

Academia Lodge № 847

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Veritas Est Intus



English Masonic Medal
1755

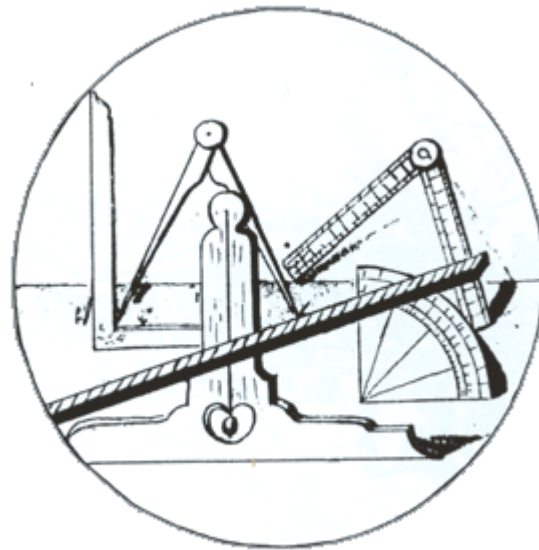
This striking Masonic jewel, found in volume 6 of Gould's *History of Freemasonry*, depicts many Masonic symbols arranged in a style that is rarely seen after the 18th century. While modern Masonic artwork frequently jumbles symbols together arbitrarily and in patterns which, while common, are not meaningful, in the past we see examples of very thoughtful designs based on the significance of the symbols and their interactions.

The Latin mottos are 1) around the circumference, *Virtuti et Silentio*, "To Manly Virtue and Silence"; 2) within the letter G, *Veritas Est Intus*, "Within Here is Truth." Of course, while erroneously marked "A.D.," the Masonic date is 5755 Anno Lucis, or 1755.

Note that the Square and Compass are not "upside down." They were very commonly shown in either vertical orientation during the 18th century. The Master of the Lodge still wears an "upward pointing" Square, while in many jurisdictions both the Master and the Senior Deacon have opportunity to hold the Compass with its points upward at certain moments. When viewed in this light, the jewel evokes the experience of initiation in the actual work of the lodge.

Interestingly, the arrangement of this jewel is based directly upon a design found in a little-known Hermetic manuscript: the *Paradoxa Emblemata, Ænigmata, Hieroglyphica, De Uno, Toto, Puncto, Centro* by Dionysius Andreas Freher (1649-1728). The book is a series of 153 hieroglyphical emblems based upon the Point within the Circle, and is of a general Hermetic/Rosicrucian character.

Freher is not known to have been a Freemason. However, it is possible he was initiated—he did come to London in 1699. Either way, his *Paradoxical Emblems*, each copy of which was made by hand for private distribution, must have found its way into Masonic circles: otherwise we cannot account for the similarity between these two designs.



emblem 93

*Puncto debent ortum Omnia,
Ad Punctum magnificandum omnia concurrunt **
circa 1700

Trans. "Everything's beginning lies in the Point, Everything flows together to the Point, making it greater."

Earlier in the *Emblemata*, the caption for folio 17 reads, *Quis Extus quæris Intus est:* "Why search outside? It is within." This is another parallel with the Latin inscription on the 1755 Masonic jewel.

This previously undocumented connection was first presented in Academia Lodge No. 847 on 10 September 2008.

Notes by Shawn Eyer, P.M.

IN VIAM
INITIATORVUM

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