

Scottish Rite (Masonic Order) French Language Collection

1787-1825, 1907, n.d.

RG 486

Brock University Archives

- Creator:** Scottish Rite (Masonic Order); Grand Orient de France
- Extent:** 26 cm of textual records
- Abstract:** This collection contains materials relating to freemasonry. All of the material is written in French. The collection consists of 19 books as well as conference papers, a letter, a leaflet and some other papers. The bulk of the material relates to the Scottish Rite Order and the Grand Orient de France.
- Materials:** Books, a letter, conference papers, a leaflet.
- Repository:** Brock University Archives
- Processed by:** Chantal Cameron
- Last updated:** January 2015
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- Term of use:** Scottish Rite (Masonic Order) French language collection is open for research.
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- Preferred citation:** RG 486, Scottish Rite (Masonic Order) French language collection, 1787-1825, 1907, n.d., Brock University Archives, Brock University.

Acquisition info.: Acquired from Donald W. Lambie, Chairman, Library & Archives Committee, Supreme Council 33°, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of Canada, in 1997.

Administrative history

Scottish Rite of Freemasonry

The origins of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry can be traced to France around 1754, when a Chapter of Claremont was founded in Paris. Initially this chapter had seven degrees, but by 1758 there were twenty-five degrees, known as the Rite of Perfection. In 1761, Stephen Morin was appointed to introduce the Rite into the New World. He began with Kingston, Jamaica and San Domingo. Further establishments were made in New Orleans, LA(1763); Albany, NY (1767); Philadelphia, PA (1782); and Charleston, SC (1783). In order to improve the disorganized state of the degrees in Europe, “Grand Constitutions” were enacted in 1786. These Constitutions formally brought into existence the “Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite”. None of the degrees of the Scottish Rite would seem to have origins in Scotland. “Scottish” is translated from the French word “Ecosais”, which is found in some of the French titles of some of the degrees of the Rite of Perfection. It is possible that the Scottish connection is a result of the involvement of a Scotsman, Andrew Michael Ramsey, who may have devised some of the degrees.

Source: <http://www.scottishritecanada.ca/about-us/history/>
Retrieved 2013/10/31

Grand Orient de France

The Grand Orient de France is the largest and oldest Masonic organization in continental Europe. Initially known as the Grand Lodge of France when established in 1728, the name changed to the Grand Orient de France in 1773. Currently, the Grand Orient de France has more than 49,000 members and more than 1200 lodges.

Source: <http://www.godf.org/>
Retrieved 2015/01/23

Jacques Molay and Freemasonry

Jacques Molay (1243-1314) was the last Grand Master of the Knights Templar. The Knights Templar were a powerful and wealthy order of knights founded during the Crusades. King Philip IV was determined to disband the order and seize their wealth. When false accusations of blasphemy and sodomy were made against the order, Molay requested that Pope Clement V investigate the claims. Subsequently, all the Templars in France were arrested and interrogated at the request of King Philip IV. Molay and other Templars confessed to some of the charges, likely while being tortured. These confessions were later retracted, and Molay appealed to the Pope for a personal judgment. Instead, Molay and other dignitaries were imprisoned indefinitely. Molay again asserted his innocence, and was declared a heretic by King Philip IV and burned at the stake as punishment.

Some Masonic orders have claimed heritage from historical figures, including the Templars. During the 1760s, German masons claimed that the Templars had been the “repository of secret wisdom and magical powers” as a result of their occupation of the Temple of Solomon. It was claimed that James of Molay had been the recipient of these powers, which he handed down to his successor before his execution. The eighteenth century Masons believed that they were the direct heirs.

Sources: Barber, Malcolm. *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* p. 318.

Jacques de Molay, Encyclopedia Britannica online
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/387929/Jacques-de-Molay>
 Retrieved: 2015/01/23

International Conference of Supreme Councils in 1907

From June 10-15, 1907, twenty Supreme Councils from around the world were represented at the International Conference of Supreme Councils held in Brussels. Some important decisions were made at this conference, including agreement on the publication of the *Constitutions of 1786* as the fundamental law; the need for the exchange of information and uniformity of signs, words and symbols; and the recommendation of having an international conference at least every five years. These decisions signified an important shift to a more global outlook.

Source: Fox, William L. *Lodge of the Double-headed Eagle* (p. 154)

The collection contains 19 books, as well as conference papers, a letter, a leaflet and a handwritten, folded sheet. The bulk of the material relates to the Scottish Rite Order and the Grand Orient de France. All materials are written in French. The Scottish Rite Order material contains one hardcover volume and 15 paperback volumes. The 15 paperback volumes contain information about the Grades of Rose Croix. The title page of the hardcover volume reads *Code et Statuts generaux des Tribunaux des Grands inquisiteurs, Inspecteurs Commandeurs*. [Code and General Statutes of the Court of the Grand Inquisitors, Inspectors Commanders]. The Grand Orient de France material contains one book entitled *Histoire de la foundation du Grand Orient de France* as well as several loose pages enclosed with the book. One enclosure is a 6-page letter written by a woman. The envelope is postmarked February 6, 1825. The two other enclosed items are a leaflet and a handwritten folded sheet containing 4 pages of writing. The other material includes two books as well as papers from the International Conference of Supreme Councils in Brussels in 1907. The first book is a catalogue of the library archives. The second book is *The Tomb of Jacques Molay*.

Organization:

The collection was arranged into 3 series:

Series I: Scottish Rite, 1787, n.d.

Series II: Grand Orient de France, 1798, 1812, 1825, n.d.

Series III: Other Masonic material, 1907, n.d.

Inventory:

Series I: Scottish Rite, 1787, n.d.

- 1.1 One hardcover volume entitled *Code et Statuts generaux des Tribunaux des Grands inquisiteurs, Inspecteurs Commandeurs* [Code and General Statutes of the Court of the Grand Inquisitors, Inspectors Commanders]. This is followed by a preliminary title, *De L' autorite Maconnique dans le Regime Ecossais philosophique* [Masonic authority of the Scottish philosophical system], containing 4 Articles. There are 10 other sections that contain Articles 10-161. These sections are titled the Courts; Offences; Sentences; Appeals; the Presidents and Officers of the Court and their functions; Formality of rigor required before and after the admission of Grand Inspectors, their duties and responsibilities, the Elections; Work, Admissions, Visitors; The Creation of the Courts of the Grand Inspectors and Chapters, the great black and white eagles; the Deputy Grand

Inspectors; and General Provisions. This section is dated the 10th day of the first month, 1787.

The next section contains a sketch of the cross of the Inspector Commander, followed by examples of letters patent, including those for the creation of a tribunal, a deputy Grand Inspector, and a chapter of the Grand Eagles, white and black. This is followed by General Articles of the Chapters of the Grand Eagles, white and black of the Scottish (philosophical) Rite, followed by 4 crests. The last section is titled *Statutes and Regulations: Philosophical creed convents by the authority of the Grand Supreme and S. [Sovereign] Court, chief order of France*, 10 March, 1787. This section contains a preliminary discourse and 25 regulations. The remaining few pages of the volume contain more examples of documents and letters.

- 1.2 Grade de Rose Croix No. 1.
- 1.3 [Grades] 4, 6.
- 1.4 Grade VII—Provost and Judge.
- 1.5 Grades 11 to 15.
- 1.6 Cahiers Francaises, Rit Ancient accepte [French books, Ancient and Accepted Rites], Grades 13-18 & 21 [6 volumes tied together].
- 1.7 Chevalier Prince de Jerusalem—Grade 16.
- 1.8 Grades 16 to 22
- 1.9 Grade 25: the ultimate or Grade 25 of the Royal secret, or Knight of St. Andrew and faithful guardian of the sacred treasure.
- 1.10 Inauguration [et] Instalation.
- 1.11 Grade de Grand Commandeur du Temple [Rank of Grand Commander of the Temple].

Series II: Grand Orient de France, 1798, 1812, 1825, n.d.

- O.1 A book entitled *Histoire de la foundation du Grand Orient de France* by Claude-Antoine Thory, 1812. This is likely an editor's copy for a new edition. It has 471 pages and is annotated throughout. There are 4 plates at the end of the book that contain various illustrations resembling lockets. The title page states that the book contains the "...revolutions that have preceded, accompanied and followed until one thousand seven hundred ninety nine, era of the meeting in this body, the Grand Lodge of France, known

as the Grand Orient de Clermont, or the Arcade de la Pelleterie, with an appendix containing the supporting documents, several curious and unpublished reports with the history of the Franche- Masonry, the details of many rites and a fragment of the secret meetings of women.”

- O.1 One 6-page letter written by a woman, enclosed with the above book. The envelope is postmarked February 6, 1825.
- O.1 One folded sheet containing 4 pages of writing, dated July 12, 1798. This item was enclosed with the above book.
- O.1 Leaflet, n.d. The document ends with the names of the Officers of the G.L. administration, including Roettiers-De-Montaleau, De Joly, Bertonasco, De Joly-Frayssinet, and Borie. There is a crest below the names with the words “Grand Orient de France” included. This item was enclosed with the above book.

Series III: Other Masonic material, 1907, n.d.

- O.1 One book entitled *Catalogue de la Bibliotheque des Archives*, n.d. Most of the dates in the entries in the book range from 1745-1812. There are 17 illustrations included in the back. The book is divided into 6 sections: Section I: Historical Masonry; Section II: Moral Masonry: discourse, reports, essays. Lodges, celebrations & funeral ceremonies; Section III: Poetical Masonry; Section IV: Systematic Masonry: grades in all rites; Section V: Religions, rites, costumes; Section VI: Occult, magic, astrology.
- 1.12 One handwritten book entitled *Le Tombeau de Jacques Molay* [The Tomb of Jacques Molay], n.d. The title page reads “the tomb of Jacques Molay, or the secret of a conspirator who wanted to know everything: posthumous work”.
- O.1 International Conference of Supreme Councils in Brussels, 1907. The conference papers contain 3 annexes from the International Conference of Supreme Councils in Brussels in June, 1907. The first annex contains descriptions of the masonic orders and degrees, from 1° to 33°. Each description contains the order, signs, battery and age. The second annex is divided into two sections. The first section is entitled *List of Masonic bodies placed under the obedience of the Belgian Supreme Council*. The second section is entitled *List of respectable lodges placed under the obedience of the Grand Orient of Belgium*. The third annex is a list of dignitaries/officers of the Supreme Council of Belgium. Another untitled set of papers is included that begins “in execution of the resolutions adopted by the International Conference of Sup. Cons. held in Brussels from 10 to 15 June 1907 we have the favor to send you...” A summary of the papers described above follows.

