

TWO CONSTITUTIONS

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Brethren, I suspect that there are a few things about our Scottish Rite that you might have wondered about – why we are organized as we are, or why we have different bodies meeting at seemingly random intervals throughout the year. You might wonder why we have the strange sounding titles for the many officers occupying the stations and places at our Bodies' meetings. More importantly, you might wonder if there is something similar to our Virginia Grand Lodge's Methodical Digest with the rules and regulations written down to guide us on the proper governance of our Scottish Rite. Those of you who have completed, or are working your way through the Master Craftsman course have had some exposure to some of the governing documents of our Rite, but unless you have taken the time to find and read them, you may not yet have a full understanding of our organization. Tonight, we will talk about our Southern Jurisdiction's, "Law of the Rite".

Our "Law" is stated in several basic documents. Perhaps the one we are most aware of is titled "Statutes of the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third Degree". The Statutes have defined and governed the functioning of our Rite since 1859 when, as the newly elected Sovereign Grand Commander, Illustrious Albert Pike called a meeting of the Supreme Council to consider and approve his completely reworked Statutes. Today, the Statutes are updated typically on a biennial basis concurrently with the meeting of the Supreme Council. The current Statutes were revised and approved in August 2011, and we would expect an update to result this month when the Supreme Council meets again. The Statutes are posted at scottishrite.org and you should each take a look at the Statutes just to have a better understanding of what they contain. Spend some time with Article XV. This is where you'll find "Regulations Governing the Subordinate Bodies".

Article XXI of the Statutes states:

"These Statutes, with the Regulations of 1762, the Grand Constitutions of 1786, as published by this Supreme Council, except as herein modified together with the edicts and decisions of the Supreme Council, and the unwritten principles and Landmarks of Freemasonry constitute the law of the Rite in the jurisdiction of this Supreme Council."

So we have two Constitutions plus the Statutes – along with the normal Masonic caveat of edicts and decisions as well as the broader, and not commonly defined, Landmarks. The two Constitutions are the part I want to focus on for a bit, tonight. These documents are the Constitutions and Regulations of 1762 and the Grand Constitutions of 1786. Albert Pike later published copies of the two documents based on transcriptions from earlier manuscripts, in a single publication titled *The Grand Constitutions of Freemasonry; Ancient and Accepted Rite*. You can find a copy in our Library, or you may prefer to purchase a copy of your own from the scottishrite.org bookstore.

The **CONSTITUTIONS AND REGULATIONS OF 1762** were supposedly transmitted to Etienne (Stephen) Morin's from the Grand Orient of Berlin, Paris, and Bordeaux in 1762. The document names him The Very Illustrious and Very Puissant Prince Etienne, Grand Inspector of all the Regular Lodges in the New World. This document provides the basis for Morin's Order of the Royal Secret that is accepted as the parent of our current Scottish Rite.

The Constitutions and Regulations of 1762 has 35 Articles addressing qualifications for initiation, a listing of the degrees, the Order's organizational structure, Officers and their roles, protocol, and other such material as would be required to establish the operational and administrative guidance for an organization. The Constitution of 1762 described an Order composed of 25 degrees. The 25 Degrees were defined in 7 Classes with a specific 81-month timeline for their conferral.

- **1st Class, 3 Degrees; 15 month schedule:**
 1. Entered Apprentice (3 mos to attain degree)
 2. Fellow of the Craft (5 mos from EA to FC)

- **2nd Class; 5 degrees; 21 month schedule:**
 4. Secret Master (3 mos)
 5. Perfect Master (3 mos)
 6. Confidential Secretary (3 mos)
 7. Provost and Judge (5 mos)
 8. Intendant of the Buildings (7 mos)
- **3rd Class; 3 degrees; 7 month schedule:**
 9. Elect of the 9 (3 mos)
 10. Elect of the 15 (3 mos)
 11. Illustrious Elect, Chief of the 12 Tribes (1 mos)
- **4th Class; 3 degrees; 5 month schedule:**
 12. Grand Master Architect (1 mos)
 13. Knight of the Royal Arch (3 mos)
 14. Grand Elect Antient, Perfect Master or Perfection (1 mos)
- **5th Class; 4 degrees; 6 month schedule:**
 15. Knight of the East, or of the Sword (1 mos)
 16. Prince of Jerusalem (1 mos)
 17. Knight of the East and West (3 mos)
 18. Knight of Rose Croix (1 mos)
- **6th Class; 4 degrees; 12 month schedule:**
 19. Grand Pontif or Master ad vitam (3 mos)
 20. Grand Patriarch Noachite (3 mos)
 21. Master of the Key of Masonry (3 mos)
 22. Prince of Libanus or Royal Axe (3 mos)
- **7th Class; 3 degrees; 15 month schedule:**
 23. Sovereign Prince Adept (5 mos)
 24. Illustrious Knight Commander of White & Black Eagle (5 mos)
 25. Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret (5 mos)

To implement the Order defined by the 1762 Constitution, Morin deputized Henry Franken in Kingston, Jamaica to confer the Order's degrees in the West Indies and North America. Morin died soon there after, but Franken then deputized others to begin Bodies and the Order spread somewhat tenuously, sporadically, and generally, unsuccessfully – probably due to the more pressing matters that must have dominated the thoughts of Masons during the period of the American Revolution.

The Constitutions and Regulations of 1762 were followed by **THE GRAND CONSTITUTIONS OF 1786**. While it supercedes the 1762 Constitutions, the new document states that all the previous Articles that “are not contrary to the present Ordinances, are preserved in force and shall be observed.” The Grand Constitutions also introduced a governing Supreme Council of 9 members. (97 years later Pike's Statutes of 1859 would increase this number to today's 33 members.) The Grand Constitutions also provide for two Supreme Councils in North America, two in South America, and one in each kingdom/nation elsewhere in the world.

The Grand Constitutions of 1786 has 18 Articles, and like its predecessor, it also defines the organization, degrees, handling of funds, and so on. The primary reason for its creation seems to have been to overcome the competition and confusion that existed among the many Rites and their numerous “high degrees.” [Read *King Frederick's* words from *Grand Const.*, page 225.]

- “...recent and urgent representations, which of late have been addressed to us, from every quarter, make evident to us the pressing necessity of opposing a strong barrier to that spirit of intolerance, sectarianism, schism and anarchy, which recent innovators are endeavoring to introduce among the brethren... Wherefore these reasons, and other inducements of not less weight, impel us to the connecting together and agglomerating into one body, the Art of Stone Masonry, all the RITES of the Scottish regimen...”

The Grand Constitutions of 1786 consolidated 8 competing Rites into one system of Thirty-three degrees - still in the previously established 7 Classes and subject to the previously “required delays”. These were the existing 25 degrees of the Order of the Royal Secret plus 8 more degrees taken from the competing Rites: The Grand Constitutions states:

- “These Rites are those that are known as ‘The Ancient,’ ‘Heredom or Hairdom,’ ‘of the Orient of Kilwinning,’ ‘of St. Andrew,’ ‘of the Emperors of East and West,’ ‘of Princes of the Royal Secret’ or ‘of Perfection,’ of ‘Philosophy,’ and the most recent Rite of all, styled, ‘The Primitive.’ ”
- The Constitutions go on to state, “We do declare them all to be now and henceforth conjoined and agglomerated into one single Order, which, professing the dogma and pure doctrines of the ancient Art of Stone-Masonry, embraces all the systems of the Scottish Rite, united under the title of The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.”

It’s interesting to note that while the new Constitution states that it was signed by King Frederick II of Prussia, many now assume this may not have been the fact. It is possible that Frederick’s authority might have been considered helpful and his name invoked to ease all that ‘conjoining and agglomerating’ from the other Rites.

So those are the two documents that created the early structure and governance of the Scottish Rite. Some future program can now deal with Pike’s 1859 Statutes that brought us to our modern Scottish Rite. The Handout shows the change of the seven classes of degrees from 1762 to 1786.

Comparison of Degrees as of 1762 and 1786

Constitutions and Regulations of 1762		Grand Constitutions of 1786	
<i>Deg</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Deg</i>	<i>Title</i>
1	Entered Apprentice	1	Entered Apprentice
2	Fellow of the Craft	2	Fellowcraft
3	Master Mason	3	Master Mason
4	Secret Master	4	Secret Master
5	Perfect Master	5	Perfect Master
6	Confidential Secretary	6	Intimate Secretary
7	Provost & Judge	7	Provost & Judge
8	Intendant of the Building	8	Intendant of the Building
9	Elect of the Nine	9	Elu of the Nine
10	Elect of the Fifteen	10	Elu of the Fifteen
11	Ill. Elect, Chief of the 12 Tribes	11	Elu of the Twelve
12	Grand Master Architect	12	Master Architect
13	Knight of the Royal Arch	13	Royal Arch of Solomon
14	Grand Elect Antient, Perfect Master of Perfection	14	Perfect Elu
15	Knight of the East or Sword	15	Knight of the East or Sword
16	Prince of Jerusalem	16	Prince of Jerusalem
17	Knight of the East & West	17	Knight of the East & West
18	Knight Rose Croix	18	Knight Rose Croix
19	Grand Pontif or Master ad vitam	19	Grand Pontiff
20	Grand Patriarch Noachite	20	Master of the Symbolic Lodge
21	Master of the Key of Masonry	21	Noachite or Prussian Knight
22	Prince of Libanus or Royal Axe	22	Knight of the Royal Axe
		23	Chief of the Tabernacle
		24	Prince of the Tabernacle
		25	Knight of the Brazen Serpent
		26	Prince of Mercy
23	Sovereign Prince Adept	27	Knight of the Sun
		28	Knight Commander of the Temple
		29	Knight of St. Andrew
24	Ill. Kt Cmdr of White & Black Eagle	30	Knight Kadosh
		31	Inspector Inquisitor
25	Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret	32	Master of the Royal Secret
		33	Inspector General Honorary