

## *Others May Care To Know . . .*

**Sonny Shortlegs**

### **WHO IS WHO AMONG THE FOUNDERS AND DEVELOPERS OF MASONIC RITUAL?**

**THOMAS DUNCKERLY** — Born in London, England, October 23, 1724, died in 1795, supposed to be the son of the Prince of Wales, later George II, King of England, very active Mason and wrote several of the 'charges' as well as revising parts of the ritual.

**WILLIAM PRESTON** — Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, July 28, 1742, died 1818. Came to London in 1760, joined the Masons in 1762. He attended college, acquired knowledge of Latin and Greek, thus enriching himself in languages which might be the key to the finer mysteries of learning. He was a printer and proof reader and devoted much of his time to literary pursuits. Becoming Deputy Grand Secretary, he arranged the General Regulations and completed an appendix to the Book of Constitution. Being highly educated, possessing a retentive memory and extensive Masonic connections, he soon became master of the subject. Noted as a ritualist, instructor and the founder of a system of lectures still extant, he published his first "Illustrations of Masonry" in 1772 and this was followed by eleven more during his life time and two more after his death. The Prestonian Lectures stand even to this day as a monument to his endeavors and constitute the foundation of ritual in America. Two editions of his "Illustrations of Masonry" were published in America, both in 1804, one in Alexandria, Virginia and one in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

**PETER WM. GILKES**—Born May 1, 1765 and died in 1833, was the third among the outstanding English ritualists. He taught daily classes in Freemasonry, emphasized the Third Degree over others and spent most of his life in a revision, dissemination and explanation of the ritual. He was regarded as one of the ablest writers on Masonic ritual and forms.

**THOMAS SMITH WEBB**—Born in Boston, October 13, 1771, died in 1819 — The Father of Masonic Ritual in America — was well educated, proficient in French and Latin and engaged in printing and bookbinding. Became a Mason in 1782, was the founder of the York Rite system in America and arranged the various degrees in the Chapter, Council and Commandery, writing much of the ritual for all these as well as being the leader in forming the Grand Bodies in New Eng-

land and the General Grand Chapter and the Grand Encampment. He held many Masonic offices including that of Grand Master but he is best known for his "Freemasons Monitor or Illustrations of Freemasonry." Although he did outstanding work in many branches of Masonry, his greatest contribution was in revision and clarification of ritual in the Symbolic Degrees and in founding the York or American Rite.

**BENJAMIN GLEASON** — Born 1777, died 1847 — received Preston Lectures from Thomas Smith Webb, served as Grand Lecturer of Massachusetts 1800 to 1842, visited England and exemplified the lectures. His greatest work was in exemplifying and simplifying the Masonic work.

**JOHN SNOW** — Born February 15, 1780 in Rhode Island, moved to Ohio and served as Grand Master, was active in all branches of Masonry, especially the York Rite, in revising the ritual, expounding the work and enlightening the Craft.

**JEREMY L. CROSS** — Born in Haverhill, New Hampshire June 27, 1783, died in 1864. One of the greatest ritualists and Masonic organizers the world has ever known, he worked with Thomas Smith Webb and began to travel far and wide to disseminate Masonry in all its branches. Having received the various degrees and orders of the York Rite, he began immediately to pass them on in large doses to any who would receive them. His education was poor but his marvelous ability to memorize ritual enabled him to work in all divisions of Masonry. His true "Masonic Chart or Hieroglyphic Monitor" is his greatest contribution to the building of Masonic understanding of the lectures. It is said that he came to Richmond and brought with him the plates and cuts used by Dr. John Dove in his illustrated Monitor or Text Book, which was adopted and used in the early days of our Grand Lodge, (West Virginia).

There is a story, probably true, that Jeremy Cross was disappointed in the Third Degree lecture received from Thomas Smith Webb because there was nothing in it to commemorate the life and death of Grand Master Hiram Abif, and he determined to do something about it. He called together a group of friends and co-workers, including Masonic scholars, artists, undertakers, and monument builders. They searched cemeteries in many cities and finally found a monument erected in the form of a broken column. They then enlarged upon this idea by placing a beautiful virgin behind the column, a book open before her, a sprig of acacia in her right hand, an urn in her left, with father time behind unfolding and counting the ringlets of her hair. Thus Bro. Cross became the founder of the symbolism

*(Continued on inside back cover)*