

The Evolution of an Order

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“The Order of Brotherly Love”!

“The Order of Jonathan and David”!

These are but two of many names which have been given to an interesting side degree which has developed from its early roots over 300 years ago into what we now know as “The Order of the Secret Monitor”.

History tells us that the “Order of David and Jonathan” was brought to the New World by Dutch settlers of Jewish decent; but we must go back to the Netherlands for its origins.

The northern-most part of Holland was essentially Protestant in the 16th century but an unfortunate royal marriage caused first Austrian and then Spanish influence. Both Austria and Spain were strongholds of Roman Catholicism and consequently abhorrent to the Dutch Lutherans. This invariably lead to the formation of underground secret societies with the object of freeing the mother-land from the fetters of their overlords.

Just as David was persecuted by Saul, so were the Dutch Protestants harassed by the Catholics. A revolutionary brotherhood was formed with modes of recognition suited to the hours of darkness as well as daylight, and signs and symbols were chosen from the David and Jonathan story of the Bible.

That was in the late 16th century ... and it occurred again a hundred years later when Louis XIV of France invaded the Low Countries again in a Catholic crusade against the Huguenots the same modes of recognition were employed to cause confusion amongst the invaders. Many Dutch Protestants emigrated to the New World to find a new life with greater liberty than seemed possible in Holland. Any opposition to the way of life of the Dutch settlers immediately brought forth a resurgence of the David and Jonathan cult which had served the Netherlands so well in the past.

For the roots of the Order, we must look back to a Dutch work of the Order of Jonathan and David and Jesus Christ; an Order having seven degrees:-

1. Squire or Friend of the Order;
2. Knight or Nephew;
3. Commander or Brother;
4. Grand Commander of Jonathan and David;
5. Commander of the Order of Jesus Christ;
6. Grand Knight;
7. Grand Commander.

The first three are closely associated with the present first degree of the Secret Monitor but the last four were reserved for Freemasons of eminence.

The essence of this degree evolved into a true side-degree which could be conferred by one brother upon another by a simple obligation and the communication of the signs and modes of recognition.

The degree was taken to England by Dr. Zacharie, a PGM from California who settled in London in 1875, after the American Civil war. He joined Bon Accord Mark lodge and there met a number of

brethren who had become Secret Monitors during their Masonic progress. With these brethren, Dr. Zacharie formed the Grand Council for the Order on June 17, 1887. At the first festival of the Order on July 15, 1887, Alfred Meadows Conclave #1 received its warrant and initiated 30 candidates. London Conclave #2 was then formed.

The object of the Order was set forth in the Constitution:

“The special feature of the Order consists in this:

- Every Conclave shall appoint not more than four Visiting Deacons, whose duty shall be to search out and call upon any Brother who may be in danger or distress, or who may have fallen into ill health, or who may be in need of fraternal monition, sympathy, consolation or assistance. This duty shall be recognised in every set of by-laws sanctioned for any conclave, and the S.R. of every conclave, at his installation, must be duly warned that he will be held responsible to the Grand Council for the proper carrying out of this Constitution. He will also take care to impress the importance of this matter upon those whom he may appoint as his Visiting Deacons.”

By the end of 1887, the Grand Council had extended the first degree ritual and added the Prince Degree and the Installed Supreme Ruler degree.

The Order expanded very rapidly and Conclaves were soon spread over the Commonwealth: Penang, Jamaica, Nepal, Calcutta, Singapore, South Africa, Deccan, Bombay and Burma.

Meanwhile, back in North America, the **Sovereign College of Allied Masonic and Christian Degrees for the Western Hemisphere** was formed in 1892 by Hartley Carmichael from degrees he acquired from Scotland. It soon changed its name to **of America** and then removed the words **of Christian**. It was Carmichael who gave the **Grand Tylers of Solomon** degree to the **Grand Council of the Order of AMD of England** in 1892. The Sovereign College controlled the **Arch and Dove or Arch Mariner, Secret Monitor, St Lawrence the Martyr, Mason Elect of Twenty-seven or Grand Tyler of Solomon, Order of Holy Wisdom, Knight of Constantiople** and the **Order of High Priesthood** degrees.

H.J. Hughan in his “History of the Secret Monitor 1887 – 1907” states:

“On Dec 12, 1892, Dr. Carmichael, Grand Master of the **Allied Masonic and Christian Degrees**, visited the Order of Secret Monitor in England and obtained copies of the ritual as practiced in Britain. A couple of years later Dr. Carmichael again visited England; he presented a copy of the American AMD ritual of the Secret Monitor.”

This indicated that by this time the two rituals were widely divergent.

Records show that a group of brethren from Maine wrote on Jan 23, 1895, to the Grand Council of Secret Monitor in England applying for permission to open a Conclave of Secret Monitor and confer the Second and Third degrees. A Warrant was granted, and this led to a confrontation with the Sovereign College in the USA. In May 1895, the Grand Council of AMD of England severed all contact with the Grand Council of the Order of Secret Monitor and declared that the American Secret Monitor degree would become the sixth degree under their system. All members who had received the British Secret Monitor degree should be admitted (subject to ballot) provided they agreed to be obligated to the Grand Council of AMD and provided they paid the fee.

Strained relations existed until 1898 when a compromise position was adopted in which the Maine Warrant was cancelled, both the Grand Council of AMD and the Grand Council of S.M. would have no

jurisdiction within the United States and finally that both would work the Secret Monitor in their own way.

This was clearly unsatisfactory and it dampened the growth of the Secret Monitor for 20 years. The first active step was taken when Napier-Clavering was elected as Grand Master of the Allied in 1920. He announced that he was in sympathy with the idea that the AMD should surrender its rights over the degree of the Secret Monitor to the other Grand Council and that he was firmly convinced that this would be conducive to Masonic harmony.

This was referred to a committee which was obstructive and delayed the resolution for over 10 years. It was not until 1931 that Napier-Clavering, who was, by this time the Grand Supreme Ruler of the Grand Council of the Order of the Secret Monitor as well as the Grand Master of the AMD, was able to announce that the AMD had surrendered its claim to the Secret Monitor degree.

The Order of the Secret Monitor has expanded greatly from that time and is one of the fastest growing bodies in Masonry.

There are now more than 300 Conclaves and there are daughter Grand Conclaves in Australia and New Zealand.

On September 15, 1994, the Grand Officers of the **Grand Conclave of the Secret Monitor, or Brotherhood of David and Jonathan, in the British Isles and in Territories Overseas** took time from the International Convention of Knights Templar in Toronto to constitute, consecrate and install the officers of three Conclaves of the Order in Canada. There were:

- Ottawa Conclave # 450 in Ottawa, Ontario
- London Conclave # 451 in London, Ontario, and
- Toronto Conclave # 452 in Toronto, Ontario.

These Conclaves were formed at the request of the Sovereign Grand Master, M.V.Bro. Norman A. Robertson, with the approval of the Grand Executive.

These three Conclaves will initially be administered by the Grand Council of AMD of Canada but agreement has been reached that an independent Grand Conclave of the OSM for Canada may be formed when there are 12 past Supreme Rulers to be the first Grand Officers.

*(Later Note: the Grand Supreme Ruler and a number of the Grand Officers of the **Grand Conclave of the Order of the Secret Monitor in the British Isles and in Territories Overseas** came to Toronto, Ontario on **March 26, 1997**. They proceeded to Inaugurate the **Grand Conclave of the OSM of Canada** and to Install the first Grand Officers. The first Grand Officers were:*

<i>Grand Supreme Ruler</i>	<i>M. Wy. Bro. Glenson T. Jones</i>
<i>Deputy Grand Supreme Ruler</i>	<i>R. Wy. Bro. Edward S.P. Carson</i>
<i>Grand Chancellor</i>	<i>R. Wy. Bro. Kenneth W. Rager</i>
<i>Grand Counsellor</i>	<i>R. Wy. Bro. Ralph M. Boone</i>
<i>Grand Guide</i>	<i>R. Wy. Bro. Albert E. Card</i>
<i>Grand Chaplain</i>	<i>V. Wy. Bro. David J. Price</i>
<i>President of the Executive Committee</i>	<i>V. Wy. Bro. James A. Finch</i>
<i>Grand Registrar</i>	<i>V. Wy. Bro. Clifford C. P. Hardy</i>
<i>Grand Recorder</i>	<i>V. Wy. Bro. S. Michael Jenkyns</i>
<i>Grand Director of Ceremonies</i>	<i>V. Wy. Bro. Keith Ansell</i>
<i>Grand Visitor</i>	<i>V. Wy. Bro. James A. Curr</i>

*A. Grand Director of Ceremonies
Grand Standard Bearer*

*Wy.Bro. Michel J. Sastre
Wy.Bro. Robert D. Kondra*

The Conclaves represented at the Inauguration were:

- Ottawa Conclave, # 450 (UK), Ottawa, Ontario which became Ottawa Conclave # 1*
- London Conclave, # 451 (UK), London, Ontario which became London Conclave # 2*
- Toronto Conclave, # 452 (UK), Toronto, Ontario which became Toronto Conclave # 3*
- Winnipeg Conclave, # 453 (UK), Winnipeg, Manitoba which became Winnipeg Conclave # 4*
- Saskatoon Conclave, # 454 (UK), Saskatoon, Saskatchewan) which became Saskatoon Conclave # 5*

Acknowledgements:

- Adapted from material extracted from “Century: A History of One Hundred Years of the Order of the Secret Monitor” by E.G. Gregory White, Prov. G.S.R. for Essex & Suffolk*
- Some material was also obtained from “A Century of the Allied Masonic Degrees” by H.H.C. Prestige, C.B.E., M.A.*
- Some was also obtained from “Centennial History of the Allied Masonic Degrees of America 1982 – 1992” by William G. Peacher, M.D., M.A., P.S.G.M., K.G.C.*
- The later note was extracted from the minutes of the Inauguration of the Grand Conclave of the OSM of Canada*