



IDAHO KNIGHTLY NEWS

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Editor's Note

If anyone would like to submit an article for the Idaho Knightly News, please email me your article using Microsoft Word. Keep it between 1 page and 1.5 pages.

Upcoming Events:

Grand York Rite of Colorado Sep 4-6
Grand York Rite of Wyoming Sep 11-14
Grand Lodge of Idaho Sep 17-20
Northwest York Rite Conf. Oct 17-18

The Swedish Rite, Pt. 1

By Barry E. Newell

One of the things I love about Freemasonry is traveling and visiting Lodges around the world. On my list of places I still wish to see is a Lodge in Sweden, as they practice a variation of Freemasonry called the Swedish Rite. It differs from the rest of Grand Lodge systems in that to even petition, an aspirant must be of the Christian faith, but

they do not dictate the denomination or exact practice. This rite is composed of the following degrees:

St John's Lodge:

1. Entered Apprentice
2. Fellowcraft
3. Master Mason

St Andrew's Lodge:

4. Scottish Apprentice
5. Scottish Fellow
6. Scottish Master

Chapter:

7. Knight of the East
8. Knight of the West
9. Knight of the South
10. Confident of St. Andrew

The High Council:

11. Knight Companion of the Red Cross
12. Vicar of Solomon

The Swedish Rite is practiced commonly in Nordic countries, but each country has its Grand Lodge that governs its own jurisdiction; there's no supreme authority over the entire Swedish Rite, but these Grand Lodges work together to keep the uniformity with the ritual. The Swedish Rite is a peculiar system that was influenced by other Grand Lodges as well as Gnosticism and Rosicrucianism. It is also interesting to see that with the Swedish Rite, you don't see any other appendant bodies in existence in that jurisdiction.

Freemasonry was introduced to Sweden by Count Axel Wrede-Sparre who had gone to France serving as a Cavalry officer and while there became a Freemason. Once back in Sweden, he started a Lodge composed of those who also had joined Freemasonry abroad; many of them were of high nobility. In 1735, he initiated his brother-in-law, Count Carl Gustaf Tessin, in Stockholm. This Lodge was short-lived and ceased to exist around 1748. In 1752, Count Knut Posse founded the Lodge St. Jean Auxiliaire, receiving a charter from the Grand Master from Paris, and many of the Masons living in Sweden, including Count Axel Wrede-Sparre, joined this Lodge. This Lodge would become known as the "Mother-Lodge of Sweden" (a pseudo-Grand Lodge) and began issuing charters to Lodges throughout Sweden and Finland. To expand Freemasonry, the Swedish Lodges opened their Lodges to Christian men of other classes outside the nobility.

In 1756, Carl Fredrik Eckleff, with six Brothers, formed the Scottish Lodge L'Innocente in Stockholm, which worked the so-called Scottish St Andrew's degrees. By 1759, Eckleff was able to found a Grand Chapter in Stockholm and was said to be

authorized by a foreign patent, but it's not known where this patent originated. An official Grand Lodge of Sweden would be founded the following year, but would not have authority over the Scottish St Andrew's degrees. Eckleff was instrumental in starting to mold a system of Freemasonry that had a Christian basis. The Swedish Rite was further developed by Charles XIII, who would eventually become King of Sweden and King of Norway, and became Grand Master of Sweden. Over the years he would create a system of degrees that were not just progressive, but seen as continuous. Charles XIII would eventually head both the Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter, and which would lead to the unification of Freemasonry under one authority.

