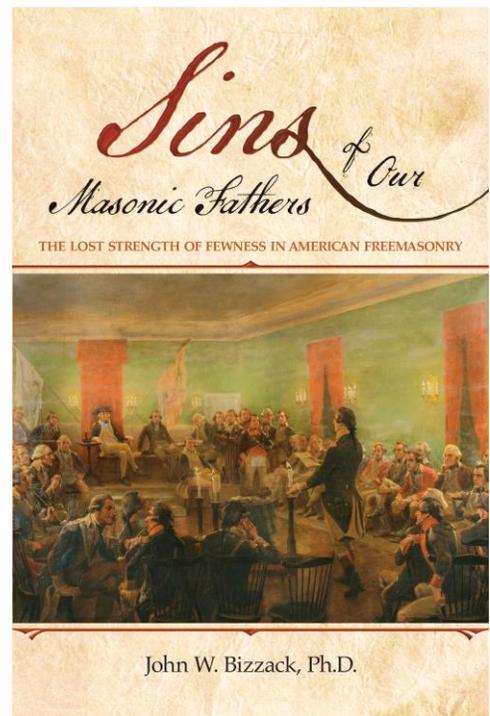


William O. Ware Lodge of Research
BOOK REVIEW

SINS OF OUR MASONIC FATHERS

Reviewed by Wm J. Lorenz, PM - William O. Ware Lodge of Research Fellow

John W. Bizzack's latest book, *Sins of Our Masonic Fathers - The Lost Strength of Fewness in American Freemasonry*, delves into the question of why American Freemasonry, with lodges chartered only fifteen years after the first Grand Lodge was held in London in 1717, diverted itself from "making good men better" through the education of Masonic principles, its lessons and history; to allowing the ritual to become the sole source of Masonic education. But this is only one of the "sins" or errors of our Masonic fathers. Bizzack uses quotes from well-known Masonic authors, past and present, to support his theory that the perceived need for larger membership is the main culprit which worked against what Freemasonry should stand for. This is not to say that Freemasonry has failed the membership, but the membership has failed itself by not assuring the new Mason, a continuing access to educational material "to improve himself in Masonry."



Bizzack puts this thought directly to the Masons of today. "Regretfully, the fraternity, its philosophies, and heritage continue to be misunderstood by not just the public, but many Masons who have not received good and wholesome instructions from their lodge or pursued it on their own." Unfortunately, the public, as well as some of our brethren, get their impression of Freemasonry from popular books and movies, written by Masons and non-masons, on such subjects as mysticism, conspiracies, treasures hidden and found, and any other subject that will make the novelist, or film maker money. Although some of these types of books and movies may be fun to read and watch, the

wrong impression of Freemasonry is placed in the minds of many. We do very little to counter these impressions.

The author lists eight principal “sins” or errors and a host of little ones, which continue to plague the Craft. Each sin is dissected and analyzed thoroughly that the reader will have an excellent understanding, with enough background that he may arrive at his own conclusion.

Today, you and I are the “fathers.” Are we passing on some of the same “sins” to the new Mason? Can we improve on this? Can we make Masonic education a part of the new Mason’s early Masonic life, that when he matures in Masonry, he will be the “father” who continues the process of “making good men better?”

Sins of Our Masonic Fathers – The Lost Strength of Fewness in American Freemasonry is well researched, and brilliantly written. In my opinion, however, the 185 pages should not be read through in one sitting. One should pause after each chapter or even at every section of each chapter, to reflect on what is being said to the reader. Like his previous book *Island Freemasonry*, it is a book that causes one to think, and I highly recommend it.

Sins of Our Masonic Fathers – The Lost Strength of Fewness in American Freemasonry is available through Amazon.com and Masonic publication outlets.

Brother Bizzack, the author of six other books on Freemasonry, is Past Master and currently serving Master of Lexington Lodge No. 1, Lexington, Kentucky and a member and Research Fellow of William O. Ware Lodge of Research.