

PAMPHLET

*Freemasonry*  
for  
*Women.*

by

Wor. Bro. Elsie Anderson, G.S.W.

P

PAMPHLET

366.180941

CITY OF LONDON POLYTECHNIC  
FAWCETT COLLECTION

Calcutta House  
Old Castle Street  
London E1 7NT

3900048481 FC4848

366.180941

REFERENCE  
ONLY

*Freemasonry*  
for  
*Women.*

LONDON GUILDHALL UNIVERSITY  
FAWCETT LIBRARY

## Freemasonry for Women.

---

**F**REEMASONRY as such is too well known to need any elaboration.

It is a philosophy of life where Brotherly-love, Relief and Truth are not only its virtues, but the very bricks and mortar making up its structure.

Freemasonry is non-political and non-sectarian.

It is a profound and interesting study that has exercised and absorbed master minds for hundreds of years.

Every woman joining the Craft finds it most inspiring, and the work beautiful, interesting, uplifting and helpful.

Freemasonry offers friendship to all and is a Public Service quietly rendered.

It is the most powerful institution for good the world has ever known.

It offers a noble link of comradeship which is always true, and helps to smooth life's difficulties.

Freemasonry is the gentlewoman's agreement to spread Light with Understanding; it is the gentlewoman's agreement to do good, here, there and everywhere.

Throughout history many well-known women can be found in the ranks of the Order.

They can be traced in Ancient Egypt.

Within the last few centuries, the Widow of Charles I, Daughter of Henry IV of France, Catherine the Great, Marie Antoinette, the Empress Josephine, Madame F. de Canisy and many others are reputed to have been members of the Craft.

In more recent years Sarah Bernhardt is said to have been initiated by permission of the Grand Orient of France.

In Britain as far back as 1730 the Hon. Elizabeth St. Leger was a Mason.

Tradition has it that she accidentally learnt the masonic secrets and was thereupon admitted into the Craft.

Be that as it may, it is in the present century that Freemasonry

among women as such was started, and has since its commencement made rapid strides.

The status of woman has now completely altered. The war and post-war period has thrown women into all occupations. In all branches of life to-day, be it economic, industrial or scientific, women occupy a position no different from men, and are filling the posts with great efficiency and ability.

Arguments which are being levelled by men against Women Freemasons to-day were levelled against their sisters years ago in their struggle for political and economic rights.

Women have succeeded in spite of having to fight against great odds.

Even now some prominent Masons deny the existence of Women Freemasons. It is a case of the "wish being father to the thought."

Nevertheless Women Freemasons exist in their thousands, and are yearly increasing in numbers, strength, influence and utility.

**The Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons is unique in Masonic History, for it is the only organisation of its kind in the Masonic world that is organised entirely by Women for Women.**

No man, Mason or otherwise, can be admitted to this Order, or visit any of the Lodges, nor is any man permitted to have anything to do with its administration.

The Fraternity was founded by the late Mrs. J. Elizabeth Boswell-Reid, who was the first The Most Worshipful The Grand Master (1913-1933) and by Mrs. Seton-Challen, who is now The Most Worshipful The Grand Master.

It is a wonderful organisation of serious-minded women from all walks of life.

Within it one can find women of title and independent means, Professional Women such as Doctors, Lawyers, Accountants, Teachers, Business Women, Matrons of Hospitals, Lady Detectives, Journalists, Women Councillors and Justices, not forgetting representatives of the Stage, Art, Literature and Music.

It is not necessary to be wealthy to become a Freemason, but the Fraternity is naturally particular about the bona-fide of the Candidates in order to maintain the regard and high esteem in which the Fraternity is held.

Every member is thoroughly enthusiastic and most sincere.

In such an organisation, embracing in its lessons all shades of thought—literary, scientific, mystical and practical—no mind need be unsatisfied.

Freemasonry for women has come to stay, and plays no small part in the life of the Women's Movement to-day.

No other movement draws women together as does the Craft.

It would be difficult to find a nicer body of women, and true brotherly love and good comradeship exist between all.

The workings of the Lodges are carried out with the greatest dignity, and the most meticulous care is taken to maintain the prestige of the Craft, so honourably established in this country.

The Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons has its headquarters at St. Ermins, Westminster, where they have their own particularly beautiful Temple and offices, and where they enjoy all the amenities of a good hotel.

The women wear the same regalia and jewels, carry out the same ritual and ceremonies, and have the same secrets and constitutions as laid down by the United Grand Lodge of England.

None of the titles are feminised and within it all are Brothers.

Criticism has been levelled against the use of the term "Brother."

"Brother" is an ancient land mark of the Order, and in the circumstances should not be changed.

In Masonry the term "Brother" has no application to sex but is equivalent to a title, in the same way as the title "Doctor" is applied to both sexes alike.

Women Freemasons have a Benevolent Fund from which Brothers in distressed circumstances are assisted.

They also assist many well-known charities, and do a great deal of benevolent work of an unostentatious character.

The Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons has its own Grand Lodge, under whose jurisdiction all the Lodges work.

The Fraternity has many Lodges which work the three Craft degrees. It also works the Holy Royal Arch, Mark Masonry, and the Rose Croix.

There is also a Research Lodge.

Each Lodge meets once a month from October to June inclusive, and every Lodge has its own Lodge of Instruction.

For the convenience of those who find it impossible to attend meetings in the evenings, some Lodges meet in the afternoon.

So far, the United Grand Lodge of England has not **officially** recognised Women Freemasons.

I am sure, however, that their attitude cannot be maintained for ever.

The Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons would only wish to be recognised as the Women's branch. They have no wish to actually work with men in the lodges. The presence of the opposite sex might deviate attention and detract from the seriousness of the ceremonies.

Women were challenged by certain men Freemasons to build a Masonic Society without the aid of men, and accepted that challenge successfully.

It was the United Grand Lodge of England formed in 1813 which banned women from Masonry, thereby abolishing an ancient landmark.

Previous to this there were several Grand Lodges in this country.

The time will arrive when the scales will fall from the eyes of the United Grand Lodge of England, and show them how utterly selfish it is to deny official recognition of Women Freemasons, a privilege enjoyed by them down the centuries.

After all, if a woman is good enough to be the wife, mother or sister of a Mason, she ought to be good enough to be his "Brother."

The Men's Order recognise the coloured races, but refuse recognition to their own mothers, wives and sisters!!

Although we criticise the United Grand Lodge of England with regard to its attitude towards Women Freemasons, we hold the Men's Order in the highest possible esteem and are full of admiration for their great benevolence.

The equality of sex to-day is a "fait accompli," and if the United Grand Lodge of England has not yet realised it, time itself will bring the change, and with it recognition of the Honourable Fraternity of Ancient

Freemasons as true and genuine Freemasons.

There are several spurious societies of quasi masonry, and it therefore behoves any woman contemplating joining the Craft to take the utmost care not to be drawn into any of these organisations if she wants pure and genuine Freemasonry.

Any woman contemplating joining the Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons will not find it so costly as do their brother men.

This is because banquets are not held after every Lodge meeting, and, without being disrespectful to our brother men, women are more content with light refreshments.

"Open" Dinners are held frequently and are largely attended not only by Women Freemasons, but their lady friends who are interested in the Craft. Whist Drives, Dances and other social events are also held.

The Fraternity has its own Masonic Library, and Brethren are encouraged to read on the vast and fascinating subject.

The Fraternity publishes its own Masonic Journal—"The Woman Free-

mason Ltd.”—which has a large circulation both at home and abroad, and is eagerly waited for.

No woman has ever regretted joining the Craft.

Freemasonry brings comradeship, great happiness and an added interest in life.

It is useless to paint the lily; but in the words of the proverbs the writer feels that “that which cometh from the heart will go to the heart.”

ELSIE ANDERSON (Mrs.)

Grand Superintendent of Works,  
Assistant Grand Scribe E.,  
M.M.M.,  
Board of General Purposes,  
Editor “The Woman Freemason Ltd.”

“Elmore House,”

2, Amhurst Park,  
Stamford Hill,  
London, N.16.

*Copyright.*

*First Printed—June, 1933.*

*Reprinted—May, 1934.*

*Second Reprint—April, 1935.*

**PAMPHLET**