

A.:F.:M.:

MASONIC EDUCATION

Freemasonry in South Carolina

A Brief History & The State of the Craft Today

Clemson Lodge No. 254 • Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina

WHY THIS MATTERS

A Living Chain of 290 Years

From the colonial wharves of Charleston to this lodge room tonight

When Clemson Lodge No. 254 was chartered in 1903, the Grand Lodge of South Carolina was already 116 years old.

When the Grand Lodge of South Carolina was formed in 1787, Solomon's Lodge in Charleston had already been meeting for 51 years.

Tonight we look at where we came from, and where the Craft stands in our state right now.

THE FIRST LODGE IN SOUTH CAROLINA

1736

Solomon's Lodge No. 1

Charleston, South Carolina

Still meeting today

FOUNDING

Chartered by Lord Viscount Weymouth, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England, on October 28, 1736.

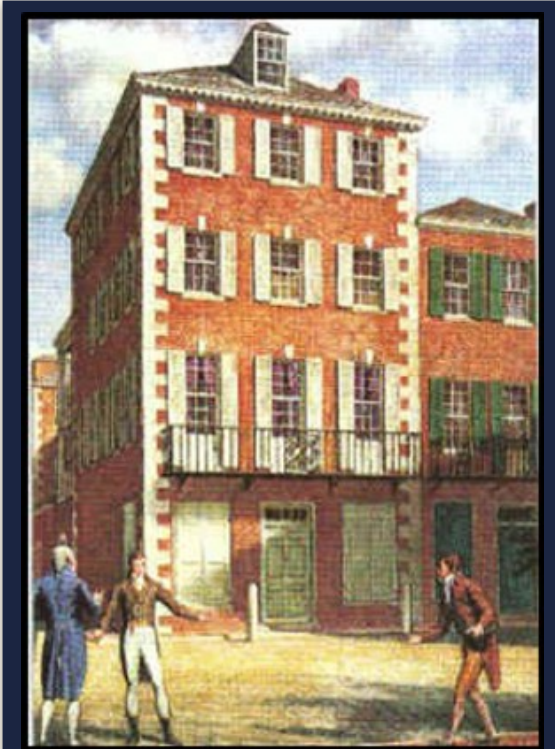
FIRST PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER

John Hammerton, Secretary of the Province of South Carolina, was appointed to oversee the Craft in the colony.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Solomon's Lodge is one of the oldest continuously operating lodges in the Western Hemisphere, predating the United States itself by 40 years.

SOLOMON'S LODGE NO. 1



Shepheard's Tavern

STILL MEETING SINCE 1736

Charleston's Masonic Heritage

One of the oldest continuously operating lodges in the Western Hemisphere.

Met in upper rooms of taverns and counting houses in colonial Charleston.

Brothers included merchants, sea captains, planters, and French Huguenots.

Today still active, holding to the original 1736 charter under the Grand Lodge of A.F.M. of South Carolina.

THE PROVINCIAL ERA • 1736–1787

Five Decades Under English Authority



Two competing English Masonic factions, *the "Moderns" (1717) and the "Ancients" (1751)*, both established Provincial Grand Lodges in South Carolina. Charleston became one of the busiest Masonic ports in the colonies, with brothers including planters, sea captains, French Huguenots, and tradesmen.

THE UNION OF 1817

Ancients & Moderns Become One

THE ANCIENTS

Grand Lodge of A.F.M.
Formed 1751
More traditional ritual, working-class roots

THE MODERNS

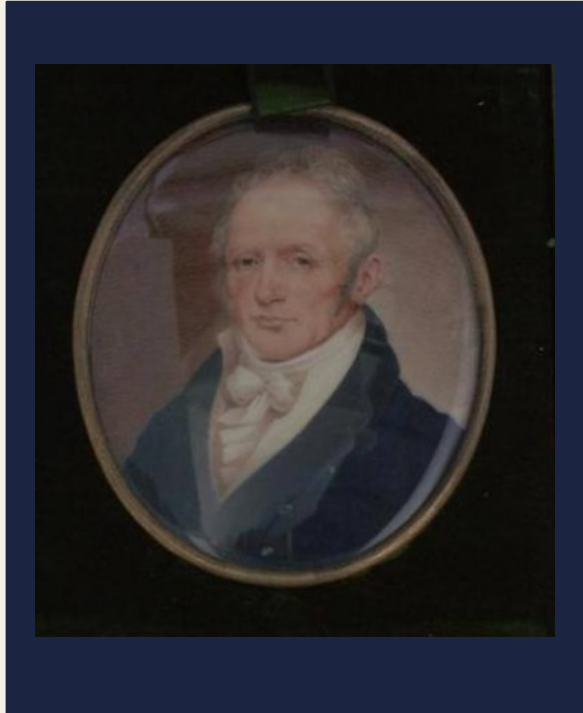
Grand Lodge of F. & A.M.
Descended from 1736 charter
More aristocratic, planter class



Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina

United December 1817 • the name we still bear today

THOMAS WRIGHT BACOT • 1817–1820



Thomas Wright Bacot

First Grand Master, Grand Lodge of SC • 1817-1820

- Born 1765 in Charleston to a Huguenot family
- Revolutionary War Captain; wounded at Fort Moultrie
- U.S. Postmaster of Charleston (appointed by George Washington)
- Banker and leading Charleston citizen
- Selected as first Grand Master in the dramatic 1817 union of the Ancients & Moderns
- Served 1817–1820; Grand Lodge mourned his death in 1834

PART II

The Grand Lodge Today

Where the Craft stands in South Carolina in 2026

BY THE NUMBERS • THE CRAFT TODAY

The State of the Craft in South Carolina

246

Subordinate Lodges

Across all SC counties

24,319

Total Members

Master Masons in good standing

30

Districts

Each with a District Deputy GM

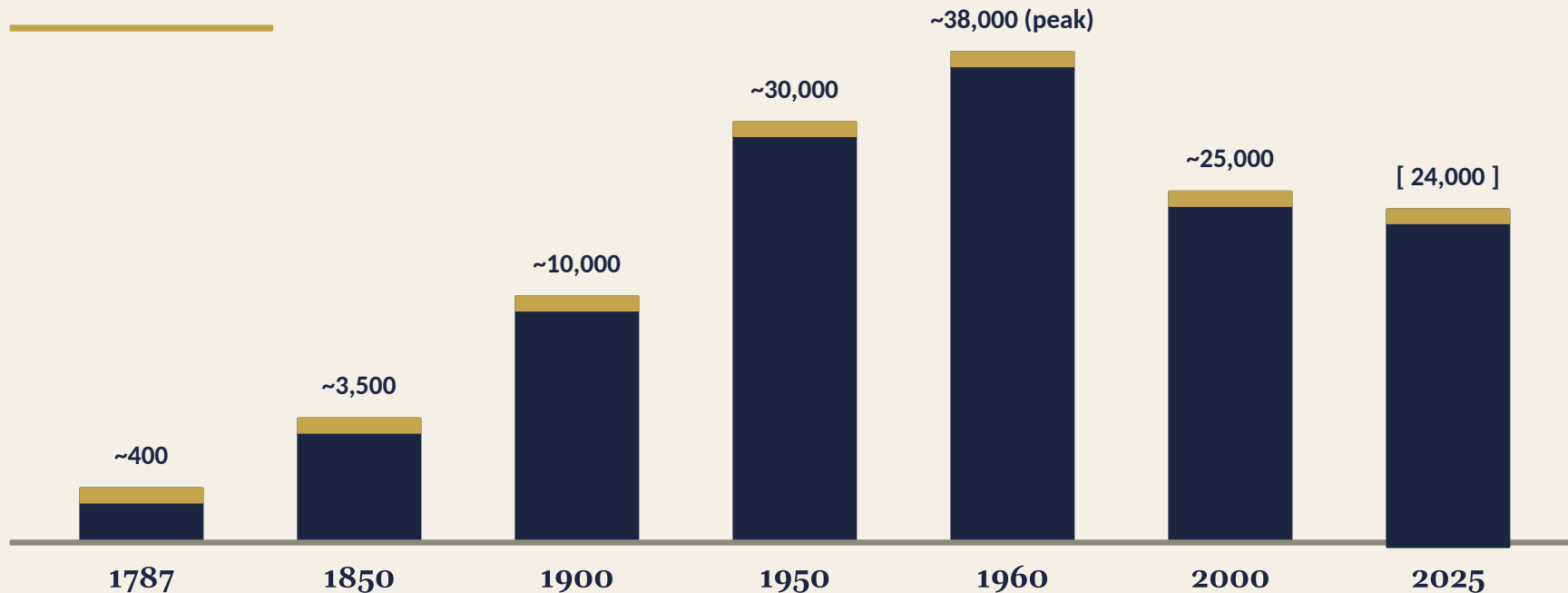
300+

Raisings in 2025

New Master Masons made

MEMBERSHIP OVER TIME

Estimated Master Masons in South Carolina



Estimates compiled from Grand Lodge communications and historical records • refine with current GL data

WHERE WE FIT IN

Clemson Lodge No. 254 in the Larger Picture

No. 254

Our Number on the Roll

By the time we were chartered in 1903, 253 lodges had already been numbered before us in South Carolina.

1903

116 Years After the Grand Lodge

We were chartered in the 8th decade of the unified Grand Lodge, well past its founding generation.

District 15th

Our Current District

One of dozens of districts across the state, each overseen by a District Deputy Grand Master.

AN UNBROKEN CHAIN

*"From 1736 to tonight,
the same Craft, in the same state,
under the same square and compasses."*

Thank you, Brothers.