

Illustrations of Masonry: The Frontispieces of the *Book of Constitutions* 1723–1819

Martin Cherry

IN 1723 THE GRAND LODGE IN LONDON PUBLISHED ITS FIRST RULE BOOK OR constitutions. It was a significant step by an embryonic organization to impose its methodology on the increasingly popular Freemasonry phenomenon. The significance which the Grand Lodge attached to the publication of its constitutions is evidenced by the inclusion of an engraved frontispiece which raised the price and the status of the book. It also encompassed a visual message. Between 1723 and 1819 this first Grand Lodge, its rival Antients or Atholl Grand Lodge, and, after 1813, the newly United Grand Lodge, published fifteen editions of a *Book of Constitutions*,¹ for which six frontispieces were created.² This paper will highlight the Masonic connections of the artists

¹ Five editions of the *Constitutions* . . . for the Premier Grand Lodge; eight editions of *Abiman Rezon*, the constitutions of the Antients Grand Lodge and the *Constitutions* . . . published in 1815 and 1819 for the United Grand Lodge of England.

² A frontispiece is an illustration on the page opposite the title page of a book, usually taking up the whole page. Sometimes the frontispiece was a picture of the author but other images, like the cover of a modern paperback, sought to convey a sense of the theme and ideas contained in the book.

and engravers who created the frontispieces and will offer some theories about their visual messages and how these messages changed over time.

John Pine's Frontispiece for the 1723 and 1738 *Constitutions*

The frontispiece of James Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723 was repeated in the 1738 edition.³ It was relatively early in the career of the engraver John Pine (1690–1756) that he was commissioned by the scientific publishers, John Senex and John Hooke, to engrave the frontispiece of this first edition. After an apprenticeship, possibly with Bernard Picart in Amsterdam, Pine returned to London in 1719 where he established his business.⁴ He was an active Freemason from the early 1720s, being a member of lodges meeting at the Globe, Moorgate,⁵ and at the Horn Tavern, Westminster.⁶ Pine was responsible for the engraved lists of lodges, the pocket guides to the meeting times, and places of the lodges under the Premier Grand Lodge. It is often recorded that Pine was responsible for the lists from 1724⁷ until 1741,⁸ but an earlier list, probably dating from 1722–23, engraved by Bowen and Pine, has come to light amongst some letters from Charles, 2nd Duke of Richmond (1701–50) to Martin Folkes (1690–1754), in the archives of the Royal Society.⁹

Although Pine is recorded as the engraver of the frontispiece, there is considerable doubt that he was the originator of the design, which several commentators have attributed to Sir James Thornhill.¹⁰

Pine's frontispiece influenced other engravers. The Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, John Pennell, produced an Irish edition of the *Constitutions*¹¹ with a crude reworking of Pine's original frontispiece, although it looks sophisticated com-

³ J. Anderson, *The New Book of Constitutions of the Antient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, Containing their History, Charges, Regulations, &c. / Collected and Digested by Order of the Grand Lodge from their Old Records, Faithful Traditions and Lodge-books for the use of the Lodges* (London: Printed for Brothers Caesar Ward and Richard Chandler Booksellers, 1738).

⁴ S. Sloman, 'Pine, John (1690–1756), engraver', H. C. G. Matthew, and B. Harrison (eds.) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Vol. 44 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 361.

⁵ Now Old Dundee Lodge No. 18, London.

⁶ Now Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge No. 4, London.

⁷ The 1724 list was a collaboration with the engraver Emmanuel Bowen (1693–1767).

⁸ A. Prescott, 'John Pine: a Sociable Craftsman', *MQ Magazine* 10 (London: United Grand Lodge of England, 2004), 9.

⁹ MS/865/2, Royal Society.

¹⁰ H. Sadler, 'The Frontispieces to the *Book of Constitutions*', *Masonic Illustrated* Vol. 1, No. 7 (London: Spencer & Co., 1901), 153; A. Prescott, 'The Publishers of the 1723 *Book of Constitutions*', *AQC* 121 (2009), 155.

¹¹ Grand Lodge of Ireland, *Constitutions of the Free-Masons: Containing the History, Charges, Regulations, &c. of that Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity: for the use of Lodges* (Dublin: printed by J. Watts, at the Lord Carteret's Head in Dames-Street, for J. Pennell, at the three Blue Bonnets in St. Patrick's Street, 1730).



Fig. 1. Frontispiece of Anderson's 1723 *Constitutions*

pared with Powis and Larkin's frontispiece of *Complete Free Mason*,¹² which copied the idea of a noble Grand Master brandishing the *Constitutions* within a classical arcade.

The 1723 frontispiece depicts John, 2nd Duke of Montagu, Grand Master of the Premier Grand Lodge in 1721, handing over a copy of the *Constitutions* and a set of compasses to his successor, Philip, Duke of Wharton, each accompanied by their Deputies and Wardens. One of Montagu's entourage carries aprons and gloves, an early depiction of both in a Masonic context. One of Wharton's entourage is a clergyman, possibly Jean Theophilus Desaguliers, believed to have been Grand Master in 1719 and Deputy Grand Master to Wharton in 1722. The scene takes place within a classical arcade depicting the five orders of architecture, Composite in the foreground and Tuscan to the rear. Through the Tuscan arch Helios, the sun god, flies his chariot over a parting of seas and the diagram for Euclid's 47th Proposition floats in the space between the two Grand Masters.

There is no contemporary commentary on the image although Henry Sadler noted that 'the architectural portion of the picture may be intended to represent the Body

¹² Anon. *Complete Free Mason : or, Multa Paucis for Lovers of Secrets* (London: Anon., c.1764).

of Masonry, which, Dr. Anderson, in the last paragraph of his book, says “resembles a well-built Arch”.¹³ In his Prestonian Lecture H. Kent Atkins likened the classical arcade to Inigo Jones’s designs for Court Masques made more than one hundred years before Pine, a tribute to the originator of Palladian architecture in England.¹⁴ The design could equally be an attempt to place Freemasonry in antiquity: hence the presence of Helios and Euclid. The positioning of the Orders of Architecture with Tuscan, the oldest, at the rear and Composite, the youngest, in the foreground, may represent progress. The parting sea could represent the Old Testament, which Anderson’s history uses as its starting point, progressing through to the two noble Grand Masters representing Palladianism and the Enlightenment. The most obvious message is that Wharton, wearing his peer’s robes, and Montagu, in the robes and feathers of a Knight of the Garter, both highlight the calibre of the organization’s patrons. What better advert could there be for the fledgling Grand Lodge? No wonder it was retained for the second edition in 1738.

Louis-Phillippe Boitard’s Frontispiece for the 1756 & 1767 *Constitutions*

At first glance the frontispiece by Louis-Phillippe Boitard and Benjamin Cole, used for the 1756 and 1767 *Constitutions*, is relatively straightforward. A female figure is seated on a throne bearing the coat of arms of the Premier Grand Lodge with a Masonic pavement and a collection of Masonic working tools at her feet. In the background is a view of the City of London, including St Paul’s, many of Wren’s other churches, and the Monument, starting point of the Great Fire, which brought modern architecture to London and revived the stonemasons’ trade. A wide River Thames, busy with boats of all sizes, flows through the Old London Bridge and turns into the sea, which is equally busy with great ships. The moon sinks into the horizon and a spectacular sun illuminates the sky.

Boitard was an accomplished artist and Benjamin Cole was the first of several generations of Coles employed as engravers.¹⁵ Both men were active Freemasons. In 1729, Cole published an engraved Old Charge with the title *A Book of the Antient Constitutions of the Free & Accepted Masons*, the second edition featuring a Cole frontispiece of three gentleman Masons on a building site.¹⁶ He published a book of Masonic songs in 1731,¹⁷ and was the engraver and publisher of John Frederick Lampe’s *British Melody*¹⁸ in 1738.

¹³ Sadler (1901), 153.

¹⁴ H. K. Atkins, ‘The Five Noble Orders of Architecture’ *AQC* 82 (1969), 35.

¹⁵ See W. J. Songhurst, ‘John Cole’ *AQC* 20 (1907), 6–14.

¹⁶ B. Cole, *The Antient Constitutions of the Free and Accepted Masons*. (London: Printed for B. Creak, 1731).

¹⁷ B. Cole, *A Curious Collection of the Most Celebrated Songs in Honour of Masonry* . . . (London: Printed for B. Creak and B. Cole, 1731).

¹⁸ J. F. Lampe, *British Melody, or, The Musical Magazine: Consisting of a Large Variety of the Most Approv’d English and Scotch songs* . . . (London: Benjamin Cole, 1738).

Boitard appears on a list of brethren and lodges whom Anderson thanks for their encouragement in the 1738 *Constitutions*¹⁹ as one of those who supplied practical help, such as being engraver John Pine, scientific instrument maker Jonathan Sisson, and printer Thomas Aris, leading Andrew Prescott to speculate that ‘Boitard was perhaps responsible for the engraved tailpieces at the end of each section of the 1738 *Constitutions*.’²⁰

In 1746 Boitard illustrated the widely-read autobiographical account of John Coustos’s torture and imprisonment by the Inquisition in Lisbon.²¹ Boitard, like Desaguliers, was a Huguenot, a French protestant, and this publication encouraged anti-Catholic sentiment in England. He was also a member of the Antigallican Society founded in 1745 as a focus for opposition to a cultural invasion of Britain by French goods and fashions, which became a focus for a form of patriotism.²² The 1756 *Constitutions* were the work of a fairly unscrupulous publisher called John Scott and an editor called the Reverend John Entick, whom Prescott described as ‘Scott’s pet hack.’²³ Scott and Entick published a *Pocket Companion*²⁴ in 1754, for which Boitard designed and engraved a frontispiece featuring King Solomon in a Masonic setting. Boitard’s previous work for Scott, together with Cole’s position as official Grand Lodge engraver, made them the obvious choice for the 1756 frontispiece.²⁵

The female figure in Boitard’s frontispiece has an element of Britannia about her, seated on her throne with her thriving capital behind her.²⁶ Prescott noticed these patriot elements of Boitard’s design; ‘with its sweeping view of the London skyline, has a strongly patriotic feel. In general, Boitard’s enthusiasm for Freemasonry seems closely related to his strong identification with the Anti-Gallican and Anti-Catholic components of the emerging sense of British national identity.’²⁷

The frontispiece was used eleven years later when a new edition of *The Constitutions* was published by W. Johnson of Ludgate Street. As Boitard had died in 1768, some writ-

¹⁹ Anderson (1738), 229.

²⁰ A. Prescott, *The Production of the English Books of Constitution in the Eighteenth Century*. (Unpublished paper, c.2005), 6–7.

²¹ J. Coustos, *The Sufferings of John Coustos for Free-Masonry, and for His Refusing to Turn Roman Catholic, in the Inquisition at Lisbon* . . . (London: Printed by W. Strahan, for the author, 1746).

²² See A. Prescott, ‘Boitard, Louis-Philippe [Louis-Pierre]’, in C. Porset and C. Revauger (eds.), *Le Monde Maçonique des Lumières (Europe-Amériques & Colonies): Dictionnaire Prosographique*. Vol. 1 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2013), 418–20.

²³ Prescott (c.2005), 6.

²⁴ J. Scott, *The Pocket Companion and History of Free-Masons* . . . (London: Printed for J. Scott, at the Black-Swan, in Duck Lane, near West Smithfield, 1754).

²⁵ In the 1740s Benjamin Cole took over from John Pine as the official producer of the engraved lists of lodges, a job he kept until 1766, when his son William took over. Benjamin also produced two unofficial lists in 1766 and 1767.

²⁶ W. J. Hughan, ‘Constitutions of 1756’, *The Freemason* Vol. XIX, No. 920. (London: George Kenning, 1886), 611. Hughan is adamant that the figure is the genius of Freemasonry.

²⁷ Prescott, ‘Boitard, Louis-Philippe [Louis-Pierre]’, (2013), 419.



Fig. 2. Frontispiece of the 1756 *Constitutions*

ers including the authors of Boitard's entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* erroneously stated that this was his final work.²⁸

Brother Larken's Frontispiece for the 1764 edition of *Ahiman Rezon* The first edition of *Ahiman Rezon*,²⁹ the constitutions of the Antients Grand Lodge, printed and sold by James Bedford at the Crown in St Paul's Churchyard from 1756, did not have a frontispiece, just a very busy two-colour title page, but the second edition published in 1764³⁰ featured an engraved frontispiece and title page by an engraver called Larken, whom Cecil Adams identified in 1937.

²⁸ T. Clayton and Anita McConnell, 'Boitard, Louis-Philippe (fl. 1733–1768) Engraver and Designer' in H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Vol. 6 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 454.

²⁹ L. Dermot, *Ahiman Rezon, or, A Help to a Brother . . .* (London: Printed for the Editor and sold by Brother James Bedford, at the Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1756).

³⁰ L. Dermott, *Ahiman Rezon, or help to all that are (or would be) free and accepted masons . . .* 2nd edition (London: Printed for the author and sold by Robert Black Book-binder and Stationer in George Yard, Tower Hill, 1764).

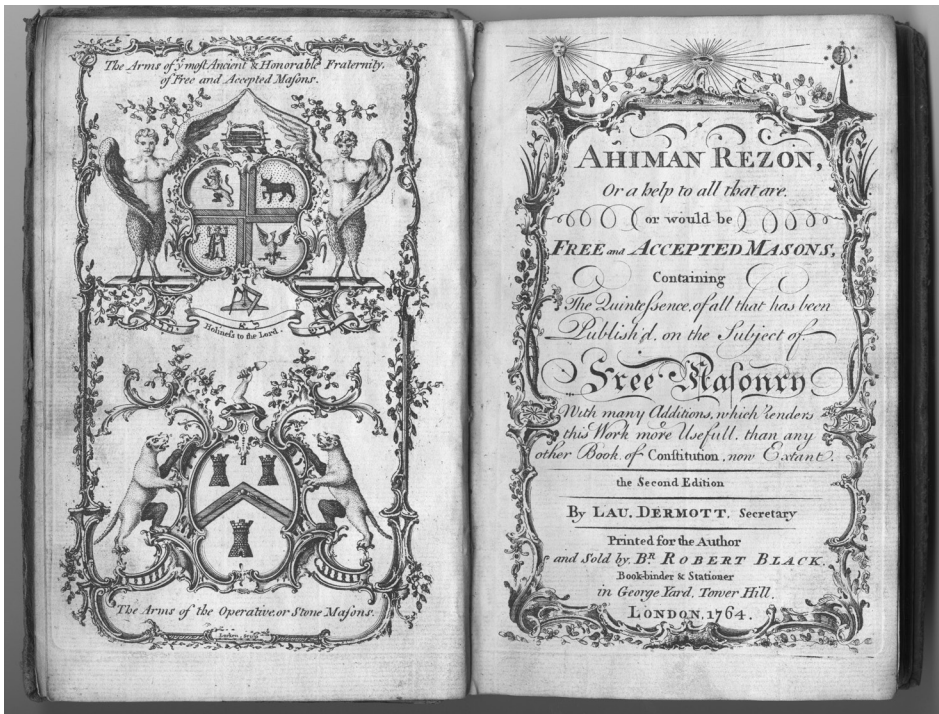


Fig. 3. Frontispiece of the of the 1764 *Ahiman Rezon*

the book was sold by Robert Black, a book binder and stationer and a member of Lodge No. 31 (Antient), who in 1756 joined No. 7 (Antient). The Title-page of this edition is engraved, and there is also an engraved Frontispiece by Bro. Larken, who was almost certainly the same person as Peter Larkin, also a member of Lodge No. 31.³¹

Adams was probably correct, although the membership registers show that he was Patrick, not Peter.³² He also noticed that Larken was the engraver of the frontispiece of *The Complete Free Mason: or, Multa Paucis for Lovers of Secrets*, with its crude interpretation of Pine's frontispiece. Larken was not a celebrated engraver and his works do not appear in the online catalogues of any of the national museums or galleries. There is however a picture of a trade card engraved by Larken in Ambrose Heal's study of London trade cards, that suggests he was capable of better work than his two Masonic pieces.³³

³¹ C Adams, 'Ahiman Rezon, the Book of Constitutions' *AQC* 46 (1937), 254.

³² Name spelt Larkin in the membership registers and Larken on the engravings.

³³ A. Heal, *London Tradesmen's Cards of the XVIII Century: An Account of their Origin and Use* (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1925) plate XXXI.

Larken's engraving for *Abiman Rezon* is relatively simple, consisting of two coats of arms, one described as 'The Arms of ye most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity, of Free and Accepted Masons' and the other as 'The Arms of the Operative or Stone Masons'. *Abiman Rezon's* author, Grand Secretary Laurence Dermott, gave a full explanation of the design in the text. In his essay on the Premier Grand Lodge or Moderns as he calls them Dermott wrote: 'Amongst other things they seized on the stone masons Arms, which that good natured company has permitted them to wear to this day, for which reason several of the brethren have turned their aprons in the old fashion, and affect to imitate the operative masons.'³⁴ In other words, the Moderns have stolen the arms of the London Company of Masons. He then goes on to describe how he found the coat of arms used by the Antients in the writing of the Hebrew scholar and Solomon's Temple modeller, Rabbi Jacob Jehudah Leon. These arms feature the animals of the four principal tribes of Israel: Judah's lion, Ephraim's ox, Ruben's man, and Dan's eagle, supported by Cherub with the face of a man, wings of an eagle, back and mane of a lion, and feet of a calf, with the Ark of the Covenant and its own Cherub as the crest. Although having done exactly the thing he had accused the Moderns of doing, appropriating a coat of arms from elsewhere, Dermott was keen to explain why the arms he had chosen for the Antients were the more suitable of the two:

As these were the arms of the masons that built the tabernacle and the temple, there is not the least doubt of their being the proper arms of the most antient and honourable fraternity of free and accepted masons, and the continual practice, formalities and tradition, in all regular lodges, from the lowest degree to the most high, i.e. THE HOLY ROYAL ARCH, confirms the truth hereof.³⁵

Dermott used this description to make further criticism of the Moderns. They were copying the London Company of Masons because they were bringing modern and false innovations into Freemasonry, whereas the Antients were staying true to the path set out in biblical times.

Although Larken was not as skilled an engraver as Pine or Cole, his engraving of the Antients coat of arms helped transmit the design and make it one of the most recognizable images of eighteenth-century Freemasonry, with several American Grand Lodges incorporating it into their own coats of arms. The first American edition of *Abiman Rezon* published for the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and dedicated to General Washington,³⁶ has a copy of Larken's frontispiece by the celebrated American engraver, Robert Scot (1745–1823).³⁷

³⁴ Dermott (1764), xxxii.

³⁵ Dermott (1764), xxxvi.

³⁶ W. Smith, *Abiman Rezon: Abridged and Digested* . . . (Philadelphia, Pa: Printed by Hall and Sellers, 1783).

³⁷ J. D. Hamilton, *Material culture of the American Freemasons* (Lexington, Ma.: University Press of New Eng-

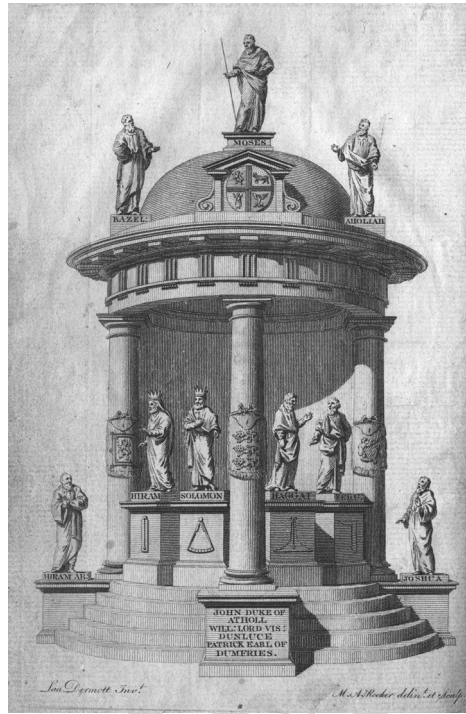


Fig. 4. Frontispiece of the 1778 *Ahiman Rezon*

Laurence Dermott and Thomas Harper's frontispieces for *Ahiman Rezon* from 1778 to 1813

The next six editions of *Ahiman Rezon* all shared the same frontispiece, initially designed by Dermott for the 3rd edition in 1778 and revised by Thomas Harper (1736–1832) in 1801 for the 5th edition. Dermott was suitably qualified to design the frontispiece. He had been Grand Secretary from 1752 until 1771, Deputy Grand Master since 1772, and was the author of the earlier editions of *Ahiman Rezon*. Initiated in Ireland in the 1740s, Dermott had come to London in 1746, initially to find work as a scenery painter, although he eventually went into business as a wine merchant.³⁸ Dermott employed Michael Angelo Rooker (1743–1801) as his engraver. Rooker was the son of engraver Edward Rooker and studied landscape painting under Paul Sandby, brother of Thomas Sandby, the architect of the first Freemasons' Hall. He became the principal scenery

land, 1994), vi.

³⁸ G. Lamoine, 'Dermott, Lawrence (1720–1791)' in C. Porset and C. Revauger (eds.), *Le Monde Maçonnique des Lumières (Europe-Amériques & Colonies): Dictionnaire prosographique* Vol. 2 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2013), 983.

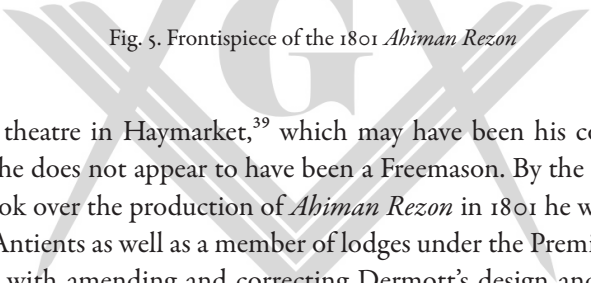


Fig. 5. Frontispiece of the 1801 *Ahimán Rezon*

painter of the theatre in Haymarket,³⁹ which may have been his connection to Dermott, because he does not appear to have been a Freemason. By the time jeweller Thomas Harper took over the production of *Abimán Rezon* in 1801 he was Deputy Grand Master of the Antients as well as a member of lodges under the Premier Grand Lodge.⁴⁰ He is credited with amending and correcting Dermott's design and he employed an engraver called John Chapman, a member of Lodge No. 195 at the Bedford Head, Covent Garden, with the edition's printer Thomas Burton.⁴¹

Dermott's design features a prostyle, or free standing, Doric temple, with statues of biblical patriarchs described in an explanation of the frontispiece on an unnumbered page at the start of each edition.

³⁹ M. Bryan and G. C. Williamson, *Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers* Vol. IV (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1921), 273.

⁴⁰ G. Lamoine, 'Harper, Thomas (1735–1832)' in Porset and Revauger Vol. 2 (2013), 1391–2.

⁴¹ Adams (1937), 275.

The three figures upon the dome represents the three great masters of the tabernacle in the wilderness. The two crowned figures *with that on their right hand*, represents the three great masters of the holy temple at Jerusalem. The three figures on the left hand represents the three great masters of the second temple at Jerusalem.⁴²

The dome is decorated with the arms of the Antients Grand Lodge. On each column is an apron decorated with the arms of Scotland, England, and Ireland. The pedestals that four of the statues stand on are decorated with a plumb line, compasses, a level, and a square. The pedestal immediately in front of the temple is engraved with the names of the Grand Masters of the Antients Grand Lodge and of the Grand Lodges of Scotland and Ireland. Dermott's explanation discusses their presence:

The three columns, bearing Masons aprons, with the arms of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and supporting the whole fabrick, represents the three grand masters (of England, Ireland and Scotland) whose names are on the front pedestal, and who wisely and nobly have formed a triple union to support the honour and dignity of the Ancient Craft, for which their Lordship's names will be honoured and revered whilst Free-masonry exists in these kingdoms.⁴³

Harper's revision of the frontispiece merely altered the names of the Grand Masters to bring them up to date and added the Ark of the Covenant and Cherubim to the Coat of Arms.

As with his frontispiece of the 2nd edition Dermott has used his 1778 design to argue for the superiority of his Grand Lodge over the Moderns, who two years earlier had dedicated the first Freemasons' Hall. By placing the names of the rulers of the three Grand Lodges under the figures of the biblical masters, he is saying that the Grand Masters are the heirs of Moses, Solomon, and Zerubbabel, whereas the Grand Masters of the Moderns, by omission, are not.

Another contemporary issue to which Dermott was alluding was the agreement for mutual recognition agreed with the Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland in 1772.⁴⁴ By highlighting the alliance between the three Grand Lodges Dermott makes it clear that the Premier Grand Lodge was not part of that alliance.

The prostyle temple proved to be a popular design for American Freemasons. Several American editions of *Abiman Rezon* include versions of this frontispiece. A New York edition includes an identical frontispiece, which is credited to Dermott.⁴⁵ A Grand

⁴² L. Dermott, 'Explanation of the frontispiece' *Abiman Rezon, or Help to All That are (or Would) be Free and Accepted Masons* . . . 3rd edition (London: Printed for James Jones, Grand Secretary, and sold by Peter Shatwell, in the Strand, 1778).

⁴³ Dermott (1778).

⁴⁴ J. Belton, *The English Masonic Union of 1813* . . . (Bury St. Edmunds: Arima, 2012), 45.

⁴⁵ L. Dermott, *The True Abiman Rezon* . . . (New York, NY: Printed by Southwick and Hardcastle, 1805).

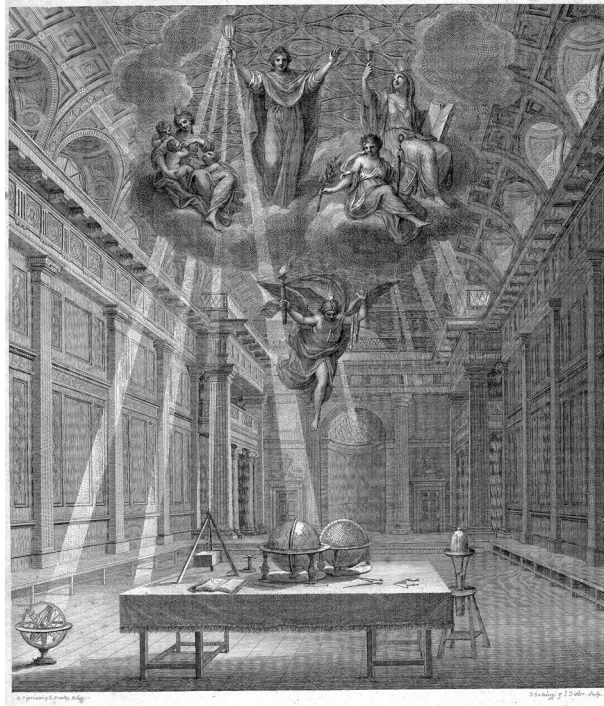


Fig. 6. Frontispiece of the 1784 *Constitutions*..

Lodge of Maryland edition of 1817 has an almost identical design to Dermott's original, including the British arms on the columns, but it substitutes the names of the Grand Masters with four names including DeWitt Clinton and Thomas Smith Webb, rulers of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the United States.⁴⁶ Variations of the prostyle temple also appear in American monitors,⁴⁷ including Cross's *True Masonic Chart* of 1826,⁴⁸ which manages to squeeze in six extra patriarchs, including Adam and Noah, whilst leaving the pedestal at the front empty, presumably for the owner of the book to add the names of their choice.

⁴⁶ S. Cole, *The Freemasons' Library and General Ahiman Rezon* (Baltimore, Md.: Printed and published by Benjamin Edes, 1817).

⁴⁷ A manual or ritual guide aimed at lodges containing explanations of the symbolism, songs, prayers etc.

⁴⁸ J. L. Cross, *The True Masonic Chart: or, Hieroglyphic Monitor Containing all the Emblems Explained in the Degrees* 4th edition (New Haven, Conn.: T.G. Woodward and Co., 1826).

Thomas Sandby and Giovanni Cipriani's Frontispiece for the 1784 *Constitutions*

Arguably the most accomplished of the six frontispieces is the illustration created for the 1784 *Constitutions* of the Premier Grand Lodge. This edition was edited by John Noorthouk for the Grand Lodge's Hall Committee, which since the opening of the Freemasons' Hall and Tavern in 1776 had taken over much of the administration of Grand Lodge, including official publications. The frontispiece was a collaboration of four artists, Freemasons' Hall architect Thomas Sandby (1723–98), artist Giovanni Cipriani (1727–85) and engravers Francesco Bartolozzi (1727–1815) and James Fittler (1758–1835). All four were associated with the Royal Academy of Arts; Sandby, Cipriani and Bartolozzi were all members and Fittler a former pupil. Sandby, Cipriani, and Bartolozzi were all Freemasons. After the completion of the Hall the Premier Grand Lodge had created the rank of Grand Architect for Sandby, and he had been co-opted onto the Hall Committee. Cipriani and Bartolozzi were lifelong friends, born in Florence and trained at the *Accademia del Disegno* before moving to London, where the pair became regular collaborators.⁴⁹ In 1777 both men joined the Lodge of the Nine Muses No. 502, a new lodge full of artists and musicians, whose officers' jewels and candlesticks were designed by Cipriani.⁵⁰ They later collaborated on tickets for a series of concerts to be held at Freemasons' Hall in 1783.⁵¹

As is often the case with collaborative projects, the production of the frontispiece overran its deadline. After approaching Sandby, who recommended Cipriani, the Hall Committee resolved in January 1783 that 'Brothers Cipriani and Sandby be requested to give the Design and that the subject be taken from the Modern Era of Free Masonry'.⁵²

Over the next two years the Hall Committee Minutes are full of references to committee member and professional musician Redmond Simpson, reporting on the progress of the frontispiece in relation to Noorthouk's work on the book, which was published over a year before the artists finished. Bartolozzi was notorious for his poor time management and was once sued by the artist John Singleton Copley.⁵³ The committee finally saw the completed plate for the frontispiece in May 1786, by which time the artists, including the now deceased Cipriani, had waived their fees. The Hall Committee did not mind: they could sell the engraving separately, including copies to all those who had already purchased the book.

⁴⁹ A. Pink, 'Cipriani, Giovanni Battista (1727–1785)' in Porset and Revauger (eds.) Vol.1 (2013), 804.

⁵⁰ Pink, Porset and Revauger Vol. 1 (2013), 806.

⁵¹ P. J. Dawson, 'Masonic Concerts in 1783' *AQC* 87 (1974), 246–8.

⁵² Moderns Grand Lodge Hall Committee, *Minutes Covering the Dates 3 January 1778 – 21 December 1787* Library and Museum of Freemasonry reference GBR 1991 FMH MINS/1.

⁵³ A. Pink, 'Bartolozzi, Francesco (1728–1815)' in Porset and Revauger Vol. 1 (2013), 274.

A good description of the frontispiece was provided by former Grand Secretary, James Heseltine.

The architectural part represents the inside of Freemasons' Hall. The uppermost figure is Truth, holding a mirror which reflects its rays on diverse ornaments of the Hall, and also on the Globes and other Masonic Furniture and Implements of the Lodge. Truth is attended by the three Theological Virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity: under these, the Genius of Masonry, commissioned by Truth and her Attendants, is descending into the Hall, bearing a lighted Torch; she is decorated with some of the Masonic Emblems, and on her arm hangs a ribbon with a Medal pendant, with which she is to invest the Grand Master, in token of the Divine approbation of a Building sacred to Charity and Benevolence.⁵⁴

Heseltine must have been working from Cipriani's drawings, because the artist had died in 1785 before the emergence of the final engraving. In 1786, Sandby wrote to Grand Secretary William White to apologise about the inaccurate scientific instruments that appeared in the design.

I sent Mr Cipriani an indigested Idea for the Table and its furniture, imagining he would have improved the hint, but find my own was adopted. The Instrument for which you cannot find a name I fear has not been copied from a real one, which I meant for an air-pump, the exact form of which I could not recollect. In short, my sketch was carelessly done, that Cipriani might have pumped up some of his better Ideas for the purpose.⁵⁵

This suggests that most of the work was done by Cipriani and Bartolozzi. Fittler's contribution is unknown. He doesn't appear in the committee Minutes but he is credited on all the copies of the frontispiece, although more than one plate was produced. Some versions credit P. rather than T. Sandby with the design. Sadler thought it was an engraver touching up the plate believing the design was by Thomas's artist brother Paul who would have been better known for artistic works.⁵⁶

Grand Lodge must have been pleased with the frontispiece. Cipriani's emblematic figures and scientific instruments painted Freemasonry as Enlightenment ideal and Sandby's Hall looks majestic, a suitable venue for Masonic ceremonies or public hire. Grand Lodge also kept faith in Bartolozzi, who in 1796, in collaboration with artist and Freemason, Thomas Stothard (1755–1834), produced tickets for a concert to raise

⁵⁴ J. Heseltine, 'Explanation of the Frontispiece' in J. Noorthouck (ed.), *Constitutions of the Antient Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons* . . . (London: Printed by J. Rozea, 1784).

⁵⁵ T. Sandby, *Letter of Thomas Sandby, Architect to William White, Grand Secretary*. 11 January 1786. Library and Museum of Freemasonry reference GBR 1991 FMH HC 10/B/6.

⁵⁶ Sadler (1901), 154.



Fig. 7. Frontispiece of the 1819 *Constitutions*.

funds for the Free-Masons Female Charity.⁵⁷ He also engraved Stothard's painting of Bartholomew Ruspini presenting the pupils of the Female Charity to Grand Lodge.⁵⁸

William Silvester's frontispiece for the 1815 and 1819 *Constitutions*

After the union of the two Grand Lodges in 1813 and the new laws agreed upon then, the United Grand Lodge of England decided to issue a new book of constitutions as quickly as possible and William Williams, Provincial Grand Master of Dorset, agreed to organise the printing and publishing.⁵⁹ The book would be released in two parts, the first containing a new history written by George Adam Brown (1774–1843) of Trinity College Cambridge and the second containing the charges and constitutions, with a revised edition three years later. The first version of part two appeared in 1815, followed

⁵⁷ Library and Museum of Freemasonry reference GBR 1991 FMH PPAP/15.

⁵⁸ Believed to have been painted in 1800.

⁵⁹ United Grand Lodge of England, 'Sanction' *Constitutions of the Antient Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons*, Part the Second (London: Published by the authority of the United Grand Lodge, by William Williams, Esq. : Printed by W.P. Norris, printer to the society, Little Moorgate, London-Wall, 1815).

by a revised part two in 1819. Then in April 1822 Richard William Silvester (1771–1842) of Jerusalem Lodge No. 263 appeared with a frontispiece and bill. The Grand Lodge proceedings recorded what had happened:

In 1815 the Duke of Sussex, then Grand Master, on his own responsibility, gave orders for a Frontispiece to be prepared by Bro. R. W. Silvester, engraver to the Grand Lodge... Bro. Silvester sent his bill for £73 10s, payment of which was deferred on the ground of the Finance Committee knowing nothing of the order for the work. After enquiry of the Duke, and a considerable reduction in the amount, it was settled in the following September.⁶⁰

Silvester started working for the Premier Grand Lodge just before the union. In January 1813 he engraved the tickets for a reception for the Acting Grand Master, the Earl of Moira, and in 1816 the first version of the 'Pillars' Grand Lodge certificate, the design still used today.⁶¹ Lateness of delivery may account for why only two of the eighteen copies of the 1815/1819 *Constitutions* in the Library and Museum collection contain frontispieces.

Silvester's design is very clever. A female figure, representing Freemasonry, stands within a Masonic temple, her right hand holding a *fascies* or bundle of bound rods. Her left hand rests on a pedestal decorated with figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and possibly Fortitude, bearing the name *Duke of Sussex, MW GM*. On top of the pedestal is the Ark that John Soane built to house the Articles of Union and a terrestrial globe. At her feet is an armillary sphere, a Volume Of The Sacred Law, and some Masonic tools. Behind her is a brazier embossed with the word *Concord*, and behind that a bust of the Prince Regent upon a pedestal, engraved *His Most Glorious Majesty* and the beginnings of a date in Roman numerals, possibly 1813. The design is all about the union. The female figure wears a belt fastened with a handshake, the fascies represent strength in unity and Soane's Ark is another symbol of the union. The Prince Regent, a former Grand Master, was Patron of the United Grand Lodge. His bust also represents loyalty to the crown, possibly a reference to the *Unlawful Societies Act* of 1799 and the collaboration of the two Grand Lodges over the negotiation and implementation of the Act.

The tradition of a frontispiece ended with Silvester's work. By the early nineteenth century, with Freemasonry now firmly established under the leadership of the Duke of Sussex, perhaps there was no longer any need to use such illustrations to reinforce other messages whether about legitimacy, patriotism, or the moral worth of Freemasonry.

⁶⁰ Sadler (1901), 154–5.

⁶¹ T. O. Haunch, 'English Craft Certificates' *AQC* 82 (1969), 190.