

**REMARKS ON SOME  
MASONIC BOOK  
PLATES IN AMERICA  
AND THEIR OWNERS**

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Remarks on some masonic book plates in America and their owners by A. Winthrop Pope

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**A. WINTHROP POPE**

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*By*

*A. Winthrop Pope*



**BOSTON**

**1908**

# Remarks on Some Masonic Book Plates in America and their Owners

By Brother A. Winthrop Pope, of Rabboni Lodge, Boston

P. O. Address, Newton, Mass.

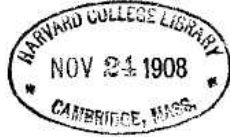


A. Winthrop Pope

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M. C. M. VIII

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**List of Masonic Book Plates in America.**

The Busby Collection.	Theodore Sutton Parvin, 33rd.
Alcide Chausse .	The Pike Library.
The Collins Collection.	Alexander Winthrop Pope.
Danforth.	Robert Fletcher Rogers, 32nd.
Samuel W. French, 32nd.	S. M. Sener.
Melvin H. Hapgood.	David McNeely Stauffer.
Grand Lodge of Iowa.	Supreme Council 33rd, Northern
General Washington Johnston.	Jurisdiction.
Silas Ketchum.	Supreme Council 33rd, Southern
Kingston.	Jurisdiction.
Masonic Library Association of	L. M. Taylor, 33rd.
San Francisco.	David B. Wheeler.
John Fiske Nash.	S. Stacker Williams, 33rd.





## FOREWORD.

In the preparation of my remarks on some American Masonic Book Plates and their owners I have had valuable assistance from Secretaries and librarians connected with the Craft, also from brother collectors. Mr. Frederick J. Libbie of Boston, loaned me from his personal collection original impressions of the Danforth and Ketchum plates for the purpose of reproduction here. I have been favored in the same manner by some of the Brethren, also by friends not connected with the institution but whose plates bear the symbols of their profession, which have the same character as Masonic plates. The well known collector, Mr. Walter C. Prescott of Newton Center, Mass. rendered important assistance, as also did Brother Henry Mitchell of the Studio Building, Boston, and also the members of the John A. Lowell Bank Note Co.

All of the above have my most hearty thanks. In addition to the persons here mentioned I had most valuable information from the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Medical Society Communications, and the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, also from the scholarly and interesting essay by Dr. Robert Day, of Cork, Ireland, entitled "Masonic Book Plates" which appeared in the *Ex Libris Journal* of December, 1903, and from *American Book Plates* by Charles Dexter Allen, a volume indispensable to collectors of American Plates. Mrs. Zella Allen Dixon's charming little volume concerning Book Plates was of service. I am also indebted to Right Worshipful Sereno D. Nickerson, Historian of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

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It is a well known fact among book lovers that their books often mysteriously disappear from their shelves and are forever lost. To prevent such occurrences many persons, on becoming the owners of a new volume, are in the habit of writing their names on the fly leaf with pen and ink or pencil. Others use a book plate. Now the question is frequently asked What is a book plate? So that a brief definition right here may not be out of place. A book plate is a label with a name printed or engraved on it, inserted usually on the inside of the first cover of a book as a mark of ownership. A simple label bearing a name, like a visiting card, answers the purpose, or it may be more elaborate and frequently is characteristic in some manner of the owner,—for instance a gentleman interested in the rubber business may have a picture of a rubber heel with

wings attached, and the words *Ex Libris* together with his name under it, and he has a complete outfit in the way of a book plate. The heraldic book plate having the owner's name and motto is one familiar to the collector of these little works of art; such book plates are sometimes used by Americans who have no clear genealogical title to them. Others use little pictures with appropriate mottoes or quotations and owner's name or monogram. Whatever form is adopted it is intended to be a neat affair and frequently is an ornament to the volume of which it forms a part.

A Masonic book plate is so called because it bears upon it the emblems or symbols of Freemasonry. It is strange but book plates of this character are few and far between. The writer has a collection of many hundred, and yet after careful search is able to find that he has only about

sixty examples bearing the emblems of the Craft. On this account however, it must not be supposed that members of the institution are not readers, or interested in books, or do not use a book plate; quite the contrary; many fine libraries and many charming book plates are owned and used by members; nevertheless when they have their book plates designed they apparently forget to have any of the Masonic emblems installed therein. What can be in more appropriate taste than for a brother skillfully to embody one or more of the beautiful emblems of Freemasonry in his book plate.

#### DANFORTH

Of early American Masonic book plates but few are known, the Armorial here illustrated



and described as follows:—

Arms, argent. In chief, the all seeing eye; in base, a lozenge, azure. Crest, three books, ppr.

Motto, "Ubi plura nitent non ego paucis offendar maculis."

In the upper dexter corner a sun in splendor.

Danforth

N. H. Sc.

is attributed by Mr. Charles Dexter Allen in his "American Book Plates" on page 190 to Dr. Samuel Danforth, of Boston, and it is of particular interest to us because both the owner and the engraver were of Boston, and both were also distinguished members of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts. Samuel Danforth was born in Cambridge, Mass. August, 1740, and died in Boston at the age of 87, November, 1827. He was tall, thin and erect; his father was Hon. Samuel Danforth, Judge of Probate for Middlesex County. He graduated from Harvard college at the age of 18 in 1758, M. D. Hon. 1790, and commenced the study of medicine with Dr. Rand at Charlestown at a time when high repute for skill in physic was required by nine pence per visit: he then practiced a year or two in Newport, a place at that time distinguished for its prosperity and its literary character. Here he treated some difficult cases with a success that established his reputation, and formed for him friendships which lasted during life. He returned to Boston and having married a daughter of Mr. Watts of Chelsea, settled in Hanover St. By undeviating integrity he shortly became elevated to the front rank of his profession;—when summoned to the sick bed he investigated the case with exactness and in all difficult medical cases his opinion was relied on as the utmost effort of human skill. The confidence of his patients was unlimited, and they feared departure from his instructions almost as they feared the judgment to come; and it is said that his counte-