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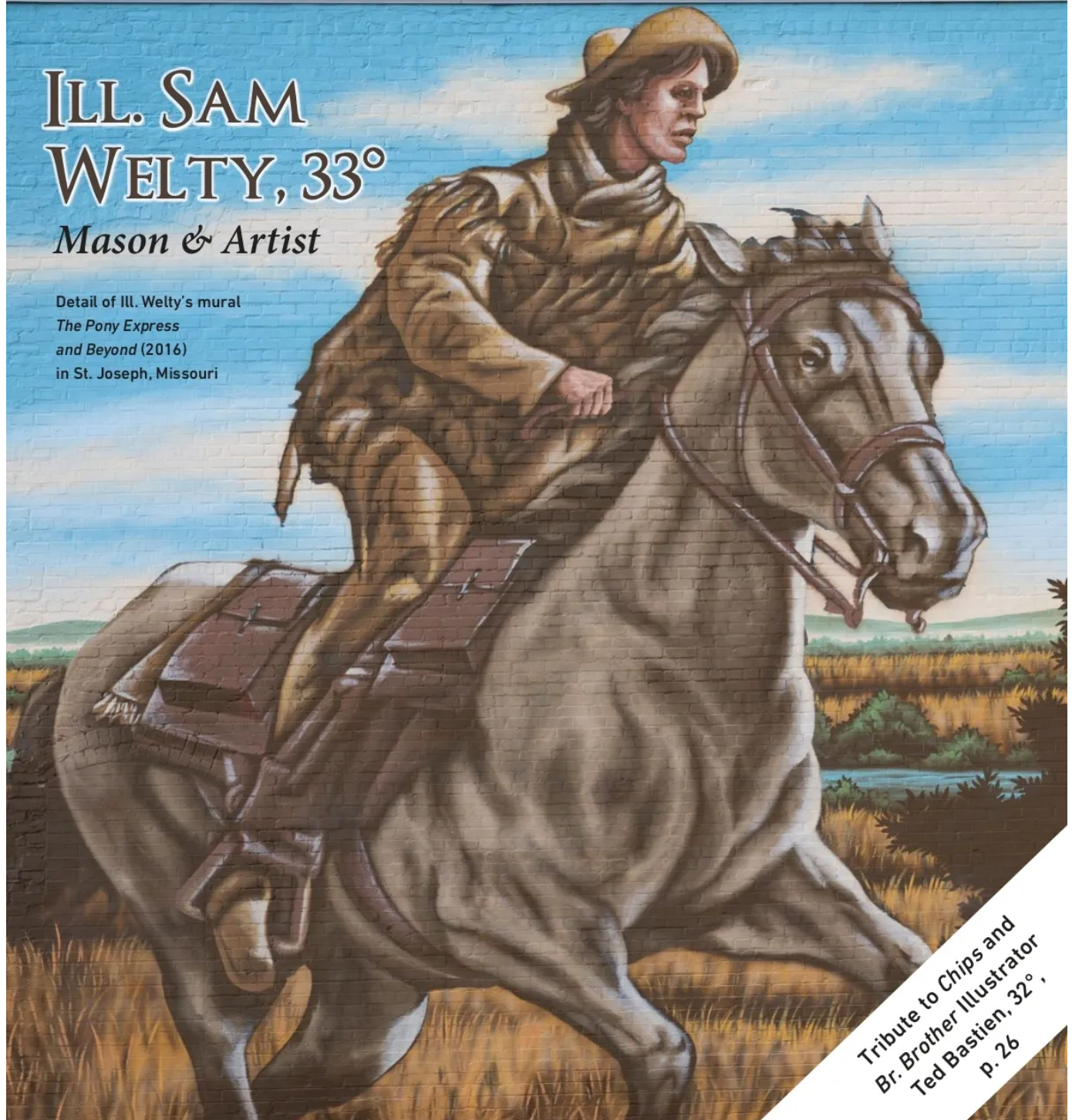
SCOTTISH ✧ RITE JOURNAL

OF FREEMASONRY • SOUTHERN JURISDICTION, USA®

ILL. SAM
WELTY, 33°

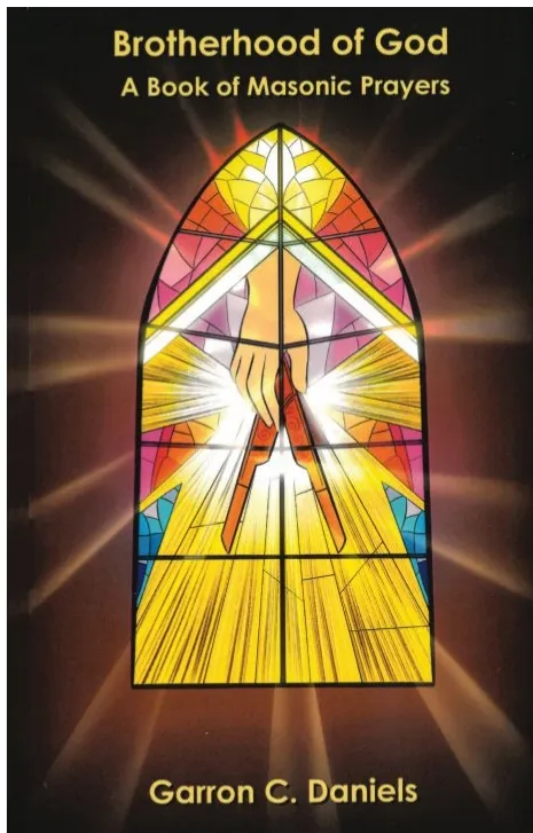
Mason & Artist

Detail of Ill. Welty's mural
*The Pony Express
and Beyond* (2016)
in St. Joseph, Missouri



Tribute to Chips and
Br. Brother Illustrator
Ted Bastien, 32° ,
p. 26

PRAYER AND THE ESOTERIC



Garron C. Daniels, *Brotherhood of God: A Book of Masonic Prayers*. Perfect Ashlar Publishing. 2022. 101 pp.

There are many opportunities in which prayer may be offered, and Rev. Garron C. Daniels, 32°, has blended those opportunities and occasions very well in *Brotherhood of God: A Book of Masonic Prayers*. The resemblance to *The Book of Common Prayer* (Episcopalian) and *The Book of Worship* (United Methodist) will strike a nod of familiarity for many readers.

Br. Daniels has written a resource that may be used in so many ways,

it would be difficult for anyone to say with this book as a resource that “I have nothing to offer in the way of a prayer.” He has covered a wide variety of areas. On my second reading, I intentionally looked in his Personal and Family Life section for those going through separation and divorce. Br. Daniels’s wise omission of such a prayer is better addressed his way through prayers for “Those we Love,” “For Guidance,” “For Strength,” and “For Protection,” with one of his best

prayers being found on page 43, “For Those in Isolation or Alone.”

Daniels’s prayer “For Our Masonic Family” could be prayed in our concordant and appendant organizations as is the case, ultimately, with all of the prayers he has written. The table of contents allows a quick reference to prayers for the World, the Nation, Personal and Family Life, as well as General Masonic Use. My favorite prayers were the ones for the recovering and the dying to say. Often even members of the clergy fail to invite such prayers from those who are healing or about to experience the ultimate healing.

The length of the Masonic Bible Presentation, the longest prayer in the book, should not impede its use. From the Great Light, we are taught the Divine attributes by which we are to live. Through it and these wonderful prayers Br. Garron C. Daniels has offered, all of us are good men made better. Well done!

—Rev. Dr. A. Gene Cobb, Jr., 33°,
Deputy of the Supreme Council
in North Carolina



Fabio Venzi, *Freemasonry: The Esoteric Tradition*. Lewis Masonic. 2016. 280 pp.

Masonic scholarship has long grappled with the historical and philosophical origins of its initiatic journey, finding echoes in religions and philosophical traditions as far back as the ancient Near East and Classical Mediterranean. In *Freemasonry: The Esoteric Tradition*, Italian sociologist and Masonic writer Fabio Venzi approaches the subject not through its historicity but through the lens of “universal models,” examining the Initiate as a recurring archetypal figure. “From the Epoptes of the Eleusinian Mysteries,” Venzi writes, “to the Hermetic of the first centuries B.C.; from the Magician and the Neoplatonist of the Renaissance to the Rosicrucian; from the Alchemist to the Freemason, the same human type, an individual featuring a series of common characteristics and, in particular, a similar ‘vision of the world,’ is manifested cyclically in specific historic moments.”



Front cover (detail) to Fabio Venzi,
Freemasonry: The Esoteric Tradition

Taking readers through an in-depth and challenging study on Western esotericism, Perennialist philosophy, Traditionalism, and Jungian psychology, the author seeks to understand the Masonic initiate as a carrier of the same light safeguarded by the earliest Schools of Wisdom, which he believes have preserved throughout history the timeless tenets of Tradition, the *Sophia Perennis*—the core truths at the root of all religions.

In the first two chapters of the book, Masonic author Venzi focuses on defining esotericism and Traditionalism, interpreting Tradition in terms of the Perennialist current in his examination of the work of René Guénon (founder of Perennialism), Ananda Coomaraswamy, Karl Jaspers, and Julius Evola. It is in the second chapter that the author first be-

gins to approach the initiatory path from a perspective seldom seen in Masonic commentary: that of Jungian psychology. Setting out to identify what he refers to as “a Jungian esotericism,” the author contends that Tradition is a manifestation of the Jungian collective unconscious—“the storehouse of latent memory traces inherited from the ancestral past of mankind”—the building blocks

of which, according to Jung, are archetypes. The Venzi perspective ties the Jungian process of individuation—that is, one’s “transformation into a unique being in possession of an inner coherence, his own Centre”—to initiation, referring to it as a “spiritual journey towards an increased self-awareness...” Using Jungian individuation as a springboard, the author shifts in the final two chapters to focus on the nature of the Masonic initiate in terms of the transformative journey toward self-knowledge, or, in his words, toward “an integration between the conscious and the unconscious, an integration between the inner Ego and Self.” The author challenges the purely moralistic reading of Masonic symbology and contends that a far deeper meaning

exists in light of transformative initiation. The symbol of the Ashlar, for instance, represents more than moral improvement and becomes “the symbol of an entity that may only be restored in the depths of the human psyche.” The checkered pavement, similarly, comes to represent the mind itself, with the black and white tiles symbolizing “the union between our conscious and unconscious parts, an integration of opposites...”

The book is a scholarly volume for those with a serious interest in Freemasonry from the standpoint of Traditionalism and esotericism. It is a unique examination of the Masonic initiate in the psychological context of initiatic societies throughout history. Fabio Venzi makes a very thorough case—and a sincere appeal—for readers from the Masonic tradition to consider the Masonic journey as the profound, self-transformative, ageless process. As such, it is one that seeks to transform not merely the Mason himself but humanity as a whole through the preservation and transmission of the eternal ideals and wisdom ever sought by man in times of intellectual and spiritual darkness. •

—Morgan Smith



Back cover (detail) to Fabio Venzi,
Freemasonry: The Esoteric Tradition