

Order of the Amaranth



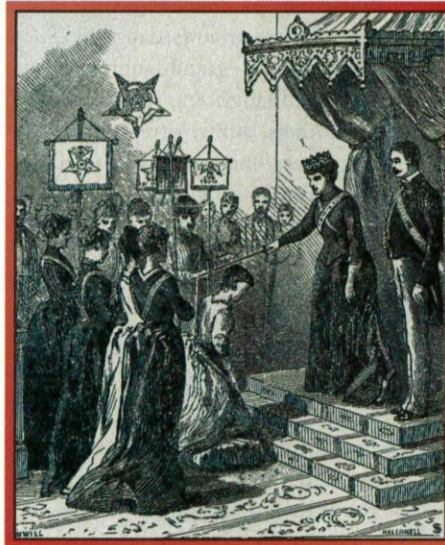
The Order of the Amaranth, an organization for Master Masons and their female relatives, was at one time the third and highest degree of the Rite of Adoption of the World.

Throughout its history, various organizations allowing Freemasons, their wives and other female relatives have attached or attempted to attach themselves to Freemasonry. Some of these groups have prospered, while still others have dwindled or have been rejected by various governing bodies of Freemasonry and simply ceased to exist.

In 1860, New Jersey musician and songwriter James B. Taylor, supposedly basing his organization upon a seventeenth-century Order of the same name, put into motion what was to become the Order of the Amaranth. The Order, an androgynous organization for Master Masons and their close female relatives, was similar in structure and purpose to the already established Order of the Eastern Star.

Sometime between its founding and 1873, Robert Macoy obtained control of the Amaranth from Taylor and established a Supreme Council to govern it. Rob Morris, of Eastern Star fame, had already

given Macoy in 1866 control of the Order of the Eastern Star, then called the "Rite of Adoption of the World." Morris did this upon his departure for an extended stay in the Holy Land. Macoy, who felt that the continual conferring of the



same degree by the Eastern Star was "monotonous," decided to incorporate the Order of the Amaranth into the Rite of Adoption, by rearranging it into a three-degree system. The first or "initiatory" degree was the Order of the East-

ern Star, the Queen of the South degree was second, and the Order of the Amaranth was the third and highest degree, with Macoy himself Supreme Royal Patron of the Rite.

Founded upon the virtues of Truth, Faith, Wisdom, and Charity, members are taught to remember their duties to God, Country, and their fellow beings. Local bodies, called Subordinate Courts, are governed by Grand Courts, which are in turn governed by the Supreme Council. Officers in the organization share titles similar in some aspects to those of the Order of the Eastern Star: Royal Matron, Royal Patron, Associate Matron, Associate Patron, Treasurer, Secretary, Conductress, Associate Conductress, Standard Bearer, Marshal in the East,

Marshal in the West, Truth, Faith, Wisdom, Charity, Prelate, Musician, Wisdom, Sentinel, Historian, and Warder.

Macoy revised the ritual from time to time, and it is said to be one of his last works prior to his

death in 1895. For those who had served as Royal Matron, he added an Administrative Degree which was a type of "chair degree" similar in purpose to the Degree of Actual Past Master of the Symbolic Lodge, which is common in some jurisdictions. This Degree appears to have been dropped when the Amaranth adopted its own version of the ritual in 1912 and ceased using the Macoy version.

In 1897 the Amaranth, then with an estimated membership of five hundred, severed its dependence upon the Rite of Adoption partly at the request of members of the Order of the Eastern Star who didn't like being considered merely an "introductory degree" to this system. Membership in the Amaranth, however, was still restricted to members of the Eastern Star. This too would change in 1921 when, at the request of the General Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, the Order of the Amaranth became a

the Amaranth Diabetes Foundation was established. Since that time the organization has collected over seven million dollars, all of which is given to the American Diabetes Association.



Left: James B. Taylor founded the organization that one day would become the Order of Amaranth. Above and on previous page: Depiction of an initiation ritual



Taylor photo courtesy the Robert R. Livingston Masonic Library, Grand Lodge of N.Y., F. & A.M.

Today eligible female relatives consist of: wives, widows, daughters, step-daughters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters, mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, half-sisters, nieces, and grand nieces. In 2002 a provision was added to

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fully independent order, with membership consisting of Master Masons and their close female relatives. By 1922 membership in the Amaranth had grown to approximately thirty thousand.

Throughout its history the Amaranth, in keeping with its teachings, has supported various charities, including numerous Masonic organizations, and in 1979

accept members of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls or the International Order of Jobs Daughters who met certain requirements and were recommended by a Master Mason.

For more information, visit the official web site of the Supreme Council Order of Amaranth, Inc. at: <http://www.amaranth.org>

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