

Brother Frederick Madison Smith, Past Master; 32° Mason; and an Ordained Minister

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At the onset of this presentation, I will clearly state that Freemasonry is NOT a Religion. However, in the United States of America, and in nearly all countries who have Grand Lodges in Amity with Grand Lodges in the U.S.A., most require their members to have a belief in a Supreme Being. The designation might be "Almighty God"; "The Deity"; "The Creator"; "The Redeemer" or "The Great Architect of the Universe". All are synonymous. Detractors of the fraternity may claim otherwise, but Almighty God is central to the life of a true and dedicated Mason.

Nearly everyone knows that Freemasons come from all Walks-of-Life... lawyers, doctors, teachers, astronauts, statesmen, laborers, and even clergymen have been (and many 'are' today) devoted Masons. Each member of our ancient and honorable Fraternity has his opportunity to make a modern mark upon the World. This was especially true in the case of Brother Frederick Madison Smith (1874-1946).

Bro. F. M. Smith (as he preferred to sign his name on Masonic Meeting Attendance-Books or Ledgers) was born January 21, 1874 in Plano, Illinois; and died March 20, 1946 in Missouri. Few people today realize that he was a grandson of Brother Joseph Smith, Jr., a member of the Masonic Lodge in Nauvoo, Illinois---the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (or LDS Church). Joseph Smith Jr's brother Hyrum Smith was the current Worshipful Master of the Nauvoo lodge when he and his brother Joseph were assassinated in the year 1844. In addition, their father Joseph Smith, Senior, was an early-day Mason, during the turbulent years of anti-Masonic fervor and bigotry.

After Brother Joseph Smith's assassination in 1844, his religious followers broke into two separate and distinct factions. The groups were similar in some respects, yet also vehemently opposed to certain "practices" of the other respective group. One group, led by Brother Brigham Young (who was Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason in the Masonic Lodge at Nauvoo, Illinois) embarked with thousands of **his** supporters to "The State of Deseret" (a Hebrew word denoting 'honeybee') later to be called modern-day State of Utah. The other major group was at first somewhat leaderless, but eventually was headed by Joseph Smith's son Joseph Smith III; and eventually that group's leadership passed-down to Joseph III's grandson, Brother Frederick Madison Smith, who again took up the mantle of taking a keen interest in the fraternity of Freemasons. The latter group was the *Reorganized Latter Day Saints* which relocated its headquarters from Nauvoo, Illinois to Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. One other peculiarity (which shows the nitpicking between the two groups) is that the Utah-based branch insisted that the word "Day" NOT BE CAPITALIZED. The Utah group insisted on a hyphen (-) between the two words "Latter" and "day" to make Utah's version, *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. For simplicity's sake (and for brevity), in this article: I will refer to the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, group headed by Brother F.M. Smith, simply as the RLDS. In recent years, it has been re-named and is now known as *"The Community of Christ"*.

Back in the year 2005, I wrote to the M.W. Grand Lodge of Ancient Free & Accepted Masons of Colorado. I received a reply from Brother, Sir Knight and Frater Gerald A. Ford, 33^o, Knight Templar, and IX^o in the Colorado College of the S.R.I.C.F. Frater Ford notes that Frederick Madison Smith was Initiated as an Entered Apprentice on September 15, 1926; Passed to the Degree of a Fellow-Craft Mason on March 2, 1927; and was Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason on March 16, 1927 in Carbondale Lodge #82 located in Carbondale, Colorado. He demitted from that Lodge about a year later on March 8, 1928.



Next, I wrote to the M.W. Grand Lodge of Ancient Free & Accepted Masons of Missouri. I was informed that Bro. Frederick Madison Smith affiliated with Orient Masonic Lodge #546 in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri from that same Carbondale Lodge #82 in Colorado. The date of his affiliation was April 28, 1928. I was separately told by a former Recorder of Palestine Commandery of the York Rite Bodies of Independence, Missouri, that he believed that F.M. Smith was a member of that Knight Templar Commandery; however a precise record-card could not be found.

Getting back to the Grand Lodge of Missouri - Sandy Clark, who was then Secretary for the Grand Lodge of Missouri stated the following: "I will say that he (F.M. Smith) must have known his (Masonic) Work well, to affiliate with a Lodge of over 600 members and immediately become an Officer." F.M. Smith was Junior Deacon of the Lodge in 1930; Senior Deacon in 1931; Junior Warden in 1932; Senior Warden in 1933; and Worshipful Master in 1934.

I also contacted the archives of The Supreme Council 33^o, of The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction in Washington, D.C.; who informed me that Frederick Madison Smith had petitioned the Valley of Fort Scott, Kansas for the Scottish Rite Degrees. His residence then was listed as Pittsburg, Kansas (and must have been extremely BRIEF of a residence) because he received the 14^o in Joabert Lodge of Perfection on April 25, 1927. He received the 18^o in Mackey Chapter of Rose Croix on April 26, 1927. He received the 30^o in Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh, also on April 26, 1927. And Frederick M. Smith attained the 32^o in Fort Scott Consistory on April 27, 1927. His occupation on his petition was listed as "Minister". He soon demitted and affiliated with the Kansas City, Missouri, Scottish Rite Bodies, where he died as a member in Good Standing in 1946. He also joined the Mystic Shrine in Mirza Shrine in Pittsburg, Kansas; but likewise demitted to affiliate with Ararat Shrine Center where he became a Life Member. His grandson Frederick Niels Larsen, (who currently heads what is termed "The Remnant Church" in Independence, Missouri; told me a few years ago how his grandfather F.M. Smith once took him to an Ararat Shrine Circus, and this event made for a profound memory for the boy.

It is clear that Frederick Madison Smith had a long and wide Cable-Tow. I find it particularly remarkable that Brother, Companion, Sir Knight, and Noble Frederick Madison Smith lived in the same town of Independence, Missouri, during a good portion of the SAME YEARS when another Mason lived there: Illustrious Brother, Companion, Sir Knight and Noble Harry S Truman, 33^o, Knight Templar and a Shriner----who belonged to many of the exact same Masonic Bodies as F.M. Smith. The two men were contemporaries in the same locality. Bro.: Frederick M. Smith's impressive progression through the various Masonic Degrees is only paralleled by his impressive credentials via Academic Degrees and Awards.

Year 1895: He was educated at Iowa City Academy.

Year 1896 University of Iowa;

Year 1898 Bachelor of Arts , Graceland College and was the first graduate of this College.

Year 1911 Master of Arts, University of Kansas at Lawrence, Kansas.

Year 1916 Ph.D. from Clark University, in Worcester, Massachusetts.

In addition to all that, F.M. Smith was the Prophet-President of the Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) (now called "The Community of Christ") from May 1, 1915 to his death March 20, 1946.

F.M. Smith was Grand Orator of The Grand Lodge of Missouri 1929-1930.

He was Grand Chaplain of The Grand Lodge of Missouri 1940-41.

He was Exalted a Royal Arch Mason in Orient Chapter #102 R.A.M. in Kansas City on June 26, 1928; greeted in Shekinah Council #24 R & S M Sept 12, 1928.

Knighted in Oriental Commandery #35 KT in Kansas City on Dec 21, 1928....and affiliated with Palestine Commandery #17 KT of Independence, Missouri, on June 2, 1938.

To be sure: Frederick Madison Smith was "a Traveling Man".

Many other clergymen have been noted Freemasons in addition to F.M. Smith. Included among those are:



- **Bishop Hiram Abiff Boaz (1866-1962)** former President of Southern Methodist University in Dallas County, Texas.

- **Herschel Harold Hobbs**, former President of the Southern Baptist Convention, died 1995 age 88. He was raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason in Siloam Lodge #276 in Oklahoma City at age 54.

- **Rev. Fr. Francisco Calvo**. Roman Catholic Priest who helped establish Freemasonry in Costa Rica. Father Calvo is believed to have been Initiated into Freemasonry in Peru at the Callao Universal Harmony Lodge and he later was Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason (via "courtesy work") done by the Universal Brotherhood Lodge on April 8, 1858. He and other fellow Masons established Lodge Caridad #26 which was granted a Charter on June 28 1865. It is believed that Rev. Fr. Calvo was a member of Masonic Lodges in Cuba, Spain, and perhaps ...elsewhere. In addition, Father Calvo was granted authority to establish The Supreme Council 33^o of the Scottish Rite for Central America. And Illustrious Brother, and Rev. Fr. Francisco Calvo, 33^o was its Sovereign Grand Commander. Brother (and Rev. Fr.) Calvo died in San Jose, Costa Rica, at the Hospital of St. John of God, at 73 years of age, on the morning of July 18, 1890.

- **The Rev. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale (1898-1993)**, 33^o, and a Knight Templar. Minister, and author of "The Power of Positive Thinking. Ordained a Methodist Minister in 1922; later affiliated with The Reformed Church in America.

- **Hugh I. Evans (1887-1958)** former Head of the Presbyterian Church USA 1950-51.

- **Anglican Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher** who was Archbishop of Canterbury in The Church of England from 1945-1961. Additionally, he held the post of Grand Chaplain of the United Grand Lodge of England.

- **Rev. Robert Emmett Bledoe Taylor**, Ordained Baptist Minister; one of the founders of Baylor University now at Waco, Texas; as well as Baylor Female College then located at Belton, Texas. Lawyer and District Judge. He was a founding member of Baylor Masonic Lodge #125, and served as The Grand Chaplain of The Grand Lodge of Texas: 1843, 1846, and 1847.

- Although not a Minister, but a Statesman, Brother **William Merle Watkins**, Knight Templar and Shriner was Mayor of Grafton, West Virginia; a member of the West Virginia State Senate; and Circuit Judge for West Virginia's 19th Judicial District; and he was **active in the Lutheran Church**.

All of the aforementioned gentlemen (and many, many others) truly believed in "**The Brotherhood of Man, Under The Fatherhood of God**". While each had his own philosophy, viewpoint, or even a differing theology: Each of them could find "common ground" to Meet on the Level; and Part upon the Square. They knew that harmonious friendships didn't compromise one's own integrity. Debating religious preferences was never done. Each man held to his own inner Belief in a Supreme Being (which varied according to each man's own conscience). And, respect and tolerance for those Brethren from a different Faith, were always given respect a reciprocal courtesy. Politeness was just as important as Piety. As noted earlier: Freemasons come from all Walks-of-Life....all professions. Whether they be a "religious preacher" or an "academic professor," the main focus of the fraternity was never lost: FREEMASONRY inculcates good citizenship and uses Signs and Symbols to reinforce virtuous tenets. It does not pretend to be a means toward "Heavenly Salvation" ---In that regard, our fraternity always directs a man to seek his own House of Worship for spiritual guidance toward salvation ---since that is not within Freemasonry's sphere.

Bro. Frederick Madison Smith was a unique individual. He was an Academic; an ordained Minister; and he was a fraternal-man (or "Lodge Man") too. He believed in **consensus of the group**....but once consensus was finally and firmly **ESTABLISHED**: he felt that "members" had a



DUTY to follow thereafter. He maintained that philosophy in his fraternal-dealings in Masonry as well as in his role as the leader of hundreds of thousands of RLDS members. Obviously, he felt that "Harmony" and "Unity" was the Strength and Support of any Society.

Although Bro. F.M. Smith was not a Masonic Rosicrucian...he was indeed a dedicated Mason who believed that a person's Fraternal friendships could be (and were) compatible with any individual person's personal Faith in the God and Creed of their choice. He (and others) felt that every person's own, individual, unique conscience dictated their own loyalty, reverence, and worship towards their Creator. Brother and Sir Knight and Noble Frederick M. Smith was a gentleman. He was a Mason who believed in helping his neighbor. Brother Frederick Madison Smith believed in three elements which are ardently promoted in Masonic Rosicrucianism: Faith, Fraternalism, and Education. As Masonic Rosicrucians, let us, as Masonic Scholars, promote those virtuous and peaceful elements to make this a more educated, enlightened, and tolerant world.

Sources / Recommended Readings:

- "10,000 Famous Freemasons" by William R. Denslow.
- Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry by Dr. Albert G. Mackey, 33^o and a Knight Templar.
- Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia by Henry Wilson Coil, 33^o, and a Knight Templar.
- Historical Archives of mainstream LDS Church, Salt Lake City, Utah
- Historical Archives of former Reorganized RLDS Church (now "Community of Christ"), Independence, Missouri.
- Personal, postal letter sent from Gerald A. Ford, 33^o, and a K.T; and IX^o.....Grand Secretary of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Colorado, 1130 Panorama Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80904 to Frater James A. Marples, VII^o, P O Box 1542, Longview TX 75606 ---- dated February 25, 2005; giving Colorado Masonic Records of Bro. F.M. Smith.
- Personal, postal letter sent from Sandy Clark, Secretary, Grand Lodge of Missouri Masons, to Frater James A. Marples, dated January 21, 2005 giving Missouri's Masonic Records of Bro. F.M. Smith.
- Archives of The Grand Lodge of Texas; Library and Museum, located at Waco, Texas.
- Archives of The Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon.
website: http://www.freemasonry.bcy.ca/biography/baylor_r/baylor_r.html
- Personal, postal letter from the Archives at "The House of The Temple", headquarters of The Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree; to Frater James A. Marples, dated Febr 2005; giving A.&A.S.R. Records of Bro. F.M. Smith, 32^o.
- Personal telephone-call from Noble James A. Marples to Ararat Shrine Center, Kansas City, Missouri pertaining to Noble F.M. Smith's membership in the Mystic Shrine....with follow-up phone call to Mirza Shrine Center A.A.O.N.M.S., Pittsburg, Kansas.
- Personal telephone conversation between Frater James A. Marples of Longview, Texas and Fred Larsen of Independence, Missouri (a grandson and namesake of F.M. Smith).



- Personal correspondence between Rev. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale and Frater James A. Marples.

About The Author:

Frater James A. Marples VII^o is a Perpetual Life Member of Mulvane Lodge #201 A.F. & A.M. in Mulvane, Kansas. Brother Jim is also a life member of the International Peace Gardens Lodge of Freemasons (Canada-USA) as well as an honorary member of Golden Rule Lodge #562 in Willard, Ohio; as well as Nelson Lodge #77 in Nelson, Nebraska. He is a life member of The Wichita Kansas York Rite Bodies; The Lincoln Nebraska Scottish Rite Bodies; The Robert-the-Bruce Association (California); the Masonic Order of the Gordian Knot (Indiana); The George Washington Masonic Stamp Club; The Masonic Order of the Sword of Bunker Hill; Kentucky Chapter #134 of National Sojourners; Heroes of '76; North Texas York Rite College at Sherman, Texas; and Nebraska College S.R.I.C.F. He is a Regular Member of the Allied Masonic Degrees; Grand College of Rites; Shawnee County Kansas Square and Compass Club; Saint David Conclave of The Red Cross of Constantine; and Holyrood Council #61 of Knight Masons (Nebraska).

