

# WOMEN MASONS OF RECORD

*(Gleanings from "Masonic Enlightenment", United Grand Lodges of Germany.)*

Every Master Mason knows that a woman cannot be made a Mason under a strict law of the Order. Few, however, know that there were women Masons before — many — who were admitted into the Order under forced circumstances in almost all cases. They had to be taken in after discovery that they had learned the mysteries of the Order by eavesdropping. It just proves that there is nothing men can hide from women whose "strongest weakness" is curiosity.

Take the case of Catherine Babington (1815-1886) of Kentucky. It is said that at 16 she knew so much of Masonry that it was thought best to initiate her. For a year and a half she had been watching each meeting of the Lodge in Princess, Furnace, Ky., while hiding in a pulpit in the Lodge. An uncle discovered her and after much discussion in the Lodge it was agreed to obligate her. However, she was not made a member and she never attempted to visit a Lodge.

Another lady, Mrs. Beaton (1717-1802) of Norfolk, England, concealed herself in a Lodge room and had learned the secrets of the first degree when discovered and initiated into the Order.

Somewhat different was the case of Catherine I of Russia. She was formerly a mistress of Peter The Great,

who was the first to establish Masonic Lodges in Russia, and as such was also the Emperor's adviser. Finally Peter married Catherine and made her Empress in 1712. Shortly thereafter the Emperor gave her permission to establish the Order of St. Catherine, an Order of Knighthood for women. She was Grand Mistress of the Order which was a semi-masonic body.

In Ireland, Elizabeth St. Leger (1693-1773) is said to have been initiated at the age of 17 in Cork about 1710. She was the daughter of a Viscount in whose house the Lodge meetings were held. Through a chink in the wall she listened to all the ceremonies being conducted. Upon being discovered, her father and brothers decided to complete her Masonic knowledge by initiating her. She married Richard Aldworth and became a patroness of the Craft until she died in 1773 at the ripe age of 80.

The wife of a French general became a Republican heroine in the French revolution. She was Madame de Xaintrailles, a Major of Cavalry. As a reward for her extraordinary courage, she was given the first degree of real Masonry — not Adoptive Masonry. It is said that she assisted in various degree works of her Lodge, "Les Freres Aristes".

One Mrs. Bell in Newcastle, England, made two holes on one wall of the Lodge and from an adjoining room watched the proceedings of the meetings. She afterwards claimed to

have "discovered the secrets of the Craft", and advertised in the "Newcastle Weekly Chronicle of January 6, 1770 that any woman who would come to her will be instructed in the secrets of Masonry. It is not stated if the 'ad' brought her customers. In Klattau, Bohemia, a women's Lodge was in existence in 1789, the membership of which, it is said, was confined to wives of Masons. The Baroness Chanowsky de Lagendorf was the only exception. Her husband was not a Mason. So successful was the women's Lodge, "The Three Crowned Hearts", that the parent Lodge, "Sincerite", died.

Perhaps the case that raised the biggest rumpus was that of Countess Helene Hadik Barkoczy of Hungary. A highly educated woman, she came to possess by inheritance a large Masonic library and made an earnest study of the Craft. Through close acquaintances in the Fraternity, she was initiated in Lodge Egyenloseg under the Grand Orient of Hungary. On learning of the violation of the statutes, the Grand Orient instituted proceedings and the Deputy Master was expelled, the other officers dropped from membership lists, while the

other members were suspended for varying periods. Later the Grand Orient declared the woman's admission to the Fraternity null and void and forbade her admittance into any Lodge under penalty of having their charters arrested. Other Grand Lodges were requested to do the same.

These are only a few of the women Masons who are on record. A good many more, it is said, are named by William R. Denslow in his "10,000 Famous Freemasons".

Back here in the Philippines there was one woman who, it claimed was a Mason. She was the daughter of Faustino Villaruel of Lodge Walana. It was her father who initiated the movement for a Grand Regional Council in the Philippines in 1893 together with Apolinario Mabini and several prominent Masons of the revolutionary era. No mention of her being a Mason, however, is made in Kalaw's history of Philippine Masonry, unless it has escaped us. But the belief is persistent and seems to be widespread. The first Eastern Star Chapter in the Philippines to admit Filipino members is named after this lady.



## *Medical Clinic For Masons*

The Acacia Medical Clinic is now open for consultation. Masons and thier families may see any of the Physicians listed below during their respective times of assignment on the ground floor of the Plaridel Masonic Temple, 1440 San Marcelino St., Manila:

Monday .....	Dr. Reginaldo Pascual .....	5 - 6 p.m.
Tuesday .....	Dr. Eugene Stransky .....	5 - 6 p.m.
Wednesday .....	Dr. Manuel T. Rivera .....	4 - 5 p.m.
Thursday .....	Dr. Roman Kamatoy .....	4 - 5 p.m.
Friday .....	Dr. Teodorico Santos .....	4 - 5 p.m.
	Dr. Juan Fernando .....	4 - 5 p.m.
Saturday .....	Dr. George A. Ros .....	3 - 4 p.m.
	Dr. Damaceno J. Ago .....	4 - 5 p.m.
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