



The Grand Lodge of Virginia *Ancient Free and Accepted Masons*



John Blair Jr.

By: Most Worshipful Matthew T. Szramoski, Grand Master

John Blair, often overshadowed by other Founding Fathers, played a crucial role in shaping both the American republic and the early days of Freemasonry in Virginia. His life, spanning from 1732 to 1800, is a fascinating tapestry woven with legal acumen, political savvy, and a deep commitment to the principles of brotherhood and liberty.

Born into a prominent Virginia family, Blair received a classical education at the College of William & Mary and studied law in London. In 1757, he was initiated into Williamsburg Lodge No. 6, marking the beginning of a lifelong dedication to Freemasonry. He quickly rose through the ranks, becoming Worshipful Master and actively participating in lodge activities.

Blair's leadership qualities and commitment to the fraternity's ideals were evident. Blair played a pivotal role in the formation of the Grand Lodge for Virginia, and in 1778, he was elected our first Grand Master.

Blair's Masonic journey intertwined with his political career. He served in the Virginia House of Burgesses and later on the Continental Congress. His commitment to liberty and justice aligned with Masonic ideals, and he actively advocated for the separation of powers and a strong federal government.

Blair's influence extended beyond the halls of lodges and legislative chambers. He served as a judge on the Virginia Court of Appeals and later as an associate justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, influencing the interpretation of the newly formed Constitution. His legal expertise and dedication to the rule of law earned him respect from colleagues across the political spectrum.

Blair's legacy as a Mason is multifaceted. He is remembered as a leader who laid the groundwork for Freemasonry in Virginia, promoting its values of brotherly love, moral responsibility, and intellectual growth. His dedication to these principles resonated with Founding Fathers like George Washington and James Monroe, who were also Masons.

John Blair's story is a testament to the enduring power of Masonic ideals in shaping individuals and influencing the course of history. He was a man of his times, navigating the turbulent years of revolution and nation-building, all while remaining a dedicated Mason. His life and legacy remind us that the values of brotherhood, liberty, and justice remain vital not just for Masons, but for all who seek to build a more just and equitable world.

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