

Early History of the Eastern Star

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From the *New York Courier*, May 13, 1877. We find the following in the *Brooklyn Review*, and give it for the information it contains.

Editor, *Brooklyn Review*: Finding that Masonic Editors and Masons generally have but a confused idea of the workings and origin of the Eastern Star Order, I propose to elucidate the true inwardness of the famous society of "Adopted Masons" as they delight to call themselves.

The Order known in the United States as the Eastern Star, originated in Sweden. It was called "the Star of Truth," and its membership confined exclusively to females who were the near relations of Freemasons, with the exception of one brother only to each subordinate organization of the lower degrees. He was styled Pastor or Protector, and sometimes Supervisor.

No other men were admitted to membership in the lower degrees. In the higher degrees the women alone conducted the organization, no men whatever being admitted. The lower degrees were called Constellations, in which is found the five-pointed star, each point of which represented a cardinal virtue, and all founded upon or illustrating the principles of Truth, and the characters of all were selected from the Old Testament.

The upper degrees were contained in what was called the Temple of Enlightenment. The work in these upper degrees

was beautiful and impressive, nay sublime. As I have said before, no man's rude footsteps disturbed the peaceful quiet of the Temple where the sublime principles of truth were exemplified by women, selected from the Constellations for their devotion to the cause of purity, honor and truth. These ladies were not unmindful of those virtues in the opposite sex, for Masons distinguished for their zeal and superior moral and intellectual attainments were introduced within the Temple of Enlightenment at intervals and created by the ladies therefore "Knights of the Amaranth."

Each Knight was presented with a ring having the mystic seal of the Order engraved thereon. The honorary Order of the Knights of the Amaranth was instituted by Catherine the Second of Sweden."

It is claimed this Star of Truth was translated into French, and later into English, and was arranged in system or lecture, and called the Star of Christ. In order to make it correspond with its new title the characters representing the fourth and fifth points of the star were struck out, substituting in their places the characters of Martha and Electa.

The Masonic historians of the '50s and '60s announced this new creation, which was afterwards changed to the Eastern Star.