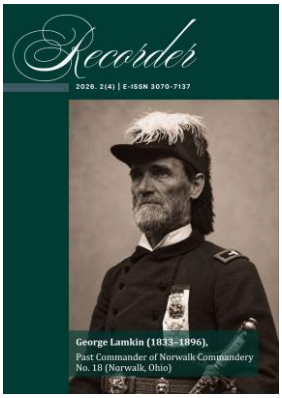
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Editorial

Dear Reader,

The latest issue of Recorder continues the publication of studies devoted to the history of Freemasonry in the United States of America. The materials presented in this issue reflect a variety of approaches to the study of the Masonic tradition, ranging from the analysis of historical publications and biographies of individual figures to the study of museum collections, the publication of personal documents, and coverage of contemporary scholarly and museum activities.

A special place in this issue is occupied by works devoted to the history of American Freemasonry during the colonial period and its subsequent development. The study of early Masonic publications makes it possible to gain a deeper understanding of the formation of Masonic culture, the dissemination of ritual texts, and the transmission of intellectual traditions. Biographical studies devoted to Thomas Smith Webb, George Lamkin, and George Cook Manee complement the overall picture of the historical development of Freemasonry by examining the activities of specific individuals, their professional pursuits, and their social connections.

Another equally important area is the study of material and visual heritage. Museum collections preserve evidence that is not always reflected in official documents and published historical works. Portraits, books, regalia, and other objects make it possible to reconstruct biographies, trace the characteristics of organizational culture, and establish connections between individual members of the Masonic movement. The systematization of these materials, their cataloging, and their historical attribution provide a foundation for further research.

In this context, the publication of Burton Evan Watkins's diary from November 1926 is of particular importance. This personal account of his younger brother's illness and death reveals the emotional dimension of everyday life and provides an opportunity to explore family relationships, religious beliefs, and the culture of mourning in American society during the first third of the twentieth century. Documents of this kind expand the range of historical sources and remind us of the importance of individual experience in understanding the past.

This issue also introduces readers to new acquisitions in museum, archival, and library collections, as well as exhibitions devoted to the uniforms and regalia of the American Knights Templar. These materials demonstrate that preserving historical heritage involves not only collecting objects and documents but also their scholarly description, contextualization, and presentation to a wider audience.

The editorial team regards Recorder as a platform for the systematic accumulation and scholarly publication of diverse sources relating to the history of Freemasonry. We hope that the materials in this issue will be useful to researchers, historians, museum professionals, and all readers interested in the study of American Masonic heritage.