



EXHIBITION  
HALL

# THE NOISY RETURN OF EXHIBITION HALL

## JOURNEYPLANET@GMAIL.COM

Yes, we're back. And yes, that's a wrestler on our cover. Becky Lynch is one of the most talent women on the WWE's roster right now at a time that women's wrestling is probably hotter than at any point in the last 50 years. Go figure. Her style of ring entrance attire is steampunk-inspired, and she's Irish, so I must put her on the cover!

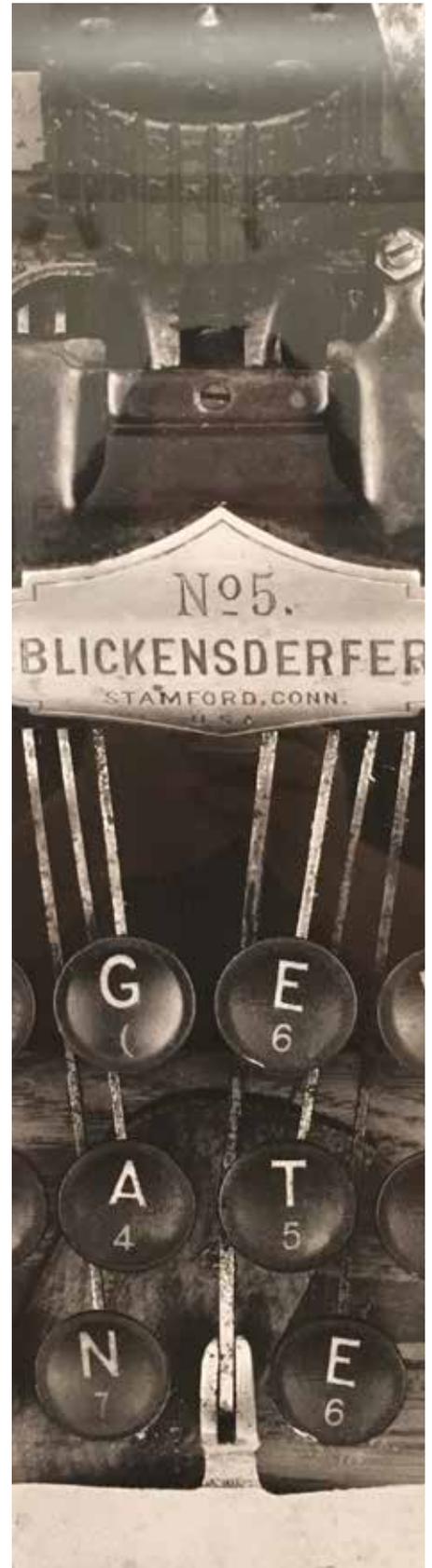
So, what's been going on since the last one of these issues? I'm married, had a couple of kids, JohnPaul and Benji, and have basically been livin' life in the mountains of Boulder Creek, California. It's been fun, it's been exhausting, it's been reality.

I haven't been able to read much, or watch too many movies, either. It's hard when you have to work, take care of the kidlings, and drive an hour to and from work every day. It doesn't leave a lot of time for zining, but I'm gonna manage. I hope to get three of these out this year, one of which will be a special Gail Carriger themed issue (and Debbie Bretschneider has a lovely piece in here about encountering Gail!) and perhaps another on Tim Powers, though that might have to wait a year. I'm also bringing back Claims Department, my other personal zine, with an issue on 1980s and 90s comics that's already out, one about comics legend Julie Schwartz, and then a BIG issue about the Zodiac Killer that might make me go all Greysmith...

Journey Planet is still running and putting out issues too! We're up for another Hugo, which is always fun, even though I can't make it out to Finland to enjoy the ceremony. It's an honour to be back on the list. We won a Hugo in 2015, then weren't even nominated last year (though we came close) and now we're on again. If you haven't yet, check it out at <http://journeyplanet.weebly.com>

This issue is, of course, dedicated to all those Steampunk out there who are doing their thing. It's a weird time. We have passed peak-steampunk a while back (Steampunk'd was probably the high-watermark, but by then we'd already seen the cons starting to die down) but there's still amazing stuff going on!

I'm very happy to say that this issue has the words of Debbie Bretschneider, a fine costumer and wonderful human being, from Valerie Frankel, a writer of stuff that is phenomenal, and many many-time Hugo nominee Andy Hooper, whose piece may be the longest thing I've ever published and one that absolutely fascinated me to a level only the best stuff manages to do! Art on Page 6 is by Hugo winner Maurine Mo Starkey!!!



**BEING AN  
ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
TRACKING,  
OBSERVATION,  
AND  
ENCOUNTERING OF  
ONE'S FAVORITE  
AUTHOR  
BY  
DEBBIE  
BRETSCHNEIDER**



I was hooked the first time I saw a Steampunk costume. Victorian, yet not! And with gadgets! I immediately started creating a wardrobe of steampunk costumes to wear to science fiction conventions. As I became more and more interested in this genre, I discovered the books of Gail Carriger. I adore them! The protagonist is always female and always delicious. I met Ms. Carriger at a few book signings, but the short time spent with her at these events was not enough.

And then I found out that in 2016, Gail Carriger was the Guest of Honor for Gaslight Gathering in San Diego, California. The location was very doable from my northern California home and so I bought my tickets. Steampunk gatherings are known for their all-the-time costuming, the Gaslight Gathering was no exception. But what to wear?

One of Gail's books is named Prudence, The Custard Protocol Book One, after the main character. Several years ago I bought fabric to make the dress on the cover and the race was on to get the dress made in time. The books are set in the early 1890's and the dress on the cover showed the large leg-o-mutton sleeve that was popular then. I had never made that type of outfit before, but armed with the Laughing Moon Mercantile 1890's shirtwaist and skirt patterns, I was on my way.

Now once at the convention, how was I to get my picture taken with Ms. Carriger and get to spend some time with her? There was of course the usual line to get books autographed and I did that. I discovered too late that there was a late night dance that I would have had to buy a ticket ahead time and she was an honored guest at the dance, so I missed an opportunity. Foiled!

Ah, but I discovered there was an afternoon tea and I was able to buy a ticket to that. And then, careful not to be pushy or obnoxious, I secured a seat at the same table as Gail! It was wonderful to listen to her delightful conversation. Then to top off my afternoon, Gail Carriger posed with me in my Prudence costume!





As a kid, I loved magic. That statement is true for so many kids, but to me, it was something of a minor obsession. No, not quite to the level of depth I held for wrestling, or baseball stats, or the random trivia I hold on to through to today, but it was right up there. David Copperfield was a thing, and you could see Ricky Jay on TV or Doug Henning or, if you were watching *The Tonight Show* on the right night, see Orson Welles' famed slight of hand patter. It was a great time to be a magic fan.

And, of course, I loved Houdini.

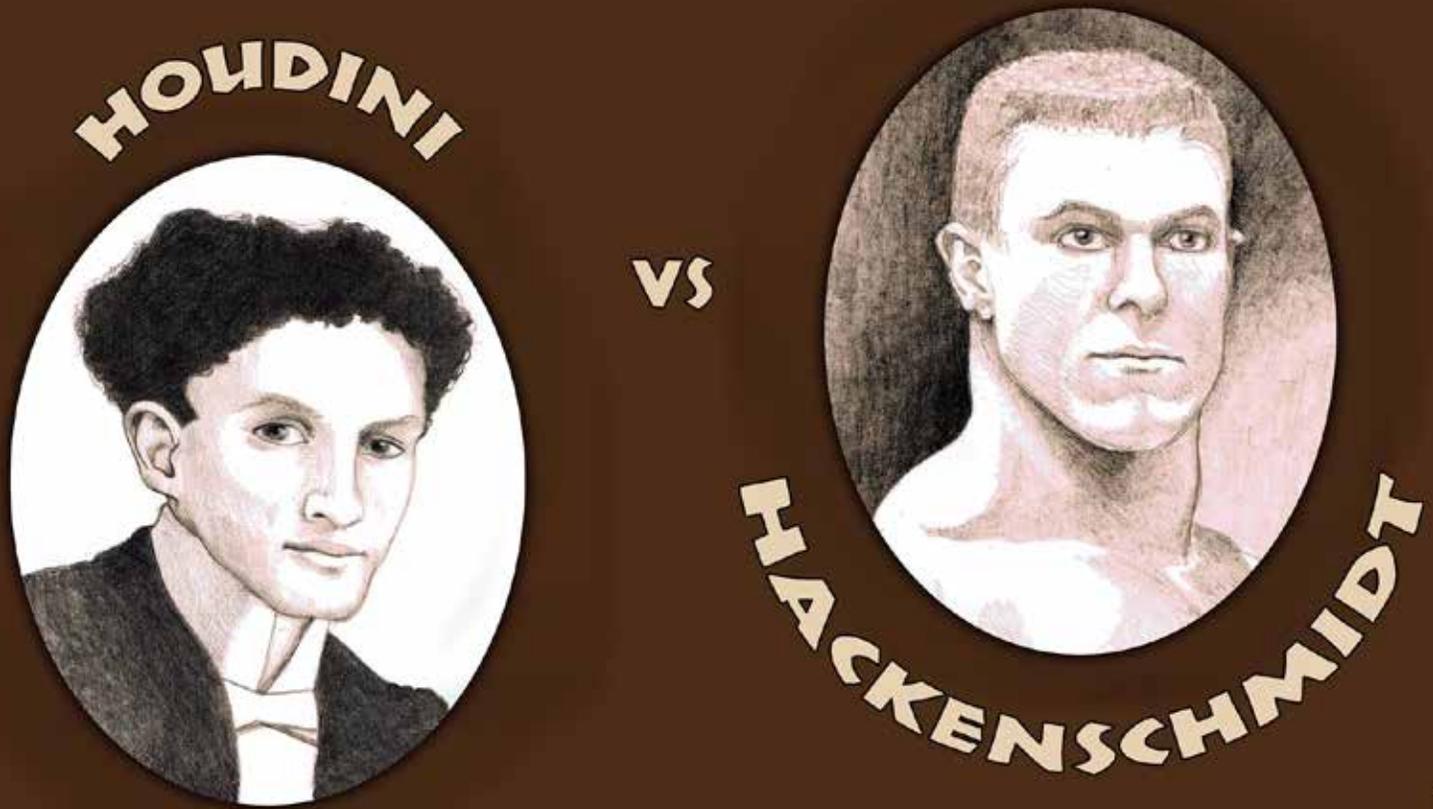
Erik Weisz, better known as Harry Houdini, casts a shadow that darkens many corners through to today. Few remember the legendary magicians of the 1980s, but damned if you don't personally know many folks who would immediately know who you were talking about if you brought up Houdini. He wasn't the first stage magician, in fact he took his last name from the legendary French magician Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin, but he was the first to arrive when there was a mass media to be played with. He made movies, at first shorts, then features, and he was all over newsreels. He was a master manipulator of both people and his own image. He was everything a magician should be.

The famous story of his death is based on his stomach. He had always claimed to be able to take any punch. Many had tried him on over the years, and he knew exactly how to handle a punch. Supposedly, the story goes, a guy came in and said he'd heard he could take the punch of any man alive, and he punched Houdini hard. Houdini didn't have time to tense the proper muscles, or to do the slight turn that allowed him to absorb it properly, and a week later he died. This is probably true, which would make him, like Chung Ling Soo, a victim of his own trick backfiring.

I spent much of my youth looking into Houdini. I loved his theatricality, especially when it came to the milk can escape. It was just so cool, and it was referenced all over the place, including on *Happy Days*! I also realised that he was, in many ways, me with manual dexterity. He was into wrestling, he was into the paranormal, he was into hoaxing (and busting hoaxes), and he was into movies; he made them and he loved them.

I was digging into him again, and it felt like old times, it even led me to digging into old films!

# HOUDINI DEFEATS HACKENSCHMIDT



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*I read about a lost film made by Houdini called Houdini Defeats Hackenschmidt. There was no information on the film, other than it was the first short film made by the legendary magician. Hackenschmidt, as any Professional Wrestling Historian would know, was the first great World Champion. It hurt that there was nothing about this film's content anywhere, which is always a bummer, but while researching this article at the Orson Welles' Museum of Meaningful Misdirection, I came across a box labeled "Houdin Scripts". Having been interested in the world of the founder of modern magic Robert-Houdin, I decided to leave off my topic research and discovered that instead of being a box related to scripts from the great French liar, it was a box of scripts for films by Harry Houdini. Like all discoveries, it begins with a misspelling.*

Below is a script, neither dated nor attributed to any individual, for Harry Houdini's first film!

## **Title Card – Houdini Defeats Hackenschmidt**

Open on A wrestling ring, with Referee C.B Cochrane standing in the center, holding a gold belt, showing it to the thee sides towards camera. On his left is Georg Hackenschmidt wearing a long robe. On the referee's right is Harry Houdini, in his traditional evening suit. Photographers invade the foreground of the picture, snapping dozens of pictures of the trio.

Art by Maurine Mo Starkey

### **Title Card – The Russian Lion George Hackenschmidt!**

Cut to Georg Hackenschmidt removing his robe, passing it over the top rope to a waiting ring boy exposing his muscles, wearing his trunks which go up to just above his navel. Hackenschmidt gives a pose emphasizing his abdominal muscles, then into a pose flexing his biceps. The photographers take many photos of Hackenschmidt posing.

### **Title Card – The World's Greatest Escape Artist – Harry Houdini**

Cut to Houdini removing his coat, then handing it to his wife Bess, standing just outside the ring. He undoes the cuffs of his shirt, rolls them up just past his elbows. Then laces his fingers, twists his hands, and cracks his knuckles.

### **Title Card – The World Championship will be determined!**

The pair extend arms and shake hands, as Cochrane holds the belt aloft between them for the cameras which explode into a sea of flashshots.

### **Title Card – Let the Match Begin!**

Cut to a tight shot of a bell ringing

### **Title Card – Hackenschmidt is amused.**

Cut to Hackenschmidt stifling a giggle as Houdini bows slightly to him, offering his head as if to allow the wrestler to place him into a headlock. Hackenschmidt hesitates, then approaches, and pulls Houdini into his snugest headlock.

### **Title Card – HEAD LOCK!**

Cut to Hackenschmidt Seeming determined to crush the great magician's head, only to have Houdini slide out and pop to his feet behind Hackenschmidt.



### **Title Card – ESCAPE!**

Hackenschmidt looks at his arms where he expected to find Houdini's head. He turns to face Houdini, who is smiling at the great champion. He then bends again, offering Hackenschmidt his head for another headlock.

### **Title Card – Head lock take 2!**

Hackenschmidt places the headlock on Houdini and bears down, leading the Great Escapist to flail his arms for a moment in the crook of the arm of the Russian Lion. After a few seconds, Hackenschmidt begins to look more and more confident when Houdini against slips out and pops to his feet behind the champion again. Hackenschmidt spins instantly, and Houdini gives him a deep, theatrical bow.

### **Title Card – The Champion loses his patience.**

Houdini offers his head one last time, but Hackenschmidt instead taps him on his shoulder, leading the magician to stand upright, allowing Hackenschmidt to put on his patented bear hug.

### **Title Card – THE DANGEROUS BEAR HUG!**

Cut to Houdini's arm flying every which way as Hackenschmidt punishes his impudence with his signature move. He shakes the smaller magician from side-to-side, seeming to relish in having him so firmly trapped. HE takes two steps, stops and obviously puts all his muscle into the crushing submission hold.

### **Title Card – Hackenschmidt Goes for the win!**

Cut to Hackenschmidt bending his knees and seeming to put more weight into the bear hug.

Jump Cut to Houdini leaving the bear hug and appearing behind Hackenschmidt. Hack's arms fly inwards, wrapping around his own chest. He looks left and right, then doubles over, looking between his own legs, allowing Houdini to push him forward, putting his shoulders down, and holding his legs, giving him the pin!

### **Title Card – The Champion is down!**

Cochrane jumps to the mat and slaps it three times!

### **Title Card – 1! 2! 3!!! New Champion!**

Houdini stands and waves his hands to the crowd as Hackenschmidt gets to his knees, looking utterly disappointed. Cochrane goes to the ropes, is handed the championship belt, which he hands over to Houdini as we fade out.



GEORG  
KARL  
JULIUS  
HACKENSCHMIDT  
1877 - 1968



## HOLY RETRO, BATMAN! THE WORLD OF STEAMPUNK SUPERHEROES BY VALERIE ESTELLE FRANKEL

When envisioning steampunk superheroes, many instantly picture cosplay and fanart, with reimagined Batman and Harley Quinn striding around in top hats and corsets. Those may be the most fun, though an extraordinary stack of steampunk superhero novels, films, and especially comics emphasize how well the genres mesh.

*The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* is the most famous of these. It began as a comic book series by Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill (1999), which according to Moore, was intended as a "Justice League of Victorian England." The film arrived in 2003. It was even more "superhero" style, with heightened powers and more young characters like Tom Sawyer and Dorian Gray. Allan Quatermain (played by star Sean Connery) was elevated to the central character over Mina, much as the X-Men series focused on Wolverine. In this and especially in its advertising it cleaved close to the new X-Men franchise, deliberately targeting that audience.

Though superheroes began in the forties, a few retro comics have taken superheroes back to Victorian times – sometimes with the most popular characters from DC and Marvel. DC's *New 52* did a series of steampunk alternate covers. More interestingly, *Gotham by Gaslight* (1989) is a DC Comics one-shot by Brian Augustyn and Mike Mignola, with inks by P. Craig Russell. A sequel followed, *Master of the Future* (1991), also written by Augustyn, but with drawings by Eduardo Barreto. This was the first *Elseworlds* story, a logical channel for steampunk. At a DragonCon, comic creator Mike Mignola noted that the genres blend well

because, as with the forties, Victorian era heroes lived in a simpler world, with clearer noble versus criminal choices. This, some might say, is Batman at its best.

Of course, when modern heroes return there, they're sometimes struck by the opposite – one set of rules for the rich and another for the downtrodden. Logan, from *O!*, goes back this far. Born in Alberta, Canada during the late 19th Century, James Howlett was a frail child, the son of rich landowners. When his friend Dog Logan, abused son of the groundskeeper, is expelled from the estate, Dog's father then attacks James' parents. Shocked as he is, James erupts with claws and more tragedy follows. This backstory, divulged in *Wolverine: Origins*, reveals him as a Victorian hero. hilariously, in Joss Whedon's *Astonishing X-Men: Torn*, Logan reverts to the Victorian fop he might have been. "I'm the best at what I do, and what I do... is so terribly pretty!" he smiles, crafting a paperchain of people holding hands. He also hides behind a female student and demands protection. Later he refuses to hide behind Kitty's skirts as he puts it, "unless you think that's a good idea." This total contrast sets him at odds with his past, emphasizing how the superhero of today is far tougher.

Likewise, Marvel's *Runaways* are the children of a team of supervillains who delighted readers by sounding like real teens: Nico Minoru can do magic. Molly Hayes (codenamed Bruiser and Princess Powerful) is nine but has Hulk-like superstrength. Victor Mancha, the son of Ultron, can control electromagnetism. Chase Stein (codenamed Talkback) has technological prowess from his mad-scientist parents...and also a time machine. Karolina Dean (Lucy in the Sky) discovers she is an alien and falls for Xavin, an alien Skrull who becomes female to please her. Joss Whedon's six-part story arc, "Dead End Kids," takes them back to 1907, meeting runaways, heroes, and villains in three different New York teams. They recruit a 1907 adolescent, Klara Prast, but must deal with her horror at lesbianism, even while expressing their own at her abusive marriage. This jarring contrast reveals to the teens how good modern civilization really is. Several of the young heroes also take the opportunity to face down their ancestors and discover what superheros were like in the turn of the century, powered by religion and prejudice as well as iron and bronze.

Outside the two comic book giants, *The Incredible Adventures of Janus Stark*, a British comic strip by Tom Tully and Francisco Solano López ran in the magazine *Smash* 1969-1971. It featured a Victorian escapologist using his powers to battle crime. His bizarrely rubbery bones made him similar to Reed Richards, especially in how he was drawn.

Steampunk superheroines are more common and subversive as they wield their powers in alt-histories that welcome them. Kaja and Phil Foglio created the genius inventor with her many gadgets. Agatha Heterodyne discovers she has magical powers of invention in a world ruled by the tyrannical Baron Klaus Wulfenbach and his rather attractive son Gilgamesh. These powers link her with the legendary swashbucklers of the past, as she discovers her heritage piece by piece. *Girl Genius* is an ongoing "gaslamp fantasy" in web comics/ graphic novels and a series of prose novels. At the end of December 2013, the comic was over 1650 pages in length. Agatha shines in this alt-world, which lets her stretch superpowers to an anachronistic degree for a young Victorian woman.

Dynamite Entertainment's *Legenderry: A Steampunk Adventure* (2013) by Bill Willingham (of *Fables*) teams up The Phantom, Vampirella, The Green Hornet, Flash Gordon, Red Sonja, Zorro, and others in a steampunk setting. His heroine, Magna Spadarossa, adds a similar historically reimagined girlpower, as she seeks her lost sister Sonja.

Lady Mechanika is a top PI with a set of pistols. A detective of the supernatural, the lady is more than a little mystical herself. Part human and part machine, she has no concept of the past that made her this way. She heads up her own series, created in 2010 by Joe Benitez and Peter Steigerwald for an original series with Aspen publishers. She too kicks butt in an alt-history that allows her to shine.

*The Jekyll Island Chronicles*, created by Steve Nedvidek, Ed Crowell, and Jack Lowe,

and released by IDW Publishing, features Woodrow Wilson, Andrew Carnegie, and Henry Ford who recruit a strongman with mechanical legs, an electro-woman, an ace pilot of a steam-powered warplane, and a Tuskegee cryptologist, as they combat the rising threat of Anarchists. Other comics include *The Five Fists of Science*, a steampunk graphic novel by Matt Fraction and Steven Sanders (2006, Image Comics) as well as *The Steam Engines of Oz* crossover from Arcana.

There are also steampunk superheroes outside of comics. The novel series *The Society of Steam* by Andrew P. Mayer and *The Girl in the Steel Corset* by Kady Cross are specifically steampunk superheroes. They create flying machines appropriate for the era, gain powers from the aethyr, and defend their countries – the former in New York and the latter in London. These too center on uppity young women, enjoying the freedom to solve crimes and save the day, even as they work within secret societies under the radar of public opinion.

*Adam Adamant Lives!* ran 1966 to 1967 on BBC. It starred an Edwardian swashbuckler played by Gerald Harper who fought crime and solved mysteries. Frozen in stasis since the turn of the century, he teamed up with a modern young woman and butler to solve modern crimes. As he journeyed through modern times, he offered a romantic, old-fashioned perspective, but also showed his sixties audience how much had changed.

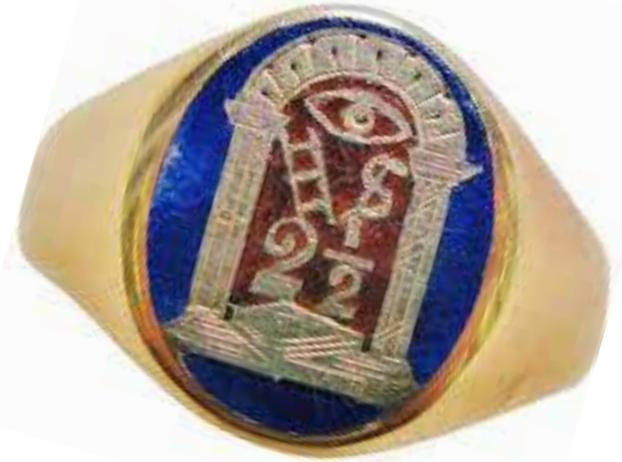
Dieselpunk – retrofuturism from a later era, after cars but before computers, shares much of the clever blend of history and gadgets. *DC Bombshells* is currently doing World War II retro reenvisionings, with no men. This was based around statuettes in cool costumes and has a delightful aesthetic, offering the women a chance to shine. Other dieselpunk retro superheroes include Marvel's TV show *Agent Carter*, as she plays innocent and takes down supervillains after World War II. *Marvel Noir*, a 2009-2010 Marvel Comics alternative universe, featured X-Men, Spider-Man, and Daredevil. The series considered how superheroes would fare with the historical turmoil and retro technology of the time. In 2008, J. Michael Straczynski and Chris Weston created *The Twelve*: forties heroes from Timely Comics frozen by the Nazis and awakened in modern times to a new world. The contrast gives it a delightful retro aesthetic and comments on how morals and heroism have changed. Even *Marvel 1602*, created by Neil Gaiman and Andy Kubert, has some of the alt-history inventions and magic that makes steampunk such fun.

In the end, all the stories offer a delightful blend of crime-fighting and retrofuturism, showing how well the genres blend to empower those who were historically sidelined in this clever alternative subgenre.



# INDEPENDENT ORDER OF RECHABITES

Salford Unity



## MASONS, MOOSE AND ODDFELLOWS: SOME FRATERNAL SOCIETIES OF 19TH CENTURY AMERICA BY ANDY HOOPER

A taste for alternate history usually goes hand-in-hand with a passion for the “real” story of the past, and both have been great beneficiaries of the recent surge of interest in genealogy. The digitization of vital records has opened the story of our family histories to casual perusal; a few hours spent online can now uncover everything that once took weeks of digging in paper public archives and parish records. And in the process, one cannot help but develop a greater understanding of the times in which our ancestors lived. We can identify their occupations and places of residence through Census records, and the same documents will tell us similar things about their neighbors. City directories, school yearbooks, military records, wills and probate filings can all provide great clues to what people did, and with whom they did it. Those associations, professional, personal, ethnic, religious and fraternal connections not only illustrate the course of 19th Century lives, they also illustrate the many ways in which they were different from us, living in the 21st Century.

One of the most significant differences I’ve found between myself and my ancestors is the much greater role that clubs, fraternities, associations and beneficial societies played in all their lives. When one thinks of the adventure stories that formed the foundations of science fiction, like Verne’s *Around the World in Eighty Days* or Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Lost World*, clubs formed by gentleman adventurers and explorers play pivotal roles in both. Such clubs were familiar elements of Victorian Society, and they served to give verisimilitude to the proceedings. In H. G. Wells’ time, the thought that the Gun Club of Baltimore might build a mammoth Columbiad mortar to shoot a projectile to the moon actually seemed quite

plausible socially, if not for the physical impossibility of the endeavor. People formed groups in pursuit of every goal one can imagine, including many which seem completely alien or repugnant to us now. The line between a fraternal association and a criminal conspiracy or a dangerous cult is mainly a matter of perspective. And the fact that so many of these Societies were secretive in nature, concealing their practices and ideals from outsiders, inevitably led many to imagine more fantastic and malevolent purposes were behind them.

In the 20th Century, the mystery of these groups gradually dissipated, and their trappings and rituals began to give an impression of camp and comic opera. In the end, they were the province of characters like Fred Flintstone (The Loyal Order of Water Buffalos) and Ralph Kramden (The Loyal Order of Raccoons.) In our time, an everyman like Homer Simpson pays only incidental attention to groups like his bowling team and internationally-renowned barbershop quartet, but the insularity and exclusivity of the “Stonecutters” make them of temporary interest – and once it’s clear they just want to drink beer and play ping-pong, the luster quickly fades. Of course, in a world of electric wonders and aether fliers, the possibility that one or more of these groups really might possess secret insights or ancient knowledge might be much greater.



### **A Lineage of Joiners**

In researching my own family tree, I was fortunate in that my Mother’s family, the Oakeys, were residents of one Midwestern American city for several generations after immigrating from Gloucestershire, England in the 1850s. They arrived in Madison, the capitol city of Wisconsin, only about five years after the latter was admitted to the Union in 1848, and several of their descendants are still living there today. When I set out to research their stories, I had no idea how many of them there had been, and how connected they were to every institution I could imagine. They had literally helped to build some of the oldest and most revered buildings in town.

One of them literally lived on the site of Madison’s most impressive “club,” the Masonic Temple building on Wisconsin Avenue. My three times great uncle William Oakey (1824-1892), who was actually employed as a mason and stone-cutter, built his first house on Johnson Street, on a lot now under the southeast corner of the Temple building. The fifth of William’s seven sons, William J. Oakey (1866-1954), was a 32nd Degree Mason, as well as a bricklayer and maker of concrete blocks; when he passed, his Brothers of Madison Masonic Consistory #5 took charge of his funeral arrangements, even though all his “real” brothers had long since preceded him into the next world.

These organizations “boomed” dramatically in the second half of the 19th Century, when a growing and increasingly migratory population needed such institutions to give it a sense of connection and security. Some were organized for political or social goals, such as “Temperance,” which was the crusade to free society of the deleterious effects of alcohol. Most had charitable intentions, both for the benefit of its members, and for the community at large. For their members, they provided that essential “third place,” with interactions not offered by work or the home. They were different also from religion, although many such societies supported or were supported by the church, and held quasi-religious rites as part of their club activities. Of course, some were clearly more devoted members than others, and some people were compulsive “joiners” of groups and clubs in the 19th Century, just as some people have a “meet-up” four or five nights per week today. They must have been faced

with a dilemma when the sundry fraternal societies took to the streets for public events like the Independence Day parade – did one march with the Moose, the Odd Fellows, or the Woodmen of the World?

Even a summary of the Oakeys club activities could run for pages. In addition to being a Mason, William J. Oakey was a member of the Tripoli Shrine of Milwaukee, a masonic-inspired society founded in 1870. His brother Dr. Alfred John Oakey died in the Iroquois theater fire in Chicago in 1903; his membership in the Englewood Dental Association provided a connection to obituaries published in *Dental Cosmos* magazine that illuminated elements of Dr. Oakey's personal life, and the fact that a colleague, Dr. Mervin Rimes, died in the fire with him.

His younger brother, Dr. Washington Joseph Oakey (1872-1946), was also a dentist, also a graduate of the Chicago Dental School, but he found his fortune in the east, practicing first in Newburgh, and later Saranac Lake, New York. Among the many groups to which he belonged across his life were the League of American Wheelmen, the Newburgh Yacht Club, the Saranac Lake Golf Club, the Saranac Lake Curling Club, the Saranac Lake Rotary, and the Whiteface Mountain Free & Associated Masons, of which he was past master.

Another brother, George J. Oakey (1869-1938) was a bricklayer and a champion bowler. George apparently joined any group that maintained a bowling league; he was frequently seen among the Elks, Moose, Eagles and the Knights of Columbus.

His cousin, Edward A. Oakey (1866 – 1950), a longtime proofreader of the *Wisconsin State Journal*, was renowned for the quality of his singing voice; by far his most important fraternity was the Madison Mozart Club, of which he was a charter member and frequent president. Brother Samuel George Oakey (1859 -1916) followed in his father Henry's footsteps as 5th ward alderman, and was also a member of the Freemasons and the Odd Fellows. William Ellsworth Oakey (1861 – 1933) was best known for his long career as a janitor, first at the 5th Ward school, and later at the County Courthouse. Early in life, he worked for an uncle, Edward Morden, who was one of Madison's first water pump retailers and fabricators. The Morden pump shop was right next door to the Madison Chapter of the Salvation Army, and William E. was one of Madison's first Christmas-time "bell ringers."

My great-grandfather Benjamin Franklin Oakey (1868 -- 1945) was yet another mason contractor, who lived in Madison his entire life. As a young man, he was a member of the E.W. Keyes Hose Company of the Madison Volunteer Fire Department, and a long-time officer of the Madison Cycle Club, a chapter of the League of American Wheelmen. Unlike several of his cousins, Ben never became a Mason, probably because he converted to Catholicism in

1902, just before marrying my great-grandmother. (The Mother church has prohibited the faithful from participation in Freemasonry since 1738.)

As a consequence of all this family research, I actually made a list of the nationally-affiliated clubs and organizations that were present in Madison, Wisconsin between the 1850s and the 1930s, with some remarks on their history and purposes. Although almost all of the important national fraternities had a presence in Madison, this is by no means a complete list of the groups operating across that period; but the fact that so many were present in a medium-sized Midwestern city should illustrate how truly pervasive they were.



## Free and Associated Masons

Although both members and outsiders have often purported to trace its lineage back to the time of Alexander the Great and before, modern Freemasonry actually originated in London, England, no earlier than the last two decades of the 17th Century. There were definitely four “lodges” operating in London by 1717, when the four banded together to form what would later be known as the “Grand Lodge of England.” (That first great meeting was held at “The Goose and Gridiron,” a public house in St. Paul’s churchyard.) There were also Lodges meeting in America by this time – the earliest documented masonic gatherings took place in Pennsylvania, no later than 1715.

These masons were certainly inspired by societies of stone-cutters who had formed guilds in the early 15th Century. Documents from that era known as the “Old Charges” formed the foundation of modern Freemasonry, and confirm its connection to medieval guilds that provided such fundamental elements as the ranks of Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Masons. The original “masonic secrets” were probably quite prosaic standards relating to the way stone was worked, incorporated into buildings, and most importantly, what one was to be paid for cutting it. In modern freemasonry, the classic tools of the mason – the trowel, square, compass and plumb-level – are used to illustrate moral lessons and values though the metaphor of ritual.

Freemasons were also associated with “free-thinking” and anti-religious sentiment, although virtually all Lodges required members to swear their belief in the deity prior to their initiation. But in the 18th Century, particularly in France, Masons became identified with reformist politics, and many prominent Jacobins first became acquainted as Masons. This association was strong enough that the English Parliament came close to banning Freemasonry in 1799, due to the part it had played in the French Revolution.

The most provocative element of Freemasonry is its secrecy, which has the unintended consequence of allowing the human imagination to speculate wildly on its true nature. The Roman and Orthodox Catholic Churches charge that Freemasonry presents a deistic and naturalistic view of religion that conflicts with Christian doctrine. In reply to these and other charges the Masons have often asserted: “Freemasonry is not a religion, nor a substitute for religion. There is no separate ‘Masonic deity,’ and there is no separate proper name for a deity in Freemasonry.” So that isn’t the mystery we’re talking about, anyway.

Today, the web site of the Wisconsin Freemasons proclaims, “The purpose of Freemasonry is to promote personal development by reinforcing moral principles, to assist those suffering unfortunate circumstances, and to foster friendship and cooperation among all people.” This statement seems to betoken little in the way of mystery, but Masonic rituals remain a cherished secret. Masons seek and favor one another’s interests because of the presumptive shared purpose the brotherhood offers them; but the rest of us must be forgiven if we feel that the world is being run on secret handshakes and masonic signs. Both Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt were masons, to our documented benefit.

In North America, Freemasons were particularly prominent among the Founding Fathers, and after America gained its independence, there was a brief effort to establish a Grand Lodge of the United States, with George Washington as its first Grand Master. But this effort was soon abandoned in favor of Grand Lodges organized by state. American Masons soon barred African-Americans from



membership, beginning with 15 African-Bostonians, who applied in 1775. Under the leadership of a man named Prince Hall, the group received recognition from the Grand Lodge of Ireland, and persisted into the middle 19th Century. Two members were seafarers, and recognized in London lodges as fully associated and regular Masons.

In America, Freemasonry was rocked by a scandal in 1826. A former Mason named William Morgan had publically threatened to reveal masonic lore, and when he was kidnapped by known Masons and subsequently disappeared, it was widely assumed he had been murdered. When his kidnapers received relatively light sentences, criticism broke out across the country. Masonic membership entered a two-decade period of decline. Under the leaderships of Thurlow Weed, “Anti-Masons” opposed to President Andrew Jackson (an avowed member of the Craft) formed a political party, which nominated William Wirt, Attorney General under James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, as its candidate for President in 1832. This was ironic, as Wirt was himself a Freemason; he received just 7 electoral votes and the party disbanded not long after.

American Interest in Freemasonry rebounded after its low in the 1830s, and by the time Madison became the capitol of the State of Wisconsin in 1848, new Lodges were popping up all over the upper Midwest. Wisconsin’s Grand Lodge was formed in 1844, and in January of 1845, Madison’s Lodge #5 was granted its charter by Wisconsin’s first Grand Master, the Reverend Benjamin T. Cavanaugh. The initial membership cost was a relatively princely \$13.00.

Madison’s first Master was John Catlin, also an early postmaster and state Attorney General. Other early members included mayors Augustus Bird, John H. Corscott, and James Bowen. Senator Robert M. Lafollette was a member of Lodge #5; so was my high school principal, Alfred G. Colucci.

The arcane nature of masonic lore has made it easy to form divergent rituals and interpretations, and schism seems to be an inevitable fact of masonic life. In 1854 a group of 19 Masons sought to break away from Madison Lodge #5, possibly for doctrinal reasons, but more likely because #5 was just too populous to fit into any hall in town. The new lodge styled itself Hiram Lodge #50, a reference to Hiram Abiff, supposedly the architect of Solomon’s temple and the central character in the mystery play performed as part of the ascension to Master Mason.

Among Hiram Lodge’s founding members was Algernon S. Wood, as he was one of Madison’s most respected stone carvers, and created many of the early headstones in the historic Forest Hill Cemetery.

Hiram Lodge #50 shared quarters in the Odd Fellows Hall for a number of years. They suffered a second spin-off in 1857, when several German-speaking members left to form Concordia Lodge #83, which disbanded in 1885. That year, Madison Lodge #5 and Hiram Lodge #50 were “reunited” in sharing the former Presbyterian Church on Wisconsin Avenue, which they jointly remodeled and rechristened as the “Madison Masonic Hall.” The present-day Masonic Temple was built on the same site in 1923. Designed by brothers James and Edward Law, it was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.



## **Eastern Star**

The Order of the Eastern Star is an “appendant body” of Freemasonry, whose members are either Master Masons themselves, or relatives of one or more Masons. The group is open to both men and women, and has its own series of rites and degrees, but in most Chapters, members are wives, widows, daughters or sisters of initiated masons. In Madison, Eastern Star became popular after 1910, and was one of many groups who shared the Masonic Hall on Wisconsin Avenue.

## **Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks**

The Elks trace their history to a club composed of white minstrel show performers known as the “Jolly Corks,” who formed in 1868 to circumvent New York City’s statute on tavern hours. It might not be so surprising, then, that they were one of the last major fraternal groups to integrate racially, only resolving to remove the language restricting blacks from membership in 1976, in response to Federal law. Even then, they left open the possibility of reinstating the membership restriction if the law changed in the future.

Despite this shameful shortcoming, the Elks began to emphasize the “Benevolent” elements of their credo after one of the original Jolly Corks died and left his wife and children in dire conditions. The group voted to rename themselves after an animal of recognized stature and nobility as a measure of their new mission, and began their long tradition of charitable activities. Today, these tend to be focused on military veterans and disabled children; at one time, the Elks emphasized their service to one another, founding a Mutual Benefit society to insure them, and have maintained a retirement home in Bedford, Virginia, since 1915.

The Elks adopted a suite of rituals and titles that recall Masonic titles in some ways; the leader of the organization is traditionally styled the “Exalted Master.” At one time, it was fashionable for Elks to be buried in shared cemetery plots; many of these were decorated by impressive pieces of statuary.

Madison’s Elks Lodge #410 received its charter on February 2nd, 1898. The Elks Lodge on Monona Avenue, now known as Martin Luther King Boulevard, was a major social hub for the first 60 years of the 20th Century, with its original neighbors being the Grand Army of the Republic Hall, and the Avenue Hotel. The basement was home to a bowling alley, thought to be one of the best in the city by discerning bowlers. It was very close to the location of “Monk’s Hall,” Madison’s original acknowledged den of sin, operated by railroad lobbyists in the 1850s. The Western Union office was two doors away on the corner, and many congratulations and resolutions were dictated to the clerks following triumphal evenings at the Elks.



## **Loyal Order of Moose**

The Loyal Order of Moose was founded in Louisville, Kentucky, in the spring of 1888 by Dr. John Henry Wilson. Originally intended purely as a men's social club, lodges were soon founded in Cincinnati, Ohio, St. Louis, Missouri and Crawfordsville and Frankfort, Indiana. However, this initial wave of expansion soon faltered, and the organization was in danger of disappearing altogether soon after the turn of the 20th Century. In 1906, a Welsh immigrant named John B. Davis gave a rousing speech to the other seven members of the Moose National Convention, who voted him extensive powers to recruit and reorganize the fraternity. By 1912, he had grown the Order to nearly 500,000 members in more than 1,000 Lodges across the nation.

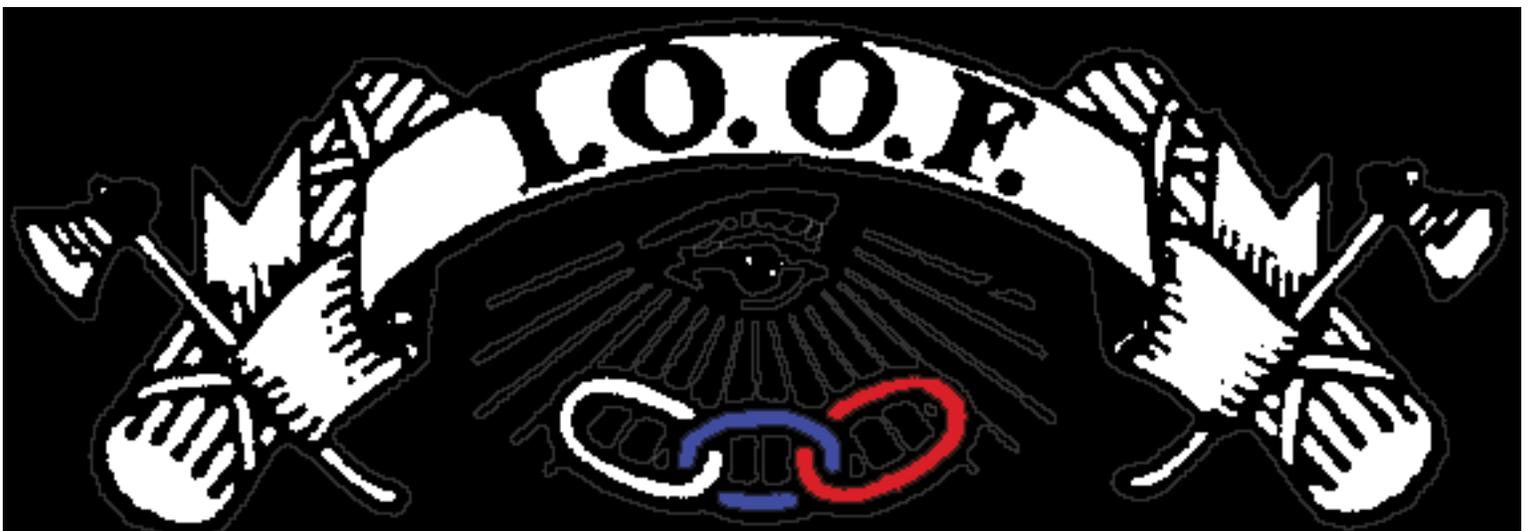
Like many fraternal organizations, the Moose aspired to the construction of a sanctuary for the dependents of deceased members, as well as a retirement complex for members at the end of life. The former venture, known as "Mooseheart," is located near the banks of the Fox River, about 40 miles away from Chicago. The community has provided a home for thousands of children, not exclusively orphans, and long since expanded to include those with no previous connection to the L.O.M. The retirement needs of members are addressed by "Moosehaven," a 63-acre community south of Jacksonville, Florida.

Mooseheart is an important element in the "9 O'clock Ritual," which is a feature of most Moose gatherings. At nine o'clock, all Moose are directed to face toward Mooseheart with bowed heads and folded arms and repeat a silent prayer "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not for such is the Kingdom of Heaven. God bless Mooseheart." At that same time the children of Mooseheart kneel at their bedside in prayers as well.

## **Independent Order of Odd Fellows**

The International Order of Odd Fellows is one of the oldest fraternal societies, with origins not dissimilar from the Masons in 18th Century London. However, the early history of the group is poorly documented and subject to much conjecture. The name itself is open to question, the most likely account of its origin being that it was formed by tradesmen who did belong to other standing guilds, and pursued "odd" or unusual professions. The organization is definitely old enough that its first significant schism was between supporters of the deposed Stuart Royal line, and the house of William II of Orange.

In North America, the Independent Order of Oddfellows was founded by Thomas Wildey in Baltimore, Maryland in 1819. The Independent Order drew its lineage from the "Manchester Unity" in Britain, but became completely independent after 1842. The American Order has always been symbolically identified by a chain of three links, representing Friendship, Truth and Love. Thousands of IOOF-provided gravestones decorated with this symbol can be found in cemeteries from the 1850s to the 1940s.



The First Lodge in Wisconsin was established in 1835, when it was still part of the Michigan Territory. The first Lodge was formed in the mining center of Mineral Point, among immigrants from Pennsylvania who had become familiar with the Independent Order there. The Order remained concentrated in southwestern Wisconsin up to statehood, although it was temporarily interrupted when the entire lodge departed for the California gold fields in 1849. Madison's Hope Lodge #17 was in operation by 1854. In 1875 they purchased a dedicated hall in the new Tenney Block on South Pinckney Street. They would remain there until the building was razed in 1925, and the Oddfellows began to share the new Masonic Temple with the Hiram Lodge, Madison Lodge #5, the Order of the Eastern Star, and the Zor Shrine, which purchased its own facility in the early 1980s.

The Odd Fellows pursued a less elaborate set of secret rituals than the Freemasons, but they also have a history of strong organizational secrecy, and have been subject to the same speculative condemnations as other secret societies. In the 1850s, the Independent Order established a parallel organization for female members, the Rebekahs. In Madison, the Rebekahs were frequently far more visible than the Oddfellows themselves, and sponsored a wide spectrum of charitable activities.

### **Fraternal Order of Eagles**

The organization that would become the Fraternal Order of Eagles was founded in February, 1898 by six Seattle, Washington theater owners, who met on a pile of lumber in Moran's shipyard to discuss an ongoing musician's strike. After placating the strikers, the group continued to meet, at first on local theater stages, using the provisional name of "The Order of Good Things." As numbers grew, participants selected the bald eagle as their official emblem and changed the group's name to "The Fraternal Order of Eagles." In April, 1898, the membership formed a "Grand Aerie," secured a charter and developed a constitution and by-laws, with John Cort elected the Eagles' first president.

The Eagles mission is a typically all-encompassing endorsement of Good Things: *The Fraternal Order of Eagles, an international non-profit organization, unites fraternally in the spirit of liberty, truth, justice, and equality, to make human life more desirable by lessening its ills, and by promoting peace, prosperity, gladness and hope.* The distribution of early members among traveling theatrical troupes – they were actors, stagehands, playwrights and accompanists -- helped to spread the Fraternity across the United States and Canada. Another reason for the group's success was the emphasis on providing funeral benefits for members – no



Eagle ever ended up laid namelessly to rest in a potter's field. Among the successful fruits of their lobbying efforts include Mother's Day, the Social Security system, and Federal prohibition of job discrimination based on age.

Madison's Aerie #623 came into being in 1910; early members included bowling luminaries like Louis Schillinger, grocer August Bach, mason Matthew Pertzborn, Madison Gas & Electric Clerk William H. Matzdorff, bookkeeper Charles A. Kraft, and Edward Mergen, a printer at the *State Journal*. The Eagles were clearly more open to "tradesmen" and working people than the Masons or the other "Noble Orders."

### ***International Order of Good Templars***

The order of Good Templars rose from a group founded by Daniel Cody of Utica, New York in 1850. Calling themselves the Knights of Jericho, they employed rituals and regalia inspired by the Freemasons, but had the singular purpose of spreading temperance or total abstinence from alcohol. The organization's motto was "Friendship and Charity." In their early years, the Templars were notable for admitting men and women equally, and admitting members of any race. In 1875, the rules were altered to allow segregated lodges in the south.

The organization spread rapidly in both the U.S. and Canada; in 1868, a chapter was established in Birmingham, England, from which the order spread to more than 35 countries around the world. The organization declined in the United States after Prohibition, and only about 1% of the organization's contemporary memberships of 200,000 reside in the United States. Since the 1970s, much of the masonic ritual has been discontinued, and its mission is now dedicated to the healing the effects of drug addiction.

Madison's Capital Lodge #1 of the Good Templars was founded in 1856. By the 1870s, the city's enthusiasm for Temperance had produced two groups of Templars, the Capital and Madison Lodge #156. In the February 2nd, 1876 issue of the *Wisconsin State Journal*, the joint election of officers for both Lodges was announced. The leadership contained exactly as many women as men, and included jurists Rufus Smith and Charles Bross. Carriage manufacturer R. W. Rexford was the leader of Lodge #156, while Samuel J. Bradford led Lodge #1. Also among the members of Lodge #156 were Robert M. Lafollette and Miss Sarah Nichols, the older sister of Charles G. "Kid" Nichols, professional pitcher and Madison's only representative in the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame.

### ***United and Ancient Order of Druids***

The fraternal Order of Druids is much less known in the 21st Century than the Masons or Odd Fellows, but in the 19th Century they were strong rivals to both in membership and distribution of Chapters. The organization was founded in London in 1781, and although some of its members were involved in the neopagan movement, the Order was not, and explicitly prohibited its members from discussing politics or religion. It had a series of rites and degrees, and developed a tradition of wearing "Druidic" costume for parades and public events.

In Madison, the first meeting of Druids who had migrated from Boston and New York probably took place before the Civil War. By 1868, Madison Hein No. 4 was conducting regular meetings in the Hall at No. 3 State Street. Jon Kurcher was the group's presiding officer. By 1886, there were circles active in both Madison and the nearby town of Monona. The Madison group appointed cigar maker Peter Schaus as their Supreme Druid, while boatman Charles Bernard was in charge of the Monona group.



By 1897, Madison's Exalted Druid was Adolph Klose, who made his living as a tailor, while George Nebel, a notary and barber was still the group's secretary, as he had been in 1886. By 1900, George and his brother Ed Nebel were the two remaining officers; but by 1902, the group disappeared from the Directory completely, having apparently lost its remaining members to the Odd Fellows and other Fraternities

### **Woodmen of the World**

The Woodmen of the World were the creation of one tenacious man, Joseph Cullen Root, a Massachusetts native who was inspired by an 1883 sermon on the "noble woodmen who cleared the American frontier," delivered in Lyons, Iowa. He founded a fraternal group, the Modern Woodmen of America, later that year. About six years, internal dissension led to Root's expulsion from the organization. Moving to Omaha, Nebraska, he decided to start over again, founding the Modern Woodmen of the World in 1890.

Across their history, the primary goal of the Woodmen has been to provide insurance to its members, and like the IOOF, the Woodmen were noted for the distinctive tree-trunk shaped headstones that it provided for its members through 1930. At one time, the Woodmen also owned a chain of radio and TV stations in Nebraska and Kansas, one of which gave Johnny Carson his first job in broadcasting.

Local chapters of the Woodmen were known as Camps, Courts or Groves. Membership was originally restricted to white males, but the rules were modified in the 1970s, to include people of any race or gender. The organization had its own program of rituals and secret passwords, and maintained them into the 1970s as well. Today, the organization markets itself under the name Woodman Life, and continues to serve 800,000 members nationwide.

Madison's Chapter, number 365, was known as the "Banyan Camp," and met twice per month at the "Woodman Hall," located at 21-23 W. Main Street. At the turn of the 20th Century, there were at least two organizations with similar interests, the International Order of Foresters' High Court of Wisconsin (#928), which met at "Forester's Hall" in Brown's Block. And Forester's Hall was also the home of two other Fraternities, the "Mystic Workers of the World," and the "Order of Companions Court Prosperity #90.") The Catholic Order of Foresters, St. Joseph's Court #535 also shared the busy building.

### **The Knights of the Modern Maccabees**

The Knights of the Maccabees were formed in 1878 in London, Ontario, by members of the International Order of Foresters. They drew their name, rituals and lore from the Jewish rebels that fought against the Seleucid Empire in the 2nd Century BC. Like several other groups, their rituals and social observances would eventually become secondary to their goal of providing low-cost insurance to its members. In Madison, the organization was popular between 1895 and 1920, and had its own hall at 24 W. Mifflin Street. Cement contractor Henry F. Whelan was the commander of Blackhawk Tent #59 during their peak period of membership between 1905 and 1908. The women's auxiliary was simply known as "The Ladies of the Maccabees."

### **The Knights of Malta**

Also known as the Order of St. George or St. John, the Knights trace their lineage to the Medieval Hospitalers of Rhodes and Malta. It is a masonic sub-group, open only to those Freemasons professing faith in Christianity. In Madison, they were an early appendage of the Order of Good Templars, but persisted into the 20th Century, and eventually took up residence in the Masonic Temple on Wisconsin Avenue.

## **The Knights of Pythias**

Founded by Justus H. Rathbone in February of 1864, the Knights of Pythias is the only fraternal society to be chartered by an act of the U. S. Congress. It is also one of the few explicitly organized for the participation of African-Americans. Rathbone was inspired by a play detailing the mythological story of Damon and Pythias, and wanted the group to reflect the loyalty demonstrated by Pythias. The organization's motto is "Friendship, Charity and Benevolence." Pythian ritual was another simplified echo of Masonic practice, but also generally kept secret from outsiders. Members were often presented with ceremonial swords, some of which were remarkably elaborate in decoration and design.

Madison's Monona Lodge #11 was founded in the 1860s, but membership dwindled, and the organization gave up its charter in 1873. Ten years later, the group was reinstated, and would operate from a Hall on the upper level at 5 N. Pinckney Street for more than sixty years. The women's auxiliary group, the Pythian Sisters, used the same facilities and was equally involved in charitable activities.

## **The Knights of Columbus**

Founded by Father Michael McGivney in 1882, the Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic service organization. It was partially inspired by the frustration of Catholics who were prohibited from belonging to any of the popular secret societies of the 18th and 19th Centuries. In Wisconsin, the Knights formed their first Councils in 1900, and the Madison Council's charter was approved in 1901. Most chapters are associated with a specific parish or church to which they pledge their services; Madison's K of C has traditionally supported Greenbush's St. James Catholic Church, the Good Shepard Parish, and St. Joseph's Parish.



## **Royal Arcanum**

The Supreme Council of the Royal Arcanum is a fraternal benefit society founded in 1877 in Boston, Massachusetts by John A. Cummings and Darius Wilson, who had previously been among the founders of the Knights of Honor, a similar organization, in Kentucky. Wilson was also active in the American Legion of Honor and the Royal Society of Good Fellows, as well as being a prominent official in the Order of United American Mechanics, Ancient Order of United Workmen, a Freemason and an Oddfellow.

Early in its history, the Arcanum called on its members to be successful Christian men, and embraced a racist by-law prohibiting "Mongolians" from participation. This was later dropped. Its motto was "Faith, Virtue & Charity." Its rituals were said to be quite elaborate, involved a lengthy oath of obligation, and made prominent use of the number

"1105" which had some connection to the medieval orders such as the Knights of Malta.

Royal Arcanum members were not especially numerous in Madison, but their "Four Lakes Council No. 1549" met every 2nd and 4th Monday in the G.A. R. hall into the 1930s.

## **Royal Neighbours of America**

Founded in 1888, the Royal Neighbours were a Women's' organization, that sought to provide financial stability for its members at a time when they could not vote, and in many states, were severely restricted in the amount of property they could own or inherit without the benefit of marriage. The Neighbours sought to change both those things, championing women's suffrage and providing insurance for their personal benefit. The organization opened a "National Home" in Davenport, Iowa, to help members in need of assistance. It continued in operation until 2004.

In Madison, the Royal Neighbours Lake City Camp, #1146, also shared the Modern Woodmen's facility, and met twice per month to educate its members on financial self-reliance.

## **The Tribe of Ben Hur**

Like something of a cross between a fraternity and a modern fan club, The Tribe of Ben Hur was inspired by Lew Wallace's popular novel, subtitled "A Tale of the Christ." The group derived its rituals and ranks from the novel *Ben Hur*, and used them to instill moral, spiritual and patriotic principles. Madison had a small chapter that was active between 1890 and 1920. It did not have a dedicated clubhouse, and meetings were held in member's homes or the halls of other clubs and societies. The organization endowed a series of scholarships, but eventually devolved into an insurance company like many other fraternal groups. It formally changed its name to the Ben Hur Life Association in 1930, and was absorbed by USAA Insurance in 1988.

## **The Loyal Legion**

The Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (aka MOLLUS) was a fraternal order formed in 1865 by officers from the U.S. Army, Navy and Marine Corps. They stated as their purpose the cherishing of the memories and associations of the war waged in defense of the unity and indivisibility of the Republic; the strengthening of the ties of fraternal fellowship and sympathy formed by companionship in arms; the relief of the widows and children of dead companions of the order; and the advancement of the general welfare of the soldiers and sailors of the United States. The modern organization is composed of descendants of these officers. In Madison, the Legion shared its meeting space with the more populist and openly political G.A. R.

## **The Grand Army of the Republic**

Formed the same month as the MOLLUS, the Grand Army of the Republic was open to soldiers of all ranks who had served in the armed forces of the Union during the War of the Rebellion. In Madison, the G.A. R. Hall at 128 Monona Avenue was one of the most significant social hubs of the city. In part, this was due to the identification of the G.A. R. with the Republican Party; veterans of the Civil War would give the party a virtual political monopoly until the Democrats re-asserted their dominance over the South in the 1870s. In Wisconsin, Democrats were a vanishing breed in the second half of the 19th Century, and the proliferation of G.A. R. posts in every town helped sustain that monopoly.

The G.A. R. dominated the conversation on veteran's issues in the country for the better part of fifty years, and their example was one reason for the development of later veteran's groups, like the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

## **Daughters of the American Revolution**

A lineage-based service sorority whose members are direct descendants of individuals involved in the fight for American Independence. Having traditionally restricted its membership to whites only, the organization became involved in an intense controversy when it barred African-American musicians from playing at its halls. When the D.A.R. refused to make any exception to this rule for the respected contralto Marian Andersen, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt resigned her membership in the organization. The D. A. R. later apologized to Andersen and she performed several times at the D.A. R. Constitution Hall, but their membership was not integrated until the 1980s.

## **The Women's Christian Temperance Union**

Like the Good Templars, the W.C.T.U. had only one real issue of interest to them, but it was a blockbuster. Their crusade took more than fifty years to complete, but they eventually convinced a majority of America's elected officials to "go dry." In Madison, the Union had a rich history of attracting memorable speakers, including their spiritual leader Sister Carrie Nation. On her visit to Madison, she was happy to stay at the Fess Hotel, because it lacked a bar.

The W.C. T. U. was one of the first national political groups aimed specifically at women, who were thought to be the primary victims of the national epidemic of alcoholism in the 19th Century. At the turn of the 20th Century, as their goal came within sight, Madison's chapter of the Union had meetings on the first and third Tuesday of each month at the First Congregational Church.

## **Young Men's Prohibition Club**

By 1890, Madison had at least six organizations, including two rival Temperance Boards, all dedicated to the eradication of alcohol. This was the only one explicitly directed at young people. In 1886, the club listed G. A. Wheeler as its President; D. A. Silliman, Secretary; and H. H. Roser, Treasurer.

## **Ancient Order of United Workmen**

This was one of the most successful of the many national fraternal benefit societies that became popular after the Civil War. It eventually evolved into the Pioneer Life Insurance Corporation, and was most active in Madison between 1885 and 1900.

## **The Modern Brotherhood of America**

Another successful Benefit Association, formed in Tipton, Iowa, in 1897. Its principal founder and president for 22 years was former Tipton Mayor Thomas B. Hanley (1852-1919). As an insurance provider, The MBA were pioneers in the use of actuarially-based premium rates, but suffered huge losses because of World War I and the influenza epidemic. It later merged with the Independent Order of Foresters, In 1911, Madison's Chapter President was Milton Haines, a painter residing at 220 West Gilman. He and his wife Emma shared the house with Milton's sister Bertha, who was employed as the Clerk to the Superintendent of Public Schools.



### **American Protective Association**

An anti-Catholic association formed in 1887 by 7 Protestant businessmen in Clinton, Iowa. It was later embraced by Canadian Irish Protestants, who formed its most enthusiastic component. Among their beliefs was the claim that the Roman Catholic Church had instigated the Civil War. They became involved in politics in the mid-1890s, even running handful of their own candidates. This led to a protracted conflict with the Democratic Party, until in 1897 most APA members joined the Free Silver movement and embraced Democratic nominee William Jennings Bryan. In Madison, A.P.A. meetings were held every Friday night on the 3rd floor at 3 S. Pinckney Street.

### **American Red Cross**

The story of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Society is far too involved to relate here, but in short, it was founded by a Swiss businessman named Jean-Henry Dunant, who was shocked by the suffering that he witnessed in the aftermath of the Battle of Solferino, Italy in 1859. The American chapter was created by Civil War heroine Clara Barton in 1881.

The Dane County Chapter of the ARC was formed in 1909, and was the most important medical relief organization in Madison during both World Wars.

### **The Equitable Fraternal Union**

Founded in 1897, this was another secret and benevolent society most popular in the Midwest. It's "Supreme Assembly, or headquarters, was in Neenah Wisconsin. It admitted both male and female members, and conducted a set of rituals which mentioned God and Heaven, but not Jesus, which led some to criticize the Union. Later merged with the Fraternal Reserve Association and absorbed the Germania Mutual Life Assurance Company and continues to insure its members today. As recently as 1993, there were still more than 45,000 members.

### **Fraternal Aid Association**

Another group primarily dedicated to providing insurance to its members, founded October 14, 1890, in Lawrence, Kansas. Founders included members of the Ancient Order of United Workmen, Modern Woodmen of American and the Maccabees. The Association accepted both men and women, but only members of the "white race," and only those who were not engaged in particularly hazardous professions. They also excluded residents of cities with a population of more than 200,000, which had the effect of banning most recent immigrants from membership. All of these measures were justified in the name of providing benefits to its members at an affordable rate of subscription.

### **Sons of Hermann**

Founded in New York in 1840, the Sons of Hermann were intended to provide insurance and other beneficial services to German immigrants in America. They also fostered various activities to foster German language and culture. Madison's Lodge #43 began meeting in the 1870s, and by 1897, was meeting twice monthly in the same hall on East Main used by the Druids. That year, the national organization was wealthy enough that they built a large monument in New Ulm, Minnesota. But like many German fraternal organizations, it grew far less popular after the sinking of the R.M.S. *Lusitania* in 1915, and Madison's Lodge had folded by the end of the First World War.

### **Ancient Order of Hibernians**

Organization formed at St. James Catholic Church at the edge of the notorious Five Points neighborhood of New York in 1836. Its members were exclusively Irish and Catholic, and its foundation at least partially inspired by popular militia movements in Ireland. However, it crossed the Atlantic back to Ireland at the turn of the 20th Century, and became popular in Belfast as a reply to Orange militants. In Madison, the Order hit a peak of membership in the 1880s, and contributed to the construction of its St. Patrick's church.

### **The Sons of Norway**

Still the largest organization of Norwegians outside of Norway, the Sons of Norway were formed in 1895. Several generations of Norwegian immigrants had reached America by the 1890s, and in addition to improving the welfare of Norwegian-Americans, they also worked for Norway's independence from Sweden, which was finally accomplished in 1905. Madison's Idun Lodge #74 was meeting by 1897, and held meetings twice monthly in the Woodman's Hall.

### **The Daughters of Norway**

Formed as a "Women's Auxiliary" of the Sons of Norway in 1908, the two organizations were officially combined in 1950. Madison's Trensyn Lodge #54 met on the second Thursday of the month. In the 1920s, one couple, Art and Clara Thompson, served as Presidents of both organizations.

### **Improved Order of Red Men**

This organization drew its inspiration from the members of the Sons of Liberty who disguised themselves as Native Americans to dump 342 chests full of English tea into Boston Harbor in 1773. Some of those original members may actually have been present at the meetings at Fort Mifflin in Philadelphia in 1813 where the "Society of Red Men" was formed. The name was changed to the Improved Order of Red Men at a meeting in Baltimore in 1834. The Order's rites and regalia were based on their understanding of Native American culture. Some of the same men later organized the Society of Tammany, sharing a popular nickname for the Leni-Lenape Chief Tamanend, and which would later become the most feared urban political machine in America. Madison's Lodge was known as "Minissino Tribe No. 8," and they met twice monthly in the 1880s and 1890s.

### **The Loyal American League**

A fraternal benefit society formed in Des Moines, Iowa in 1892 by William Jarvis, a former organizer for the Order of Owls. While they offered the same insurance benefits as other societies, the Loyal Americans were also committed to fighting "puritan intolerance." They apparently ceased operation in the early 1920s.

### **Mystic Workers of the World**

Founded in 1892 by C. W. Clendenen of Fulton, Illinois, a veteran initiate of the masons and several other societies. Members had to pass a physical examination to receive benefits, but could become social members without one. The name was apparently the most mystic thing about the group; Milwaukee's Archbishop Messman examined both its constitution and its rituals and could find nothing Catholics should object to. By 1920, the M.W.W. had adopted modern actuarial practices, and in 1930, changed its name to Fidelity Life Assurance in 1930.

### **The Grand Order of the Orient**

Not related to the Ordo Templi Orientis, formed by Aleister Crowley and others in 1925. This was another beneficial society formed in Michigan in 1895, with an elaborate ritual and internal hierarchy. The Milwaukee Chapter was particularly successful, but the organization never expanded very far beyond Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, and it had ceased operation in Madison by 1930.

### **The Royal League**

A Fraternal order headquartered in Chicago, formed as a splinter from the Royal Arcanum in 1883. The motive for its formation was to increase the death and personal disability benefits offered by the R.A. But the League also sponsored debates and the reading of papers and other entertainments. In 1904, the League opened the Fellowship Sanatorium in North Carolina, the first such facility owned by a fraternal organization. A women's auxiliary, The Ladies of the Royal League, were active through the 1930s. City directories named officers, but no regular meeting locations, which apparently rotated between several downtown commercial blocks.

### **The Temple of Honor**

Founded in 1846 as a splinter from the Sons of Temperance, by members who judged that organization's rituals too elementary. While still dedicated to abstinence from alcohol, members of the "Temple of Honor and Temperance" were inspired by the medieval Knights Templar, and developed a mythology that incorporated the stories of Damon and Pythias and Jonathon and David. Although the American Templars apparently dispersed after the passage of Prohibition in 1920, the group still persists in Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

### **A Closing Note:**

This list does not include local clubs and associations unique to Madison or the State of Wisconsin, which were also an important phenomenon. Local historical and heritage societies also sprang up all over America in the 19th Century, and such groups preserved all manner of arcane lore and colonial Americana. Nor have we considered any of the many political, criminal or labor organizations, which also grew rapidly in the Victorian age. But the length of even this limited survey shows the degree to which people were seeking connections to the "wider world" in the 19th Century.

Communities were born and evolved rapidly with the migration of Europeans and others to America, and the concurrent movement of Americans through its western frontiers. People found themselves living a thousand miles or more from "home," and the continuity of membership in a Loyal Order or Benevolent Brotherhood made the dislocation bearable. With the telegraph, the photograph, phonograph, and advances in printing and lithography, the era saw a revolution in communication that would continue through the telephone, the wireless, and ultimately television. Almost all of these fraternal societies would have been delighted to see that process accelerated, in a time when the idea of "progress" became a cultural imperative.

Victorians were not apologetic about their belief in justice, loyalty or moral obligation, and were comfortable discussing and acting on these concepts in social contexts. The need for validation by these social and quasi-ideological clubs was a profound force in the "real" 19th Century, and have played an intriguing role in our fantasies as well. In fiction, the relatively prosaic truth hidden behind the secret rites of the Loyal Knights and Good Templars is no impediment to more fanciful and entertaining interpretations. And like all human endeavors, they run the full spectrum of good, evil and monstrous indifference. But any narrative that places a protagonist in some analog of the 19th Century would be well-advised to define their place in the forest of Moose, Masons and Worldly Woodmen.

