THE GETTYSBURG STAR & REPUBLICAN BANNER.

☞ Devoted to Politics, Foreign and Domestic Intelligence, Literature, Science, Agriculture, the Mechanic Arts, Internal Improvement, and General Miscellany. ☜

The Star AND REPUBLICAN BANNER.

GETTYSBURG, SEPT. 7, 1835.

☞ Overwhelming Testimony against the Lodge!

THADDEUS STEVENS } LIBEL.
vs.
JACOB LEFEVER.

☞ We had intended to give a detailed report of this trial, but our time and space will not, at present, permit it. We shall therefore proceed to give the evidence in the cause, so far as it relates to *Masonry*. From this the public will be able to judge whether the Oaths, Obligations, Ceremonies and Penalties charged upon the Institution by Anti-Masons, be genuine or not. They have long been denied by Masons, in conversation, although, on this trial, NONE DAREDDENY THEM UNDER OATH!

We ask the serious attention of an impartial people to the testimony of respectable witnesses—men of all professions—Clergymen, Lawyers, Merchants, Farmers, Mechanics and Laborers—which we shall continue to publish for several successive weeks. The testimony is voluminous, but should be read through by every Christian and Freeman. Unless we are greatly deceived, it establishes, beyond all cavil, THE EXISTENCE OF ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS AND DIABOLICAL INSTITUTIONS EVER INVENTED BY UNHOLY AMBITION—AN INSTITUTION WHICH IT IS THE DUTY OF EVERY FREEMAN TO REET, AND OVERTURN AT THE POLLS!

We give this week the Deposition of JAMES A. SHEED, Esq. of Dayton, Ohio, which of itself is enough to call forth the indignation of community against so loose iniquitous, so muderous an institution as Masonry is here proven to be!

Deposition of Jas. A. Sheed,

OF DAYTON, OHIO.

STATE OF OHIO, *Montgomery Co. SS.*

The Deposition of JAMES A. SHEDD, of Dayton, County of Montgomery, State of Ohio, taken at the office of James A. Shedd, in the town of Dayton, the fifteenth day of July, in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-three, pursuant to directions contained in the enclosed commission, directed to us the subscribers, by order of the Honorable Circuit Court of Adams County, State of Pennsylvania, to be read in a cause now pending in said Court, in which THADDEUS STEVENS is Plaintiff, and JACOB LEFEVER, Defendant—as follows, (to wit)

Interrogatory 1st, proposed on the part of the Plaintiff.

1. Are you a Free-Mason? If so, state where made, and how many degrees you have taken; and please state the Obligation or Oath attached to each degree; and if you are a Royal Arch Companion, describe the scene of the Burning Bush, as represented in the Lodge or Chapter.

Answer by Deponent to Plaintiff's 1st quest.:

I became a member of Pacific Lodge, in Amherst, Massachusetts, in June, 1826; in which Lodge, I took the Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Master degrees. In September following, I left New England, and went to reside at Fort Niagara, State of New York; and while in that vicinity, I took the Mark Master's, Past Master's, Most Excellent Master's and Royal Arch Degrees in the Benevolent Chapter at Lewiston, in said County; over which Chapter Col. *Wm. King* presided as High Priest. Of the Oaths or Obligations which were administered to me at my introduction into the several degrees I have taken, I remember those of the three first—having committed them to memory before I left Pacific Lodge, and they are to be found as administered to me by Mr. Thayer, Master of Pacific Lodge, in the Appendix marked A. which is made a part of this Deposition. The obligations of the four higher degrees, I never committed to memory, nor were they, to the best of my recollection, ever repeated to me, except what, administered to me, *one* in my hearing, except two or three times to others at their introduction. And in March, 1827, I discontinued my attendance at Lodge meetings, and have never been at one since. But still I remember many portions of them, though not with sufficient clearness to enable me to write them out in full.

When I received the oath of a Royal Arch Mason, I to understand, yet to be felt himself bound with me, and the embarrassment consequent upon such a situation prevented me from paying much attention to it. But I remember the element which required me to "assist a brother Royal Arch Companion, when engaged in any difficulty, and to espouse his cause, so far as to extricate him from the difficulty, whether he be right or wrong." It was talked of among the Fraternity, and understood by them, that it was not prudent to entrust to Masons of the lower degrees, the important secrets relative to the Morgan Conspiracy, that they could not be entrusted with entire safety to Royal Arch Masons, who were bound by a stronger oath than Master Masons. For this reason, none were strongly solicited to become Royal Arch Companions; and some Masons of the lower degrees, who joined the Chapter, were never required to pay any fee. They were then considered as safer depositories of the secrets of the Morgan conspiracy. the Royal Arch Obligation which was administered to me, I cannot say whether the clause relative to keeping secret murder and treason, varied from the clause concerning those crimes, in the Master Mason's Obligation or not.

The following circumstance, however, and what I have above stated, induce me to believe that Murder and Treason were not excepted; for I was present when Col. Jewett and two others received the Royal Arch obligation, and after it was administered by Col. King, some one remarked to him that he had omitted the clause respecting murder and treason; which he then repeated to them, and according to my best recollection, it was, that they *must* keep ALL the secrets of a Brother Royal Arch Companion communicated to them as such, MURDER AND TREASON NOT EXCEPTED; and Col. Jewett promised to consider it the same as though it had been administered in due order. The penalty of the Royal Arch Obligation was, that I should have my skull smote off, and my brains exposed to the scorching rays of the meridian sun, should I knowingly or willful ly, violate or transgress any part of this my solemn oath, or obligation, of a Royal Arch Mason.

I remember the scene of the *Burning Bush* as represented in the Chapter, and it occurred soon after the obligation was administered to me. While myself and the two who were bound with me, (with a rope which passed several times around our respective bodies, and thus attached to each other,) were being conducted round the room, some one was reading the passage of scripture found in Exodus, "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law Priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God even Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush; and he looked, and behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." By this time we had arrived, being blindfolded and led by our conductor, to the bush, when some one pulled down the bandage from our eyes, and the bush appeared before us, burning with exceeding brilliancy. Some one then repeating Deity, called out from behind the bush, "MOSES!" "MOSES!" and our conductor answered, "HERE AM I." The person then behind the bush proceeded "*Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place on which thou standest is holy ground. I am the God of thy fathers. the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*" While the person behind the bush was reading the above extract, our conductor stooped down, and took off one of the slippers from my feet, and when the passage was concluded, they immediately covered my eyes with the bandage, while a voice was again heard saying, "*And Moses hid his face for he was afraid to look upon God.*"

Interrogatory 2d by Plaintiff.

State fully and knowingly, whether you may have of the abduction and fate of William Morgan, late of Batavia, New York, the cause for which he was kidnaped, the manner in which it was done, and by whom, whether by Masons or others. And if by Masons, whether it was done in pursuance of their Masonic Obligations. State also whether you know that any Masonic body as such took any part in the perpetration thereof, or in screening, aiding, or abetting, the offenders. State fully all you know relative to that offence, whether witnessed by yourself, or known through regular Masonic communications.

Answer. In answering the above, I will state every thing in the order in which it transpired, whether witnessed by myself, or made known to me through regular Masonic communication.

I left Rindge, N. Hampshire, about the 3d of September 1826, for the West of N. York, to obtain employment as a school teacher. I had for many years been acquainted with Col. Jewett, at that time superintendant of Fort Niagara; and I went to that place, believing he would render me all the assistance in his power. I arrived at the Fort, I think, on the afternoon of the 12th of September, and had been there but a short time when two messengers, who were Masons, came for the purpose of obtaining a place in which to confine Morgan, until they could make arrangements with the Canadian Masons, to have him secretly conveyed out of the country. Col. Jewett, who was a Mason, and to whom I made myself known as such, on my arrival, stated to me, as a Mason, that one Morgan had been revealing the secrets of Masonry, and that the Masons of Western N. York were about to engage in a high-handed measure, without a parallel perhaps in the history of the world, except when King Stanislaus was forcibly seized and carried away by the Poles; which measure was to seize Morgan, a free citizen, convey him, by force, out of the country—transport him to Quebec, or Montreal, and from thence to England, if they could find a British vessel whose commander was a Mason. He stated that it was not the intention of the Masons to do him any injury—that he was an intemperate man, and that the welfare of his family would be promoted by his absence, for the Fraternity intended to provide for them. He stated, that however reluctant he might feel to engage in the transaction, yet he felt himself compelled, when called upon as a Mason to render his assistance, and furnish a place for the reception of Morgan; that if he was ever in the government service, he was in a post in consequence of his participation in that affair, still he felt bound to lend his aid, and the fraternity would be obliged to indemnify him for any losses he might sustain, since this affair was for the benefit of Masonry.

One of the messengers left with him a letter of introduction to one McBride, a Mason, residing in Canada, and at that time a member of the Provincial Parliament; and he was requested to go, and with the assistance of McBride, complete some arrangements with the Canadian Masons concerning the abduction of Morgan, which arrangements, the Messengers had already commenced. The health of Col. Jewett was at that time feeble, and it being a laborious task to row a boat across Niagara River, he requested me to go with him, and lend my assistance, which I did. On entering the village of Niagara, Col. Jewett accosted a stranger standing in the street, and made inquiry, as I supposed, for the person to whom the letter was directed. After some conversation which I could not distinctly understand, the stranger remarked, "I suppose I understand your business—we shall soon have a meeting of the Lodge;" and he invited us to enter. About ten Masons were present, a Tyler was stationed at the door; but the Lodge was not opened in due form. Col. Jewett attend to them the object of his visit; and informed them, that it was the object of the Masons to suppress Morgan's book. A debate of some length and animation ensued, respecting the course most proper to be pursued; and on the question, a Mason, whom I afterwards learned to be Garside, declared openly, THAT MORGAN OUGHT TO SUFFER DEATH, FOR BREAKING HIS MASONIC OBLIGATIONS. He was promptly put down by another Mason, a gentleman of very respectable appearance, who I understood lived about 40 miles from that place. This gentleman declared, that nothing could induce him to be, in any manner, accessary to the murder of a man; but he would furnish money, freely and willingly, to aid in transporting Morgan out of the country, and in suppressing the book. After some discussion they could arrive at no conclusion respecting the disposition to be made of Morgan, who was expected to be at Fort Niagara very soon, and we returned.

We were accompanied from Canada to the Fort by two Masons, one of whom was Granger, and I understood from some things that were said that evening, that when Morgan should arrive, he would be confined in a secure Block-house situated in the N. E. part of the yard of the Fort. While we were engaged in a flame of fire together, I remarked, that Morgan deserved to die for revealing the secrets. On the following day, Morgan not having yet arrived, Colonel Jewett requested me to assist him in making some powder from the Magazine, which he alledged was spoiling on account of the humidity of the room. I took him my assistance, and commenced operating, however, that he was preparing it for the intended blast, which I supposed another building was intended for him, situated in a less frequented part of the yard. The next morning, which was the day of the Installation of the Benevolent Chapter at Lewiston, I was informed by Col. Jewett, that Morgan had been brought and confined in the Magazine the night before. Col. Jewett and myself, together with Eli Bruce, went to Lewiston that day to attend the Installation, on board the Steam Boat Martin Ogden; Giddins, however, remained at home to take care of Morgan, together with a brother-in-law from Lockport, who was a Mason, and who came there the night before. The cause assigned by the Masons for the seizure and abduction of Morgan was, his having violated his Masonic oaths and revealed the secrets of Masonry. And by his removal from the country, they hoped to be able to suppress the publication of his book, and prevent a revelation of the secrets of Masonry. They viewed his Masonic treason as a most aggravated offence, and one for which he deserved punishment; and some considered, that the Lodge possessed a right to punish him for his crime. And those Masons who were concerned in his abduction, so far as I could gather from their remarks, considered their obligations to support and uphold Masonry such, as would justify them in violating the laws of the land. So far as I know, all who were in any degree engaged in that conspiracy, were Masons.

At the Installation of the Benevolent Chapter at Lewiston, which took place on the 14th of September, the Rev. Mr. Cummins, of Rochester, officiated as clergyman. A very large number of the fraternity attended, from a distance in the vicinity, Jack-on-the-hollow, in-law of Giddins, was sent by him to inform the Masons at Lewiston that Morgan was making much disturbance at the Magazine. I understood that some one was sent to silence him. After dinner I was present in a room with several Masons, and heard many remarks made concerning Morgan. Some were enraged that he should have made so much disturbance in his confinement, and gave vent to their feelings in bitter curses. After the ceremonies and festivities of the day were past, I returned to the Fort, a few miles below Lewiston, in company with at least forty Masons, some of whom were going to Rochester by way of the Lake Ontario, and others intended to take the Canal route, on their way returning. A portion of this company stopped at Giddin's, who kept a house of entertainment. I saw several of them walking arm in arm in the vicinity of the Magazine where Morgan was confined, but I was a entire stranger to them; and Col. Jewett and myself not only agreed to keep aloof from their consultations, but not even to go to the Magazine to see Morgan—to which resolution I adhered, and I never saw Morgan while there, nor in my life, and knew not, until long after, what was transacted that night by the fraternity.

Morgan remained a prisoner at the Fort, according to my best recollection, five days and nights. On Saturday subsequent to the Installation, Garside, who was present at the consultation held in the Lodge in Canada, came to me at the Fort, and asked me if Morgan was still in the Magazine. I replied that I presumed he was, but had not seen him. He then stated *that Morgan deserved to die for revealing the secrets of Masonry; that he would rejoice to have an opportunity to put him to death; and if here after he was to be punished for the deed, HE WOULD WILLINGLY ASCEND THE SCAFFOLD, AND GLORY TO DIE AS A MARTYR IN THE CAUSE OF MASONRY.* He asked me if I would go and introduce him to Col. King, *that he might obtain his consent to put Morgan death in the Magazine.* But I refused to go.

On the morning after the removal of Morgan, Col. Jewett and myself were walking in the yard of the Fort, and were met by Elisha Adams, who had had the custody of Morgan most of the time during his confinement in the Magazine. We went with him to the door, he applied his mouth to it and called *Morgan! Morgan! Morgan!* three times, but no one answered; he unlocked the door, and we entered. I then saw what I believed to be enough to satisfy any one, that some one had been there confined for several days. On the North side of the room, was a quantity of straw on which a person had lain; a pitcher and counter were also there found; a plank broken, a large cordage had been cut in pieces; Morgan had used for the calls of nature; also a silk flag handkerchief. Col. King soon joined us at the Magazine. He spoke of Morgan's having been there, but said nothi about his fate. I was requested to destroy the handkerchief, which I did by throwing it in a deep vault, and every trace which Morgan had was obliterated, and the room set in order. I was not then satisfied as to the probable fate of Morgan. However, I supposed that the Masons in Canada had fully concluded to lend their aid, and had taken him to Quebec or Montreal, for I had understood from Jewett that a man in Canada, who was a half Indian and a Mason, had agreed to take charge of him on his journey.

Every circumstance connected with that conspiracy, which either occurred within my observation, or was communicated to me *Mecurately*, I was bound by my obligations to keep inviolate in my bosom, and had no more liberty to disclose them, than to reveal the secrets of Masonry. The abduction of Morgan and the suppression of his book, were Masonic measures, undertaken by Masons, for the benefit of Masonry; and so long as I considered my obligations binding, I was compelled to keep the things I saw, and which were entrusted to me by Masons, inviolably secret.

When the Masons saw, during the subsequent winter, that efforts would be made to bring them to punishment for their crimes, they held frequent meetings, and encouraged each other to hold out to the last, and not reveal any of the secrets of that conspiracy. Some were sanguine in their hopes, that Morgan would be never found, and they proposed to raise money to for him to leave the country. I was requested to go to Lewiston and state to some of the fraternity there the danger to be apprehended from the disclosure of Giddins, and to urge the necessity of procuring money for his departure—which I did. A messenger, a Mason, was immediately sent from Lewiston to the Falls of Niagara—who dispatched another, as I understood, to Lockport, to ascertain what sum could be raised in that Chapter. I subsequently learned that they had already expended their funds for purposes connected with the Morgan affair. Failing in their design of getting rid of him this way, they next resorted to entreaty, and urged him to save his friends from ruin, and reminded him that by making a disclosure, he would violate his Masonic obligations, and threatened him if he did, were incurred.

Several of the Masons with whom I was at that time familiar, and who were acquainted with many facts relative to the Morgan affair, came to the conclusion that I called on to testify, *they would swear that they knew nothing about it!* They alleged, as an excuse, that their Masonic Obligations would justify them in so doing; that if they should take a Judicial oath in a Court of Justice, it would be an compulsion and the force less criminal to break it than a Masonic oath which they had taken prior and voluntarily; that their brethren who engaged in the affair, did it in the form of a Masonic Court, and were guilty of no moral offence, for they intended no harm; and, therefore, since their situation was so unfortunate that they must be compelled to commit perjury on one hand or the other, they had better, to answer that they knew nothing about the affair, and save their friends from ruin. I, however, did not wish to remain and expose myself to the danger of being called as a witness, and some of the fraternity urging me to go, leaving, as I understood, lest I should betray them on examination, I left New York some time before the close of the Court, sooner than I had designed leaving, and went to Monroe, Michigan. In going to Michigan to avoid being a witness against my brother Masons, I considered that I was doing right, and I know that I discharged my duty as a good Mason.

I went to Michigan in company with a Knight Templar, a gentleman of intelligence and unimpeachable character, who made me acquainted to me, *as a Masonic secret*, in the village of Freedonia, THAT MORGAN WAS PUT TO DEATH BY FREE-MASONS. This was the first information my knowledge of the facts of the first seven degrees of Masonry, without violating the duty which he owes to society, and to the laws of his country.

3d question of Defendant.

Do you publish an Anti-Masonic Newspaper? or are you in any manner connected with the publication of such a paper?

Answer by deponent to the 3d question of Defendant. No.

4th question of Defendant.

Are you a seeding Mason? And how long were you a Mason before you seceded? Have you at any time been an officer in a Lodge of Free-Masons, and what offices have you filled it any? Have you at any time, and when, administered the Masonic obligations, and which of them to any person or persons taking Masonic degrees?

Answer by deponent to Defendant's 4th ques.

I am a seceding Mason; and I continued a Lodge-going member from the time of my initiation in June, 1826, to March, 1827; since which time I have not entered a lodge, although it was some time, I cannot tell how long, after I discontinued my attendance at lodge meetings, before I became satisfied that the Masonic obligations were neither scriptural nor religiously binding upon my conscience.

I have never held an office in any Lodge or Chapter, except on one occasion, in the Chapter, I officiated as Tyler, and I officiated as Senior Warden in the absence of that officer; and I never have at any time, nor to any person, administered any of the oaths or obligations of any degrees of Masonry.

5th question by Defendant.

Have you at any time, and when, been expelled from a Lodge of Free-Masons? If yes, for what offence, reputed or real?

Answer—No, not to my knowledge.

IV. Have you ever known a Mason refuse to testify when legally called on, and ordered so to do by the Court, when a brother Mason was on trial, and he called to give evidence against him? If so, state the particulars.

Answer—The only Morgan trials I ever attended, were those of Elisha Adams and Whitney Beach and others, had in February and March, 1831, in the last Court, I think, which has ever been held for the trial of the Kidnappers—and on those occasions, the Masons *pretended* to answer the questions put to them.

V. Have you ever known a Masonic Juror refuse to convict a brother Mason of a crime, when the other eleven Jurors, not Masons, had agreed as his guilt? If so, state the particulars.

Answer, I HAVE. On the trial of Elisha Adams one of the Morgan conspirators, a Mason, by the name of Wilson, was sworn on the Jury, and the cause was submitted to them under a charge from the Court, in which his opinion of the guilt of the prisoner was clearly expressed, and no one who heard the testimony manifested to my knowledge any doubt upon it. The Jury retired, and as soon as they had an opportunity to confer with each other *the eleven who were not Masons agreed upon a verdict of guilty*, (as they stated,) BUT WILSON THE MASON, HELD OUT FOR TWO NIGHTS AND NEARLY TWO DAYS, REFUSING TO CONCUR WITH THEM IN THE VERDICT OF GUILTY. At last the Jury were called in, and Judge Nelson, who presided at that trial, asked them if he could afford them any aid in agreeing upon a verdict. One of the Jurors observed, that one of their number was determined to hold out, and that there was no prospect that they should ever agree. Upon which Judge Nelson, let that Juror stand up." He arose, was Wilson, *the only Mason upon the Jury.* The Judge asked him, if he thought he could agree with the other Jurors? Wilson replied, that the Court had asked, which it ought not. He replied, that with that Judge, he could agree. Wilson then said, "I am a part of the testimony."

Question 6th on the part of the Plaintiff

State any other facts which you may have, tending to prove that masonic obligations have operated to defeat the administration of Justice.

Answer by deponent to Plaintiff's 6th quest.:

Most of the facts of which I may have knowledge proving the interference of Masonry in the administration of Justice, have not occurred within my observation, or been communicated to me Masonically. I will however state a masonic communication made to me before I renounced it. A Mason, a gentleman of intelligence, integrity and high standing, who, during many years of his life has held the office of Judge, by profession a Physician, told me, as a Mason, that while he resided in the State of New York, a Mason came to him and asked him if he wished to make his fortune. He replied, that he had no objections. The Mason then said, I am engaged in making counterfeit money, unite with me in the business and we can become rich. The Mason to whom the suggestion was made, like an honest man, repelled it with abhorrence. The Masonic counterfeiter then told him to keep the proposition as a *Masonic* secret. And my informer told me that he had done so, for he considered his obligations required it of him; and though the spurious notes which the counterfeiter had issued were in circulation, and he *knew* from whence they proceeded, *yet he dare not inform the officer of justice*, lest he should be in violation of his masonic obligations.

Answer by deponent to Defendant's 5th question.

No. I never have.

6th question by Defendant.

Were you during your continuance with Masonry restrained or prohibited from disclosing its principles or obligations? If yes, state particularly the nature of the restraint or prohibition that was imposed upon you.

Answer by deponent to Defendant's 6th ques.

I was. And I was so restricted and prohibited by the oaths or obligations which I had taken, and in which I swore always to conceal, and never reveal any of the secrets of Masonry, binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my throat cut across from ear to ear, my tongue torn out by the roots, and body buried in the rough sands of the sea a cable-tow's length from shore, at low water mark, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty four hours. And as a Fellow Craft, to have my left breast torn open, and my heart and vitals taken from thence: and as a Master Mason, to have my body severed in two in the midst, my bowels burnt to ashes, and the ashes scattered to the four winds of heaven, if I should willfully violate or transgress any part of the oath of a Fellow Craft or Master Mason. As a Royal Arch Mason, I also swore never to reveal any of the secrets of that degree, or violate that oath—binding myself under no less penalty than to have my skull smote off, and my brains exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, if I should ever willfully violate or transgress any part of the oath of a Royal Arch Mason. These oaths or obligations I considered as binding, I was compelled to keep the things I saw, and which were entrusted to me by Masons, inviolably secret.

When the Masons saw, during the subsequent winter, that efforts would be made to bring them to punishment for their crimes, they held frequent meetings, and encouraged each other to hold out to the last, and not reveal any of the secrets of that conspiracy. Some were sanguine in their hopes, that Morgan would be never found, and they proposed to raise money to for him to leave the country. I was requested to go to Lewiston and state to some of the fraternity there the danger to be apprehended from the disclosure of Giddins, and to urge the necessity of procuring money for his departure—which I did. A messenger, a Mason, was immediately sent from Lewiston to the Falls of Niagara—who dispatched another, as I understood, to Lockport, to ascertain what sum could be raised in that Chapter. I subsequently learned that they had already expended their funds for purposes connected with the Morgan affair. Failing in their design of getting rid of him this way, they next resorted to entreaty, and urged him to save his friends from ruin, and reminded him that by making a disclosure, he would violate his Masonic obligations, and threatened him if he did, were incurred.

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