

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS

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# The Book of Hiram

Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas

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## About the Book

This is the extraordinary story of Knight and Lomas's fourteen year quest to uncover the secret teachings buried beneath Roslin Chapel near Edinburgh. Their quest ends with extraordinary revelations about early human history - the origins of Christianity, of Freemasonry and of science. They show that all were charged with a belief in a secret cosmic code, linking, for example, the Exodus from Egypt, the founding of Solomon's Temple and the Star of Bethlehem. This book reveals for the first time why there were such high expectations of a Messiah at the time of the birth of Jesus Christ. *The Book of Hiram* will change everything you thought you knew about both the Bible and Freemasonry.

## About the Authors

Christopher Knight was born in 1950, and has a degree in advertising and graphic design. He is chairman of a marketing and advertising agency and is a Freemason. Robert Lomas was born in 1947 and has a degree in electrical engineering. He has worked on the guidance systems for Cruise missiles, and was involved in the early development of home computers. He is a Freemason and lectures on Masonic history.



*Also by Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas*

The Hiram Key  
The Second Messiah  
Uriel's Machine

*By Robert Lomas*

The Invisible College  
The Man who Invented the Twentieth Century

*By Robert Lomas and G. A. Lancaster*

Forecasting for Sales and Material Management

# The Book of Hiram

Freemasonry, Venus and the Secret Key to  
the Life of Jesus

Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas

For more information visit these websites:

[www.knight-lomas.com](http://www.knight-lomas.com)

[www.robertlomas.com](http://www.robertlomas.com)

[www.bradford.ac.uk/webofhiram](http://www.bradford.ac.uk/webofhiram)



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For Caroline - CK

To my wife and children in  
thanks for their continual support - RL

# Acknowledgements

This book could not have been written without the help and assistance of the many Masons, and family members of long-dead Masons, who have made available copies of forgotten ritual books. There are too many of you to thank individually but we are extremely grateful for all the material you have provided to enable us to create *The Masonic Testament*.

We would also like to thank:

The Brethren and staff of the Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland for their advice and assistance.

Jenny Finder and her library staff at the Bradford University School of Management for their continuing good-natured support, and ability to procure long-lost books.

Tim Bentley and Stan Houghton of Bradford University Computer Centre for their help in setting up the Web of Hiram.

Geraint Lomas and Josh Gourlay for their tireless efforts in scanning and proof-reading vast tracts of ritual for the Web of Hiram.

Niven and Ian Sinclair, of the Niven Sinclair Library and Study Centre at Noss Head, Wick, for sharing their knowledge and introducing us to Ashley Cowie.

Ashley Cowie for sharing his discovery of the Rosslyn Lozenge Pattern.

Professor Philip Davies of Sheffield University for his expert and on-going Biblical advice.

Professor Jim Charlesworth of Princeton University for his support in proposing an excavation at Rosslyn.

Dr Jack Millar of Cambridge University for his insightful comments about the structure of Rosslyn.

Robin Heath for his helpful discussions on deciphering the travels of Enoch.

Corin Wilson for his encouragement to investigate astrology with an open mind.

Alan Butler for his assistance with matters astronomical and megalithic.

Tony Batters for his expertise and enthusiasm.

Our agent Bill Hamilton of A. M. Heath Ltd, whose enthusiasm and focus helped keep us on track during the conception and protracted birth of this book.

Our editor Mark Booth, whose guidance on how to present a very complex story has been invaluable.

All the folk at Random House who did all the tedious production tasks which are so necessary to turn a manuscript into a finished book. In particular we would like to single out for special thanks Hannah Black who organised the team, Steve Cox who slugged away copy-editing and Carolyn McAndrew who proof-read it all.

# INTRODUCTION

IT IS NOW thirteen years since we joined forces to research the origins and meaning of the weird rituals used by Freemasons. For the first five years we had no intention of sharing our findings with anyone - inside or outside of Freemasonry. But because what we found appeared to be of great importance we decided to write a book about our voyage of discovery, and much to our surprise *The Hiram Key* became an immediate bestseller that went on to be translated into well over thirty languages.

The rituals of Freemasonry form the most ancient oral tradition of the Western world. Our quest was far from over with the publication of our first book, and we went on to write two further books that led us through history right back to the astronomy-based culture of prehistoric Britain. We found that the Freemasonic rituals formed an almost forgotten pathway through the past, linking together people and events that had previously been assumed to be unconnected. Many of our findings have challenged old ideas, but we have been pleased to receive the support of many leading scholars in various aspects of our work.

We have been fortunate to receive a great deal of help over the years, and our quest has made startling progress. However, there are two areas where we have found unexpected opposition. The first stems from the Roman Catholic Church. The second concerns our attempts to facilitate an archaeological investigation of a medieval building in Scotland that has become central to our investigation.

We became aware of hostility from the Catholic establishment from an early stage. Shortly after *The Hiram Key* hit the shops a small piece appeared in the *Catholic Herald* which was both balanced and open-minded. We were initially impressed by the paper's ability to be objective about a book that took an innovative approach to interpreting the history of Jesus Christ. But in the next edition a second review appeared that spanned two pages, complete with photographs copied from our book and a banner headline proclaiming 'Chris and Bob's Bogus Adventure'. This time the article was far from balanced, full of venom for our book, for us as individuals and anyone else who was a 'drunken' Freemason. The aim was not to debate or even mention our findings, but to ridicule us and our views from start to finish.

Our next book received the same treatment in a double-page spread filled with aggression that avoided any comment on the key issues we had raised. Again it was clear that the reviewer had read the book with little care, because the rare references made, even to insignificant parts of the content, were completely wrong.

When our third book came out we were waiting with interest to read the next attack from this corner of the Roman Catholic establishment. We were not disappointed. The producers of the *Catholic Herald* published a substantial review of *Uriel's Machine* with a bold headline that shouted 'Bogus Archaeology'. This article told its readers at length that our work was complete nonsense, without ever mentioning our claims or even attempting to refute any evidence.

We find it strange that a British Roman Catholic newspaper chose to run extensive reviews on three successive books, solely in order to label them utterly bogus. Surely if a book is complete rubbish you ignore it, rather than waste time telling your readers how awful it is.

*Uriel's Machine* had received favourable reviews from many newspapers, but then one appeared that was as aggressive and disingenuous as the *Catholic Herald* piece. Shortly after the book came out we were interviewed by someone else who used exactly the same theme for an article later carried in the *Daily Telegraph*. Perhaps the strikingly similar approach was simply chance, but we later found that one-time religious correspondent Damian Thompson was no stranger to the *Catholic Herald*.

After spending the first quarter of an hour demonstrating his comprehensive inability to operate a mini-disc recorder, Thompson spent the rest of the two-hour interview repeatedly shouting: 'But you can't do science like that.' He admitted his ignorance of astronomy and mathematics; but being quite unable to understand the calculation methodology we employed did not deter him from dismissing our findings as wrong - simply because he said they were. When his article appeared it made no reference to our core thesis but juxtaposed weird claims from other people's books with references to us, thus creating the false impression that we had said these things, or supported them in some way. The lengthy headline read:

*Minoans built Stonehenge, Atlantis is based in Antarctica, Jesus was buried in France. Welcome to the best selling world of bogus archaeology.*

Strange claims indeed; none of which we would accept. Thompson went on to try and discredit our work by stating that *The Hiram Key* had been 'rubbished by historians and critics alike'. He evidenced this claimed universal rebuttal of our earlier work by quoting a headline from just one publication. That headline was 'Chris and Bob's Bogus Adventure'. Of course the quotation, with the now familiar 'bogus' theme, came from none other than *The Catholic Herald*.

Could we be on to something so important that some people believed we must be discredited?



In April 1998 Chris was speaking at a Masonic symposium in Perugia, Italy. One evening before the event the organiser, Professor Giancarlo Seri, received a phone call from Rome. On the line was a senior figure from the Roman Catholic Church asking if it was true that one of the authors of *The Hiram Key* was to address Italian Freemasons. Professor Seri told him it was, asked the caller if he had read the book and, if so, what he thought of it. The clergyman's reply was frank: 'Yes, I have read it. It is an excellent book but there are certain things which should not be said.' He did not say it was inaccurate (let alone bogus), indeed his only objection to our work appeared to be that we were telling people about it.

We have great respect for the Roman Catholic Church, but we also believe that nobody has the right to prohibit the investigation of alternative explanations of the past. In its dark period the Church tolerated no deviation from its account of the way the world is, murdering whole populations if it suspected them of harbouring ideas different to those it preached. From Galileo onwards it has been fighting a losing battle, but today it reluctantly accepts concepts such as Darwinian evolution.

So what is it about our humble research into the origins of Masonic ritual that seems to have touched such a very delicate nerve? We decided to find out, and this book describes our search.

The second issue that we have to contend with is the resistance to a proper archaeological examination of the fifteenth-century Rosslyn Chapel that lies in the Lothian Hills just a little south of Edinburgh. In *The Hiram Key*, our quest ended at this late medieval building in Scotland that we reasoned might well contain documents originally buried under the Jerusalem Temple at the time when the earliest of the Gospels of the New Testament were being written down. We put forward an argument that Rosslyn Chapel, as it is now called, is the repository of the most important Dead

Sea Scrolls, which are likely to contain direct references to a messianic individual who is now remembered under his Greek designation of 'Jesus Christ'.

We appreciate that this is, at first view, a strange claim but it is very well supported by evidence. The key points are:

1. The Copper Scroll found amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran lists the scrolls and Temple treasures that were buried beneath the Jerusalem Temple in, or immediately prior to, 68 CE.
2. It is known that the nine Crusader founders of the Order of the Knights Templar continuously excavated under the ruins of that Temple between 1118 and 1128 CE.
3. A nineteenth-century British army expedition that excavated under the Temple found nothing but the workings of the Knights Templar and some artefacts left by them.
4. The older rituals of Freemasonry state that these knights found documents under the ruins of the Temple in Jerusalem and brought them to the St Clair estates in Kilwinning, Scotland, in 1140 CE.
5. Rosslyn was built by a member of the St Clair family, between 1441 and 1490 CE.
6. The same family later became the most senior Freemasons in the world as hereditary Grand Master Masons.
7. The ground plan of Rosslyn is a carefully designed copy of the layout of Herod's Temple in Jerusalem.
8. Dr Jack Miller, head of studies in geology from Cambridge University, confirmed that Rosslyn is built from exactly the same stone as the Jerusalem Temple.
9. The west wall of the 'chapel' is a copy of the west wall of the Jerusalem Temple, rather than an abandoned attempt to build a great collegiate church. Dr Miller also

demonstrated that this oversized west wall was a copy of a ruin, and that it could not possibly be a part of any intended building.

10. Professor the Reverend James Charlesworth of Princeton University, Dead Sea Scroll expert and Albright Professor of Archaeology in Jerusalem, subsequently pointed out that the west wall exhibits deliberate design features to make it look like the architecture of the Jerusalem Temple.
11. Other experts, such as biblical scholar Professor Philip Davies, have pointed out that the building is clearly not Christian and that most of the hundreds of carved figures inside are holding either books or scrolls.
12. The only original inscription in the whole building is a single passage from the Book of Esdras which refers to the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple by Zerubbabel.
13. The foundations are recorded to have taken four years to lay out, and it is also known that the builder kept four large chests of documents in the nearby castle. These documents were more important to him than the women of his family, because when a fire broke out he insisted that these chests were rescued before his womenfolk.
14. A carving on the south wall proves a connection with Freemasonry. The layout of the pillars inside corresponds to the rituals of Freemasonry and is associated with ritual that states this is 'the key to finding the precious thing'.

When *The Hiram Key* was published one of the trustees of Rosslyn publicly stated that they would support an archaeological dig at the site if a team of world-class scholars, including leading Scottish academics, was assembled. After we took Professor Charlesworth to Rosslyn, he did exactly that and put a detailed proposal for an investigation to the trustees in early 1999. To the best of our knowledge no response has been received.

We have come to the conclusion that a proper archaeological investigation of Rosslyn is not going to

happen in the near future, and hence we are not going to be able to recover the concealed documents and the secret teachings we believe they contain. The challenge we face is to get around this problem.

Our starting point is the vast amount of old Masonic ritual that has been given to us over the years by supportive Freemasons. We set about the huge task of sorting and organising as much early Masonic material as we could, and then Robert proceeded to create a major website to allow this material to be viewed in a number of different sequences. The website has proved to be an invaluable research tool for investigating the complex, convoluted and mainly discarded myths of Freemasonry.

Once all of this old Freemasonic ritual was assembled into a form where it could be scanned and searched simply, the underlying story emerged with a new clarity. A strange historical tale had been recorded in an almost random fashion across many Masonic degrees, often with considerable repetition. The historical content enabled the material to be sorted into chronological sequence to create a book, similar to a Testament of the Bible, with much that mirrors the two existing Testaments but also containing additional information only recorded in other contemporary Jewish documents such as the works of the first-century historian, Josephus. But there was also a third layer of information that does not appear anywhere else at all. This, therefore, has to be either simple invention or some lost strand of knowledge that can shed a great deal of light on both the Old and the New Testament. We have become convinced that it is the latter of these two options.

As we started to plan *The Book of Hiram* we decided to restructure this material into a document that we called *The Masonic Testament*. This forms Part Two of this book and it is made up of passages from Freemasonic ritual assembled in chronological order. The original ritual words are used as far as possible with only linking words added to allow the

underlying story to be revealed. We see it as something akin to a missing book of the Bible.

We have used *The Masonic Testament* as a source document in Part One of this book and footnoted it with the abbreviation MT followed by the chapter and verse concerned, (e.g. MT 16:38 for Chapter 16 Verse 38).

Readers can check the validity of *The Masonic Testament* by looking up the precise words of each paragraph at a publicly accessible website Robert has created at the University of Bradford. It can be found at <http://www.bradford.ac.uk/webofhiram>.

This academic resource that we have called *The Web of Hiram* has now been taken on to be maintained by the University of Bradford as a research tool available to everyone.

The website provides the supporting evidence for our claims, and for the first time allows any reader with access to the Net to see the detail behind the story we tell. Now that readers can judge our claims for themselves, it is no longer necessary to rely on the opinions of third parties.

Our findings to date have led us to believe that there is a knowledge of ancient science at the heart of the almost lost rituals of Freemasonry. In this, the final phase of our quest, we set out to find this missing science that appears to worry the Roman Catholic Church so much.

# Part One

# Chapter One

## THE DEATH OF THE BUILDERS

### **THE OLDEST MYSTERIES OF NATURE AND SCIENCE**

FREEMASONRY IS DYING.

For most people life is far more complicated than it was just a generation ago. We work harder and we have more disposable income. Long-term commitments are usually avoided at all costs. In an age when employment comes packaged as a series of renewable contracts and even marriage is out of vogue, it is not surprising that men no longer queue up to sign on for a lifetime of acting out odd-ball rituals in a local hall with no windows. Candidates for the Craft are expected to enter into a life-long relationship with a lodge before learning what Freemasonry is. They are given no advance warning of what they will be expected to do, or what benefit it will be to them. It is little wonder that the Grand Lodges who govern Freemasonry around the world are having difficulty in selling a proposition that does not meet any of the normal criteria of a marketable product.

An obvious question is 'Does the demise of this secretive Order really matter?' Maybe it should be allowed to quietly wither away. But, as we will demonstrate in this book, Freemasonry is a major untapped source of information about our past that is in grave danger of being lost for ever. To lose the information buried within its rituals before it is

properly understood would be throwing away one of the true treasures of the Western world.

We both joined Freemasonry for the same reason: curiosity. We wanted to know what was going on inside this secretive gentlemen's club and the only way to find out was to join. We independently reasoned that becoming part of something so unknown was not too great a risk, as we could leave if we found it distasteful or simply boring. The rituals were every bit as strange as we imagined, but slowly it became evident that nobody, no matter how senior, could give us any clue what Masonry was really about. The charitable work the Order espoused was impressive, and the morality taught within the rituals was of the highest order, but that did not begin to explain why Freemasons practise such bizarre rituals, which claim to be extremely ancient and to contain unusual lessons, referred to as mysteries.

When we joined Freemasonry the first mystery imparted to us was that the technology of building in stone is a sacred act that serves as a metaphor to aid spiritual understanding. Indeed, during the most important section of our First Degree we were explicitly told that our initiation into Freemasonry was identical to the laying of the foundation stone of a spiritual building. The ritual says:

*It is customary at the erection of all stately and superb edifices, to lay the first or foundation stone in the North-East corner of the building. You, being newly initiated into Masonry are placed in the North-East part of the lodge, figuratively to represent that stone; and from the foundation laid this evening may you raise a superstructure, perfect in all parts and honourable to the builder.*

Back in 1989, when we joined forces to investigate the origins of Masonic ritual, our initial belief was that the whole thing was probably developed from bits and bats of esoteric tradition by a stream of romantic thinkers between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was not many months before we started to suspect that this casual assumption was way off course.



## **A MATTER OF DEATH AND LIFE**

Despite the widely held view that Freemasonry is an international brotherhood wielding unseen power and influence for the benefit of its members, the reality is that it is not a single organisation any more than the Christian Church or the communist movement. It is a loose idea, based on hundreds of esoteric rituals that claim varying amounts of antiquity. By general consensus the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) is the senior Masonic authority in the world, and yet it recognises only four of the many degrees in existence as being 'true Freemasonry'.

The term organisation seems inappropriate to a worldwide body that is so disparate and under-structured. Even the UGLE has no record of the membership of the thousands of lodges it directly controls in England and Wales, let alone the various Grand Lodges around the world that are affiliated to it. This absence of any information on members of the Craft (as it is known within the brotherhood) resembles the classical cell structure adopted by many secret organisations. Terrorist groups for instance operate on a tiered, need-to-know basis where each member is given the identity only of the few individuals with whom he has to have direct contact. This protects the organisation from suffering serial damage should any outsider infiltrate its ranks.

Modern Freemasonry is often described as a 'secret society', but it has sometimes preferred to describe itself as 'a society with secrets'. These are portrayed by UGLE as being only a handful of unimportant ceremonial niceties such as passwords and grips (distinctive handshakes) which are supposedly intended to prevent non-Freemasons gaining admittance to a lodge.

There are traditional penalties in each of the principal degrees of Freemasonry whereby the candidate swears to

keep the secrets about to be imparted to him away from anyone who is not a member of that particular degree. These penalties were dropped from the UGLE-approved rituals a few years ago, but they remain in many other Grand Lodges, including that of Scotland. The obligations entered into are not insignificant, as they include having one's tongue or heart torn out, the throat cut and the body dismembered in a variety of imaginative ways.

According to the officially approved history of Masonry nothing is known for sure about the brotherhood prior to the installation of Anthony Sayer as Grand Master on Midsummer's day 1717, when a group of London-based Freemasons established a Grand Lodge. However there was nothing particularly 'Grand' about a handful of men from four pubs agreeing to get together as a formal unit, especially as Freemasonry was alive and well in many other towns and cities, especially in Scotland.

The self-inflicted amnesia about early Freemasonry that struck this little band of Londoners was entirely understandable. Just three years earlier the German-speaking George of Hanover had become king of Great Britain, displacing the rulers of the Catholic House of Stuart. The supporters of the deposed Stuarts (the Jacobites) hatched a number of plots to overthrow the new Protestant dynasty. In 1715 a group of Jacobite nobles led an uprising in Scotland and marched into England in support of James II's son, James Francis Edward Stuart, later known as the Old Pretender. After an indecisive battle with the government forces, the Jacobites surrendered at Preston in Lancashire.

Freemasonry was known to be closely associated with the Stuarts, and with Scotland in general, so to admit to being a member of the Order was tantamount to admitting support for a terrorist organisation dedicated to the overthrow of the king. In the same year as the Grand Lodge of London was formed the so-called Triple Alliance was negotiated between Great Britain, France and the Netherlands to guarantee the

succession of the reigning monarchs in their respective countries. With the Jacobite struggle apparently lost, this was not a good time to be branded an enemy of the state. What better time to make sure you kept no central records of membership? The famous architect and founder member of the Royal Society, Sir Christopher Wren, was Grand Master of Freemasonry prior to 1717, but he, and many others like him, simply walked away from the Order rather than risk social exclusion or even arrest.<sup>1</sup> For some reason, the records of UGLE were amended, at the outbreak of the First World War, to remove the identification of Wren's Grand Mastership. Today it is officially denied.

Once English Freemasonry disowned its Jacobite heritage the need for secrecy was gone, and the lack of a central membership list today surely reflects an absence of need rather than deliberate policy. When the UGLE wishes to communicate with its rank and file it speaks to the various Provincial Grand Lodges, who write to the individual lodge secretaries, who in turn pass the correspondence on to the humble Masons convened in their lodges.

Being Freemasons ourselves, we are bound by our obligations to keep the secrets of Freemasonry. Some fellow Freemasons criticised us for revealing details of rituals when we published *The Hiram Key*. Indeed we described parts of several rituals, particularly key elements of the all-important third degree of the Order. However, we were extremely careful to obey the precise ruling of our own Grand Lodge here in England and Wales, and did not reveal any of the grips and passwords that constitute the present-day 'secrets' of the Order.

Whilst most Freemasons are happy to admit their membership, some prefer to keep the whole subject private and, in the face of prejudice in the workplace, others find it necessary to sometimes deny that they are members. In our view the impression of secrecy that surrounds individual Freemasons is brought about by their embarrassment in

talking about the nature of the rituals that, in the cold light of day, sound odd in the extreme. If asked what such strange rituals are all about, they have to confess that they do not know.

In other words we believe the compelling reason for silence amongst Masons is not so much a compulsion to adhere to their sacred vows or a fear of macabre retribution from their fellows; it is more the fact that they do not understand a word of the ceremonies they participate in, and their main fear is that people will laugh at the bizarre rituals they continue to perform.

It seems certain that Freemasonry once espoused some high purpose, but today it is a rapidly shrinking social club for elderly gentlemen. In the United Kingdom it provides an opportunity to indulge in some amateur theatricals, followed by a meal and plenty of beer, although in the United States of America alcohol is not permitted at Masonic meetings. The complex and obscure ritual has to be memorised through years of word-perfect repetition, but only small parts of the ceremony can be understood as simple allegorical messages concerning uprightness of moral character. The rest is a strange mixture of meaningless words and painstakingly detailed re-enactments of events that occurred in the distant past.

The three principal degrees consist of the Entered Apprentice (the initiation), Fellowcraft (known as the passing degree), and Master Mason (known as the raising degree). Within these degrees the 'true secrets' of the order are said to have been lost, and substituted secrets introduced in their place until such time as the real secrets are rediscovered.

## **THE DARKNESS OF THE THIRD DEGREE**

In the first degree of Freemasonry the candidate is brought into the Craft in what is referred to as a state of 'naked

indigence' at the lowest level of existence like a newborn baby. The details of the ritual may vary but its message remains constant. Here we talk about the tradition we both know. The Candidate is dressed in a rough white smock and properly prepared, complete with noose and blindfold, before being taken into the temple to be made an Entered Apprentice Freemason. Here he will kneel in front of the leader of the lodge for that year (the Worshipful Master), with the twin pillars of King Solomon's Temple to either side of him. At a key point in the ceremony, after receiving his new rank, he is placed in the northeast of the temple to be given instruction. This position marks the path of light from the rising Sun on the day of the summer solstice, which is known to Freemasons as the Feast of St John, one of the two most important days in the Masonic calendar. The St John referred to here is John the Baptist, who was said to have been conceived on the autumn equinox and born on midsummer's day.

Some months later the candidate is put through his second degree. At the appropriate moment he is placed at the southeast of the temple to receive the next level of instruction, which is said to mark the progress he has made in the science. Standing at this position the candidate is on the line of the first light from the winter solstice sunrise. This day in late December is the other great day in Freemasonry, and it too is called the Feast of St John, but this time it belongs to St John the Divine, the author of the Book of Revelation.

Once the candidate has symbolically received instruction at dawn on both the summer and winter solstices he is ready to be made a Master Mason by being put through the third degree. This is a different experience right from the outset.

The candidate is once again dressed in the rough white smock, with both of his trouser legs rolled up and both sides of his chest exposed. He is not blindfolded, but as the

temple door swings open to admit him he can see that the room is in total darkness except for a small shielded candle burning on the Worshipful Master's pedestal in the east. At first the change from light outside to darkness inside leaves the candidate blinded, and he has to rely on the two deacons to steer his path across the temple floor.

In this degree the most important section takes place in the east, between the two pillars of Boaz and Jachin that once marked the extremities of the Sun's passage north and south at the solstices in front of the Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem. Here the candidate is told the story of the murder of Hiram Abif, who, it is revealed, was the architect of King Solomon's Temple some three thousand years ago. Strangely, the Worshipful Master makes reference to this otherwise unknown individual as though the average person should be aware of him when he says to the candidate:

*. . . the annals of Freemasonry afford a glorious example in the unshaken fidelity and untimely death of our Grand Master Hiram Abif, who lost his life just before the completion of King Solomon's Temple, at the construction of which as you are doubtless aware, he was the principal architect.*

When we first heard this assumption we found it strange, and in *The Hiram Key* we said that the character of Hiram Abif does not seem to exist outside of the rituals of Freemasonry. This observation caused a number of people to write to us to tell us we were mistaken, so let us here look more closely at what evidence there is in the Old Testament about the architect of Solomon's Temple. First we are told that the Phoenician king of Tyre named Hiram supplied the design, workers and many materials for Solomon's building works. This king's name is variously spelt as Hiram, Hirom and Hiram, and was probably originally 'Ahi-ram'. Josephus says that letters between Solomon and this king were preserved in the Tyrian archives.<sup>2</sup> He also quotes the