Letter from James B. Finley to David Whitcombe

James B. Finley

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Germantown Feb 8th 1841

New York perhaps is necessary for me to make some apology for my sudden departure from you the last letter was the signest state of my feelings that I might now be in for not the least intimation of your having joined the Masons until late after sermon and the news came on me like a shock of thunder and now you have joined and sworn to be a Mason do not know that I would be worth while to say anything to you on the subject. What have instilled around in many of your own church and the quiet part of good people you have been set by the Holy Ghost as an overseer of the people of God dwell and is any of them should steal through a shuffling luminous to a circus at a theater or a ball room yours is the duty to reform and declared them but more in the duty of man that I would not much matter be found in any of them then in a Mason Lodge. Shrift blindfolded with a hood around his neck and tied to his breast and the progressive oath to have this thought sent from ear to ear 6th to be an ’embassador of Jesus Christ’ one who proffers to be sent by Christ and to stand in his place dead and almost in this manner of the neck by Magrane, Ockey or Men of this sort. Well at not in York near Dubuque in the state of Dayton and then to minister to you or any their than minister would he bring Jesus in search of light. When you have Christ the Holy Ghost and send the true light to enlighten to go to a Mason Lodge asking for light in too Kelley and contradictions your luminous might have been gratified if you had taken pains to have read Morgan’s book and others without John Luynes’s pommes letters and the testimony of 256 Masons who all confessed it as a useful and dangerous to our civil interests. Last I join the feast lies in the Jesuits of Masonic establishment and an honor that comes from man and not from God.
Dear Bro. 

I write these lines to express my sincere regard and affection for you. It seems as if the past year has been a testing time for many, and I trust that you have not been exempt from the trials that have befallen our brotherhood. 

I have been reflecting on the reasons why some men have chosen to distance themselves from the Lodge and its members. It is my hope that you may maintain your faith and continue to support the principles of our craft. 

May the guidance of the Supreme Guardian be with you in all your endeavors. 

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
Dier Br

Perhaps is necessary for me to make some apology for my sudden departure from Dayton but such was the wounded state of my feelings that I thought it best. I had not the least intimation of your having join’d the Masons untill Sabath after Sermon and the news came on me like a clap of thunder and now you have joined, and sworn to be a Mason I do not know that it would be worth while to say anything to you on the subject. But you have inflicted a wound on many of your own charge and the purist part of God’s Heratage. You have been set by the Holy Ghost as an overseer of the Morrals of God’s People and if any of them should stray through a sinfull curiosity to a circus or theater or a ball room, yours is the Duty to rescue and reclaim them. But where is the truly pious man that would not much rather be found in any of them then in a Mason Lodge. ___ blindfolded with a ______ round his neck and sword pointed at his breast and the profaine oath to have his thought but from ear to ear and to see an ambassador of Jesus Christ one who professes to be sent by Christ and to stand in his place lead about in this manner by the neck by McQuene Ockley or men of this stamp. O tell it not in Goth nor publish it in the streets of Dayton and then to think of you or any Christian minister should go crying I am in search of Light when you have Christ the Holy Spirit and word the true light to enlighten. To go to a Mason Lodge asking after light is too silly and contemptable. Your curiosity might have been gratified if you had taken pains to have read Morgan’s books and Allyn’s Ritual, John Quincy Adam’s letters and the testimony of 250 Masons who all renounced it as rotten and dangerous to our Civil Institutions. But I fear the secret lies in the Desire of Masonic Influance and an honner that comes from men and not from God.

Can you now say follow me as I follow the Masons. Will not your example and influance be the means of leading many a weak brother in to the Society of these wicked men and put them under their Influance to the injury of their soules. Can you now say to them Come out from amongst the wicked when you have swoarn alegance to them. Can you now expel a brother from the church for attending balls and theaters and circuses and horse races any of whitch are much preferable to the secret abominations of a Lodge.

O My Dier Br I pray to God that you may yet see the grate evils of this abominoble flumary. Its pretentions to antiquity and the encorporating of Jesus Christ and his appostles as its ______ is Sacrilège and the Constant prostitution of Gods Holy Word and Religion; as a covering for all its ________is enogh to make a Devel quake. I speak what I know and what the world knows. It is true that since Morgans and the development of it by others, there has been some alterations of its ____ but it is the same thing and it is so attested as to be made incontestable and its flumary is not its gratest evill but it is secretly malitious and a persecution of all who do not speak well of it and ___________. As near it may it may well be called the ______ of iniquity and that it allways working evill to others but good to its self and no man that swollows its oaths can do justice to any man or citizen when the dispute is with a Mason if he does not perjure himself. He is bound to favor a Brother Mason. See the oaths. You cannot but recollect the compromise made at Chillicothe on the subject of Masonry and the Resolution that no member of the Conference could join them without censure. I
cannot but expect now you and Br. Wambaugh has yealded yourselves to be the instrements of this 
__________. But you will influance others for men allways want company to justify themselves but I
hope you will not suckseed. It needs some men of moral carructer to _____ it up and it gives influence
to the worst of men without whitch they would go down in Society. How would Mq______ live if it
was not for this _____ and you have lent him the moral influance the Church gave you to keep up him
and his abominoble system. I learned that him & the Rev. ___ Elliot walked the streets linked arm in
arm and the most abominoble man in Dayton carried the holy bible after them. This is fine Society for
the Holy and Sanctifyed ones of the alter.

My Dier you would no more have taken this step after God converted your soule then you would have
sworn an oath or got drunk but alas for your sinfull curiousity and Love of Masonic honor—Dier Br you
must soon appear at God’s ______ to give an account of all the deeds done in the body and then it will
be seen wheather you acted under the influence of the holy spirit with an eye single to God’s glory. I
expect as long as I live in the world to be secretly persecuted by your brethren and all that hate &
speak against this ___ of Darkness and of course from you as well as all the rest but I am determined
to cast my care on Christ and trust him to the end and not Masons nor Masonry. I will close this plain
letter by saying I hope none of God’s flock may follow your example.

I am as ever your Friend

J.B. Finley

Revd David Whitcome