

**AW22 Lodge Anecdotes**  
by  
RW Claude Harris, PM of the lodge  
**Internet Edition**  
**August 4, AL 6000 AD 2000**

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## **How many Worshipful Masters have presided over the lodge?**

In the two hundred seventeen years of existence (based on the Pennsylvania warrant), the lodge has had a total of one hundred forty-eight different men serve as its leader. Three served under the Pennsylvania warrant, four under the Alexandria Lodge, No. 22 and one hundred forty-one after the name change to the Alexandria Washington Lodge, No. 22 (this includes our present Worshipful Master).

The glorious stories of these men can not be told in this short paper, but one should always be reminded that among our leaders was of course the first President of the United States, a Surgeon-General in the Continental Army, a delegate to the Virginia Convention of 1788, officers of the American Revolution, a committee member appointed to recommend amendments to the constitution of the United States, various US and state representatives, and in one instance, in the Confederate Congress. We find names of celebrated generals, colonials, admirals, judges, lawyers, physicians, pastors and businessmen not overlooking Mayors of the City of Alexandria and council representatives. In short, our lodge has installed leaders from all walks of life---from the highest post of the land, to the most humble---a true example of Freemasonry's teachings.

The first attempt to list all those who served in the East was initially done by Franklin L. Brockett, PM in his now famous book "The Lodge of Washington" published in 1876. Alfred G. Uhler, PM added additional Masters in a second edition of the book in 1899. It was not until 1959 when William Moseley Brown, PGM of Virginia and first official Archivist of Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22 put forth another study. An accomplished historian and author, Most Worshipful Brown was paid by the lodge to complete its history and catalogue the archives. In his unfinished manuscript dated 1959, we find the first enumerated list of all Worshipful Masters with dates of their tenure. Afterwards, we must wait until 1973 when Junior Warden Donald M. Robey, worked with Lodge Archivist Harold R. Cumbee, PM to complete and refine the list. It was these two men that worked with pervious lists to correct spelling and add Masonic titles such as PDDGM to the names of Past Masters. In fact, MW Robey told me he had to reference not only the lodge original minutes, but also grand lodge proceedings to add the additional titles. Thus, one can find the first published list of all the Worshipful Masters in programs and bulletins issued by Worshipful Donald M. Robey in 1975.

Completing and refining a list that spanned two hundred years, was not an easy task. First, there was a score of misspellings, and some Masters have similar or same names. If one looks at the list, you will find several examples where a "Sr." was added to a name because a son (Jr.) with the same name also served as Worshipful Master.

Another example that complicates the list is the inclusion or exclusion of Craven P. Thompson. Brother Thompson was elected Worshipful Master on December 14, 1820, but declined installation later in the month. Although included in the Brown list of 1959, I agree to exclude him since Masonic law stipulates one is not technically Worshipful Master until after being obligated and declared Worshipful Master in the ceremony of installation. On the other hand, John B. Hancock is included in the list even though he refused to serve. He was elected and later installed on December 27, 1849, but for some reason immediately resigned. Elections had to be held two weeks later on January 10, 1850 to vote for and reinstall William Page who had just left office. Therefore technically, Hancock served fourteen days even though he refused to fulfill his duties.

A more modern case concerns Past Master Leo A. Sentiger, Jr. who served in 1982 but decided to demit from the lodge several years later. Worshipful Sentiger was elected and installed serving his full term of twelve months. He is therefore entitled to be included in any list of former Worshipful Masters of this lodge. Although his demit may indicate he is no longer a member of the lodge (a demit is the proper method to withdraw from membership), his tenure as Worshipful Master cannot be altered. One should note that for years the bulletin was printed with "(demitted)" by his name. I feel this branding is no longer necessary since we can clearly see there are previous examples of demits, resignations, refusing office, and even suspensions.

The period that a Worshipful Master serves has always been twelve months beginning on or near December 27, the festival of Saint John the Evangelist, which celebrates the winter solstice. This has been a custom of the lodge since its first formation in 1783. This tradition was altered in 1855 when the Grand Lodge of Virginia ordered all subordinate lodges to conduct their installations on June 24, the festival of Saint John the Baptist (the summer solstice). Thus, from 1856 to 1903, the lodge held elections on the regular stated meeting previous to the installation on June 24. It was not until 1904 when grand lodge decided that installations should be conducted on or near the festival of Saint John the Evangelist in December that the lodge reverted back to her old tradition of conducting installations on or near December 27.

The longest reigning Master of the lodge was Colonial George Deneale who served a total of thirteen terms or thirteen total years in office. Born in Fairfax County in 1766, he came to Alexandria about 1790 and became a very active patriot, town citizen and Freemason. Not only committed to the military, he was chosen Clerk of the Common Council of Alexandria and after 1800, Clerk of the Circuit Court of the United States for Alexandria County. It was he that was appointed to arrange the military escort at the funeral of Washington on December 18, 1799. A few days later, the lodge installed him as its Worshipful Master on December 27, 1799. Colonial Deneale was also Master in 1805 when the lodge changed its name to include that of Washington. He died in the summer of 1818 at the age of 52.

The second longest serving Master was Alexandria physician Dr. Thomas Semmes, who served ten elected terms or ten full years of office. It was he as Worshipful Master who welcomed Lafayette on his visit to the lodge on February 21, 1825. When he died in 1833, the lodge ordered August 13, 1833 "that the hall and rooms of the lodge be clothed in mourning for the space of twelve months" in token of their high esteem for the service he had rendered the lodge.

In the following listing, I have been careful to reference all the above-cited materials. To my best understanding, this is the most complete and accurate list to date. I must admit a good historian never relies on information of others, but returns to the original sources. Unfortunately, I don't have the possibility of consulting the original records at this time. Nevertheless, I remain confident of this work.

The below register only includes the month and year as a reference, as I could not confirm the exact day of every installation. I have also been very careful in referencing the exact name of the individuals, the lodge, and dates of the issued warrant, charter or resolution as issued by the respective grand lodge. Please understand, I don't solicit the removal of a hyphen or the addition of a comma in the lodge title, I just list the name as found in the original grand lodge documents.

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**Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22**  
**Past Masters' Register**  
**August, AL 6000 AD 2000**

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**Lodge No. 39**  
 Alexandria, Virginia  
 Warranted by  
 The Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania  
 under  
 The "Ancient" Grand Lodge of London, Great Britain  
 February 3, 1783

- |                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Robert Adam        | February 1783 – December 1786 |
| 2. Robert McCrea      | December 1786 – December 1787 |
| 3. Elisha Cullen Dick | December 1787 – April 1788    |
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**Alexandria Lodge, No. 22**  
 Chartered by  
 The Grand Lodge of Virginia  
 April 28, 1788

- |                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. George Washington  | April 1788 – December 1789    |
| 2. Elisha Cullen Dick | December 1789 – December 1795 |
|                       | December 1797 – December 1799 |
| 3. James Gillis       | December 1795 – December 1797 |
| 4. George Deneale     | December 1799 – December 1805 |
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**Alexandria Washington Lodge, No. 22**  
 Resolution adopted by  
 The Grand Lodge of Virginia  
 December 9, 1805

- |                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. George Deneale, PDDGM | December 1805 – December 1812 |
|                          | December 1816 – December 1817 |
| 2. Thomas Sanford        | December 1812 – December 1813 |
| 3. William Paton, Jr.    | December 1813 – December 1815 |
| 4. Thomas Semmes         | December 1815 – December 1816 |
|                          | December 1817 – December 1820 |
|                          | December 1821 – December 1822 |
|                          | December 1823 – December 1825 |
|                          | December 1829 – December 1830 |
|                          | December 1830 – December 1833 |
| 5. Samuel Snowden        | December 1820 – December 1821 |
| 6. William A. Williams   | December 1822 – December 1823 |

7. Charles Chapin	December 1825 – December 1827
8. Joseph Eaches	December 1827 – December 1829
9. James Cloud	December 1830 – December 1831
10. John Adam	December 1833 – December 1834
11. George H. Smoot	December 1834 – December 1835
12. Joseph Nevett	December 1835 – December 1836
13. Robert T. Ramsey	December 1836 – December 1837
14. James Irwin	December 1837 – December 1843
15. W. Reuben Johnson	December 1843 – December 1844
	December 1847 – December 1848
16. Horatio N. Steel, PDDGM	December 1844 – December 1847
17. William Page, PDDGM	December 1848 – December 1849
	January 1850 – December 1850
18. John B. Hancock	December 1849 – January 1850
19. David Boyd Smith	December 1850 – July 1851
20. Lawrence B. Taylor	July 1851 – December 1851
21. Samuel J. McCormick	December 1851 – December 1852
22. Franklin L. Brockett, PDDGM	December 1852 – December 1854
23. Charles R. Suttle	December 1854 – June 1856
24. J. Conway Broun, PDDGM	June 1856 – June 1858
25. John A. Milburn	June 1858 – June 1860
26. William H. Lambert, PGM	June 1860 – June 1866
27. Edward S. Hough	June 1866 – June 1867
28. George E. French	June 1867 – June 1869
29. George R. Shinn	June 1869 – June 1871
30. William A. Moore, Sr., PDDGM	June 1871 – June 1873
31. William D. Stewart	June 1873 – June 1876
	June 1894 – June 1896
32. John B. Smoot	June 1876 – June 1877
33. J. Thomas Beckham	June 1877 – June 1879
34. Alfred G. Uhler, PDDGM	June 1879 – June 1881
35. Charles E. Stuart, Jr.	June 1881 – June 1883
36. Frank E. Corbett	June 1883 – June 1885
37. Anthony W. Armstrong, PDDGM	June 1885 – June 1888
38. Kosciusko Kemper, PGM	June 1888 – June 1890
39. Leonard Marbury	June 1890 – June 1891
40. John R. Chapman	June 1891 – June 1893
41. William M. Smith	June 1893 – June 1894
42. William R. Purvis	June 1896 – June 1898
43. John T. Callahan	June 1898 – June 1899
44. Benjamin M. Aitcheson	June 1899 – June 1900
45. August H. Oehlert	June 1900 – June 1902
46. J. Fred. Birrell	June 1902 – June 1903
47. Robert W. Arnold, PDDGM	June 1903 – December 1904
48. William A. Moore, Jr.	December 1904 – December 1905
49. Leopold Reuben	December 1905 – December 1906
50. Thomas B. Cochran	December 1906 – December 1907
51. J. Edward Shinn	December 1907 – December 1908
52. Robert W. Fuller	December 1908 – December 1909
53. Charles H. Callahan, PGM	December 1909 – December 1911
54. Edward H. Kemper	December 1911 – December 1912
55. Samuel W. Pitts	December 1912 – December 1913
56. Charles B. Swan	December 1913 – December 1914
57. Charles E. Tenneson	December 1914 – December 1915
58. C. Page Waller, Jr., PDDGM	December 1915 – December 1916
59. William H. Charles	December 1916 – December 1917
60. Claude W. Fletcher	December 1917 – December 1918
61. William B. Davis	December 1918 – December 1919
62. Robert A. Zachary	December 1919 – December 1920
63. Percy E. Clift, PDDGM	December 1920 – December 1922

64. Alfred C. Moss	December 1922 – December 1923
65. C. Philip Heishley, PDDGM	December 1923 – December 1924
66. Reuben J. Schooley	December 1924 – December 1925
67. T. Wilfred Robinson, Jr.	December 1925 – December 1926
68. John T. Ashton	December 1926 – December 1927
69. W. Seldon Washington	December 1927 – December 1928
70. Charles A. Callahan	December 1928 – December 1929
71. Charles F. Swetnam	December 1929 – December 1930
72. Elnathan J. Skidmore, PDDGM	December 1930 – December 1931
73. S. Nelson Gray	December 1931 – December 1932
74. Robert S. Barrett, PGM	December 1932 – December 1933
75. Roy M. Reeve	December 1933 – December 1934
76. Clyde C. Lamond, Jr.	December 1934 – December 1935
77. Sydney C. Cross	December 1935 – December 1936
78. A. Slater Lamond	December 1936 – December 1937
79. Dallas G. Wiley	December 1937 – December 1938
80. James T. Sherier, PDDGM	December 1938 – December 1939
81. David E. Bayliss, Jr.	December 1939 – December 1940
82. John S. Biscoe	December 1940 – December 1941
83. Erdmann T. Stulz	December 1941 – December 1942
84. Robert L. Goods, Jr.	December 1942 – December 1943
85. Charles Cecil Wall	December 1943 – December 1944
86. Marvin L. Wilson	December 1944 – December 1945
87. Harry F. Kennedy	December 1945 – December 1946
88. Ivan F. Vannoy	December 1946 – December 1947
89. Roger C. Sullivan	December 1947 – December 1948
90. Charles A. Cornnell, PDDGM	December 1948 – December 1949
91. Godfrey P. Runaldue, PDDGM	December 1949 – December 1950 (Living)
92. Edward Buckmaster	December 1950 – December 1951
93. Charles L. Eisenman	December 1951 – December 1952
94. Herman C. Beasley	December 1952 – December 1953
95. Lewis A. Major	December 1953 – December 1954
96. Raymond L. Strong	December 1954 - December 1955
97. Harry C. Simpson	December 1955 – December 1956
98. Oliver Lloyd Onion	December 1956 – December 1957 (Living)
99. Glen S. Faxon, Sr., PDDGM	December 1957 – December 1958
100. Odie R. Howell, Jr., PDDGM	December 1958 – December 1959
101. Earle W. Griffith	December 1959 – December 1960
102. John P. Waller	December 1960 – December 1961 (Living)
103. Gene E. Smith	December 1961 – December 1962
104. Gerald R. Turner	December 1962 – December 1963
105. William H. Booth, Jr.	December 1963 – December 1964
106. William V. Parks	December 1964 – December 1965 (Living)
107. Russell E. McLennan	December 1965 – December 1966 (Living)
108. Ryon E. Pugh	December 1966 – December 1967
109. Harold R. Cumbee	December 1967 – December 1968
110. Edward J. Gondella	December 1968 – December 1969
111. Ross H. Finn, Jr.	December 1969 – December 1970
112. George E. Olifer	December 1970 – December 1971 (Living)
113. Charles B. Swietzer	December 1971 – December 1972
114. Hugh S. Smith	December 1972 – December 1973
115. Robert C. Swiger, PDDGM	December 1973 – December 1974 (Living)
116. Donald M. Robey, PGM	December 1974 – December 1975 (Living)
117. James B. Stone	December 1975 – December 1976 (Living)
118. John R. Ranck, Sr.	December 1976 – December 1977
119. Dennis C. McCraney	December 1977 – December 1978 (Living)
120. Jason W. Snyder	December 1978 – December 1979 (Living)
121. James R. Freeman	December 1979 – December 1980 (Living)
122. Robert J. Booterbaugh, Jr.	December 1980 – December 1981
123. Leo A. Sentiger, Jr.	December 1981 – December 1982 (Living)

124. Lawrence M. Callahan	December 1982 – December 1983 (Living)
125. Archibald W. Lyon	December 1983 – December 1984
126. John M. Nicholson	December 1984 – December 1985 (Living)
127. Wayne L. Gilbert	December 1985 – December 1986
128. Robert N. Pitner	December 1986 – December 1987
129. William A. Jones	December 1987 – December 1988 (Living)
130. Frederic E. Andersen	December 1988 – December 1989 (Living)
131. Wardell H. Thomas	December 1989 – December 1990 (Living)
132. Earl C. Million	December 1990 – December 1991 (Living)
133. Granville C. Canard, Jr., DDGM	December 1991 – December 1992 (Living)
134. Claude H. Harris, Jr.	December 1992 – December 1993 (Living)
135. Frank R. Dunaway, Jr.	December 1993 – December 1994 (Living)
136. George D. Seghers	December 1994 – December 1995 (Living)
137. Mark W. Underwood	December 1995 – December 1996 (Living)
138. Walter L. Margeson II	December 1996 – December 1997 (Living)
139. Philip J. Hays	December 1997 – December 1998 (Living)
140. Michael P. Bible	December 1998 – December 1999 (Living)