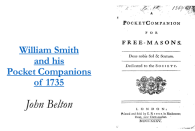
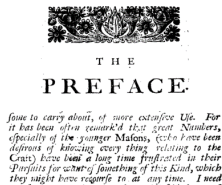


William Smith (b.1698 – d.1741) and his Pocket Companions of 1735 *John Belton*



If a mason wanted to know more about his Craft, then after 1723 he could spend half a guinea (at today's costs that is £60 EU 65 and US\$ 80) on a copy of Andersons Constitutions **OR** they could buy a Free-masons Pocket Companion for 2sh 6d – a quarter of the price. But let's look at the explicit purpose of the Pocket Companions starting with William Smith's own words:



...not to be found in any one of our Books yet published, in a small Volume easily portable, which will render what was before difficult to come at, and troublesome to carry about, of more extensive use – For it has been often remark'd that great Numbers, especially of the younger Masons, (who have been desirous of knowing everything relating to the Craft) have been a long time frustrated in their Pursuits for want of something of this Kind, which they might have recourse to at any time.¹

That was a sentiment not heard before in English masonry. So who was this William Smith. In the *Presbyterians of Ulster 1680-1730*² one can find “an Ulster Bookseller in Dublin, William Smith”. In *Nations and Nationalism, France, Britain and Ireland*³ (195) p.152 “John Smith, has a contact in Amsterdam, his cousin William Smith”, and also as Wm Smith Bookseller at the Hercules, Dame's St, Dublin.

Then in *Ireland & French Enlightenment 1700-1800*⁴ by G Gragett & G Sheridan (1999) on p.175 that:

John Smith was in partnership with his cousin, William Bruce, from 1725 to 1738. They carried on a thriving trade in French and Dutch books, John's

¹ William Smith, *Pocket Companion for Free-Masons*, pub E Rider London (1735).

² Robert When, *Presbyterians of Ulster 1680-1733* (2013)

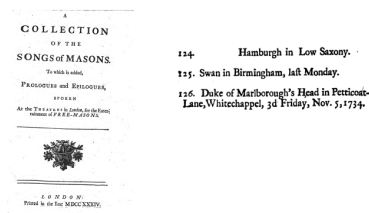
³ Michel O'Dea, Kevon Whelan, *Nations & Nationalisms: France, Britain, Ireland and the Eighteenth Century Context* Vol.86 No. 341 Spring 1997

⁴ G Gragett & G Sheridan, *Ireland & French Enlightenment 1700-1800* (1999)

uncle William Smith, travelling to Holland to buy stock for the bookshop of Smith and Bruce on the Blind Quay, Dublin. This link was maintained until William returned to Dublin in 1727.

All this information while containing similar information is additional to, but sufficiently similar to lend veracity to it. It indicated that William was a book dealer, that he crossed the North Sea regularly and was Dublin based. Thus his use of Umfreville and Rider as printers feels possible. None of the dates conflict with any of the masonic facts. And it also tell us that he was well educated so that when we see his name as author it is not surprising nor out of place. Plus writing one of the lectures in Book M would seem something that was also entirely within his capabilities. And this William Smith had become a member of Swalwell Lodge (recorded in the minute book of the lodge) and published BookM, which was similar in several respects to the Pocket Companions

But first of all let's look at the various publications that were printed under the name of William Smith (or just W.S.)



So let's start with something one could easily overlook, which is a Collection of Masonic Songs published in 1734, or to be precise after 5th November 1734 – because they record the date of consecration of a new lodge meeting at the Duke of Marlborough's Head in Whitechapel London in the list of Lodges at the back of the book.

The next publication appeared in 1735...but it was early in 1735, we know that because if we look at the Proceedings of



Grand Lodge of England for 24 February 1735 we can see that Bro Anderson was present to condemn Smith and to stake his claim to do a new and revised version of his Constitutions.

GLE Proceedings - 24 February 1735

He further represented that one William Smith said to be a | Mason,
had without his privity or Consent pyrated a considerable part | of the
Constitutions of Masonry aforesaid to the prejudice of the said | B^r
Anderson it being his Sole Property. |

It was Resolved Nemine con That a Committee be appointed
con: | sisting of the present, and former Grand Officers, and such other
Masters | Masons as they should think proper to call on to revise and
compare the | same, that when finished they might lay the same before the
Grand | Lodge ensuing for their approbation |

Anderson further represented that one William Smith said to be a Mason, had without his privity or Consent pyrated a considerable part of the Constitutions of Masonry aforesaid to the prejudice of the said B1 Anderson it being his Sole Property.

It was thereupon Resolved, and Ordered That every Master and Warden present shall do all in their Power to discountenance so unfair a Practice, and prevent the said Smith's Books being bought by any Members of their respective Lodges.⁵

And then on 31 March 1735, the very next meeting, we can read that Anderson was commissioned to do the next edition

Then a Motion was made that D^r James Anderson should be desired to print the Names (in his New Book of Constitutions) of all the Grand Masters that could be collected from the beginning of time, together with a List of the Names of all Deputy Grand Masters, Grand Wardens, and the Brethren that have served the Craft in Quality of Stewards, which was thought necessary. Because it is Resolved; that for the future all Grand Officers (except the Grand Master) shall be selected out of that Body.⁶

Why there was a book of songs first and then only a couple of months later a full Pocket Companion I have no idea. But with that proposal approved in Grand Lodge any chance that William Smith had hoped for to publish the next Book of Constitutions had vanished. I have no evidence that Smith had such a plan, but one must ask the question.

But it is interesting to look at what Smith was offering in his Pocket Companion. First there was a traditional history based approximately on the chronology of event laid out by Anderson but delivered in a readable style rather than Anderson's excessively footnoted and hard to read style. What is worth noting that Anderson in 1723 devotes two pages to the glories of grand Scottish buildings while Smith

⁵ QCA vol.10 p244-245

⁶ QCA vol.10, p251

does not mention Scotland and instead devotes two pages to the excellence of Irish buildings – an indication of his Irish heritage.

This is followed by Andersons Charges of a Freemason (unchanged of course) and then followed by the Regulations (which are by necessity) identical word for word with the text that was approved in 1721 in Grand Lodge and then appeared in Anderson 1723.

1753
Andersons Constitutions
from
and another example

But was far as brothers NOT reading the words of the past allow me to give you another example; and this one comes from the 1723 Constitutions and the “Manner of Constituting a New Lodge”. There are way in which things are done masonically today, and here is one that I can prove to you that was practiced in 1723 (some 299 years ago).

POSTSCRIPT.
Here follows the Manner of constituting a *New Lodge*, as practis'd by his *Grace* the DUKE of WHARTON, the present *Right Worshipful Grand-Master*, according to the ancient Usages of *Masons*.

The *senior* or *junior* GRAND-WARDEN; or some Brother for him; shall rehearse the *Charges of Wardens*; and the *Candidates* being solemnly ask'd by the *new Master*, shall signify their Submission thereunto. Upon which the NEW MASTER, presenting them with the *Instruments* of their *Office*, shall, in due Form, install them in their proper Places; and the *Brethren* of that *new Lodge* shall signify their Obedience to the *new Wardens* by the usual *Congratulation*.

In 1736 there was another William Smith production; BookM: Or Masonry Triumphant. Suddenly the moral and ethical values of Freemasonry appear in an extended readable and spoken form. One might possibly think of this as the contribution from the North East of England to freemasonry!! And from that part of England that worked the Harodim degrees. That is the opinion of Professor Jan Snoek and increasingly I think he is correct. The Oratorical tradition in masonry came from the north-east of England.



Prologues and Epilogues.

An EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. Thurmond, a Mason's Wife.

And for the first time we see Prologues and Epilogues. Today the words seem odd; but if we just see 'Mrs Thurmond' as an influencer in today's social media then that is probably close to the reality. And the words are to build confidence among wives and others in masonry as something that made 'good men better'.

That beauteous Ladies by their Sparks ador'd
Never could wheedle out the *Masons* Word,
And oft their Favours have bestow'd in vain,
Nor cou'd one *Secret* for another gain.
I thought, unable to explain the Matter,
Each *Mason*, sure must be a Woman-Hater.
With sudden Fear, and dismal Horror strook,
I heard my Spouse was to subscribe the Book.
By all our Loves I begg'd he wou'd forbear,
Upon my Knees I wept and tore my Hair;

When he came back I found a Change 'tis true,
But such a Change as did his Youth renew,
With Rosie Cheeks, and smiling Grace he came
And sparkling Eyes, that spoke a Bridegroom's
Flame.

It is of course very much in the style of the 18th century, and would not be acceptable today. But, if the writer had got it right the words spoke to the needs of brothers and potential brothers as to what their wives might expect. If one searches the newspapers one find numerous masonic visits to theatres by Grand Masters and their entourages, especially in Ireland. The printing of prologues and epilogues in Pocket Companions continued for some decades, so they must have been well accepted in those days.

The Pocket Companion must have been popular because there was another London Edition later in the year, and the year 1736, after there was the more substantial publication of Book M in Newcastle upon Tyne and there had been an edition in Dublin. This was to celebrate the arrival of an existing lodge into the fold of the Grand Lodge in London. The Provincial Grand Master of Durham was also the Master of Swalwell Lodge. BookM is significant because this lodge also worked the Harodim degrees. Whatever they worked in 1736 was surely something they shared with the Order of the Heredom of Kilwinning in London a few years later.

BookM was the last of William Smiths authored books, for he died in 1741, and you might think that was the end of the idea of Pocket Companions – but that was not so.



Pocket Companions by Jonathan Scott and John Entick (1754-1791)

The 1738 edition of the Constitutions, not generally liked, had also run short of stock and at the 27 June 1754 Quarterly Communication a proposal by Jonathan Scott was read;

The Memorial of Bro: Jonathan Scott referred from the last C: C. was read purporting that few or none of the Book of Constitutions printed in the Year 1738, remained unsold & that the copy thereof having fallen into the hands of a Bookseller who for his private Advantage threatened to reprint it altho intirely ignorant of the necessary Alterations & Additions required in a New Edition And therefore that all imperfect Editions of that Book might be discouraged) Proposing that the same might be henceforward printed by the Subscriptions of such Lodges & Brethren as it suited & the profits thereof applied to the Use of the General Charity And that a Committee might be appointed to review the said Book & make the necessary Alterations & Additions Bro : Scott offering to assist gratis in such Manner as the Committee should esteem him capable And the said Memorial being spoke to by several Brethren

Resolved that the said Book of Constitutions be revised & the necessary Alterations & Additions made consistent with the Laws & Rules of Masonry & that a Committee be appointed for that purpose.

This Pocket Companion clearly set out to try and please both Grand Lodge and the ordinary brother. To please Grand Lodge by including an ‘Account of the Rise and Establishment of the general fund of Charity (p132-144) General Regulation (p.161-186) and a List of all the Stewards from 1726-1753 (p186-191).

But in a volume of over 300 pages there is also space to print matters of general interest to a wider range of brethren. By comparison the Smith 1735 edition was a mere 96 pages!

Persecution in the Canton of Berne and in Germany, Italy, France, Flanders and Holland – from a 1748 publication in Frankfurt.

And address of a talk given in Grand Lodge on 11 December 1735 (. This was actually delivered by Bro Martin Clare Junior Grand Warden and on that day and Deputy Grand Master pro tempore

A Sermon preached in Boston in 1748 and then a Charge to a Constituted Lodge delivered in Helston, Cornwall in 1752

And then a repeat of “*A Short Charge to be given to new Admitted Brethren*” – and we can assume that this had popular appeal and has remained ever since.

But perhaps most interesting is the appearance in ‘History’ of an exchange of letters between Solomon and Hiram, and usefully all the text appear between apostrophies. But who is being quoted? But the source is in fact easily found and it comes from *The Antiquities of the Jews* by Flavius Josephus.

Flavius Josephus
Antiquities of the Jews
93-94 AD



He was commissioned by Emperor Domitian to write an explanation of why the troublesome Jews were not quietly conforming to Roman rule and it was completed circa 93-94 AD. The advantage of using Josephus is simple. It is a history book and not a ‘wrong’ translation of the Holy Bible!

William Smith Pocket Companions in Ireland (1735-c.1780)

THE SMITH SERIES IN IRELAND RAN TO 17 EDITIONS and was accompanied by reprints of Ahiman Rezon which were only later replaced by Books of Constitutions published by the Grand Lodge of Ireland

Jonathan Scott Pocket Companions in Scotland (1754-1792)

THE SMITH EDITION WAS PRINTED 2 TIMES (pre 1754) AND THE SCOTT SERIES IN SCOTLAND RAN TO 10 EDITIONS

They were important documents because the GLoF Scotland did not print its own Constitutions until 1839 – all the brothers in Scotland had until then were Pocket Companions

Before I go - A Conundrum Avant de partir - une énigme

1 Of God and Religion
Why did the Moderns and Scotland choose the Anderson 1723 version and the Antients and Ireland chose Andersons 1738 Constitutions with its Noachida version?

Was it something national, social or religious?
Or was it something to do with masonic social demographics in different Grand Lodges?

After all Dermott tells us that he had a wide choice of sources!

And before I close one last thought

Of God & Religion – Anderson and Ahiman Rezon

It is probably true to say that we are all familiar with the change made by Anderson to Charge ‘I Concerning God and Religion’ made by Anderson when he came to write the 1738 version – where we ‘obliged by his Tenure to observe the Moral Law, as a true Noachida....’ And to accept the ‘3 great Articles of NOAH’ as well as introducing the word ‘Christian’.

When Scott and Entick arrive in the 1750s they reverted to the Anderson 1723 version – and all the Scottish versions also remained with the Anderson 1723 text.

But Spratt in Dublin when he issued the 1750 Constitutions used the Anderson 1738 version. And in London Laurence Dermott when he wrote his 1756 Ahiman Rezon had all the possible choices at hand for he wrote in the introduction.

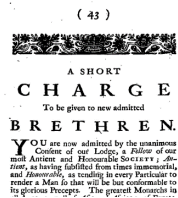
Laurence Dermott in Ahiman Rezon 1756

tion) I placed the following Works round about me, so as to be convenient to have Recourse to them as Occasion should require, viz. Doct^r *Andersia* and Mr. *Spratt* directly before me, Doct^r *D’Azzop* and Mr. *Smith* on my Right-hand, Doct^r *D’Azzop* and Mr. *Pennell* on my Left-hand, and Mr. *Scott* and Mr. *Jess* behind me: A Copy of (that often called) the Original Constitutions (said to be in the Possession of Mr. *John Clark*, in *Paris*), and another Copy of the same Magnitude handed about in *England*, together with the Pamphlet printed at *Frankfort* in *Germany*, I tied up in the Public Advertiser of *Friday, October 19, 1753*, and threw them under the Table.

So the question comes into my mind. Why did the Grand Lodge in London and Grand Lodge of Scotland settle upon the 1723 version of the Charge “Of God & Religion”; **while** the Grand Lodge of Ireland and the Antients in England decided that they preferred and remained with Andersons 1738 ‘three great Articles of Noah’. Was it something religious, something social or social class, something that came out of the different Reformations or the acceptance of non-conformist Christianity in those nations?

But finally I would like to tell you about my discovery in the 1735 Pocket Companion of William Smith.

It is finding the earliest piece of ritual prose in English Masonic Ritual yet discovered. Masonry Dissected was pure catechism. What William Smith added to that catechism was the innovation of a **'Charge to Newly Admitted Brethren'**



YOU are now admitted by the unanimous Consent of our Lodge, a *Fellow* of our most Antient and Honourable Society; *Antient*, as having subsisted from times immemorial, and *Honourable*, as tending in every Particular to render a Man so that (he ed) will be but conformable to its glorious Precepts. The greatest Monarchs in all Ages, as well of *Asia* and *Africa* as of *Europe*, have been Encouragers of the *Royal Art*; and many of them have presided as *Grand-Masters* over the *Masons* in their respective Territories, not thinking it any lessening to their Imperial Dignities to Level themselves with their *Brethren* in Masonry, and to act as they did.

And which uses words and phrases which still resound in English lodges to this day. When I first read it (aloud in my mind) it was the same piece of oratorical prose that remember from my initiation forty years ago. But I was beguiled by the flow of words, because there had been some changes. I showed it to few other brothers and got the same response that I had.

About half is nearly the same and the rest largely about being a compliant citizen probably added by that Royal Prince, the Duke of Sussex. Let me read a little to you:

To God, in never mentioning his Name but with that Reverential Awe which becomes a Creature to bear to his Creator, and to look upon him always as the *Summum Bonum* which we came into the World to enjoy; and according to that View to regulate all our Purfuits.

To our Neighbours, in acting upon the Square, or doing as we would be done by.

To ourselves, in avoiding all Intemperances and Excefses, whereby we may be rendered incapable of following our Work, or led into Behaviour unbecoming our laudable Profeffion, and in always keeping within due Bounds, and free from all Pollution.⁷

⁷ William Smith Pocket Companion 1735 London p.44

This is highly significant marker of a change in masonic ritual. What Masonry Dissected offered was ONLY a catechism of the storyline, but here just a mere FIVE years later we have an address to be 'orated' to a brother, it was a charge in 1735 and it is still a charge in 2022; and its purpose to instil masonic values to a candidate immediately after his being initiated. But you would never guess **when** this practice started unless you read through William Smith's 1735 Pocket Companion; and strangely **nobody before me has realised this and reported on it!**

It was William Smith in 1735 who introduced the tradition of there being a Charge orated to New Admitted Brethren. The modern version retains oratorical voice, the same ethos and values and a significant proportion of the same words. A TRUE MASONIC INNOVATION – proven by being in print; and the first appearance of ritual that was not a catechism or an oath!!

I have to say that if one wants to get a better flavour of what was published for brothers to read and savour between 1735 and 1772 in England, Ireland and Scotland, then there is not much else in print apart from the Pocket Companions. My discovery of 'A Short Charge to Newly Admitted Brethren' had been in open view **had I been willing to see it** in previous 'readings'. There will of course be more to be found!

Thank you for listening and I hope to have opened up a new source of masonic life in the 18th century to you all.

And Andrew, Pocket Companions are much more fun to browse through than Anderson's Constitutions ☺

Thank You