



PAPER

Antient Landmarks According to Fred & Charlie



Summary: The link with Halliwell's five Antient Landmarks.

The *First* had gone rather well.

'Lovely Charge Fred, George delivers it beautifully.'

Fred agreed - and seeing it was empty, silently slid his glass across the bar.

Taking the hint admirably, Charlie nodded to the barman.

'Two pints, of St Clements, please, Bill.'

Glasses having clinked, Charlie mused:

'What was actually meant by 'adhering to the ancient landmarks of the Order' Fred? What were the ancient landmarks? - Surely not official mile-stones to the Masonic Hall?'

Fred simultaneously raised heavenwards his glass, his eyes and his thoughts, but still managed a polite smile. *'When Modern Grand Lodge was formed in 1717 Charlie, a thirst for knowledge had swept across Europe. London was full of coffee houses, gentlemen's dining clubs, philosophical societies. All seeking the ultimate Truth, whatever that might be. Our Speculative Forefathers therefore spent the years trying to answer two basic questions. Firstly, what exactly was this Speculative Freemasonry they had just formed? Secondly, how could it be distinguished from all the other charitable dining clubs around? Sensibly perhaps, they looked to the operative masons for guidance.'*

Fred sat back, half-closed his eyes and reflected:

'Drawing on one of the oldest surviving Masonic documents in the British Museum, the Halliwell Manuscript of 1390, Antient Landmarks were defined as the basic guide to a Mason's thoughts, words and actions. Accordingly, those operative landmarks, if they were still considered relevant in 1717, might provide 'Modern Grand Lodge' with the moral lessons and fraternal obligations to be taught in the new Speculative rituals. It was suggested that an acceptable Antient Landmark must satisfy two tests: Namely, that it must have existed in operative masonry, since the time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary; and secondly, that it was an essential element in the nature of their community and of such importance that Freemasonry would no longer be Freemasonry if it were removed.'

Modern Grand Lodge also recognised the importance of constancy. In James Anderson's General Regulations, first drafted in 1721, No. 39 stated firmly that:

'The Grand Lodge has in itself the power to make new regulations, as it sees fit, providing always that the Antient Landmarks be carefully preserved...'

But which Antient Landmarks? Around 1700 there were many in current use around the country in the various semi-independent operative lodges. Halliwell's Charges of 1390 however, had five qualifications in common that seemingly passed both the above tests as potential Landmarks of Speculative Freemasonry.

1. That a Mason professes a belief in God or a Supreme Being or the Great Architect Of The Universe.
2. That the Volume of the Sacred Law is an essential and indispensable part of the Lodge, to be open in full view throughout the time the Brethren are at labour.
3. That a Mason must be male, free-born and of mature age.
4. That a Mason owes allegiance first to the Sovereign and then to the Craft
5. That a Mason believes in the immortality of the soul'

Charlie finally broke his attentive silence:

'They all seem pretty reasonable to me, Fred.'

Fred replied:

'Not all Grand Lodges overseas would agree with you, Charlie. Some devised lists of twenty or more landmarks for their individual realms. Many in North America favoured a more explanatory set of ten. Typically these defined a Mason as someone who; believes in God; accepts moral values; exemplifies honour and integrity Believes in the Brotherhood of Man; fulfils his obligations; practices charity; exercises Brotherly love; is committed to his family; demonstrates Patriotism; supports Widows and Orphans.'

Charlie nodded:

'Comprehensive... but didn't George include most of those in that Charge of his, Fred?'

Fred laughed:

'Yes, as desirable aims but not as Landmarks, Charlie. Despite the urgency in 1717 to establish any Landmarks and given 300 years for deliberation, no one has come forward with a definitive list. So perhaps the best description of what it is to be a Freemason in 2019, can still be found in Halliwell's five Antient Landmarks of 600 years ago.'

Glasses were emptied in quiet agreement. *'To Halliwell.'*



Recommended use of Papers

Papers offer a simple, direct means of advancement in a particular aspect of Masonic knowledge. They can be used in a variety of ways:

- Read at home for private study
- Shared for pre-reading by members of a discussion group
- Read aloud in Lodge or Chapter, or in an LOI/COI/new members forum
 - Followed by 'any questions'
 - As a precursor to a discussion (in which case much more time is needed, possibly more than double that allocated to the paper itself)
 - Supported by audio-visual aids, if necessary

They can be delivered by a single person or split into bite-sized pieces and read by multiple presenters (in which case, the speaker(s) should have read and practiced the delivery of the paper beforehand).

If the paper is to be used to introduce a discussion, the presenter will need to have thought about the material, done a little research, and prepared some open questions to engage with the audience. Kipling's dictum can be of help in preparing open questions, which should begin with one of his 'serving men', as follows: *'I keep six honest serving men (they taught me all I knew). Their names are, What and Why and When and How and Where and Who'*. Rudyard Kipling

*Note: All biblical passages are taken from the Authorized King James version and any reference to ritual will be from Emulation unless otherwise specified.

For further papers and other learning materials visit *Solomon* at solomon.ugle.org.uk

Don't forget to follow *Solomon* on Social Media



@SolomonUGLE



@SolomonUGLE

Acknowledgement:

UGLE gratefully acknowledges Michael Lee as the author of this document and for his permission to publish it in this form.

Fred and Charlie character drawings courtesy of Eddie Wildman.

Disclaimer:

The views or interpretations contained in this document are those of the author. UGLE recognises there are many different interpretations of ritual, symbolism and history. It does not endorse the contents of this document or of any external websites linked to within the document.

Copyright:

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from The United Grand Lodge of England in writing.