

# Character Counts

Freemasonry Is a National Treasure  
and a Source of Our Founders'  
Constitutional Original Intent

*Revised Second Edition*



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Dedicated to Master Teacher

Earl Overstreet



Past Master of Magnolia Lodge No. 495, 1999-2000, Woodville, Texas

He holds an "A" Certificate in Masonic work from the Grand Lodge of Texas and the Gold Trowel Award from Magnolia Lodge No. 495. He has been married to his sweetheart, Sue, for 56 years in 2010. He retired from Cameron Iron Works after 33 years, where as an Inspector he was known as *Exacto Facto* for his meticulous scrutiny of detail. The many who have had the fortune to train under him *know* very well the meaning of that appellation. His uncanny mastery is famous throughout Southeast Texas.



First Epigraph

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches,  
and loving favor rather than silver and gold.

A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a  
faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

Iron sharpeneth iron;  
So a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

King Solomon, son of King David  
Proverbs 22:1, 11:13, and 27:17, KJV, circa 940 B.C.



## Thank You

*A heartfelt thanks goes to my family and friends  
that have meant so much to me throughout my life.*

*A special thanks to Virginia C. Haynes<sup>1</sup>  
for her readings and encouragements of the several manuscripts.*

*A thanks to M. Douglas Adkins<sup>2</sup> and Reese L. Harrison<sup>3</sup>  
with whom I was able to travel as a friend for several years.*

*And last but not least a thanks to the legion of legends in  
Christianity, in Freemasonry, and in our U.S. founding  
who have kept the path of honor.*



### *Author Conventions*

**Cover:** the list of character traits on the front and back are condensed from Freemasonry's 32 degrees in the Grand Lodge of Texas' *Monitor of the Lodge* (2002) for the 1st-3rd degrees and Rex R. Hutchens' *A Bridge to Light* (2006) for the 4th-32nd degrees. For 31 lists of traits from 31 institutions, including Freemasonry, see [PreciousHeart.net/fm/Character.pdf](http://PreciousHeart.net/fm/Character.pdf).

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**Freemasonry and Masonry** are used interchangeably, usually in that order within a section, and refer to the age-old fraternity in its operative and speculative forms, while masonry (lower case) refers to the actual stone working or brick laying construction itself.

**Internet prefixes** "www." and "http://" have been deleted in all addresses, for the advancement in most of the web browsers will automatically insert them as appropriate nearly 100% of the time.

**Abbreviations:** "MS" stands for manuscript, "e" for established as in (e.1913), "ch." for chapter as in (ch.12), "fn." and fns." for footnote/s, and "r." for reigned as in (r.924-39).

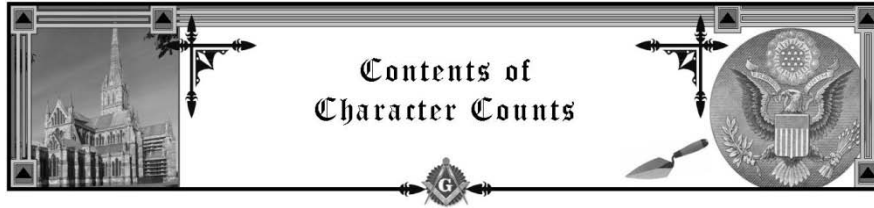
**Monitor and Manual:** since the term monitor could be confusing for non-Masons, in the text I have referred to the various "monitors" as "manuals" to facilitate understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> Haynes leads Lydia's Porch, woman-to-woman conferences, and pioneered the SBC seminary curriculum for the Certificate in Leadership in Women's Ministry: see [LydiasPorch.com](http://LydiasPorch.com).

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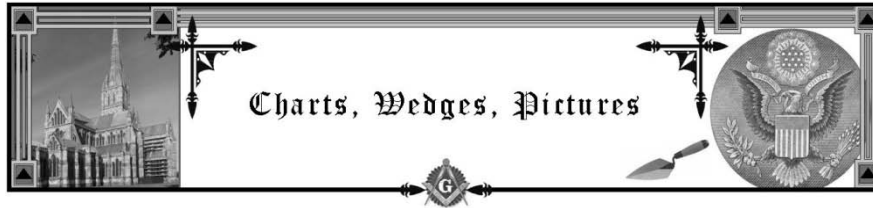


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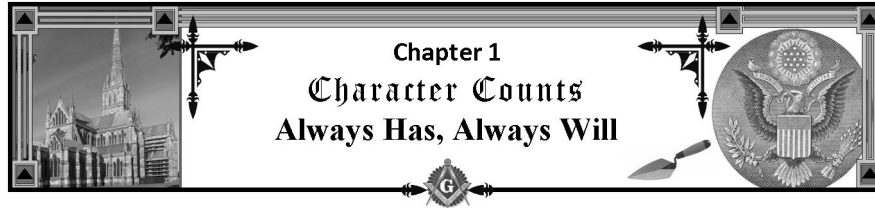


# Part One

## Character and Freemasonry's Spiritual Side

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- Chapter 2. Is Freemasonry a Religion?—*Not if You Have One*
- Chapter 3. Freemasonry Not Universalism or New Age





There never was a good knife made of bad steel.

Benjamin Franklin, 1706-1790  
Scientist, Author, Founding Father of USA<sup>10</sup>



- A. Character Counting in Freemasonry—Our National Treasure
- B. The Critics' Fantasy Coming Full Circle
- C. No More Prostitution in the Church
- D. Character Wins over Myth Every Time
- E. Joe Bob and the Meaning of Character Counting

### A. Character Counting in Freemasonry—Our National Treasure

**C**haracter Counts—always has, always will, and here is another outstanding proving ground. It is the hammer that drives the wedge of credibility and our theme. How crucial it is to this entire book cannot be overstated. Character counts so much in this venue that it decides all, even decodes all in the light.

At the beginning, Freemasonry is in many ways self-effacing and the critics allege the opposite. Reaffirmed in a hundred ways throughout—a crucial centuries-old principle is that its basic purpose is building *while* placing itself below the man's faith, family, and country. Said in another way, integral to Masonry's working principles is that a man places his faith, family and country *first*. Over one hundred thousand pages affirm that centuries-old principle.<sup>11</sup> This study on character counting is about how that *counting* weaves itself intricately through life's important battlegrounds as the leading philosophic fraternity on the tradecraft of character counting under God.

Within this study on character, what precisely are the critics saying when they claim evil and call the fraternity Pagan? As a bonus, since the critics never define the Paganism they scream about—to be utterly clear—we give you real Paganism in chapter 8. Yet Pagan is not the worst. What of Evil? Fiendish devils? Unbelievable, but that is what several influential Christian critics corkscrew. When you ask, they hide. Look at their best 100 authors for 200 years! See their most prominent authors in chapter seven. I stand back in shock and awe at titles *designed* to shock and awe.

<sup>10</sup> Character quotes from QuoteLand.com, WisdomQuotes.com, and QuotationsPage.com.

<sup>11</sup> See bibliography, and thanks to Google Books, anyone in the world can see the classics online.