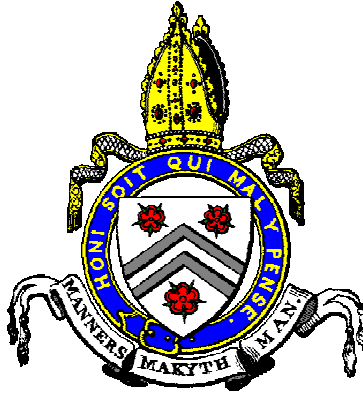


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MANNERS MAKETH THE MAN

When researching Rosicrucian history, it is not a simple process. Centuries ago, records were sketchy and usually records were poorly kept. Additionally, when it comes to the Society of 'The Rose & Cross', the old adage was: "One does not 'join' the Rosicrucian Order --- one 'becomes a Rosicrucian'.

Quite likely, the Encyclopedia Britannica in its biography of the man, William of Wykeham, introduced him in the best possible way, by saying:

"There is an old tradition, perhaps not worthy of much credit that, upon the wall of a tower in Windsor Castle, known as the Winchester tower, was inscribed in Latin, "This made Wykeham". The great churchman William of Wykeham raised this tower as the architect of Windsor Castle, working under the commands of his patron Edward III. It is further said that, the King being offended at this inscription, its more obvious meaning was dexterously explained away, seeing that it should be interpreted to record that the building of the castle was "the making" of the architect."

No man ever left more permanent traces of his course and character. William of Wykeham was the founder of Winchester College and of New College, Oxford; the builder of the noblest part Winchester Cathedral, had a title to be called their "maker", with no king or subject to dispute his pretensions. He was one of the very few men who, having raised themselves by their abilities and integrity to riches and honor, worked not sordidly for themselves to heap up treasure, but nobly employed their wealth in works of the highest public utility. The life of such a man is an example to us all.

William De Wykeham (or, 'of Wykeham') was born either in the year 1320 or 1324...in Wickham, Hampshire, England. He died 27 September 1404. His surname or family name is somewhat a mystery. Scholars cannot determine if his surname was truly a surname or he took his last name from the village of his birth. Surnames were introduced into England by the Normans at the time of the Conquest (the year 1066). William of Wykeham would have been just slightly OLDER than Father Christian Rosenkreutz, the Founder of our Rosicrucian Society who was born circa the year A.D. 1378, and who died in the year 1484 at the ripe old age of 106 years.

William of Wykeham was admitted to the Order of the Acolyte on December 5, 1361; and later ordained a Roman Catholic priest on 12 June 1362. He also became Warden of the Royal Forests in the south of England. Eventually, he was named "Bishop of Winchester" and this was validated by



Pope Urban V. Just a short while earlier William of Wykeham was named Chancellor of England. His motto was: "Manners maketh the man."

The Societas Rosicruciana In America cites William of Wykeham as a Rosicrucian. However, their information should not be relied upon solely. Their organization is unconnected with ours, even though their group was formerly headed by Dr. George Winslow Plummer (1876-1944), who was himself a Mason. Their organization (which started out being founded by men who were Freemasons such as Bro. Plummer and the noted Masonic scholar, Bro. Sylvester Gould). Unfortunately, Frater Gould died in 1909 and the remnant group headed by Plummer became more of a splinter-group with its own independent notions. It dropped any Masonic qualification for membership. It became more of a quasi-Correspondence Course which dabbled in dubious topics and jargon often written by authors using pseudonyms for their names. That group, although currently un-recognized by, and unaffiliated with Masonry or by our SRICF Colleges --- nevertheless once had a solid history. Their archival information is the only aspect that I give even a tiny shred of credence to. It cites that William of Wykeham was a Rosicrucian, who attained the Grade of Philosophus (the IV^o)...in the year A.D. 1357.

A totally different man (and Mason) with the same last name Gould (the noted Masonic scholar from England, Bro. Robert F. Gould) wrote a concise, "History of Freemasonry Throughout the World," and he said that in the year 1375, two curious coincidences occurred: The first, the earliest manuscript copy of the "Regis Manuscript," and the second: the formation of a "wonderful society" occasioned by a combination of Masons understanding not to work without an advance of wages, when summoned from several counties by writs of King Edward III, to rebuild and enlarge Windsor Castle, under the direction of William of Wykeham. It is also said that these Masons agreed on certain signs and tokens by which they might know one another and render mutual assistance against impressments ----- and further agreed not to work unless 'free' and on their own terms. Hence, they called themselves Free-Masons.

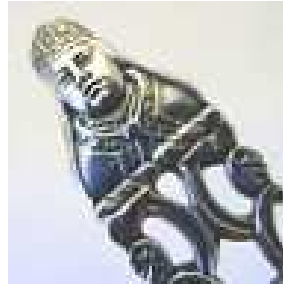
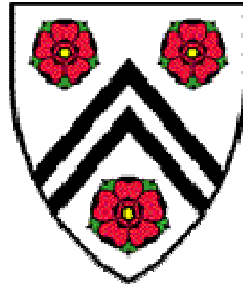
Albert G. Mackey wrote in his Encyclopedia of Freemasonry that when King Edward III appointed William of Wykeham "Surveyor of the Works" at Windsor Castle, William was invested with power "to appoint all workmen, to provide materials, and to order everything relating to building and repairs." Mackey notes that William of Wykeham held the post of Lord Privy Seal. Mackey quotes another Masonic scholar Dr. Anderson who attested that William of Wykeham was "the head of four hundred Freemasons." The 'Freemasons Magazine' (August 1796) styles him as "one of the brightest ornaments that Freemasonry has ever boasted." Mackey admits that Anderson's comments have a mix of myth and history; yet Albert Mackey was firm when he said that William of Wykeham was a "distinguished example of the connection so common in Medieval Times between the ecclesiastics and the Freemasons."

It is too bad --- and so sad, that in today's world of the year 2011, we have people attempting to rewrite history, cast stones, concoct silly conspiracy theories, and abandon all traces of truth and common-sense. Both men --Fr. Christian Rosenkreutz and William of Wykeham emphasized the importance of "higher learning" while simultaneously giving Glory and Honor to Almighty God for everything good which has been bestowed upon this Earth. The 'hands' used in human labor and endeavor are the same 'hands' which are folded in prayer ---and they are the same hands which can extend the helping hand of Charity, Benevolence, Beneficence, and Magnanimity.

Fr. Rosenkreutz stayed a Monk; while William of Wykeham eventually became a Bishop and a Chancellor of England. The Coat-of-Arms of William of Wykeham reflects a diverse life: consisting of a simple shield, which originally was a single Chevronel (a heraldic device resembling an inverted "V"); but later William modified it by changing it to two Chevronels along with three red Roses. Various scholars have speculated that the Chevronels resembled a crude imitation of a carpenter's Square (indicative of Masonry) plus the three Red Roses (indicative of his sincere devotion and attachment to our Society of the Rose & Cross = Rosicrucianism).



In summary: William of Wykeham was an immensely intelligent individual with diverse skills---mental skills, physical skills, and spiritual skills---who vigorously used his time and capabilities to share his knowledge, talents, and treasure for the benefit of all Mankind. The efforts of Frater William of Wykeham will be remembered forever. He was truly a Rosicrucian worthy of emulation.



Coat of Arms of William of Wykeham William of Wykeham, Bishop and Chancellor

Sources and Recommended Readings:

--The Titi Tudorancea Bulletin, English Edition, dated October 6, 2010:
website: http://www.tititudorancea.com/z/william_of_wykeham.htm

--Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and its Kindred Sciences by Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33^o and a Knight Templar.

--The History of Freemasonry Throughout the World by Robert F. Gould.

--Archival material from the early Societas Rosicruciana in America.

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About The Author:

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