

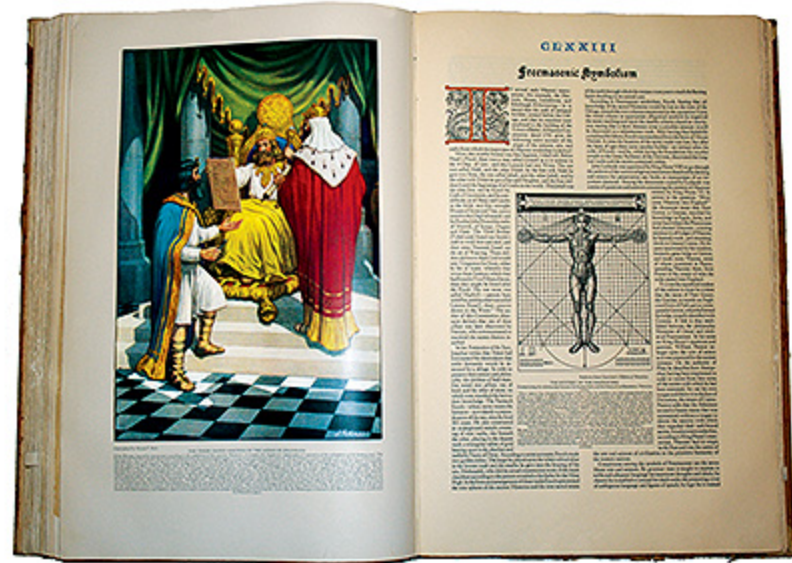


## SCOTTISH RITE MYTHS AND FACTS

# What is the most requested or asked about book in the Temple's Library?

By Bro. Stuart C. Pool 32°

The book in our collection that is most commonly requested is Manly P. Hall's *An Encyclopedic Outline of Masonic, Hermetic, Qabbalistic and Rosicrucian Symbolical Philosophy: Being an Interpretation of the Secret Teachings Concealed by the Rituals, Allegories, and Mysteries of All Ages*. This was subtitled, probably for easy pronunciation, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*. The book was originally published in 1928 and is considered by many to be Hall's magnum opus.



Manly P. Hall was born in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada on March 18, 1901. In 1919 Hall moved to Los Angeles, California with his grandmother to reunite with his birth mother in Santa Monica. It was here that at age 18 Hall became infatuated with the occult and esoteric philosophy. Between the years of 1920 and 1923, Hall wrote two small pamphlets and three books, to include amongst those, *The Lost Keys of Freemasonry*, which was published in March of 1923.

Harold Voorhis nicknamed *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* "The Great Book" in his article, "The Great Book" of Manly Palmer Hall.' This nick name was aptly given due to its "voluminous content" and the "immense field covered" in this book.

As Voorhis mentions, Hall covers a wide variety of Philosophical, theosophical, even mathematical topics. According to a piece written on the Colorado Grand Lodge's website, which has a digital version of this book, "If you read this book in its entirety you will be in a good position to dive into subjects such as the Qabbala, Alchemy, Tarot, Ceremonial Magic, Neo-Platonic Philosophy, Mystery Religions, and the theory of Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry." To give you examples of how wide the subject matter is here are just a few of the fifty chapter titles: *Pythagorean Mathematics*, *The Zodiac and its Symbols*, *Freemasonic Symbolism*, and *Mystic Christianity*. So you can see that Hall's book really does give you a broad range of topics from mathematics, to theology, as well as freemasonry. Some of these subjects have multiple chapters discussing different areas within the subject field as well. For instance there are three Rosicrucian chapters

To go with these chapters, there are forty-eight color plates with depictions relating the adjacent text. Some of these are the illustrations of: The Forty-Seventh Proposition of Euclid; Odin, The Scandinavian Father God; and the Grand Rosicrucian Alchemical Formula. Each of these illustrations comes with a footnote description of what each illustration is and how it relates to the chapter and adjacent text. All of these watercolor illustrations are attributed to J. Augustus Knapp; only twenty-seven of the forty-seven actually have his signature on them.

George Barron, Curator of the De Young Museum in San Francisco, Commented on Hall's work stating, "Into this volume has been compressed the quintessence of a colossal learning. It is a living human document, pulsating with the mental and spiritual vibrations of a profound thinker who takes knowledge for his province and reduces whole libraries to a single tome." When it was written it was then, and still is now, one of the most important compendiums of its kind. It is also the source of controversy in the esoteric communities and has been for almost a century. There are some sections of this book that are now outdated, with the sections that deal Islam being among those few; although those faults are greatly out-weighed by the comprehensive information of the other subject areas. If you're like me and did the math of Hall's birth date and the

Has a Masonic token ever been accepted as a coin?

The Sphinxes flanking the entrance to the House of the Temple represent the columns Jachin and Boaz.

Albert Pike's *The Book of the Words*

Albert Pike's Chess Set

More than half of Bro. George Washington's generals were Freemasons.

What is Cerneauism?

Double-headed eagle gargoyles adorn the House of the Temple roof.

For Auld Lang Syne

Scottish Rite Banner of Leroy Gordon Cooper—Gemini V

When did the Scottish Rite start conferring degrees with costumes and in theatrical settings?

Why do Freemasons end their prayers with the phrase "So mote it be"?

The House of the Temple contains a piece of the White House.

Featured Artifact: Masonic Lantern

Featured Book: Processus  
Contra Templarios (The Trial of  
the Templars)

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Is the “eye in the pyramid” a  
Masonic symbol?

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Washington took his oath of  
office on a Masonic bible by  
coincidence.

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Featured Book: Sermones de  
tempore et de sanctis

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Featured Artifact: Masonic Gavel

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What is the first religious attack  
on Freemasonry?

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Each column comprising the  
House of the Temple’s  
colonnade was built in three  
sections.

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Featured Artifact: 33° Jewel

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Featured Book: The Book of the  
Lodge

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What major D.C. cornerstones  
were laid by Masons?

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Featured Artifact: Albert Pike’s  
Germania Pipe

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Featured Book: The  
Freemasons’ Monitor, or  
Illustrations of Masonry: In Two  
Parts

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What is the most requested or  
asked about book in the  
Temple’s Library?

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Featured Article: Walter  
Caughey Fox—From English  
Dentist to Alaskan Miner

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What is the oldest example of  
American Masonic philanthropy?

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Myth or Fact: The Sovereign  
Grand Commander’s chair at the

publication date, you’ll realize that Bro. Hall created his Magnum Opus when he was only twenty-seven years old.

The original publication of *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* is called the Subscriber’s Edition, which was a numbered edition of only five-hundred and fifty copies. The manufacturing cost of this book at the time was \$150,000 which is equivalent to \$2.087 million today. These editions were sold only by subscription, as the edition title may suggest, and the subscriber would pay fifteen dollars upfront at the signing of the subscription agreement and the remaining sixty dollars would be paid out in four equal monthly payments of fifteen dollars each. Again, after inflation, the seventy-five dollar cost of the book is equal to \$1043 with each monthly payment of fifteen equaling \$208. The data that we have shows there was very little profit, with around sixty-five dollars per book in manufacturing, the profit was only about ten dollars. The prices varied on original subscription document however, so the exact cost and profit may never be known.

There are a lot of details on how the book was made and why it was so expensive.

Along with the Subscriber’s Edition there were four other editions on this book that had numbered copies. The second edition published was the King Solomon Edition which also had only five-hundred and fifty numbered copies. The main difference between the Subscriber’s and King Solomon Edition’s is that the Subscriber’s Edition housed three pages in the front of the book which listed the names of the owners of five-hundred and fifty copies. The third edition was the Theosophical Edition which had only two-hundred copies printed. The Rosicrucian Edition was the fourth edition of this book and had only one hundred copies printed. The Fifth Edition did not receive a special name like the other four and this one had eight hundred copies printed.

The *Secret Teachings of All Ages* was originally printed, for all five of the 1928 editions, on over one-hundred and fifty miles of the highest quality paper made by Alexandra Japan. The book uniquely qualifies as both a quarto and a folio, which is one of the reasons the book is so expensive. A quarto is a method of creating pages by folding a single piece of paper twice to create four pages from one; you most commonly see this in small eight page pamphlets. However it still qualifies as a folio because folios are pages at least fifteen inches in height, and *The Secret Teachings* is approximately nineteen inches tall.

The book’s type is Italian Old Style made by the Monotype Company. The chapter headings were all done in Caxton, and at the beginning of each chapter there is a two-color initial letter which was produced by the Caslow Foundry in England. Another very interesting fact is that the pagination of Manly P. Hall’s book was patterned after the Gutenberg bible, which many know was the first large size book printed from moveable type. All of these specifications were put together by the printer, Frederick E. Keats, and it took him over two years experimenting with different inks, paper, and type to come up with what we see in this magnificent work of art.

This masterful work of art did not stop with paper quality and font types. Hall hired John Henry Nash, a master of typography, to design the binding for his new book. Nash designed a web-like batik, which is a dyed fabric with many colors made by covering areas not to be colored in wax. The corners of the book were then reinforced with Spanish baby goat skin imported from England.

If that didn’t seem like it was enough protection, each book is protected by a substantial wooden box. The wooden box, also designed by Nash, sports the same web-like batik as the book itself and reinforced by linen corners. The corners were dovetailed to insure the strength of the box. Altogether, box and book, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* weighs over fifteen pounds.

It’s not hard to see why people would consider this book M. P. Hall’s Magnum Opus. Spending top dollar in order to print this volume back in 1928, he made sure that these books would last through the ages. Here at the House of the Temple we have two copies of the King Solomon Edition, so please don’t hesitate to come by and see its grandeur for yourself.

House of the Temple sits in the east in the Temple Room.

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One Amazing Set of Pipes, Schantz Pipe Organ at the House of the Temple

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Is Freemasonry Esoteric?

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What is our oldest book?

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What is the most common jewel in the collection?

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What is the smallest Masonic Book?

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Where and when was the 33° jewel first described?

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