulation this Supreme Council has decreed the appointment of District Deputies who are charged with the performance of like duties, therefore,

Decreed that the aforesaid regulation be and the same is hereby rescinded.

Thereafter warrants for subordinate bodies of whatever degree have emanated from the Supreme Council. This has permitted a closer regulation of the subordinate bodies for the general good of the Rite, has allowed the keeping of statistical and other records, and the unification of rituals and work.

#### PROGRESS; DISSENSION; HARMONY

In 1848 Bro. Yates and four others received from the Supreme Council a warrant for a Lodge of Perfection, a Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem, and a Chapter of Rose Croix in New

York City. These bodies brought together many nonaffiliated Scottish Rite Masons of the vicinity, and they were so successful in their work that several brothers, headed by M. W. William H. Milnor, Grand Master of Masons in the State of New York, petitioned and received a warrant for another Lodge of Perfection and Council of Princes of Jerusalem in 1852. Up to this time the Supreme Council was most harmonious and the Rite was slowly but satisfactorily extending; but when the future seemed most rosy a controversy grew out of Grand Commander Raymond's contention that all the powers of Frederick were vested in him as Grand Commander, while other members maintained that they rested in the Supreme Council as a body. In August, 1860, the break came. A discussion arose in the Council, when Raymond declared "there are unmistakable indications of insubordination, and a manifest disposition on the part of certain members to disregard their constitutional obligations and usurp the power and authority of the Sovereign Grand Commander," and thereupon closed the Supreme Council. Several of the Inspectors General who attended the session felt that the Sovereign Grand Commander had acted arbitrarily, and upon the advice of Gourgas reopened the Supreme Council and proceeded

with the business. Raymond disregarded whatever action was taken after he had closed the Council, and both parties published Proceedings for 1860.

Both of these factions continued to confer degrees and operate as a Supreme Council. Raymond remained at the head of his followers, and in 1862 Killian H. Van Rensselaer was elected Grand Commander of the other body, each using the name "Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction." At a session of the Raymond body held on the 15th of December, 1860, the Thirty-third degree was conferred upon Charles T. McClenachan of New York, a name most intimately associated with Scottish Rite Masonry thereafter, and with the Aurora Grata bodies in particular.

In spite of the controversies between these contending bodies they waxed strong and had large accessions of distinguished and prominent Masons. At this time there were three Supreme Councils claiming jurisdiction over the Northern part of the United States—the two factions of the Supreme Council over which Ill. John James Joseph Gourgas had served as Sovereign Grand Commander, and a body styled the "Supreme Council, etc., for the United States of North America, its Territories and Dependencies," and

claiming descent from Joseph Cerneau. This body, presided over by Edmund B. Hays, made overtures to the Raymond body for a union of the two as early as April, 1862, and committees were appointed by each for the purpose of effecting a consolidation. In January, 1863, both bodies gave their committees full power to act, and on the 7th of February of the same year articles of union were adopted consolidating the two Councils. On April 15th following Hays was agreed upon as Sovereign Grand Commander and proceeded to install the officers. Edward A. Raymond became Associate Sovereign Grand Commander, and Simon W. Robinson, who had remained with Raymond at the time of the disruption of the Northern Supreme Council, became First Lieutenant-Commander. In recent years the claim has been made (for a purpose) that the Raymond body was merged into and healed by the Hays body. This is disproved by the articles of union, which explicitly state that the two Supreme Councils were "consolidated upon terms honorable and just alike to all parties interested therein," and by the further facts that all members of the old bodies were required to take the oath of fealty to the united Council, and that subordinate bodies were required to take out new charters. In addition to this the

fact that the officers were installed again into offices already held by them under the *ad vitam* tenure most effectually disposes of this claim.

In his address to his Supreme Council in 1862, Van Rensselaer referred to the adhesion of the New York bodies to the Raymond Council and stated that upon consultation with many worthy brethren of that city he had decided to act upon an application for warrants for bodies in New York, and in May of that year had issued to a number of brethren, among whom were two Past Grand Masters of Masons in the State (William H. Milnor and Joseph D. Evans) a dispensation to open a Consistory in New York city. At the same session the Supreme Council ordered that dispensations be granted to the members of the new Consistory empowering them to organize a Grand Lodge of Perfection, a Council of Princes of Jerusalem, and a Chapter of Rose Croix. The following year Joseph D. Evans was crowned Sovereign Grand Inspector General, Thirty-third degree, and elected an active member of the Van Rensselaer Supreme Council. Upon the application of Joseph D. Evans, 33°, Van Rensselaer granted to Bros. William J. Munn, William A. Evans, Thomas Bishop, Charles Hodges, William T. Colbron, and Joseph D. Evans, 33°, a dispensation under date of the 19th of May, 1866, to

open and hold a Lodge of Perfection in the city of Brooklyn under the name of Lily Grand Lodge of Perfection; and upon application of the same brothers he granted a dispensation for a Council of Princes of Jerusalem in Brooklyn to be known as Rabboni Council of Princes of Jerusalem. These bodies were organized on the 15th of June of the same year.





## AURORA GRATA REVIVED



**I**N the meantime Ill. Charles T. McClenachan, 33°, Grand Master-General of Ceremonies of the Hayes-Raymond Council, had applied to Ill. Orrin Welch, 33°, Deputy for the State of New York, for authority to confer the degrees of the Rite upon sixteen Master Masons of Brooklyn and revive Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection, whose charter was now in the possession of Ill. Daniel Sickels, 33°. A dispensation to reopen Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection and confer degrees was granted by the Deputy on the 31st of March, 1866. Dispensations quickly followed for a Council of Princes of Jerusalem, a Chapter of Rose Croix, and a Consistory, all bearing the name Aurora Grata. On the 19th of April, 1866, Aurora Grata Council of Princes of Jeru-

saalem and Chapter of Rose Croix were convened at the rooms of Montauk Lodge, 13 Court street, and regularly opened by Ill. Charles T. McClenachan, 33°, with the assistance of Bros. Daniel Sickels, 33°, Ebenezer Shaw, 33°, Charles W. Willets, 33°, William T. Anderson, 32°, George W. Stebbins, 32°, Frederick B. Swift, 32°, and William Draper, 32°. The following thirteen Grand Elect Masons, members of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection, were then introduced and received the Fifteenth and Sixteenth degrees by communication: John H. Rhodes, Edward H. Craige, William H. Wallace, L. Horatio Biglow, Colin Lightbody, Jr., James Armstrong, John Ferguson, John N. Wyckoff, Jr., William M. Little, Edwin Gates, C. H. Pelletreau, Jr., H. S. Archer, James Kain, John T. Ellis, and John H. Wood. Ill. Bro. McClenachan delivered to them the dispensation for the formation of the Council of Princes of Jerusalem, and officers were named for the ensuing year. The Council was then closed and a Chapter of Rose Croix duly opened. The Princes of Jerusalem just created were introduced, received the Seventeenth and Eighteenth degrees by communication, and the dispensation for the establishment of Aurora Grata Chapter of Rose Croix was placed in their hands by Ill. Bro. McClenachan. Five days later, 22d of

April, the Chapter of Rose Croix was convened at the same place and officers were elected as follows:

WILLIAM T. ANDERSON, M. W. P. M.  
R. C. GURNEY, M. E. P. K. S. W.  
WILLIAM H. WALLACE, M. E. P. K. J. W.  
JOHN W. SIMONS, 33°, R. P. K. G. O.  
JOHN N. WYCKOFF, JR., R. P. K. G. S.  
C. H. PELLETREAU, JR., R. P. K. G. T.

By virtue of the dispensation he held Ill. Bro. McClenachan convened a Consistory of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite at the Montauk lodge rooms on the 12th of May, assisted by the same illustrious brethren who had aided him in the establishment of the Council of Princes of Jerusalem and the Chapter of Rose Croix. The degrees from the Nineteenth to the Thirty-second inclusive were then conferred by communication upon Bros. John H. Rhodes, Edward H. Craige, William H. Wallace, L. Horatio Biglow, John N. Wyckoff, Jr., William M. Little, Edwin Gates, C. H. Pelletreau, Jr., Colin Lightbody, Jr., James Armstrong, John Ferguson, H. S. Archer, and John T. Ellis. Bro. McClenachan delivered to them the dispensation for a Consistory, officers were named and the Consistory closed.

Ten days later, Tuesday the 22d of May, the

Council of Princes was again opened and officers elected for the ensuing year as follows :

EDWIN GATES, M. E. S. P. G. M.  
 WILLIAM M. LITTLE, G. H. P. S. D.  
 JAMES KAIN, M. E. S. G. W.  
 JOHN T. ELLIS, M. E. J. G. W.  
 JOHN N. WYCKOFF, JR., Gr. Secy.  
 C. H. PELLETREAU, JR., Gr. Treas.

The Consistory was then opened by Bro. McClenachan and officers elected, with the following result :

JOHN H. RHODES, Commander-in-Chief.  
 L. HORATIO BIGLOW, First Lieut.-Commander.  
 EDWIN GATES, Second Lieut.-Commander.  
 JOHN W. SIMONS, 33°, Grand Orator.  
 JOHN N. WYCKOFF, JR., Grand Secretary.  
 C. H. PELLETREAU, JR., Grand Treasurer.  
 DANIEL SICKELS, 33°, Grand Hospitaler.

#### CHARLES W. WILLETS

The name of Ill. Charles W. Willets, 33°, will be noted among the brethren into whose hands these dispensations were placed. Willets was a restive soul and had a varied Masonic career. He was a member of Benevolent Lodge No. 142 under whose warrant a number of brethren who

had been disciplined by the Grand Lodge in 1837 formed a union in September of that year under the name of St. John's Grand Lodge of the State of New York. This body was promptly declared clandestine, but for thirteen years it maintained an active existence, until its union with the Grand Lodge of the State of New York in December, 1850. On this occasion, Charles W. Willets, now Master of Benevolent Lodge No. 1, under the jurisdiction of St. John's Grand Lodge, acted as special aid. But peace and harmony were not to prevail long. The times seemed out of joint Masonically: contumacy to the edicts of the Grand Lodge was common, obligations were not revered, and a sense of Masonic fraternity and honor seemed to be quite wanting. Three years later, 1853, Henry C. Atwood became displeased with the election of Reuben H. Walworth as Grand Master and gave notice of his withdrawal from the Grand Lodge, calling upon the lodges that formerly composed the St. John's Grand Lodge to follow him. In September of this year Atwood, Willets and a number of others were again expelled by the Grand Lodge of the State of New York. This second St. John's Grand Lodge continued in existence until 1859. Willets became Grand Secretary, but this body was not destined to become so formidable nor survive

so long as its predecessor. Early in June, 1859, John W. Simons presented the petitions of Bros. Willets and Daniel Sickels for restoration in the Grand Lodge of the State of New York, and they were restored to their former rights. The organization disbanded, their lodges were united with those of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York, and their members were remade in their separate lodges. Ill. Bro. Willets died on the 10th of March, 1873.

#### WORK BEGINS AGAIN

Immediately after the election and installation of officers a committee was appointed to ascertain what paraphernalia, etc., would be required for the proper conferring of the degrees in the new bodies. A lump initiation fee of thirty-five dollars was fixed upon for the four bodies of the Rite now working in Brooklyn and the annual dues were fixed at nine dollars, of which the Lodge of Perfection was to be credited with four dollars, the Council of Princes and the Chapter of Rose Croix two dollars each, and the Consistory one dollar, all moneys to be collected and disbursed by the Consistory. It was further provided that all properties needed for any of the four bodies should be acquired by the Consistory,

and that the Consistory should engage a meeting place.

In March, 1867, the new bodies were consecrated and dedicated, and at the same meeting Commander-in-Chief John H. Rhodes tendered his resignation. Upon taking a vote for a new officer in his stead all the ballots except three bore the name of the former Commander-in-Chief; but he insisted upon withdrawing, and Ill. Charles W. Willets, 33°, was elected the second Commander-in-Chief of Aurora Grata Consistory.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MYSTIC SHRINE

On Sunday the 21st of April, 1867, the Lodge of Perfection held a special meeting at the Metropolitan Hotel at two o'clock in the afternoon for the purpose of conferring the Ineffable degrees by communication upon Bro. William J. Florence who was "about to depart for Europe," as the minutes say. There were present Ill. Bro. McClenachan and one other member of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, two from the Southern, and a number of members of Aurora Grata. The degrees of the Council, Chapter, and Consistory were conferred upon Bro. Florence before his departure.

This was the trip made by him to the Old World preceding the establishment of the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine in the United States. Bro. Florence brought back monitorial, historical, and explanatory manuscripts and communicated the secrets of the Order to Dr. Walter M. Fleming of Aurora Grata Consistory, who was empowered to introduce and establish the Order in America. It was determined to confer the Order only on Freemasons, and on the 16th of June, 1871, four Knights Templar and seven members of Aurora Grata Consistory, Thirty-second degree, were made acquainted with the secrets of the Order by Dr. Fleming and Bro. Florence. It was decided to engage in the establishment of the Order and on the 26th of September, 1872, the organization was effected and officers elected. Nine of the thirteen founders of the Mystic Shrine in the United States were members of the Aurora Grata bodies.

#### REMOVAL TO FULTON STREET

In December, 1867, came the first rejection—of a Master Mason giving his occupation as “laborer” and his address as the Fifth Avenue hotel. After a prolonged investigation the com-

mittee reported, "we do not think him a suitable candidate."

It was now decided to move from the meeting place in Court street, and a committee was authorized to engage rooms over the Dime Savings Bank, 355 Fulton street, at an annual rental of six hundred and fifty dollars. The cost of fitting up exceeded thirty-nine hundred dollars, of which the sum of twenty-four hundred dollars was made up by loans from the brethren as follows: Bros. Willets, Armstrong, Rhodes, Sickels, Anderson, Wyckoff, Lightbody, Wallace, Atkinson, and Little contributed two hundred dollars each; Bros. King, Biglow, Gates, and Hopper one hundred dollars each; and Bro. Peck fifty dollars. After making up the balance the total amount remaining in the treasury of the Consistory—which meant all four bodies—was but seventy dollars and thirty cents. The members were summoned by letter and by advertisement in the Brooklyn daily papers to meet at the new rooms for the first time on the 6th of November, 1867. No candidates were advanced, but a new secretary, Bro. E. O. Burling, was elected in place of Bro. John N. Wyckoff, Jr., who had not been quite so regular in his attendance as it is thought a secretary should be. Bro. Burling served for two years, and never were Masonic

minute books kept in a more elaborate style. The pages of his books are a constant reminder of engrossed resolutions. Purple, red, black, and gold were used in combination with fancy lettering, freehand flourishes and ornamentation to an extent which must have required a great deal of his time. He was not the ideal secretary, however, for after two years of service his accounts were found to be in such confusion that a special committee on Membership and Disputed Dues was appointed to straighten them out. Ill. Bro. Daniel Sickels, 33°, chairman of this committee, offered a resolution to the effect that "inasmuch as the records are acknowledged to be incomplete for a large portion of the past three years, each member's statement of his payment and active position should be accepted, and the proper balance and entries made, to continue therefrom in due form."

#### THE UNION OF 'SIXTY-SEVEN

On the 17th of May, 1867, the two rival Supreme Councils for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction settled upon terms of consolidation, each unanimously agreeing to give up its separate existence and to become constituent parts of the new Council known as the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of

the United States. Thus were amicable relations established between these two grand bodies and, at the same time, between the Aurora Grata bodies and Lily Lodge of Perfection and Rabboni Council of Princes of Jerusalem established in Brooklyn by the Van Rensselaer Supreme Council. In September four members of Rabboni Council of Princes were received into Aurora Grata Chapter of Rose Croix, among them being Henry T. Bragg, who became a most valuable member to the Aurora Grata bodies during the next few years. The Consistorial grades were conferred upon these brethren in Aurora Grata Consistory the next month, and Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection tendered to Lily Lodge of Perfection and Rabboni Council of Princes the free use of their rooms until those bodies could obtain suitable quarters for themselves. The outcome was that in February, 1869, Ill. Joseph D. Evans, 33°, and three others were authorized to petition Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection and Council of Princes for the affiliation of their members with the Aurora Grata bodies, and an arrangement was made by which ten of the total membership of twenty-three were affiliated with Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection. Rabboni Council of Princes transferred to Aurora Grata Council all of its properties, and Lily

Lodge of Perfection transferred to Aurora Grata Chapter of Rose Croix all of its properties for the initiation of six members into the Chapter without fee. An exception was made in the person of Bro. Thomas B. Tilton, it being agreed that he should serve one year as organist of the Aurora Grata bodies in lieu of payment of initiation fee in the Rose Croix Chapter.

The large and exquisitely carved Ark of the Covenant now used by us is one of the properties acquired by Aurora Grata by this consolidation.

#### JOSEPH D. EVANS

Ill. Joseph D. Evans, 33°, who thus became identified with Aurora Grata, was a Past Grand Master of Masons in the State of New York, having occupied the Grand East in 1854 and 1855. He was born in New York city in 1807, and it was his early intention to become a clergyman, but he went into mercantile life in Virginia in his early twenties and achieved signal success in the tobacco business. He was made a Mason in Marshall Lodge No. 39 in Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1842. The year 1850 finds him in Brooklyn, where he affiliated with Anglo-Saxon Lodge No. 137, of which he became Master in 1852—his second occupancy of the East, for he



*Joseph D. Evans*



was Master of St. John's Lodge No. 36 in Richmond four years before.

His Masonic record in New York is full of interest and marks him as a most energetic and able worker, being among the organizers and the first Master of Prince of Orange Lodge No. 16, of Hill Grove No. 450 and of Mistletoe No. 647. Bro. Evans took an active part in the adjustment of the Grand Lodge troubles of 1849, and the constitutional legislation inaugurated by him in 1857 was the keynote to that harmonious union which was effected the following year. It was he who put into operation the system of Grand Representatives between the several Masonic grand bodies of the world, and which has conduced so largely to an interchange of fraternal relations and information respecting the Craft in all countries.

His name is stamped on the records of Capitular, Cryptic, and Chivalric Masonry, but his crowning labor was performed in the Scottish Rite. He was advanced to the highest honors of the Rite in 1862, being crowned an active member of the Supreme Council in that year, and at the time of his death he was Grand Minister of State. He took a prominent part in effecting the "Union of 1867" and in planting the Supreme Council upon its present solid founda-

tion. "The Scottish Rite never had a truer friend nor warmer advocate than he. His life, extending over eighty years, has been one free from spot or blemish—a citizen without reproach."

#### SIMON WIGGIN ROBINSON

At the Consistorial rendezvous held the 25th of November, 1868, official notice was received of the death of Most Ill. Simon Wiggin Robinson, 33°, under whose hand as Sovereign Grand Commander the warrants of the Aurora Grata Council, Chapter, and Consistory were issued. Departing this life at the age of seventy-six years he held the respect of the Craft to which he had rendered long and faithful service. He had received the highest honors in the gift of his brethren, having been Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts, Grand High Priest of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the same State, and Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

#### ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

By the Constitutions of 1762 it was provided that a subordinate Consistory could not consist of more than fifteen members, including officers.

In the General Statutes and Regulations of 1861 the provision was as follows:

The number of active members of a Lodge of Perfection shall not exceed twenty-seven, including officers, and the number of active members of a Consistory shall not exceed twenty-five, officers included; but either of said bodies may create at pleasure honorary, affiliated or emeritus members, who shall be entitled to a voice in their deliberations, but not to vote. Either of said bodies may appoint a member of the requisite grade temporarily to office, but such appointment shall not confer any right to vote. Provided, also, that a Lodge of Perfection shall not be opened unless there be present five active members, including one of the first four officers, and a Consistory of S. P. R. S. shall not be opened unless there be present five active members, including the Sov. Grand Commander or one of the Lieutenant Commanders.

The brethren of Aurora Grata had been making members without any thought of this limitation, and perhaps most of them in total ignorance of its existence. The result was that in 1868 a considerable discussion arose as to the status of those who had been received into the bodies. The secretary had made no distinction between the candidates, and it was not clear whether the active members were to be selected from among their number by ballot, by the choice of the presiding officer or Deputy, or in some other manner. They decided to meet the issue

squarely, however, and in December, 1868, boldly declared that "all persons who have been proposed, elected and receiving the degrees in these bodies shall be and are active members, and the recorder is ordered to enter such decision on the minutes"—thus expressing by their action what was upon a famous occasion voiced in the words, "What's a little thing like the Constitution between friends?"

Two years later the limitation to the number of active members in Lodges of Perfection and Consistories was stricken from the Constitutions, and since then all members of the subordinate bodies have been entitled to the same rights, light, and benefits.

#### CHANGES IN OFFICERS

Although the Lodge of Perfection had a very efficient secretary in Bro. Thomas S. Crump the remaining bodies were not so fortunate. It was provided in 1870, therefore, that Bro. Crump should be initiated into the other bodies without charge, provided he would act as secretary for them at least one year, and the Consistory took his note for the amount of the initiation fees as security for the performance of his part of the

agreement. The note was returned to him at the end of the year, when he declared himself clear on the books and took a dimit. Bro. James H. Warwick resigned as Commander-in-Chief of the Consistory and as Most Wise Master of the Rose Croix Chapter; Bro. James E. Conor tendered his resignation as First Lieutenant-Commander; Bro. A. J. Warner resigned as Minister of State; and Bro. Henry T. Bragg resigned as Captain of the Guard in the Consistory. Ill. Charles T. McClenachan, 33°, opened the Consistory on the 29th of June, 1870, with an attendance of ten members, not one of the officers being in his station. A dispensation to hold an election to fill vacancies was procured from Ill. Orrin Welch, 33°, and Ill. John W. Simons, 33°, was elected Commander-in-Chief on the first day of July.

## JOHN W. SIMONS

This distinguished craftsman served as Commander-in-Chief of Aurora Grata Consistory for eighteen months, when his increasing deafness made it impossible for him to hear what was spoken in the room. He was, however, a frequent attendant at the meetings of the bodies for many years afterwards, although able only to

watch, without hearing, the presentation of the beautiful degrees of the Rite. At his death in October, 1888, Ill. Albert Pike, Provincial Grand Master of the Royal Order of Scotland, said of him to the Provincial Grand Lodge :

For another death which now gives me bitter sorrow I was not prepared. It had long been known that the shadowy heralds of the Dark Fate, whom Æschylus calls the "Saviour Death, the only physician of incurable woes," had announced his speedy coming to a very dear and much loved Brother, John W. Simons of New York, and that this good Knight lay at the peaceful village of Central Valley in that State, wasted and worn and feeble, but with unclouded intellect, patiently awaiting the coming of Him at whose approach the doors of all habitations open.

On the 22d day of this month of October death closed the patient, melancholy, loving eyes and stopped the beating of the great, kindly, generous, tender heart and made untenanted by the freed intellect the quick, active, alert brain of one of the foremost Freemasons of the world.

He was born on the 8th of October, 1821, and Freemasonry had hoped to have and confidently counted upon having his services for many years more. Dying at the age of sixty-seven without a rival as a craftsman, for nearly forty years editor of the Masonic department of the New York Dispatch, distinguished as author and jurist, he had done well his work as a Mason, and might well have considered it complete and finished; but almost until the day of his death he still sent out in brief letters, replete with



Geo. W. Simons



kindness, patience and resignation, his cheerful and loving thoughts.

He was Grand Master of Masons in the State of New York in 1860, Grand High Priest of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter, and Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar for that State, and for some years Grand Treasurer of the Grand Encampment of the United States.

But the greatest service to Masonry was rendered by him as chairman and writer of the reports of the Committee on Correspondence of the Grand Lodge and Grand Commandery of New York. To him chiefly Symbolic Masonry of the United States owes what knowledge it has of the condition and progress of Masonry in foreign countries, and it owes to him also much valuable discussion of Masonic jurisprudence, principles and doctrines in these reports. For he was a discriminating student and a sound, accurate and logical thinker, discussing all questions in a judicial spirit and admirable temper, and seldom falling into error.

He was an emeritus member of the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third degree for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States and an emeritus member of honor of the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction, as well as a true Knight of the Rosy Cross of the Royal Order of Scotland.

Some years ago he had become very deaf, a deprivation which he bore with singular equanimity; notwithstanding which it was most painful to see him sit patiently among his friends, hearing nothing of their conversation, with quiet resignation,—most pitiful and sad and touching.

So he lived among men, commending himself by the true greatness and goodness of his nature, his intellectual energy and his magnanimity, to the consideration, the esteem and love of all who knew him.

## CHAS. T. M'CLENACHAN, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

There were at this time three Lodges of Perfection, two Councils of Princes, and three Chapters of Rose Croix in New York city and but one Consistory, Cosmopolitan. There sprang up a considerable jealousy between the different bodies, and strife for what was called the "control" of Cosmopolitan Consistory. A number of the brethren of the New York bodies felt that they could not find in Cosmopolitan Consistory that Consistorial home which they sought and decided to identify themselves with Aurora Grata Consistory and give it their support and attention. The Aurora Grata bodies now had meeting rooms at 367 Fulton street, for which they engaged to pay a thousand dollars rental a year; but candidates were infrequent—less than a dozen year—and the members were neither faithful in their attendance nor prompt in the payment of their dues. By the arrangement made in 1866, the Consistory collected and disbursed all moneys and was, in consequence, heavily in debt. All of the bodies owed dues to the Supreme Council which the Consistory was unable to pay for them. After passing a resolution authorizing the treasurer to pay over to the Supreme Council on account all funds in

his possession the action was rescinded, a committee was appointed to petition the Supreme Council for a remission of dues of the Aurora Grata bodies, and three months' rent was paid to appease the landlord.

Ill. Charles T. McClenachan had been an honorary member of the Consistory since its foundation, and in November, 1871, Bro. James E. Conor proposed for active membership Ill. Bro. McClenachan and General J. H. Hobart Ward, 33°. The night they were elected Bro. McClenachan proposed for the grades in Aurora Grata Consistory fourteen members of Templar Chapter of Rose Croix of New York, and the week following proposed seven more from the same Chapter.

When Ill. John W. Simons, 33°, resigned as Commander-in-Chief, Ill. Daniel Sickels, 33°, Grand Secretary-General, presided at an election held the 14th of December, 1871, under dispensation from the Deputy, when Ill. Bro. McClenachan was elected Commander-in-Chief and was installed by Ill. Bro. Sickels.

The accessions of members from New York were frequent from now on, and it was their custom to engage stages, which rumbled down Broadway, crossed the East river by Fulton

Ferry, and proceeded up Fulton street, Brooklyn, to the Consistorial chambers.

When Bro. McClenachan assumed the office of Commander-in-Chief the Consistory had an indebtedness exceeding forty-four hundred and fifty dollars and no assets with which to meet even a portion of this sum. Happily the most of this amount was owing to members who had advanced sums for fitting up the rooms they occupied, and for other expenses from time to time. A committee was appointed to confer with these brothers, and an agreement was drawn up between them and the Consistory cancelling and relinquishing all claims for these advances on certain conditions. The conditions agreed upon were that each of the four bodies should remit all indebtedness of these brothers to any of the bodies for dues or otherwise; that each of the four bodies should make each of them a life member, and that each one should be furnished, free of expense, a proper certificate of life membership and a traveling certificate, duly signed and sealed by the proper officers of Aurora Grata Consistory. This agreement was signed by all who had advanced moneys, with the exception of those who had loaned but small amounts which were absorbed by dues.



Engraved by J. W. Mason

C. J. M. Clermont



The Roll of Honor and the amounts cancelled in this manner are as follows:

DANIEL SICKELS, 33° . . . . .	\$300.00
CHARLES W. WILLETS, 33° . . . . .	350.00
JAMES ARMSTRONG . . . . .	336.76
COLIN LIGHTBODY, JR. . . . .	300.00
JOHN H. RHODES. . . . .	300.00
ASHER D. ATKINSON . . . . .	300.00
WILLIAM T. ANDERSON . . . . .	200.00
EDWIN GATES . . . . .	200.00
JOHN N. WYCKOFF, JR. . . . .	200.00
WILLIAM MAYO LITTLE . . . . .	200.00
WILLIAM H. WALLACE . . . . .	200.00
JOHN M. HOPPER . . . . .	100.00
ALBERT H. KING. . . . .	100.00
HENRY T. BRAGG . . . . .	50.00
	————— \$3,136.76

In order to charge to each of the bodies its proper proportion of this sum it became necessary to establish life membership fees, which were fixed at fifteen dollars each for the Lodge of Perfection, Chapter of Rose Croix, and Consistory, and at ten dollars for the Council of Princes.

The Consistory now raised its initiation fee by dividing the degrees into two series, the first comprising the eleven degrees from the Nine-

teenth to the Twenty-ninth inclusive, and the second series the Thirtieth to the Thirty-second inclusive. The fee for the first group was fixed at twenty-five dollars; and it was further ordered that for the second series a new ballot should be required for each candidate, who must pay an additional fee of fifteen dollars if admitted.

During the five and a half years' occupancy of the rooms the Consistory was the body which met with least frequency, yet it had borne the lion's share of the expenses. For instance, in rent alone the Consistory had paid thirty-five hundred and seventy-five dollars, while the remaining three bodies collectively had paid but a thousand and thirty-six. Early in 1874, therefore, it was provided that each of the four bodies should pay a quarter of the rent and other expenses, the Consistory to continue to receive and disburse all moneys.

#### MEETINGS IN NEW YORK CITY

On the 31st of January, 1873, Aurora Grata Consistory was convened in Masonic Hall, Thirteenth street, New York, and the Twenty-first degree was exemplified in full ceremonial form. The additions of members from the lower bodies

in the Valley of New York were now so frequent that after the spring of 1874 the Consistory met alternately in New York and Brooklyn, and upon the dedication of the new Masonic Hall at Twenty-third street and Sixth avenue, Aurora Grata Consistory paid its share for fitting up the Consistorial chamber and towards the services of the janitor.

#### CHARTER OF COUNCIL SUSPENDED

In the meantime the Supreme Council insisted upon receiving the dues of the bodies, and although the Consistory had provided by resolution that all moneys received by the treasurer should be paid over immediately to the Grand Secretary-General, the dues of the Council of Princes were so far in arrears the Council was officially notified that unless all arrearages were paid promptly the charter would be revoked. A warrant for one hundred and eleven dollars was ordered drawn by the Council on the 13th of November, 1874, and passed to Ill. Clinton F. Paige, 33°, Grand Secretary-General, on account of dues. But the treasurer failed to honor the draft, and on the 20th of that month the charter was suspended; and it remained suspended

until the 15th of April, 1876, when the Supreme Council dues were paid to the first of July, 1875, by individual subscriptions of a few of the members. The Grand Secretary-General at once issued a certificate acknowledging the payment of dues, revoked the suspension of the Charter, and declared the works of Aurora Grata Council of Princes of Jerusalem in full force from that date.

#### AURORA GRATA LODGE NO. 756

Many and many have been the projects hatched out in the anterooms of Masonic bodies, and many a lodge has been started from a discussion begun during refreshment. Among the topics of discussion during the fall of 1874 was a plan for founding a new Symbolic lodge by the members of the Aurora Grata bodies, and on the 19th of October, 1874, the Lodge of Perfection gave the use of its rooms to twelve of its members who had obtained a dispensation under date of October 17th from M. W. Elwood E. Thorne, Grand Master, for Aurora Grata Lodge U. D. Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection voted to permit its namesake the free use of the rooms until they should obtain a regular charter, which

was granted in June, 1875. It was not until November of that year, however, that the first bill for rent was rendered to Aurora Grata Lodge No. 756, and they were so dilatory for a time that it became necessary to appoint a collector who was directed to attend the regular communications of Aurora Grata Lodge No. 756 to make whatever collections he could, on which he received a commission of ten per cent. Aurora Grata Lodge No. 756 now holds its communications in our Cathedral, and it is one of the most prominent Symbolic lodges in Brooklyn.

Another tenant was added in 1875 in Olive Branch No. 6, Ancient and Primitive Rite, and two years later Brooklyn Council No. 4, Royal and Select Masters, became a tenant of Aurora Grata.

#### PROPOSAL TO SURRENDER CHARTER

On the 28th of April, 1875, a motion was put that even now it makes us shudder to contemplate. It reads, "Moved and seconded that the members of the Lodge of Perfection be summoned to be present at the next regular communication of the Lodge for the purpose of considering the expediency of surrendering its charter. Motion carried."

What associations cluster around that document which is as requisite as the Great Lights in opening a lodge and conducting its labors in due and ancient form! And how much dearer it is to those who have received Masonic light by virtue of it when the signatures it bears are those of Masons long dead and whose names are writ large in the annals of Masonic achievement! Yet a motion was made to consider surrendering the charter of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection, a document written by the hand of Ill. John James Joseph Gourgas, and which bears the signatures of five of the six founders of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction—signatures placed there five years before that Grand Body came into existence. For a month it hung in the balance, until the meeting of May 26th, when “On motion of Bro: Bragg, duly seconded, it was resolved that we do not deem it expedient to surrender the charter of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection.”

For five years Bro. Bragg was Thrice Potent Master of the Lodge of Perfection, and for two years Most Wise Master of the Rose Croix Chapter; but in all his long and faithful service he never did anything which places him so high in our affections as when he rallied the indifferent and callous and dragged them into the Lodge to

support his motion, "We do not deem it expedient to surrender the charter of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection." No one was ever prouder of Aurora Grata than Henry T. Bragg. The pity of it that he could not have lived to see her emerge from her sea of troubles, strengthened and resolute, and enter into the joy of a cloudless and enduring prosperity. Bro. Bragg died in December of 1883, on the verge of the new birth of Aurora Grata, and the brethren laid his lifeless remains beneath the silent clods of the valley.

"Warm summer sun, shine kindly here,  
Warm southern wind, blow softly here.  
Green sod above, lie light, lie light,  
Good night, dear heart, good night, good night."

#### EFFORTS TOWARD CONSOLIDATION

In November, 1875, the Commander-in-Chief was reëlected for the Consistorial term of three years, his first administration having proved eminently successful. The indebtedness of forty-four hundred and fifty dollars had been reduced to four hundred and eighty-seven during the period of his incumbency, three hundred dollars of which was due to Bro. John H. Rhodes for money advanced by him toward the payment of

rent. The principal events in the Consistory had been the presentation of the Twenty-fourth grade in Irving Hall on the 19th of September, 1872, at the informal request of the Supreme Council, and the presentation of the Twenty-ninth grade in full ceremonial form at Bryant Hall, by request of the Deputy for the State and in the presence of the Council of Deliberation. These efforts cost the Consistory a very large sum, the amount being made up from the treasury of the body and by contributions from the members individually.

The growth and numerical standing of Aurora Grata Consistory at this time are shown by the following table, which gives the membership of each Consistory in the State of New York in 1871 and 1875, as reported to the Supreme Council.

NAME	1871	1875	GAIN
ALBANY.....	69	171	102
AURORA GRATA.. . . .	71	198	127
COSMOPOLITAN. . . . .	128	98	30*
CENTRAL CITY.....	53	134	81
CORNING . . . . .	84	174	90
OTSENINGO . . . . .	69	67	2*
ROCHESTER.....	71	184	113
TOTALS.....	545	1026	

\* Loss

It will be seen from the table that the gain in Aurora Grata was the greatest of any in the State, and in addition to New York and Brooklyn candidates came from the Hudson valley from time to time, principally from Newburgh. A party of nine came down from Adonai Lodge of Perfection at Newburgh in April, 1876, and received the grades of the higher bodies in Aurora Grata. On the other hand Cosmopolitan Consistory suffered a loss of thirty members during the period in which Aurora Grata enjoyed a gain of one hundred and twenty-seven. Overtures were now made for the union of the two bodies, and following the action of Cosmopolitan Consistory a committee was appointed in Aurora Grata to arrange a basis of consolidation. The joint committee met in Masonic Hall, New York, on the 4th of May, 1874, adopted articles of confederation and recommended them to the consideration of their respective bodies. On motion of Ill. Edwin Gates, 33°, it was "Resolved that Aurora Grata consents to its Grand East being transferred to the city of New York." This was not a vote to consolidate, and at a meeting of Cosmopolitan Consistory they too failed to ratify the articles of confederation.

In August, 1876, the Supreme Council met in New York city and again desired Aurora Grata

Consistory to present a degree before that august body. The Twenty-ninth grade was accordingly exemplified in full form before the Supreme Council and a large number of brothers from Oriental Consistory, Chicago, who had accompanied their Commander-in-chief, Ill. Gilbert W. Barnard, 33°, on a trip to the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia, and had come over to New York to join with Aurora Grata Consistory as escort of honor to the Supreme Council. The appearance of the brethren of Oriental Consistory in the streets in full uniform of the Scottish Rite excited much interest and comment, and a resolution was promptly passed in Aurora Grata adopting a bill of dress consisting of a double-breasted frock coat, black trousers, black cloth cap, Knight Templar pattern, with Teutonic cross and 32° worked in silver on the front (officers in gold), white and black sword belt, without chains, with silver double eagle clasp,—officers, gold clasp and chains.

#### THE CONSOLIDATION EFFECTED

Although Aurora Grata Consistory had been meeting both in Brooklyn and New York since January of 1873, it was discovered in 1877 that it

had no authority to hold a rendezvous in any other place than Brooklyn, and at the session of the Supreme Council held in Boston in September of that year action was taken allowing the Consistory to meet at its pleasure either in Brooklyn or New York. It was never convened in Brooklyn after that.

At the rendezvous held on the 31st of January, 1880, a resolution was adopted directing the Commander-in-Chief to appoint a committee to meet with a similar committee appointed two days earlier by Cosmopolitan Consistory to consider and report upon a plan for the consolidation of the two Consistories. The joint committee met on the 6th of February and reported back to their respective bodies as follows:

Resolved that the committee is in favor of consolidating Cosmopolitan and Aurora Grata Consistories.

1 The name of the united body shall be The Consistory of New York City.

2 All members of the two Consistories shall be continued as members of the united body, unless they shall express a desire to the contrary. Life and honorary members shall be continued as life and honorary members of the united body.

3 Members who have been suspended or stricken from the roll of either Consistory for non-payment of dues shall become members of the united body on payment of one dollar to the united body.

4 Both Consistories shall be absolutely free from debt at the time of consolidation.

5 The Deputy of the Supreme Council for the State of New York shall choose by lot the body which shall nominate the first Commander-in-Chief of the united body, and the right to nominate the remaining officers shall be alternately exercised by the two Consistories.

6 All the properties and assets of the two Consistories shall become the property of the united body, and all dues now owing to either body shall be payable to the united body.

7 The charters of the two Consistories shall be surrendered to the Deputy of the Supreme Council, at a meeting of the members of both, to be called for that purpose by the Deputy after he shall be informed of the adoption of these articles of union.

The two Consistories met conjointly on the evening of the 26th of February, 1880, and having delivered their charters to the Deputy and elected their first officers as provided, they were declared consolidated, and the labors of Aurora Grata Consistory and Cosmopolitan Consistory continued in the united body under the title of The Consistory of New York City.

Aurora Grata Consistory had lived less than fourteen years, and no subordinate body ever had associated with it a greater number of well-known and brilliant Masons in so short a period. On its books are enrolled the names of Joseph D.

Evans and John W. Simons, active members of the Supreme Council and Past Grand Masters; J. Edward Simmons, honorary member of the Supreme Council and Past Grand Master; Daniel Sickels, active member of the Supreme Council and Grand Secretary-General; Charles T. McClenachan, active member of the Supreme Council and Grand Master-General of Ceremonies; Robert M. C. Graham, active member of the Supreme Council and Deputy for the State of New York; Edward M. L. Ehlers, honorary member of the Supreme Council and Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York.

Her career was short, but who can deny its lustre?

#### DOWNCAST HOURS—WELCOME DAWN

The removal of the Consistory to New York and its ultimate consolidation with Cosmopolitan Consistory to form The Consistory of New York City was a severe blow to the remaining three Aurora Grata bodies, and it almost cost them their existence. Several communications of the Lodge of Perfection and Chapter of Rose Croix were held in New York, and in the Chap-

ter it was "moved and seconded that a committee of three, with the Master as chairman, be appointed to consider the advisability of this Chapter consolidating with the New York Chapter." The committee never reported. Early in 1878 the Lodge of Perfection, Council of Princes, and Rose Croix Chapter gave up their rooms at 367 Fulton street to meet in future only at the call of the chair, at such time and place as he might designate, and Bro. James E. Conor was made a committee of one to pack the properties and store them until active work could be resumed. In order to retain the charters the Aurora Grata Association was formed by Bros. White, Gates, Cowpland, Conor, Stiles, Sickels, Leach, Peters, Warner, Colo-Veloni, and Gardner, who mutually pledged themselves to hold the constitutional meetings and pay all fees to the Supreme Council, etc., necessary to retain the charters. Now and then the presiding officer would call a meeting for the purpose of conferring the degrees by communication upon some Master Mason who desired to receive the light of the Scottish Rite, and elections of officers were held *pro forma* as required by the Constitutions of the Supreme Council. In 1877 there was only one initiate, the next year none; in 1879 there were two. Two years then passed with-

out a single initiate into the bodies, while in the year 1882 there were only two additions. Early in 1883 all three bodies passed resolutions remitting the dues of everyone up to the first of January of that year and fixing the annual dues thereafter at one dollar in each body.

In September of 1882, two old members of the bodies, John G. Barker and John B. Harris, were expelled by the Supreme Council from all rights and privileges in Scottish Rite Masonry for participation in the organization of the so-called Gorman Supreme Council the previous year. They adopted the name of the old Hays-Cerneau Council and claimed to be its successor through Hopkins Thompson who, on the 27th of September, 1881, declared himself vested with the powers which the members of the Council had laid down when it was merged with the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction in 1863, and proclaimed the labors of the old Council resumed. Barker had been quite active, particularly in the Lodge of Perfection, and although notoriously incompetent as an officer of a Masonic body he held office in the days when it was difficult to get anyone to assume responsibility of any kind. He had possession of the warrant of the Lodge of Perfection at one time, and sent the annual returns to the Supreme

Council. In these reports he appears as Thrice Potent Master of the Lodge of Perfection from 1879 to 1882 inclusive, although the minute books do not show that he ever was Master of the body.

Better days were near, however. In 1883 interest in the bodies began to revive, twenty-three candidates were initiated, the membership rose to eighty-four, meetings became regular again, and the old rooms in Fulton street were once more occupied by the Lodge of Perfection, Council, and Chapter. On the first of December, 1883, the day of the destructive fire in Masonic Hall in New York, the Lodge of Perfection met in regular communication and conferred the Ineffable grades upon one candidate, Wayland Trask. Three months later, the 12th of April, 1884, John W. Richardson and Edwin D. Washburne received the degrees of the Lodge of Perfection, and after passing through the Council and Chapter all three went to New York, where the Consistorial grades were conferred upon them. What portentous events in the history of Aurora Grata are clustered around those three names! Who could possibly foresee the new era of prosperity which they were destined to bring, the nobler deeds and greater achievements which they were to accomplish for the Rite in Brooklyn,

and that they were to follow one after the other as Commander-in-Chief of a new Aurora Grata Consistory which they were to found in the face of difficulties declared insurmountable by so many?

At the annual meeting of the Lodge of Perfection held in the following February, Wayland Trask was elected Thrice Potent Master; John W. Richardson, Deputy Master; and Edwin D. Washburne, Senior Warden,—three new men in the Rite, but men filled with enthusiasm and love for the Scottish Rite and endowed with a capacity for strenuous work. On the night of their installation the Lodge of Perfection owed thirty-nine dollars and sixty-nine cents and had not a penny in its treasury. The brethren present made up this sum by subscription, and the new administration started off even with the world, without debts and without money. Saturday was not deemed the best night in the week for their meetings if the interest and attendance of the members were to be enlisted and maintained, and arrangements were immediately made to go back to the Montauk rooms in Court street, this time at No. 38, and to change the meeting nights to the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. At the first meeting of the Lodge of Perfection over which Wayland Trask presided as Thrice Potent Master, there were

eleven candidates, all proposed by him; and when the year rolled around forty-six had been added to the roll. The next year showed a gain of sixty-six, the following year forty-four, and a hundred and nine names were added to the membership lists during 1887. The officers used every means they could devise to awaken interest in the Scottish Rite: new costumes and properties were purchased, the degrees were conferred with much more care and in a more elaborate manner than ever before, new officers were installed by prominent Masons from other jurisdictions, visits were invited from active members of the Supreme Council, the Feast of St. John was celebrated at the Oriental hotel by a very large gathering, members of other bodies of the Rite were invited to visit Aurora Grata in numbers and confer degrees for them, and on one occasion the Lodge of Perfection was honored by a visit from Most Ill. Henry L Palmer, Sovereign Grand Commander, accompanied by Ill. Bros. Charles T. McClenachan, Grand Master-General of Ceremonies, Albert P. Moriarty, Assistant Grand Secretary-General, and William R. Higby, Grand Standard Bearer, all active members of the Supreme Council. An increase in membership and growing interest in the Rite resulted from these efforts.

## AURORA GRATA CATHEDRAL

By 1887 the rooms in Court street had become too small to accommodate the large numbers who attended the regular meetings of the bodies, and an association was incorporated under the title of Aurora Grata Association of Brooklyn for the purpose of acquiring property and establishing a suitable edifice for the use of the Scottish Rite and other Masonic organizations. They purchased the property of the East Reformed Church at the corner of Bedford avenue and Madison street and immediately set about making the necessary alterations to meet the requirements of Masonic work. The bodies invested all their available funds in stock of the Association and many members purchased blocks of stock in their desire to help in the good cause.

On the 24th of September, 1887, the new edifice was dedicated to the service of Masonry by Most Ill. Henry L Palmer, Sovereign Grand Commander. The Supreme Council of Sovereign Grand Inspectors General was constituted as follows:

HENRY L PALMER of Milwaukee, M. P. Sov. Gr.  
Commander.

ENOCH T. CARSON of Cincinnati, P. Gr. Lieut. Com-  
mander.

JOSEPH D. EVANS of New York, Gr. Minister of State.

JOHN L. STETTINIUS of Cincinnati, Gr. Treasurer-  
General H. E.

CLINTON F. PAIGE of Binghamton, Gr. Secretary-  
General H. E.

ANTHONY E. STÖCKER of Philadelphia, Gr. Prior.

NICHOLAS R. RUCKLE of Indianapolis, Gr. Keeper of  
the Archives.

CHARLES T. McCLENACHAN of New York, Gr. Master-  
General of Ceremonies.

HOMER S. GOODWIN of Bethlehem, Pa., Gr. Marshal-  
General.

WILLIAM R. HIGBY of Bridgeport, Gr. Standard  
Bearer.

CHARLES E. MEYER of Philadelphia, Gr. Captain of  
Guard.

ALBERT P. MORIARTY of New York, Assistant Gr.  
Secretary-General.

assisted by sixteen honorary members of the  
Supreme Council of the Thirty-third degree.

Wayland Trask, 33°, Thrice Potent Master of  
the Lodge of Perfection, tendered the greeting of  
the Aurora Grata bodies to Ill. Henry L Palmer  
and the members of the Supreme Council, and on  
behalf of the Aurora Grata Association of Brook-



Aurora Grata Cathedral, Bedford Avenue and Madison Street



lyn presented the Cathedral to him for dedication. Ill. Bro. Palmer accepted the trust, and assuming the gavel dedicated Aurora Grata Cathedral to the service of Masonry in accordance with the usages of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite.

Proclamation having been made East, South West and North the M. P. Sovereign Grand Commander recommitted the Cathedral into the charge of the Association, and in returning the gavel to the Thrice Potent Master congratulated the craft of Brooklyn on the beautiful edifice they had acquired and earnestly wished them a continuance of the great success that had attended their work in the past few years.

Rev. and Bro. Warren C. Hubbard was then introduced by the Thrice Potent Master, and delivered an address in which he recounted briefly the rise and fall of the Aurora Grata bodies in the years preceding 1883, and the period of unexampled prosperity, sturdy growth and stalwart maturity which had made Aurora Grata Cathedral "its goal today and its starting point tomorrow."

The first meeting in the Cathedral was held by the Lodge of Perfection on the 7th of October, when there were present a large number of visitors

from neighboring Valleys who had come to congratulate Aurora Grata in their new home.

#### HENRY L PALMER

Most Ill. Henry L Palmer, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, is without doubt the foremost Freemason in the world today. He has been honored by his brethren with the highest official station in every branch of Masonry, and has left his strong impress on every department of the Craft. He was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin in 1852 and 1853, and again in 1871 and 1872; Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Wisconsin in 1858 and 1859; Grand Master of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Wisconsin in 1853 and 1854; Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Wisconsin from 1858 to 1865 inclusive; and Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States from 1865 to 1868.

Born in Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania, on the 18th of October, 1819, he removed to West Troy, New York, where he was made a Mason in Evening Star Lodge No. 75, being raised on the



H. H. Palmer



10th of March, 1841. Bro. Palmer was Master of his lodge from 1845 to 1848 inclusive, and is the oldest living Past Master of any lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York. His removal from the State, however, technically deprives him of official recognition as Dean of the Masters of the State.

#### AURORA GRATA CLUB

By the purchase of the Aurora Grata Cathedral property the Association came into possession of the parsonage attached to the church. It was promptly suggested that this would make an excellent home for a club, and even before the Aurora Grata bodies moved into their new Cathedral the Aurora Grata Club was organized on the 18th of May, 1887, with a large membership of the same enthusiastic brethren who had built up the Aurora Grata bodies. Membership in the club was limited to Master Masons in good standing, and it was the first Masonic club organized in the world. Our example has been followed in many cities, and everywhere the Masonic club has proved itself an important addition to the social side of the fraternity. A reorganization of the club with a view to broadening its

usefulness was an ever-present topic of conversation during 1907, and in December the Aurora Grata Club gave place to the Masonic Club of Brooklyn. It has now a membership of more than twelve hundred Master Masons, its president being Bro. Theodore A. Taylor, secretary of the Scottish Rite bodies.

The name Aurora Grata was adopted by a Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star instituted on the 6th of October, 1900, and it has become one of the most flourishing chapters of the Order in the State.



## SECOND AURORA GRATA CONSISTORY



THE year 1888 found the Lodge of Perfection, Council of Princes, and Chapter of Rose Croix in a most prosperous condition. The rolls had increased in four years from eighty-four, mostly quiescent and indifferent members, to three hundred and seventy-five active, energetic and faithful workers, proud of their achievement and proud of the new Cathedral, which was conceded to be in its noble proportions and fitness for Scottish Rite work the finest in the State of New York. But the Circle of Unity was not complete—there was no Consistory in Brooklyn, and the members must go to a neighboring Valley to receive the grades above the Eighteenth. The brethren in Brooklyn made up their minds they

wanted a Consistory and set about getting it, with the result that on the 9th of October, 1888, the Sovereign Grand Commander, Ill. Henry L Palmer, 33°, granted a dispensation for a Consistory to be held in the Valley of Brooklyn.

On the 23d of the same month a special session of the Supreme Council was convened in the rooms of the Aurora Grata Club for the purpose of inaugurating Aurora Grata Consistory of the Valley of Brooklyn. The officers representing the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third degree were as follows:

J. H. HOBART WARD, as M. P. Sov. Gr. Commander.

WALTER M. FLEMING, as P. Gr. Lieut-Commander.

DANIEL SICKLES, as Gr. Minister of State.

ROBERT MACOY, as Gr. Chancellor.

EDWIN GATES, as Gr. Treasurer-General H. E.

ALBERT P. MORIARTY, as Gr. Secretary-General H. E.

ATHANASIUS COLO-VELONI, as Gr. Hospitaller.

JOHN W. RICHARDSON, as Gr. Marshall-General.

These distinguished brethren proceeded to Aurora Grata Cathedral, where they were received by the petitioners for the dispensation, and at once occupied their official stations. Ill. J. H. Hobart Ward, 33°, addressed the brethren in a congratulatory manner, filled the vacant Con-

sistorial offices by appointment, and ordered the reading of the dispensation. After every brother present had subscribed his name in the register, Ill. Wayland Trask, 33°, was presented and installed as Commander-in-Chief of the new Aurora Grata Consistory. The remaining officers were then elected, appointed, and installed with the exception of secretary and sentinel. Bros. Frank B. Jackson and Godfrey Lincks were then introduced, and by virtue of a special dispensation were created S. P. R. S. and declared members of the Consistory. The Commander-in-Chief immediately appointed Bro. Jackson to be secretary and Bro. Lincks sentinel, and they were conducted to their stations and at once entered upon their duties.

The initiation fee in the new Consistory was fixed at twenty-five dollars and the annual dues at two dollars; life membership, five dollars. It was directed that all moneys received from life memberships should be invested in stock of the Aurora Grata Association. Petitions were received from forty-nine Rose Croix Knights and all were duly elected to receive the grades in Aurora Grata Consistory. The first regular rendezvous was held on the 23d of November, 1888, when the Twenty-first degree was conferred in full ceremonial form upon fifty-five

candidates, the first time a Consistorial grade had been conferred in Brooklyn since 1877.

At the session of the Supreme Council held in September, 1889, a charter was issued to Aurora Grata Consistory, dated the 19th of that month, and on the evening of the 10th of October the Consistory was duly and lawfully constituted by Ill. J. H. Hobart Ward, 33°, representing Ill. John Hodge, 33°, Deputy for the State of New York. The patents of the one hundred and six charter members were presented to the Grand Secretary-General, who duly endorsed each one upon presentation of transfer of membership to Aurora Grata Consistory. Ill. Wayland Trask, 33°, was elected Commander-in-Chief for the regular Consistorial term of three years.

#### EDWIN KNOWLES

Among those who gave of their talents to the up-lift of the Aurora Grata bodies was Ill. Edwin Knowles, 33°. In addition to yeoman service in the conferring of degrees he tendered several benefit performances by the Amaranth Dramatic Society at the Amphion Theatre, which added several hundred dollars to the Consistory's funds. Bro. Knowles early showed a talent for the stage,

and at the age of twenty-two we find him taking minor parts under Ben Baker. He quickly rose to the position of leading man, a position which he held for many years, supporting Fanny Davenport, Mme. Janauschek, Lawrence Barrett, the Florences and many others. He became a theatre manager, having in his control the Grand Opera House, Amphion, Columbia, and Park theatres of Brooklyn, and the Fifth Avenue Theatre of New York.

Bro. Knowles was raised in Commonwealth Lodge No. 409 in June, 1885, and was its Master two years later. He entered the Scottish Rite immediately and became Master of the Lodge of Perfection. The Thirty-third degree was conferred upon him at Cleveland in September, 1889. In the Grand Lodge he was representative of the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, his native State. His death occurred on the 14th of April, 1902.

His skill in artistic grouping and scenic effects contributed greatly to the beauty and impressiveness of the degree work.

Bro. Knowles was a most courtly gentleman, a man of handsome presence, generous to a fault, and numbered his friends by the hundreds.

## EDWIN GATES

Aurora Grata was called upon in 1891 to mourn the death of one who had been her bone and sinew in her days of trouble, Ill. Edwin Gates, 33°, one of the charter members and third officer of the first Aurora Grata Consistory. He saw Aurora Grata numerically the strongest Scottish Rite bodies in the State of New York, with many of the most prominent Masons in the United States on her rolls; he saw her when trials and adversity overwhelmed her, when the Consistory was merged with another and lost its identity and the three lower bodies entered into a sleep as of death; and he was one of the hopeful and faithful band who nursed the tiny vital spark and fanned it into a conquering flame of energy and progress.

Born in Massachusetts in 1820, he was a forty-niner, fitting out a vessel and sailing for California in that memorable year. The following year he established the first American school on the Pacific Coast, and was admitted to the bar in 1852. The year before he had been made a Mason in Mokolumme Lodge and soon became its Master. Bro. Gates was a charter member of Stella Lodge No. 485 and became Master of it in 1876. The degrees of the Scottish Rite were con-

ferred upon him in 1866, and from the organization of the Aurora Grata Council, Chapter, and Consistory he took an active part in the advancement of these bodies. He labored diligently to infuse new life and energy into those who were already identified with the Rite, and brought a large amount of new material, impressing them with the importance and beauty of the Scottish Rite and arousing in them the same love for it which he possessed. Bro. Gates was treasurer of the first Aurora Grata Consistory for thirteen years, and was crowned a Sovereign Grand Inspector General in 1879.

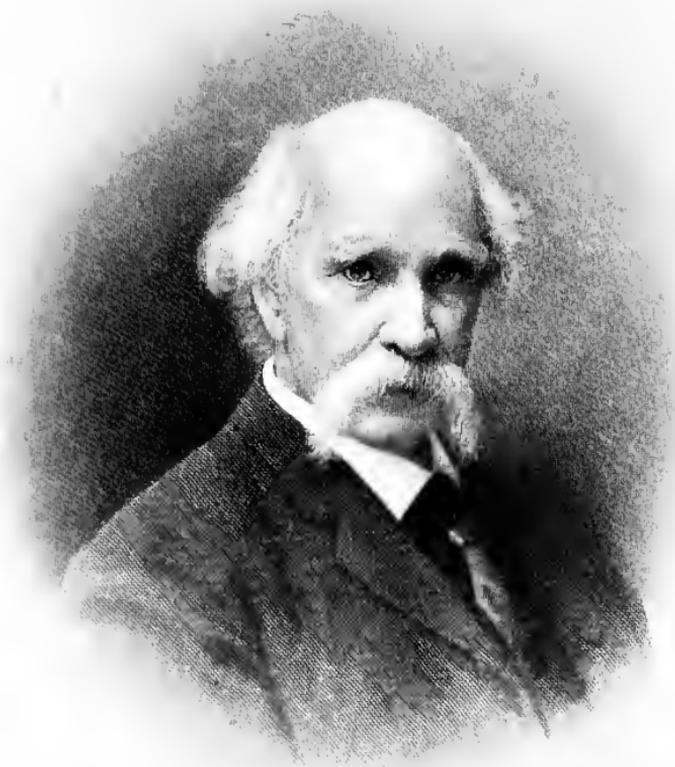
A firm and faithful friend, a rigid and upright business man, an earnest and enthusiastic Mason, believing in its principles and practicing them in his relations with his brethren and with the outer world, he was honored by all who knew him, and his death was a severe loss to Aurora Grata.

#### ADVERSITY RETURNS; AGAIN VANQUISHED

In 1896 the failure of a banking house in which the Aurora Grata bodies had deposited their funds came as a heavy blow, and under circumstances which wounded deeply. It became necessary to reduce the number of meetings to curtail expenses, and moneys which were here-

tofore invested in stock of the Aurora Grata Association were needed to meet current bills; but the same resolute determination and steadfast courage which raised the bodies in the Valley of Brooklyn to their high pinnacle was again set to the task of wiping out debt and mending the breach.

This year also records the death of Ill. Charles T. McClenachan, 33°, Commander-in-Chief of the first Aurora Grata Consistory from 1871 until its consolidation with Cosmopolitan to form the Consistory of New York City. He had been an active member of the Supreme Council since 1861, and at the time of his death was Grand Master-General of Ceremonies. Ill. Bro. McClenachan was made a Mason in 1854 in Munn Lodge No. 190, New York city, and received the Scottish Rite degrees two years later. Forthirteen years he was Thrice Potent Master of New York Lodge of Perfection and he was Commander-in-Chief of Cosmopolitan Consistory before being elected to the same office in Aurora Grata Consistory. A thorough student of Masonry, he left a monument to his attachment to the fraternity in his Book of the Scottish Rite, a monitor covering all the degrees, his addendum to Mackey's Encyclopedia of Masonry, and an extensive History of Masonry in New York State.



*J. H. Robert Truax*



## J. H. HOBART WARD

At the session of the Supreme Council in 1897 General J. H. Hobart Ward was created an active member, and at the rendezvous of October 22d of that year he was most enthusiastically welcomed as such by the Consistory and received with the grand honors and the singing of Auld Lang Syne.

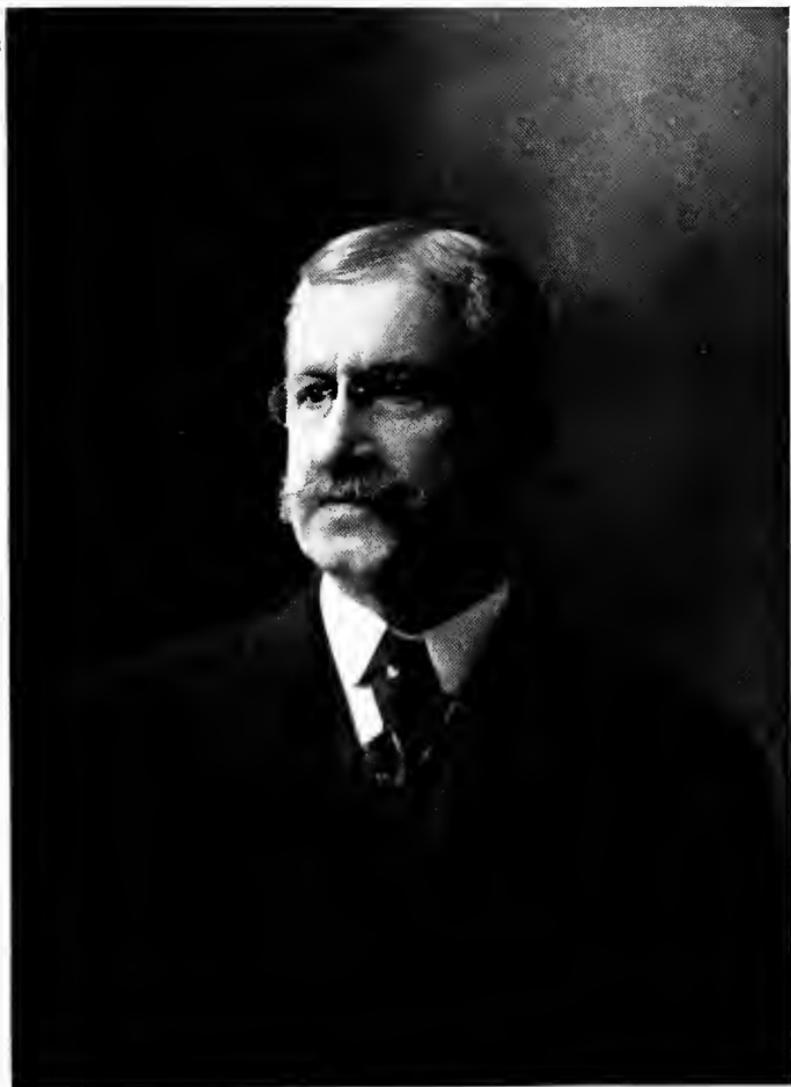
Bro. Ward was born in New York City in 1823. Immediately upon graduating from college he enlisted as a private in the Seventh Regiment, United States Cavalry, saying that he wanted to rise from the ranks. He retired a Brigadier-General. General Ward served throughout the Mexican War with the Seventh Cavalry, but not without the marks of battle, for he was wounded several times, and seriously in a desperate charge at the Battle of Monterey. At the commencement of the Civil War he raised the Thirty-eighth Regiment, New York Volunteers, which, together with another he assisted in organizing, formed the Scott Life Guards. Both of these regiments were in the Army of Virginia, usually in the division commanded by General Ward.

Bro. Ward was made a Mason in 1855 in Metropolitan Lodge No. 273 of New York, and

received the degrees of the Scottish Rite two years later. He was advanced to the grade of Sovereign Grand Inspector General in 1863. The General was an active participant in the work of preparing for and conferring the degrees, and his knowledge of ritualistic work and the methods of communicating instruction in the various grades so as to produce the desired impression on the initiate, made him a most valuable worker in Aurora Grata. General Ward was struck down and killed by a railway train in July, 1903.

#### JOHN W. RICHARDSON, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

In 1898 Ill. John W. Richardson, 33°, was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Consistory. Although marked by forced retrenchment, his administration was an active and most successful one. By an interchange of visits with neighboring Valleys he kept alive interest in the Scottish Rite work, and in the early months of the year 1898, the Twentieth grade, Master ad Vitam, was presented in full form in Aurora Grata by members of The Consistory of New York City. Afterwards Aurora Grata undertook the presentation of the same degree with such success that it is considered the best work done in our Valley.



John W. Richardson



“Uncle John” himself essayed the rôle of Wall-raven from the start, and lovers of this magnificent degree—deemed by many the finest in the entire series—are still looking for his equal in that character.

Bro. Richardson was raised in 1866 in Altair Lodge No. 601 and was its Master in 1876 and 1877. Five years later he was appointed Deputy for the Third Masonic District and inaugurated the custom of “following the Deputy” on his official visits in the Third District. He was one of the energetic workers who officered the weakling Lodge of Perfection in 1885 and imparted new life and strength to the Scottish Rite in the Valley of Brooklyn.

In May, 1898, Bro. Theodore A. Taylor, secretary of the Lodge of Perfection since the night he received the degrees, was elected secretary of the Council, Chapter, and Consistory. Bro. Taylor was raised in 1876 in Commonwealth Lodge No. 409; he was in the same year appointed Senior Deacon, becoming Master in 1882, and has been treasurer of the lodge since 1883. He was District Deputy Grand Master for the Third District in 1885 when that district won its title of Banner Third by reason of being the first to pay its quota of the Hall and Asylum debt. The district raised twenty-five thousand dollars

to that end during his term of office as Deputy. Bro. Taylor was elected Grand Treasurer of the Grand Lodge in 1900 and held that office for four years. One of the most active and best known Masons in Brooklyn, his energies in recent years have been directed toward the erection of the Brooklyn Masonic Temple, the cornerstone of which was laid on the 23d of November, 1907, by the M.W. Grand Master, Townsend Scudder, 33°, a member of the Aurora Grata bodies.

#### WILLIAM HOMAN

On the 17th of May, 1901, the Council of Deliberation of the State of New York met in its thirty-second annual session, Ill. William Homan, 33°, Deputy of the Supreme Council, presiding. Aurora Grata Cathedral was selected as the place of meeting, and it was the pleasure of Aurora Grata to entertain their distinguished guests at this the first session called by Ill. Bro. Homan after his election to the office of Deputy for the Empire State in September, 1900.

At the time of his election to active membership in the Supreme Council in 1895, Ill. Bro. Homan was the youngest in age of the active members of any Supreme Council in the world. To the energy of youth he has added a sincere

devotion to the progress of the Rite, giving special attention to awakening interest in the history of the Scottish Rite and to focusing the light of truth on clandestine bodies. In 1905 he published *The Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, a book of more than two hundred interesting and instructive pages, in which are placed before Masons as never before the history of the Scottish Rite and the truth with respect to pretenders. The following year he published as an appendix to the *Proceedings of the Council of Deliberation* some eighty pages containing fac-similes of the pages of the original minute book of Ineffable Lodge of Perfection at Albany from 1767 to 1774, which he was fortunately enabled to restore to Ineffable Lodge after much painstaking effort. His latest literary production is *The Scottish Rite and the Cerneau Wrong*, a pamphlet of peculiar value to the Rite, and particularly to those who seek to enlighten brethren of the Symbolic lodge who might otherwise be misled.

Since Ill. Bro. Homan was elected Deputy the *Proceedings of the Council of Deliberation* abound in valuable historical data of first importance, not only to the Rite in our jurisdiction, but to the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite wherever it has been regularly established.

**EDWIN D. WASHBURNE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

At the triennial rendezvous of the Consistory held in December, 1901, Ill. Edwin D. Washburne, 33°, became Commander-in-Chief,—another one of the faithful workers to whom Aurora Grata owes so much. With natural histrionic talent and a love and enthusiasm for the Rite excelled by none, he has given of his time and purse for more than a score of years for the good of Aurora Grata. Hardly a Consistorial grade has been presented these many years without his taking one of the most difficult rôles, and in the Council he has long been “Our Zerubbabel.”

The progress of the bodies was eminently satisfactory during Bro. Washburne's administration, and in May of 1902 the membership passed five hundred for the first time. His three years as Commander-in-Chief were marked by steady additions of zealous workers, and when he surrendered the gavel of the Consistory to his successor the sea of troubles had been crossed.

**GIFTS FROM MEMBERS**

From time to time the bodies have been the recipients of gifts from members in token of their attachment to Aurora Grata. In 1887 Ill.



*Edwin D Washburne*



Bro. Dwight Burdge, 33°, presented to the Lodge of Perfection a full-toned and beautiful Japanese gong from a Buddhist temple. This gong is no doubt one of the handsomest pieces of hammered bronze in the country, as its tones are of the sweetest. Its melancholy and lingering note contributes immeasurably to the solemnity of the Mystic Roll at the ceremony of the Feast of the Paschal Lamb, when it speaks its message of sorrow and tells of another brother who has been raised to sublime degrees we know not of.

The diamond studded jewel of the Master of the Rose Croix Chapter is a present from Ill. Bro. Daniel M. MacLellan, 33°, upon his retiring from the East of the Chapter in 1886. Bro. John Q. Moon presented to the Chapter in 1891 a handsome Rose Croix sword that had been the property of Ill. Edmund B. Hays, 33°, who was Sovereign Grand Commander of the Cerneau-Hays Supreme Council and became an emeritus member of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.

Upon the completion of his term of office as Commander-in-Chief Ill. Bro. Washburne presented to the Consistory a handsome jewel of the Thirty-third degree, which is always worn by the Commander-in-Chief at the regular rendezvous of the Consistory.

The small table with griffin legs, sometimes used in the Lodge of Perfection, was once the property of the famous Mme. Jumel.

#### DANIEL SICKELS

In January, 1902, occurred the death of Ill. Daniel Sickels, 33°, active member of the Supreme Council since 1849 and one of the charter members of Aurora Grata Council, Chapter, and Consistory in 1866. His Masonic record is remarkable for its diversity and activity. He was twice Grand Secretary-General of the Supreme Council, from 1849 to 1853 and from 1860 to 1873, serving as Grand Minister of State during the intervening seven years. Bro. Sickels was educated as an engineer, but early turned his attention to mercantile pursuits. He was possessed of literary talents, which he directed to Masonic rather than general literature. Perhaps his most important publication was his *Ahiman Rezon* and *Masonic Monitor*, first published in 1865 and still a standard authority with the fraternity. As long as his health permitted he was a regular attendant at the meetings of his Masonic bodies, and he served on the standing Committee on Returns in the Supreme Council for more than a quarter of a century. In



*Daniel Sickles*



recognition of his long service and the love of his associates for him the Supreme Council conferred upon him the title and dignity of Dean of the Supreme Council. His funeral services were conducted by Aurora Grata Lodge No. 756, of which he was a charter member, the Supreme Council being represented by the attendance of seven of its active members, six of its officers and twenty honorary members.

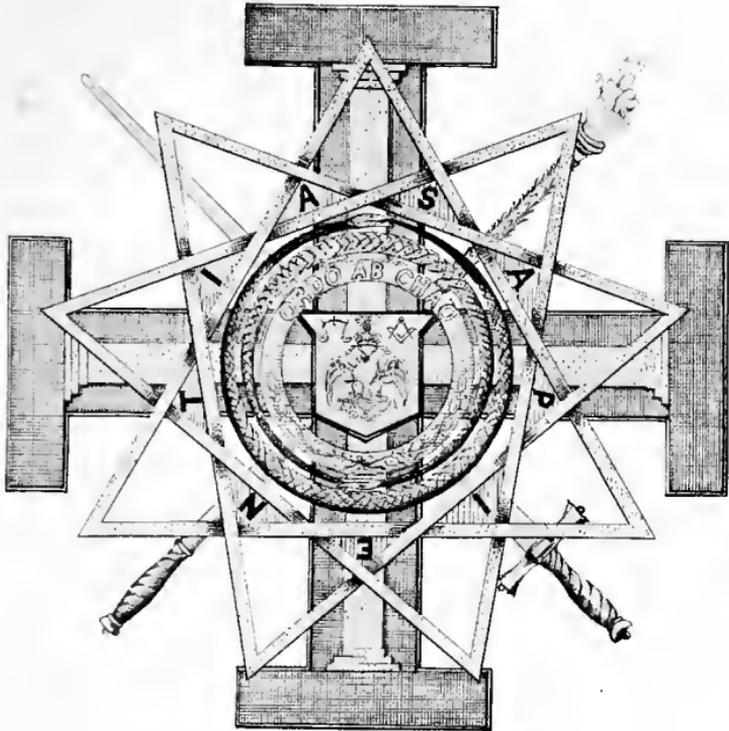
#### CHARLES H. LUSCOMB, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

At the regular Consistorial rendezvous of December, 1904, Ill. Charles H. Luscomb, 33°, was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Consistory and was installed by Ill. James H. Coddington, 33°, Grand Secretary-General H. E. Colonel Luscomb's record in Masonic and other organizations is a story of activity and achievement that is not often paralleled. He was raised in Girard Lodge No. 631 in 1880, served as Senior Deacon and Junior Warden, and was Master in 1883, 1884, and 1885. Taking up his residence in Brooklyn he affiliated with Central Lodge No. 361 and was its Master in 1888 and 1889. He was exalted in Constellation Chapter, Royal Arch Masons, in 1887 and was High Priest in 1890 and 1891. He became a member of the

Scottish Rite bodies in 1891 and five years later was elected Thrice Potent Master of the Lodge of Perfection, serving two years. In 1898 he was crowned an honorary member of the Supreme Council. It will be noted that Bro. Luscomb was Master of his Symbolic lodge before receiving the Chapter degrees and was High Priest of his Chapter before becoming a Scottish Rite Mason.

Immediately upon his installation he entered upon the duties of Commander-in-Chief with all his unique energy and a determination to leave Aurora Grata better for his having been associated with it. One of his very first acts was to put renewed vim into the fraternal visits to other Valleys and he promptly arranged for trips to Albany and Jersey City, taking with him about eighty members of Aurora Grata Consistory on the trip to New Jersey Sovereign Consistory. Visits followed to Binghamton, Philadelphia, Camden, Bridgeport, Scranton and Providence.

Greater attention than heretofore was given to the celebration of the solemn Feast of the Paschal Lamb on Maundy Thursday in the Rose Croix Chapter, when the lights are extinguished and the Chapter closed. In 1906, M. W. Frank Hurd Robinson, 33°, Grand Master of Masons in New York, responded to This Holy Day, and



*Original drawing by D. Sickels*

Original Drawing of the Grand Decoration of the Thirty-third Degree, made by Ill. Daniel Sickels, 33°



M. W. George W. Kendrick, 33°, Grand Master of Masons in Pennsylvania, Toleration. The next year the responses were by M. W. Townsend Scudder, 33°, of the Aurora Grata bodies, Grand Master of Masons in New York, and M. W. John Albert Blake, 33°, Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts. Accompanying Ill. Bro. Blake and participating in the ceremonies were M. E. Arthur G. Pollard, 33°, Past General Grand High Priest and M. E. Harry Hunt, 33°, Grand High Priest of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Massachusetts. On both occasions the Commander-in-Chief responded to The Dead. The Feast of the Paschal Lamb and the Lodge of Sorrow held each year are tiled as a Master Mason lodge, and these beautiful ceremonies are witnessed by many who are not members of the Rite.

The Paschal Lamb ceremony of 1907 led to an invitation from Massachusetts Consistory to visit Boston, and a number of the brothers accompanied the Commander-in-Chief on a two-day trip to that Valley in October, 1907. The reception committee consisted of the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, the Grand High Priest, the Commander-in-Chief and Past Commanders-in-Chief of Massachusetts Consistory, and every possible effort was put forth to extend to the visitors a fraternal welcome. The return

was made by direct steamer and the trip was voted the most enjoyable in many respects that Brooklyn had ever made. An ebony gavel, surmounted with a double-headed eagle and bearing a suitable inscription in a silver Delta, was presented to Massachusetts Consistory as a token of appreciation of their genuine Masonic hospitality.

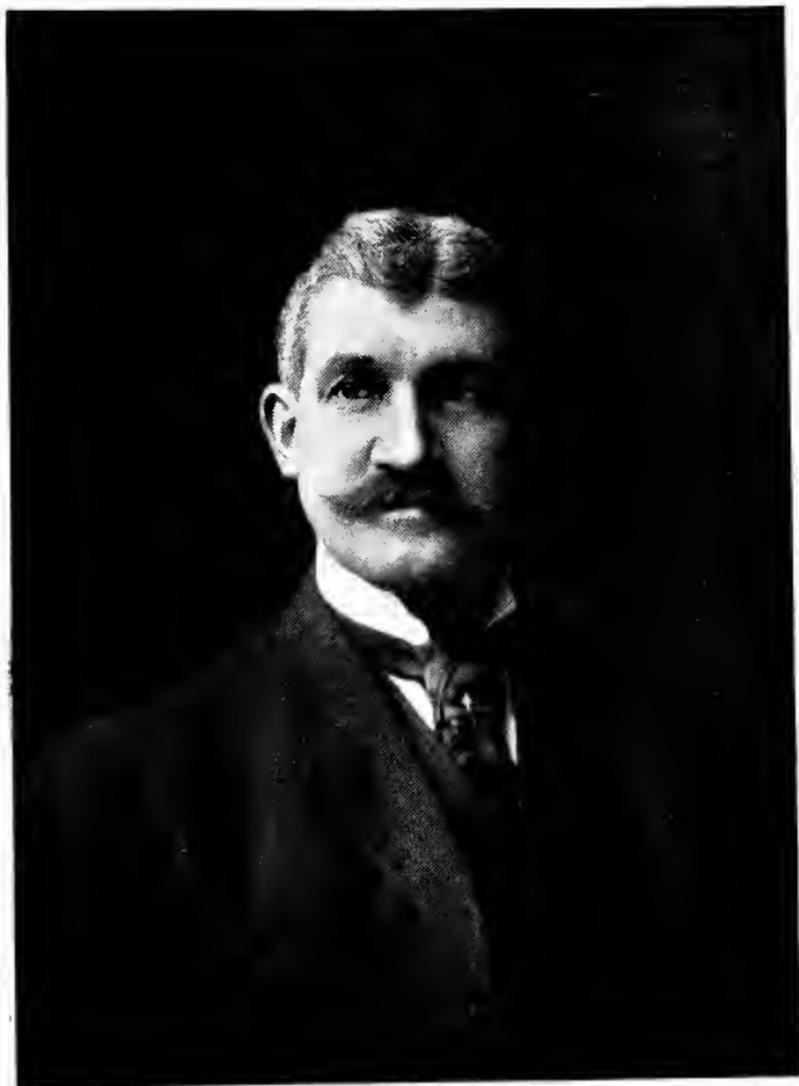
#### EXCHANGES OF VISITS WITH SCRANTON

Among the visitors at the first meeting in the Cathedral was Bro. Francis G. Rarrick, Thrice Potent Master of Keystone Lodge of Perfection, Scranton, Pennsylvania, who came to request Aurora Grata to pay a fraternal visit to Keystone Lodge of Perfection and exemplify the Fourteenth degree in full form in that Valley. The invitation was accepted by Aurora Grata, and on the 10th of November, 1887, about fifty members of the Brooklyn bodies journeyed to Scranton where the officers of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection conferred the Fourteenth degree in full form upon a large class. Keystone presented to Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection a gavel made from a post taken from Libby Prison, and this gavel is today preserved as one of the treasures of the Lodge. The following

year a delegation of twenty members of Keystone Lodge of Perfection was welcomed on a return visit to Aurora Grata.

Nearly twenty years later an apparent stranger applied for admission as a visitor to Aurora Grata Chapter of Rose Croix, and upon being passed by the Outer Guard of the Chapter prepared to sit quietly by and watch the conferring of the degree. But strangers do not go long unnoticed in Aurora Grata and it was soon discovered that he was from Scranton. He not only recalled the close fraternal relations between the bodies a score of years before, but had accompanied the Thrice Potent Master of Keystone Lodge of Perfection on the memorable visit to Brooklyn in 1888. This brother was Ill. Joseph F. Baumeister, 33°, Commander-in-Chief of Keystone Consistory. Old recollections were revived, and within a few minutes an invitation was extended to visit Scranton again and it was as promptly accepted, this time from Consistory to Consistory. On the 5th of June, 1906, nearly eighty members of Aurora Grata Consistory made the trip to the Valley of Scranton. The Twentieth degree, Master ad Vitam, was presented in full ceremonial form by the Brooklyn delegation, who had taken costumes and properties for the purpose. This degree had never

been presented before in Keystone Consistory and drew so large an attendance that it was necessary to hold the rendezvous in an auditorium. In the cast Ill. Charles H. Luscomb, 33°, Commander-in-Chief of Aurora Grata Consistory, represented Frederick II, while Ill. Edwin D. Washburne, 33°, and Ill. John W. Richardson, 33°, the only living Past Commanders-in-Chief of Aurora Grata Consistory, appeared in the rôles of Francis I and Wallraven respectively. Nearly four hundred were seated at the banquet which followed in the Hotel Jermyn. Dr. Jacob Helmer's response, The Consistory, was an able and most interesting account of the founding of Keystone Consistory at Scranton. He described the support given by Brooklyn in that difficult task, and as he recounted the alternate hopes and fears of the early workers and the manner in which Aurora Grata worked with and gave aid and encouragement to Keystone Consistory in their hours of despair the applause was prolonged and sincere. The return was made the following day, without incident to mar a trip marked by genuine cordiality and enjoyment on the part of everyone. Each member brought back a souvenir in the shape of a paper weight made from coal, while Keystone Consistory presented to Aurora Grata Consistory a beautifully



*Charles T. Luscomb*



carved loving cup made from coal and bearing a silver plate suitably inscribed. The Commander-in-Chief of Keystone Consistory wields a silver-mounted ebony gavel, presented by Aurora Grata as a souvenir of the event.

In March, 1907, Keystone Consistory paid a return visit, thirty-five strong, and witnessed the degree of Knight Commander of the Temple with Rev. Warren C. Hubbard, 33°, as Honorius, and Ill. Edwin D. Washburne, 33°, Frederick.

#### VISITS TO SYMBOLIC LODGES

Early in his administration Ill. Commander-in-Chief Luscomb planned a series of visits by the members of the Scottish Rite bodies to Symbolic lodges in order to meet in their home lodges those brothers who were active in the Scottish Rite. Some forty such visits were made to most of the leading lodges in the city, and resulted in an extension of friendships and an interchange of fraternal greetings which could have been attained in no other way. Notable among these visits was one made in December, 1905, to Commonwealth, the home lodge of our Secretary, Bro. Theodore A. Taylor. More than ninety members of the Aurora Grata bodies accompanied the Commander-in-Chief and they were

received most cordially by the officers and brethren of the lodge. The entire evening was given up to the entertainment of the guests.

On the evening of the 4th of November, 1907, Acanthus Lodge No. 719 had a Scottish Rite Night. An invitation was extended to the Consistory in the name of the lodge, and it is believed that this is the first official invitation to visit ever extended from a Symbolic lodge to a Scottish Rite body. A delegation consisting of more than a hundred was cordially welcomed. The evening was devoted to musical and other entertainment and the exchange of fraternal greetings, and it is remembered alike in Aurora Grata and Acanthus as a most enjoyable event.

The second invitation came from Marsh Lodge No. 188, to visit that lodge on the sixty-first anniversary of the institution of the lodge, and the Commander-in-Chief was accompanied by a large number of members of the Consistory. Honorary members of the Supreme Council, Thirty-third degree, members of the Aurora Grata bodies, occupied the stations during the conferring of the Third degree. Ill. Bro. Luscomb sat in the East, and the Historical Lecture was delivered by Ill. Robert Judson Kenworthy, 33°, First Lieutenant-Commander of Aurora Grata Consistory and Deputy Grand

Master of the Grand Lodge of New York State.

On all of these visits Bro. Luscomb addressed the brethren on some Masonic topic in his usual interesting manner, and brought to their attention numerable facts relating to Symbolic and Ineffable Masonry with which many of them were unacquainted.

#### WAYLAND TRASK

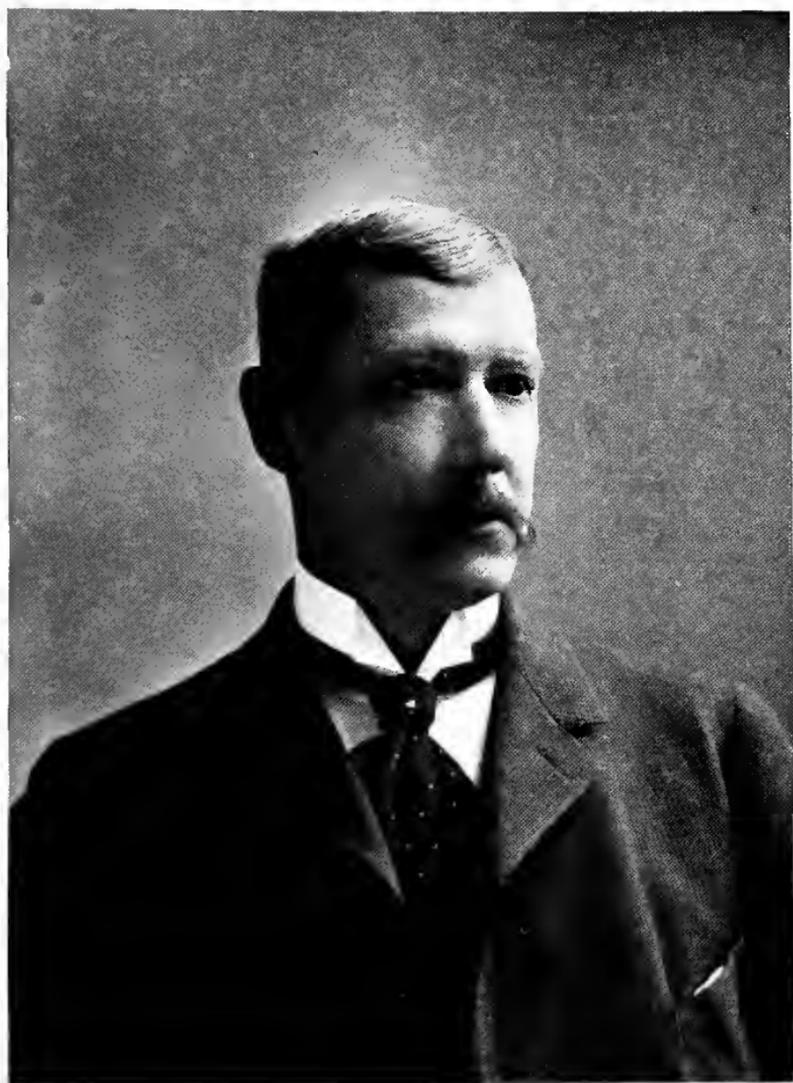
On the 27th of January, 1905, occurred the death of Ill. Wayland Trask, 33°, first Commander-in-Chief of the second Aurora Grata Consistory, a body which owed its existence to his illimitable energy. In an appreciation written by Ill. William O. Campbell, 33°, he has said of Ill. Bro. Trask:

His Masonic record, so far as it is recorded in the books, is briefly told. He was initiated, passed and raised in Montauk Lodge No. 286, Brooklyn, on October 19, November 2 and 16, 1881, respectively. By dimit he became a member of Independent Royal Arch Lodge No. 2, January 16, 1884, and its Master in 1886. He was exalted in Constellation Royal Arch Chapter on January 22, 1883, and Knighted in Clinton Commandery No. 14, where he served as Junior Warden, Captain General and Generalissimo, and became Eminent Commander in 1887.

He was made a Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret in New York Consistory, but it was in the Aurora Grata

bodies of the Valley of Brooklyn that his fame was established. He served as Thrice Potent Master of the Lodge of Perfection in the years 1885, 1886, 1887 and 1888, and was Commander-in-Chief of the Consistory from its institution October 23, 1888, to 1898.

From the beginning the history of the Aurora Grata bodies in Brooklyn is the history of Wayland Trask. What he did here is known of all men. He gave his best without stint; his talent, his time and his money were all ours, and his giving was the potent mainspring of giving on the part of others. A born leader, he inspired others to worthy imitation. He was generous, brave, tender-hearted, true. He had human weakness, mighty misfortunes, indomitable will, sturdy honesty, firm friends and hearty enemies. To know him in his hours of triumph, when on the top wave of social, fraternal and financial success, was good; but to know Wayland Trask in the dark and trying hours of adversity, was better. It was the writer's privilege to be near him in the day when money, power, prestige and fair-weather friends had all fled. A few warm friends remained to the end. It was then that the man in him shone out. Not in our way, perhaps, but in his own way, with impaired health, eyesight seriously affected by rheumatism, Masonically obscured, buried beneath an appalling mountain of debt, at the age of fifty-six, alone with his God, he determined to pay his debts, and he attacked the task in a spirit of heroism rarely equalled. This too, notwithstanding that his creditors had compromised their claims, and as a matter of law he was under no obligation to pay a dollar. This task, set for himself, he had well-nigh accomplished when death overtook him. He died at his post as surely as ever soldier



Wayland <sup>W</sup>usk



died upon the field of battle. It may be said of him as Bacon said of Raleigh, "I know that he could toil terribly." He shunned no obstacles, avoided no difficulty, but learned with Milton to "scorn delights and live laborious days."

#### ANNUAL REUNIONS

A reunion of the bodies was held on the 15th of June, 1906, and proved so successful that a two-days' reunion was held on the 7th and 8th of the same month in 1907. At both of these reunions degrees were conferred in full form in all four bodies and every effort was put forth to make the work impressive and instructive to the candidates. Both reunions were successful not only in the high character of the Master Masons who sought in them the light of the Scottish Rite, but they made possible the accomplishment of a plan which the Commander-in-Chief had in mind since his installation. When Aurora Grata Cathedral was purchased in 1887 by the Aurora Grata Association it was intended that the bodies of the Rite should acquire a controlling interest as fast as their funds would permit, but the financial troubles of 1896 "impeded for a time the progress of the work." Under the enthusiastic guidance of Ill. Commander-in-Chief Luscomb it became possible for the four bodies to purchase enough stock to become

majority holders in July, 1907, immediately following the reunion, and we came into control of our home after twenty years of effort to that end.

#### CONCLUSION

As we stand on the threshold of the second century of Aurora Grata the future seems to hold for us but bows of promise. We look around us and behold our beautiful Temple, proudly standing among the buildings of our city and bearing on the corner-stone "Aurora Grata Cathedral, A. A. Scottish Rite, N. M. J." To us it is dear; to many of us it is our Masonic birthplace, and to all our Scottish Rite home. Perhaps the noblest privilege we enjoy in this world is fraternal association with our fellow man. Friendship and brotherly love are operative and not speculative in Aurora Grata. Dissension has not crossed our portals these many years, and to the bond of union and friendship is added a sincere interest and hearty coöperation in the labors of the Scottish Rite. We have a membership of more than nine hundred of the most energetic workers in the Rite that ever gathered under one banner. We have a corps of workers who confer the degrees in a manner so finished and impressive that there is always a large attend-

ance, and the fame of our work is spreading throughout the land. We have a leader full of enthusiasm and attachment for the Rite, untiring in energy, careful of every detail that makes for perfection in the work, and so watchful over the interests of our beautiful Rite that he commands the coöperation of a large band of workers. Proud of their privilege, they are building on the rock foundation that has been laid a Masonic edifice which shall continue to stand proudly before all the world, a credit to our city and to every Mason who can claim the distinction of being a member of the Aurora Grata Scottish Rite bodies.

In the future, as in the past, "May brotherly love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us."





## APPENDIX

- I Thirty-second Degree Patent of Mordecai Myers.
- II Appointment of Mordecai Myers in Sublime Grand Consistory.
- III Officers of the Aurora Grata bodies.



THIRTY-SECOND DEGREE PATENT OF  
MORDECAI MYERS  
FIRST MASTER OF AURORA GRATA LODGE OF PERFECTION  
DATED, NOVEMBER 8, 1808

Universae Terrarum Orbis Architectonis per Horum Ingeniis.

Deus Unumque Suis.

Ordo Chao.



Deus Unumque Suis. Ordo Chao. Universae Terrarum Orbis Architectonis per Horum Ingeniis.   
 *(Faint handwritten notes and signatures, including 'Jean Gabriel Chao', '1788', and other illegible text.)*

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Thirty-second Degree Patent of Mordecai Myers, First Master of Aurora Grata Lodge of Perfection  
Dated November 8, 1808

*M. Myers*

*M. Myers*



APPOINTMENT OF  
MORDECAI MYERS  
IN THE SUBLIME GRAND CONSISTORY  
NOVEMBER 24, 1808







AURORA GRATA

LODGE OF PERFECTION

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Date of Charter: November 6, 1808

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OFFICERS FOR 1908-1909

HENRY A. POTTER	.....	Thrice Potent Master
HENRY C. BARTHMAN	.....	Deputy Master
WALTER D. GRAHAM	.....	Senior Warden
FRANCIS G. COATES	.....	Junior Warden
RUSSELL L. BOYER	.....	Orator
AUGUSTUS K. SLOAN, 33°	.....	Treasurer
THEO. A. TAYLOR	.....	Secretary
CHAS. A. BROCKAWAY	.....	Master of Ceremonies
WALTER H. YOUNG	.....	Hospitaler
HENRY G. STORY	.....	Guard
HENRY EDEBOHLS, 33°	.....	Tyler
CHAS. H. LUSCOMB, 33°	.....	Trustee
T. JEFF. STEVENS, 33°	.....	Trustee
EDWARD H. WATSON, 33°	.....	Trustee

AURORA GRATA COUNCIL

PRINCES OF JERUSALEM

Date of Charter: June 6, 1866

OFFICERS FOR 1908-1909

WILMUTH E. BLACKBURN.....	Sovereign Prince
CHARLES G. RAYNOR.....	High Priest
FRED L. POMEROY.....	Senior Warden
PAUL M. GOODRICH.....	Junior Warden
T. JEFF. STEVENS, 33°.....	Treasurer
THEO. A. TAYLOR.....	Secretary
EDWARD W. WALTON.....	Master of Ceremonies
JOHN DENNINGER.....	Hospitaler
WM. E. MERRISS.....	Master of Entrances
HENRY EDEBOHLS, 33°.....	Tyler
ROBT. JUDSON KENWORTHY, 33°.....	Trustee
JOHN W. RICHARDSON, 33°.....	Trustee
W. CLIVE CROSBY.....	Trustee

AURORA GRATA

CHAPTER OF ROSE CROIX

---

Date of Charter: June 6, 1866

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OFFICERS FOR 1908-1909

CHAS. A. TONSOR.....	Most Wise Master
ALFRED A. ADAMS.....	Senior Warden
FRED W. DILLINGHAM.....	Junior Warden
WILLIAM B. DALL.....	Orator
SAMUEL P. HARTMAN.....	Treasurer
THEO. A. TAYLOR.....	Secretary
JOHN A. MORISON.....	Master of Ceremonies
WALTER H. YOUNG.....	Hospitaler
ALBERT E. BOBO.....	Guard
HENRY EDEBOHLS, 33°.....	Tyler
EDWARD R. KNOWLES, 33°.....	Trustee
ANDREW PECK.....	Trustee
MATTHIAS GOODERSON.....	Trustee

AURORA GRATA

CONSISTORY, S. P. R. S.

Date of Charter: September 19, 1889

OFFICERS FOR 1908-1911

CHARLES H. LUSCOMB, 33° . . . Commander-in-Chief  
ROBT. JUDSON KENWORTHY, 33° 1st Lieut-Com.  
EDWARD R. KNOWLES, 33° . . . . . 2d Lieut-Com.  
WILLIAM O. CAMPBELL, 33° . . . . . Orator  
READ G. DILWORTH, 33° . . . . . \* . Chancellor  
AUGUSTUS K. SLOAN, 33° . . . . . Treasurer  
THEO. A. TAYLOR, 32° . . . . . Secretary  
W. CLIVE CROSBY, 32° . . . . . Master of Ceremonies  
RUSSELL L. BOYER, 32° . . . Engineer and Seneschal  
JOHN DENNINGER, 32° . . . . . Hospitaller  
ARTHUR E. KING, 32° . . . . . Standard Bearer  
ARTHUR E. CAMPBELL, 32° . . . . . Guard  
HENRY EDEBOHLS, 33° . . . . . Sentinel  
JOHN W. RICHARDSON, 33° . . . . . Trustee  
EDWIN D. WASHBURNE, 33° . . . . . Trustee  
JOHN D. ACKER, 33° . . . . . Trustee











