**John Quincy Adams view on Masons**

***A President’s Take on Things***

**President John Quincy Adams** (the sixth U.S. President, and the son of John Adams, the second U.S. President) wrote extensively AGAINST the institution of Freemasonry. He summed it all up nicely in one of his letters to a high-level Freemason, Colonel William L. Stone — a “Knight Templar,” who had to drink wine from a real human skull in order to obtain that “degree” through the rite of the “Fifth Libation” (which occult rite is also practiced by satanists, by the way). This man had ceased his active involvement in the lodge, but was not fully repentant and willing to FULLY secede from membership.

Nevertheless, Colonel Stone was quite upset about the William Morgan murder. And although he tried to minimize the evil nature of the institution through somewhat of an apologetic approach with his answers to Mr. Adams’ inquiries, he was still often quite honest about certain facts within his written replies on many points. Thus, he was persecuted by his fellow Masons for further exposing their evil history and practices (and confirming what was already exposed), despite the fact that he was only reluctantly providing the information that he did.

The following is the text from that letter. However, please note that the footnotes (found at the bottom of this webpage), and the bracketed notes within the text, are mine; and I provided them simply for additional clarity:

*To William L. Stone, Esq.[[1]](http://kennethcopelandblog.com/2013/01/18/are-the-copelands-freemasons-separating-fact-from-fallacy/" \l "Footnote1)*

***Quincy, 29 August, 1832.***

*Dear Sir:—Long, and, I fear, tedious, as you have found my last letter, I was compelled by a reluctance at making it longer, to compress the observations in it upon the intrinsic nature of the Masonic oaths, obligations, and penalties within a compass insufficient to disclose my opinion, and the reasons upon which it is founded.*

*I had said to you that the institution of Freemasonry was vicious, in its first step, the initiation oath, obligation, and penalty of the Entered Apprentice [i.e., the first degree]. To sustain this opinion, I assigned to you five reasons. Because they were,*

*1. Contrary to the laws of the land, extra-judicially [i.e., outside of a court of law] taken and administered.*

*2. In violation of the positive precept of Jesus Christ [i.e., to not swear any extra-judicial oath at all; see Matthew 5:33-37].*

*3. A pledge to keep undefined secrets, the swearer being ignorant of their nature.*

*4. A pledge to the penalty of death for violation of the oath.*

*5. A pledge to a mode of death—cruel, unusual, unfit for utterance from human lips.*

*If, in the statement of these five objections, upon principles of law, religion, and morals, there be anything unsound, I invite you to point it out. But if you contest either of my positions, I must entreat you not to travel out of the record.*

*I might ask you not to consider it a refutation of either of these reasons, to say that you and all other honest and honorable Masons have never so understood or practiced upon this oath, obligation, and penalty. The inquiry is not what you practice, or that of others has been, but what is the obligation, its oath, and its penalty.*

*I must request of you to give me no explanation of this oath, obligation, and penalty, directly contrary to their unequivocal import—that you will not explain black by saying that it means white, or even by alleging that you so understand it. I particularly beg not to be told that honorable, intelligent, and virtuous men—George Washington and Joseph Warren for example—understood that the penalty of death for treachery meant the death of martyrdom for fidelity.*

*I would willingly be spared the necessity of replying to the averment [i.e., positive statement] that the patterns of honor and virtue whom I have just named, with a long catalogue [catalog] of such men, have taken this oath, and bound themselves to this obligation, under this penalty; for I might deem it proper to inquire whether the very act of binding such men, by such oath, to such obligation, under such penalty, is not among the sins of the institution.*

*I must ask you to suppose that such institution had never existed—that it were now to be formed, and that you were one of ten or twenty virtuous and intelligent men about to found a charitable and convivial secret association. Suppose a committee of such a meeting appointed to draw up a constitution for the society should report the Entered Apprentice’s oath, obligation, and penalty, as a form of initiation for the admission of members. I do not ask you whether you would vote for the acceptance of the report; but what would you think of the reporters?*

*I consider this as the true and only test of the inherent and essential character of Masonry, and it was under this conviction that I told you that the Entered Apprentice’s oath was sufficient to settle, in my mind, the immoral character of the institution.*

*It is, perhaps, too much to ask of you an explicit assent to these positions, because you may consider it an acknowledgment of error. But this is the first and fundamental consideration, from which I draw the conclusion that Masonry ought forever to be abolished. It is wrong—essentially wrong—a seed of evil, which can never produce any good. It may perish in the ground—it may never rise to bear fruit; but whatever fruit it does bear must be rank poison; it can never prove a blessing but by its barrenness.*

*My objections to this seminal principle of Masonry apply, in all their force, to the single obligation, the form of which is given in the appendix to your volume (page 3), where it is stated to have been the only obligation, taken for all three degrees, so late as 1730, when only three degrees of Masonry were known. The oath is in fewer words, but more comprehensive; for the obligation is to keep “the secrets or secrecy of Masons or Masonry.” There is indeed a qualification in the promise not to write, print, mark, &c., which seems to keep the obligations within the verge of the law. For the promise is to reveal nothing whereby the secret might be unlawfully obtained. The penalty is also death, not for constancy, but for treachery, ” so that there shall be no remembrance of me among Masons.”*

*The oath, obligation, and penalty, the only one taken in all the degrees of Masonry known but one century ago, is the prolific parent of all the degrees, and all the oaths, obligations, and penalties since invented, and of the whole progeny of crimes descended from them. The natural and unavoidable tendency of such an obligation is the multiplication of its kind. This tendency is among the most obvious causes, which have led to the interdiction of all such oaths and obligations, by the civil, the ecclesiastical, and the moral law. The obligation is to keep undefined secrets. As they are undefined in the obligation itself, there is nothing in the constitutions of Masonry to define them, or to secure uniformity either of the secrets or of the obligations. Every lodge may vary the secrets, obligations, and penalties; and, accordingly, they have been so varied that scarcely any two adhering Masons give the same account of them. Almost the only defense of Masonry, after the publication, of the books of David Bernard and Avery Allyn, consisted in efforts to discredit them, by denying that the oaths, obligations, and penalties were truly stated by them. A secret institution in three degrees, the secret of each degree being withheld from the members of the degrees inferior to it, is a perpetual temptation to the initiated to multiply the secrets and the degrees. Thus it is that the lodges have grown into chapters, the chapters into encampments, the encampments into consistories; and, so long ago as December, 1802, the grand inspectors of the United States of America issued, at Charleston, South Carolina, a circular announcing the existence and names of the thirty-three degrees of Masonry.*

*The secrets, to the keeping of which the Entered Apprentice is sworn, are indefinite. In genuine Masonry, when revealed to him, he finds them frivolous. You acknowledged that your first feeling upon receiving them was disappointment. So must it be with every reflecting, intelligent man; nor is it conceivable that any such Entered Apprentice, on leaving the lodge after his admission, should fail to have observed, with pain and mortification, the contrast between the awful solemnity of the oath which he has taken, and the extreme insignificance of the secrets revealed to him. It is to meet this unavoidable impression that the institution is graduated. The lure of curiosity is still held out, and its attractive power is sinewed,[[2]](http://kennethcopelandblog.com/2013/01/18/are-the-copelands-freemasons-separating-fact-from-fallacy/" \l "Footnote2) by the very disappointment which the apprentice has experienced. He takes the degrees of Fellowcraft and Master Mason, and still finds disappointment—still finds himself bound by tremendous oaths to keep trifling and frivolous secrets. The practice of the institution is deceptive and fraudulent. It holds out to him a promise which it never performs. Its promise is light; its performance is darkness.*

*But it introduces him to intimate, confidential, and exclusive relations, with a select and limited circle of other men—and to the same confidential and exclusive relations, with great multitudes of men belonging to every civilized nation throughout the globe. The Entered Apprentice’s oath is merely an oath of secrecy; but the candidate who takes it has pledged himself, by his application for admission, to conform to all the ancient established usages and customs of the fraternity. And the charge of the master, given him upon the Bible, compasses, and square, presents him with three precious jewels—a listening ear, a silent tongue, and a faithful heart—all, of course, exclusively applicable to the secrets revealed to him; and he is told that the listening ear teaches him to listen to the instructions of the worshipful master, but more especially to the cries of a worthy distressed brother; and the faithful heart teaches him to be faithful to the instructions of the worshipful master at all times, but more especially to keep and conceal the secrets of Masonry, and those of a brother, when given to him in charge as such, that they may remain as secure and inviolable in his (the Entered Apprentice’s) breast as in his (the brother’s) own. Two check-words are also presented to him—truth and union—the explanation of which concludes that the heart and tongue of Freemasons join in promoting each other’s welfare, and rejoicing in each other’s prosperity.*

*Thus the essential nature of the Entered Apprentice’s oath, preceded by his pledge to conform to all the established usages and customs of the fraternity, and followed by the charge of the master, is secret and exclusive favor, assistance, and fidelity to the brotherhood and brothers of the craft.*

*Now combine together the disappointment which every intelligent accepted Mason must feel, at the puerility of the secrets revealed to him, compared with the appalling solemnity of the oath exacted from him for the purchase of his lambskin apron, and the secret ties with which he has linked himself with multitudes of other men, exclusively to favor, assist, and be faithful to each other, and acknowledge that the temptation to make the secrets more important, and to turn them to better account to the craft, must be irresistible. Judge this system a priori,[[3]](http://kennethcopelandblog.com/2013/01/18/are-the-copelands-freemasons-separating-fact-from-fallacy/" \l "Footnote3) without reference to any of the consequences, which it has produced, and say if human ingenuity could invent an engine better suited to conspiracy of any kind. The Entered Apprentice returns from the lodge with his curiosity stimulated, his imagination bewildered, and his reason disappointed. The mixture of religion and morality, blended with falsehood and imposture, which pervade all the ceremonies of initiation, is like arsenic mingled up with balm.*

*“Most dangerous  
Is that temptation which doth lead us on  
To sin in loving virtue.”*

*If the candidate has been educated to a sincere and heart-felt reverence for religion and the Bible, and if he exercises his reason he knows that all the tales of Jachin and Boaz, of Solomon’s temple, of Hiram Abiff and Jubela, Jubelo, and Jubehim, are impostures—poisons poured into the perennial fountain of truth—traditions exactly resembling those reprobated [i.e., denounced as reprobate and ungodly] by Jesus Christ, as making the word of God of none effect. If, as in this age but too often happens, he enters the lodge a skeptic, the use of the Bible there, if it have any effect upon him, will turn him out a confirmed infidel. The sincere and rational believer in the gospel can find no confirmation of his faith in the unwarrantable uses made of the Holy Scriptures to shed an unction of their sanctity around the fabulous fabric of Freemasonry; while the reprobate miscreant will be taught the uses to which fraud and secrecy may turn the lessons of piety and virtue, inculcated in the sublimest effusions of divine inspiration. In those Scriptures we are told that when “the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God,” they became idolaters, and were carried into captivity. Their cities then were soon filled with a mongrel race of Babylonians and Assyrians, who perverted the word of God with the impostures of paganism; burned their children in fire, to the gods of Sepharvaim; and “feared the Lord and served their graven images,”—an emblem of Freemasonry far more illustrative of its character than the tragedy of Hiram Abiff.*[*[4]*](http://kennethcopelandblog.com/2013/01/18/are-the-copelands-freemasons-separating-fact-from-fallacy/#Footnote4)

*The Entered Apprentice’s oath is, therefore, in its own nature, a seminal principle of conspiracy; and this objection applies to the only oath originally taken in all the degrees of Freemasonry at its first institution. The ostensible primitive purposes of Freemasonry were all comprised in good fellowship. But to good fellowship, whether of labor or refreshment, neither secrecy, nor oath, nor penalties are necessary or congenial. In the original institution of Freemasonry there was then an ostensible and a secret object, and by the graduation of the order the means were supplied of converting it to any evil purpose of associated power, screened from the danger of detection. Hence, all the bitter fruits which the institution has borne in Germany, in France, in Mexico, and lastly, in this our beloved country. Nor could they have failed to be produced in Great Britain, but that, by sharp and biting statutes, they have been confined within the limits of the ostensible object of the brotherhood—good fellowship.*

*[I] am, with much respect, dear sir,*

*Your friend and servant,*

*—John Quincy Adams*

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