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880 St. Nicholas Avenue,
New York City,

April 2, 1926. .

Mr. Harold Stimpson,
1120 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Stimpson:

I am very grateful for your interest in my paper, on "The Masonic Founders of America," and for the criticisms which you have made upon it.

This paper was one of a series on "Americanism." The prime purpose of this talk on "The Masonic Founders of America," was to bring out the fact, as the third step in the development of the American Federal Republic, that this nation, the United States of America, which is wholly idealistic, was founded and established by the Colonial patriots, on the principles taught by Christ Jesus, as reflected in and through Masonry. I sedulously sought to avoid all controversial points among Masons, as to the government or history of the Masonic organization, or even of its doctrines. In this spirit, I will reply to your comments in sequence.

1. You question the date 1777 as the date in which independent American Masonry was born. This was coincident with the development of the idea of political independence among the colonists, which is explained in this paragraph of my paper. Of course, this date is fixed, as the year 1776.

2. You question the statement, that the Great Pyramid of Gizeh is the oldest Masonic Temple in the world. This statement must be taken in its broad sense. There is no doubt that the Pyramid of Gizeh was chosen by the fathers as the symbol for the reverse of the Seal. The design was submitted to Charles Thompson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, by William Barton, the official herald; but the lines in the drawing of Mr. Barton were not those of the Great Pyramid. The design was corrected by Mr. Thompson to conform to the lines and angles of the pyramid of Gizeh. The opposition to the reverse of the Seal, which has succeeded, so far, in preventing its cutting,

despite the orders of Congress, which opposition has always come from Roman Catholic sources, has been based on the alleged objection, that the design was "a dull Masonic emblem," (see U.S. Government brochure on the Seal). The symbol of the Pyramid is Masonic, in that it interprets the story of the universe and man, in symbol.

3. The capstone of the Pyramid, also called "the headstone of the corner," has an entirely separate symbolism from the keystone of an arch. The two are not interchangeable, although they are not necessarily antagonistic.

4. Solomon's Temple is also a Masonic symbol, in a broad sense. Moreover, it was a fact, having been actually built, in strict accordance with the symbolism of the Hebrew religion of monotheism, and is freely referred to by Masons in its symbolic meaning. In other words, it is, so far as it goes, one of the heritages of the people of God, having come down through the ages, in line with the Covenant between God and Abraham.

5. I purposely made the distinction between the "guilds" or so-called "operative Masonry," and the true, or "speculative Masonry." Symbolic Masonry existed, even in England, many centuries before the workmen's guilds; in fact, symbolic masonry is a heritage to the Anglo-Saxon peoples, from the children of Israel. The "guilds" were instruments used for the purpose of erecting Catholic cathedrals, and their personnel was Roman Catholic. They were mere workmen's unions, and their "symbolism" had practically no meaning, unless it was the sinister symbolism of the Roman Catholic "Church." I will not go into this phase here. True Masonry is no more-related to the "guilds" than is Anglo-Saxon civilization to Roman, or Mediterranean civilization.

6. You say "No" to my statement, that Washington's Masonic activities were hidden in obscurity between the time he was raised, and the beginning of the Revolution, and you state that he was Master of Alexandria Lodge, in Virginia, in 1789. The Revolution began in the early seventies; so that my statement appears to be correct. It was taken from Lanier's book, "Washington, the Mason."

7. I purposely withheld reference to Daniel Coxe, of New Jersey, and Henry Price, of Boston, although I gave them recognition in the sentence, "Provincial Grand Masters were appointed by the English Masonic authorities." The controversy over

the question of Joseph Montfort's sole right to be recognized as Supreme Provincial Grand Master, seems to rest on the fact, that none of the other Provincial Grand Masters was "supreme" over all the colonies. Joseph Montfort was appointed to this position by the Duke of Beaufort, Supreme Grand Master of English Masons, before the colonies had declared their independence; and, whether he exercised any power or not, he is credited with having held this office for the remaining years of his life, or until about the time that independent American Masonry was declared.

8. I will add Robert R. Livingston's title, as Chancellor of New York, and Grand Master, to my paper. The information which you give as to the chapters on which Washington placed his hand, when taking the oath -- Genesis xlix and l, which contain the full account of the promises to the tribes of Israel --- is most interesting. It will certainly be added. I will also add the note as to the chapter on which President Harding placed his hand.

9. I will make the correction as to the Bible on which Washington took his oath, and on which also President Harding took his, having been furnished by St. John's Lodge No. 1, of New York City, and thank you for this correction.

10. The item, that the Governors of all the thirteen States, were Masons --- a very vital and interesting item --- will be added.

If you have any further comments, and have the time and the interest to make them. I shall be glad indeed to have them, as this talk may be repeated in the not distant future.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours.

(Signed) James P.B. Hyndman

James P. B. Hyndman

** There were Masonic Lodges in England as early as the tenth century, so I was informed by a masonic lecture, after this letter was written.*

JBPH