

Preston, Rt. W. Past Master; Bro. Donaldson moved that as an acknowledgment for his past services and steady conduct in supporting the Antient Rights and privileges of this Lodge during his Presidency, he was presented with a jewel at the expense of this Lodge . . . Resolved that five Guineas be allowed for the said jewel" unquote.

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MY REFUSAL TO BE SWORN

By George M. Dallas, Past Grand Master
Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania
January 1836

Citizen, Public Servant and Mason

Reprinted from Wisconsin Freemason

"During the anti-Masonic agitation and excitement, calling into action religious fanaticism to act in concert with political profligacy and political prostitution, the man who had the courage to stand up in the defence of Masonry, and bear aloft the banner of her undying principles, was a demi-god in comparison with the leaders of that foul persecution, that sought then (as it does now) the ostracism and destruction of all who oppose the interests of a class.

"In January, 1836, George M. Dallas was summoned to Harrisburg, to gratify the political animosity of certain political leaders in that State, by giving testimony regarding the secrets of the Craft. He was detained and threatened with imprisonment, but true to himself and his manhood, made to the Committee the following protests, which will forever stand a withering rebuke to the disgraceful actions of that disgraceful body that sought to use the power of the State for the accomplishment of their own private ends:

"Gentlemen of the Committee:

"I am a citizen of Pennsylvania by birth and constant residence. Having imbibed in early youth, I still retain, a strong sense of the free spirit of her institutions; and am unconscious of ever having, directly or indirectly, intentionally or inadvertently, committed an act or uttered a sentiment repugnant to her constitution, inconsistent with here laws, injurious to her morals, or derogatory to her character. My present purpose is to do that which, under existing circumstances, best harmonizes with my past life, and with an unabated devotion to her highest, purest, and most lasting interests.

"I am a member of the society of Freemasons. It is more than twenty years since I became so. At that period the example of the wisest and truest patriots, of Dr. Franklin, General Washington, of General Warren, of General La Fayette, and of many near and dear friends, were naturally alluring. Public opinion designated the association as alike virtuous, useful, and harmless; and legislation, which never discountenanced the connection, subsequently and expressly encouraged its continuance by signal marks of approval. In passing through the forms of admission, I voluntarily assumed obligations and duties in themselves perfectly compatible with the paramount obligations and duties of a citizen to his country, and tributary to the pursuits of enlarged philanthropy. If in the spheres of the institution beyond what is termed the Master's degree-spheres which I have not entered-or in other regions of its existence, there are, as I cannot believe., practices or ceremonies opposite in their tendencies, they are irreconcilable with its essential aims and true character. Certainly of any such I am entirely ignorant. It is however not my design or wish to eulogize or defend Freemasonry—I am neither authorized or required to do so—my only object, is distinctly to explain and justify my own personal attitude and actions in regard to this committee.

"The ninth article of the Constitution of Pennsylvania, entitled a Declaration of Rights, sets forth, unalterably establishes, the general, great, and essential principle of Liberty and Free Government.' It was intended by this article to guaranty the citizen against the inroads of powers, exercised from whatever quarters, and under whatsoever pretext—and it is formally declared, 'that everything in it is excepted out of the general powers of Government, and shall forever remain inviolate.' It is above the reach of legislation. We have no 'omnipotence of parliament'. Neither this committee, nor the House of Representatives, nor the General Assembly, nor all the organized Departments of the Government united, can touch, in order

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to evade or violate any one of its provisions. It is a sacred repository of the practical and substantial rights and liberties of the people, enumerated and reserved—inherent and inalienable. When these shall be supinely yielded up, the freedom which we now justly boast, must become illusory and vapid.

“As a private citizen of Pennsylvania, I claim, with especial reference to this Article of her Constitution, to possess and to enjoy rights and liberties which no earthly power can abridge or destroy—nor will I consent, when mindful of the gratitude I owe to the mischiefs which a surrender or waiver of those rights and liberties, on an occasion so ostensible as this, might produce. I will not consent that human authority shall, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience. I will not consent to discredit the declaration that the free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the inviolable rights of man. I will not consent to consider as idle and nugatory the emphatic precaution, that the people shall be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and possessions, from unreasonable searches and seizures, I will not consent to hold my rights and liberties of private intercourse, private sentiment, and private business, subject to the domiciliary visitations, the changeable majority, or the ideal policy of any body of men whatever.

“I understand this committee to be empowered by the House of Representatives to investigate what are called the evils of Freemasonry, and for that purpose to send for persons and papers; and I am summoned by subpoena, tested by Thaddeus Stevens, Esq., its Chairman, from my home, family, and professional pursuits, to attend here, in order to communicate, as a witness under oath, what I may know in relation to the subject of inquiry.

“The society of Freemasons is, in this state, strictly of a private nature. It is not incorporated. Like other voluntary asso-

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ciations, it is neither formed nor forbidden by law. Without, therefore, pausing to illustrate and enforce the remark that it would be equally constitutional to investigate the evils of the Society of Friends, or other societies of religion, or societies of politicians, or societies of convivial gayety or, of any of the countless combinations of partnerships by which men strive to realize calmness of conscience, the property and reputation, and the pursuit of happiness, I respectfully affirm to this committee my absolute conviction, that the proceeding which attempts, under the forms of legislation and through my own agency, to pry into, expose, condemn, and ridicule my personal doings and relations with this body of citizens, is as utterly inconsistent with the tenor and terms of the constitution as its expansion to similar cases would be fatal to freedom.

"Superadded to the considerations at which I have thus glanced, it is impossible for me to be insensible to the just dictates of personal honor. Assuredly this sentiment should never restrain any one from denouncing what is criminal or dishonest, and were I acquainted with anything of that nature in the operation and tendencies of Freemasonry, nothing could bind me to silence. But I was received by this association into its own confidence, upon my own application. I have been allowed a knowledge of the modes in which its members identify each other, and avoid deceptions upon their benevolence. At a time when neither law, nor public opinion, nor my own conscience, suggested a doubt of its correctness, I engaged myself to secrecy, and I cannot, without a sense of treachery and degradation which would embitter all my future life, prove false to my promise. Better, by far, endure the penalties of alleged contumacy, be they what they may.

"I have thought it due to the committee and to myself, to preface by these explanatory remarks, my refusal to be sworn."

-- "G. M. DALLAS."

Brother the Hon. George Mifflin Dallas was born in the City of Philadelphia, on the 10th day of July, 1792, and died there on the last day of the year 1864.

He was the son of the Hon. Alexander James Dallas, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States under President Madison. His father, like himself, was also a distinguished member of the Bar of Philadelphia.

Brother Dallas was a prominent man in the city and state of his

nativity, and in the councils of the Nation. He held at various times the offices of Mayor of the city, Deputy Attorney-General of the city, United States Senator from the State, Attorney-General of the State, Vice-President of the United States, Minister Plenipotentiary to the several Courts of St. Peterburg and St. James, of these, his duties were ably, efficiently, and faithfully discharged, and the fame of his public career remains untarnished, and is known and respected in countries other than our own.

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THE INSTALLATION CEREMONY

By Sidney M. Austin, P.G.M.

We have every reason to believe that the ceremony of installation, in some form or another, is of very ancient origin, in fact there is evidence that it formed an important part of the rites used in those ancient mysteries of pre-Christian days.

However, we have no direct evidence that would tend to cause us to believe that a distinct ceremony of installation was made use of during the days of Operative Masonry.

Therefore, the Masonic Ceremony of installation is generally accepted as being among the younger of the Masonic Ceremonies, nevertheless, we do know, and are justly proud of the fact, that it has been in use for about 240 years.

In spite of its comparatively modern origin, much of the material used in the ceremony is of very ancient vintage.

The 15 charges to which the incoming Master must freely signify his assent were taken from the various Old Charges of the order.

These old charges are Manuscripts which were laboriously written long before the arts of reading and writing were universal accomplishments and it is believed that these manuscripts formed part of the ceremonies connected with the lodges of our Operative Brethren.

They have been discovered from time to time since the period of transition from operative to speculative Masonry and are now counted among the prized possessions of various museums and lodges.

The oldest among them is believed to have been written about the year 1390, however, the similarity of their contents tends to cause our scholars to believe that all of them must have been copied