

William Miller, a freemason in the past?

(ChatGPT: Microsoft's AI; Gemini: Google's AI)

(in dark red, my words)

(Research by *LB* on May 2024)

Encyclopaedia Britannica's biography of William Miller

American religious leader

Written and fact-checked by The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica

Last Updated: Mar 27, 2024 • [Article History](#)

Born: Feb. 15, 1782, [Pittsfield](#), Mass., U.S.

Died: Dec. 20, 1849, Low Hampton, N.Y. (aged 67)

William Miller (born Feb. 15, 1782, [Pittsfield](#), Mass., U.S.—died Dec. 20, 1849, Low Hampton, N.Y.) was an American religious enthusiast, leader of a movement called [Millerism](#) that sought to revive belief that the bodily arrival (“advent”) of Christ was [imminent](#).

Miller was a farmer, but he also held such offices as deputy sheriff and [justice of the peace](#). In the [War of 1812](#) he served as a captain of the 30th Infantry. After years of [Bible](#) study he began to preach in 1831 that the present world would end “about the year 1843.” He based this belief primarily on a passage in the Book of Daniel (8:13–14). He published a pamphlet in 1833 and a book of lectures in 1836, the first of many publications. Principal organs of the Millerite movement were the *Signs of the Times* (Boston) and the *Midnight Cry* (New York). Miller estimated that between 50,000 and 100,000 believed in his views. When 1843 passed, some of his associates set Oct. 22, 1844, as the date of the [Second Coming](#). This date brought the movement to a sharp climax. There is no historical foundation for stories that the Millerites engaged in such fanatical excesses as [ascending](#) hills, housetops, and trees in ascension robes. The last general conference met at Albany, N.Y., April 1845. Belief in the imminence of the advent was restated, but no date was set and no church organization created.

There are two principal Adventist bodies today—the [Advent Christian Church](#), organized in 1861, and the much larger body of Seventh-day Adventists, organized in 1863—and several small Adventist bodies.

This article was most recently revised and updated by [Encyclopaedia Britannica](#).

Link: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Miller>

ChatGPT on William Miller having been a mason

My question: Is there any proven evidence that William Miller (EEUU, 1782-1849) was ever a mason or belonged to the freemasonry? ¿Is this just a fake?

ChatGPT's answer:

There is no verifiable evidence that William Miller, the 19th-century American Baptist preacher known for founding the Millerite movement, was a member of the Freemasonry. Claims regarding his involvement with the Freemasons seem to lack credible documentation or substantial historical proof.

William Miller (1782-1849) is primarily known for his predictions of the Second Coming of Christ, which led to the formation of the Millerite movement, and later influenced the Adventist tradition. His historical records, biographies, and writings do not provide any confirmed connection to Freemasonry.

The notion that Miller was a Freemason may arise from the general atmosphere of the early 19th century in America, where Freemasonry was widespread and often involved prominent societal figures. However, without concrete evidence, such as membership records, personal writings, or credible historical accounts, it remains speculative and likely unsubstantiated.

In summary, the assertion that William Miller was a Freemason appears to be unfounded and lacks support from reliable historical sources.

Gemini on William Miller having been a mason

My question: Is there any proven evidence that William Miller (EEUU, 1782-1849) was ever a mason or belonged to the freemasonry? ¿Is this just a fake?

Gemini's answer:

Yes, there is evidence that William Miller (1782-1849) of the United States was a Freemason. Here's what we know:

- **Membership:** Historical records show Miller was an active Freemason until 1831 [Wikipedia William Miller (preacher)].
- **Resignation:** In 1831, Miller resigned his membership. He cited a desire to avoid practices potentially incompatible with his religious beliefs [Wikipedia William Miller (preacher)].
- **Later Views:** By 1833, his views on Freemasonry had become more critical. He reportedly advised others to treat it "as they would any other evil" [Wikipedia William Miller (preacher)].

So, while Miller distanced himself from Freemasonry later in life, there's documented proof of his earlier membership.

Wikipedia, on 'William Miller, preacher'

Miller and Freemasonry[[edit](#)]

Miller was an active [Freemason](#) until 1831.^{[11][12][13]} Miller resigned his Masonic membership in 1831, stating that he did so to "avoid fellowship with any practice that may be incompatible with the word of God among masons."^[14] By 1833 he wrote in a letter to his friends to treat Freemasonry "as they would any other evil".^[15]

13- David L. Rowe, *God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World* (Eerdmans: 2008) gives extensive documentation of Miller's Masonic connections, noting that he attended a meeting as a youth on March 4, 1798; joined the **Morning Star Lodge in Poultney** and eventually rose to the rank of **Grand Master**. David L. Rowe, *God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World* (Eerdmans: 2008), p. 27.

Gemini on Morning Star Lodge

My question: Was 'Morning Star Lodge' (about 1800, in Poultney) a freemasonry organization?

Gemini's answer:

There's strong evidence that the Morning Star Lodge in Poultney, Vermont around 1800 was indeed a Freemasonry organization. Here's why:

- We can find a resource about Lee Lodge in Poultney mentioning it historically shared a building with "Morning Star Lodge No. 37, F&AM" [Poultney Area Chamber of Commerce].
 - F&AM stands for "Free and Accepted Masons", a common identifier for Freemasonry organizations.
 - No. 37 refers to a specific lodge number assigned by a governing Masonic body.

While this source refers to Lee Lodge, it mentions Morning Star Lodge as a co-occupant and specifies it was a recognized Masonic lodge under the Grand Lodge of Vermont.

Given this information, it's highly likely the Morning Star Lodge you're interested in was indeed a Freemasonry organization operating in Poultney around 1800.

Ellen White's Great controversy

His mother was a woman of sterling piety, and in childhood, he had been subject to religious impressions. In early manhood, however, he was thrown into **the**

society of deists, whose influence was the stronger from the fact that they were mostly good citizens and men of humane and benevolent disposition. Living, as they did, in the midst of Christian institutions, their characters had been to some extent molded by their surroundings. For the excellencies which won them respect and confidence they were indebted to the Bible; and yet these good gifts were so perverted as to exert an influence against the word of God. By association with these men, Miller was led to adopt their sentiments. The current interpretations of Scripture presented difficulties which seemed to him insurmountable; yet his new belief, while setting aside the Bible, offered nothing better to take its place, and he remained far from satisfied. He continued to hold these views, however, for about twelve years. But at the age of thirty-four the Holy Spirit impressed his heart with a sense of his condition as a sinner. He found in his former belief no assurance of happiness beyond the grave. The future was dark and gloomy... { GC 318.1}

Society of deists and freemasonry

My request: Was "the society of deists" the same thing than freemasonry?

ChatGPT's answer:

No, "the society of deists" and Freemasonry are not the same thing, although they share some philosophical similarities.

The Society of Deists:

- Deism is a philosophical belief that posits the existence of a rational and non-interventionist Creator who does not interfere with the natural laws of the universe. Deists reject organized religion and divine revelation, relying instead on reason and observation of the natural world.
- In the 18th and early 19th centuries, various informal groups and societies formed around deist principles, promoting rational religion and ethics based on natural theology. These groups were intellectual gatherings rather than formal, structured organizations like Freemasonry.

Freemasonry:

- Freemasonry is a fraternal organization that traces its origins to the local fraternities of stonemasons in the late medieval period. Modern Freemasonry, established in the 17th and 18th centuries, is a worldwide organization with lodges, rituals, and a system of degrees.
- Freemasonry is not a religion, but it requires belief in a Supreme Being and promotes moral and ethical teachings through symbolic rituals and allegories. It has a structured hierarchy and specific membership requirements.

Differences:

- **Philosophical Focus:** Deists focus on a rationalistic approach to belief in God and ethics without the intervention of organized religion, while Freemasonry combines moral and ethical teachings with symbolic rituals and allegories.
- **Organizational Structure:** Deist societies were informal intellectual gatherings without a formal structure, whereas Freemasonry is a well-organized institution with lodges, rituals, and degrees.
- **Membership Requirements:** Freemasonry has specific membership requirements, including belief in a Supreme Being and adherence to its rituals and principles. Deist societies did not have such structured requirements and were more open in terms of philosophical discourse.

In summary, while both deist societies and Freemasonry emerged from Enlightenment ideals and share some philosophical ground, they are distinct entities with different organizational structures and focuses.

My request: Was "the society of deists" the same thing than freemasonry?

Gemini's answer:

No, "the Society of Deists" wasn't the same thing as Freemasonry, although there's a connection between the two. Here's why:

- **Deism** is a philosophical belief system that proposes a God created the universe but isn't involved in its day-to-day operations. Deists tend to reject revealed religions and focus on reason.
- **Freemasonry** is a fraternal organization with a rich history and rituals. While not explicitly religious, it does require a belief in a Supreme Being, but it doesn't specify which one.

The connection:

- Deism gained popularity during the Age of Enlightenment, which is also when Freemasonry flourished. Many prominent Freemasons, including some Founding Fathers of the United States, were also Deists.
- Both Freemasonry and Deism valued reason and individual liberty.

Key differences:

- Deism is a belief system, while Freemasonry is a social organization.
- Deism doesn't require any rituals or ceremonies, while Freemasonry has a structured system of degrees and rituals.

- Freemasonry is open to people of various faiths as long as they believe in a Supreme Being, while Deism inherently rejects revealed religions.

In short, my view

Encyclopaedia Britannica says *nothing* about William Miller having been a deist nor a mason.

‘Great Controversy’ as well as Wikipedia states that William Miller was involved with *deism*, and that at some point in time he broke with it.

Wikipedia quotes three sources (see Note 1) *apparently* documenting Miller’s involvement with ‘Morning Star Lodge’ in Poultney about 1800, and eventually raising to the rank of Grand Master.

Gemini echoes Wikipedia’s information about William Miller’s implication with freemasonry, while ChatGPT denies it for lack of reliable bibliographic evidence.

Related to his possible implication with masonry it must be stated that, as all matters related to the Advent movement—and Church, that one is rather a sensitive question, and certainly not an indifferent theme to historians / reporters, let alone to modern authors. So, it remains a question of having or not confidence in the reliability (and intentionality, see Note 2) of the sources that point to Miller’s implication with freemasonry in the past. Since freemasonry has always been a secret society, any kind of list of characters involved in it should be regarded with some suspicion, as it is as easy to falsely accuse somebody of pertaining to it, as it is difficult to deny such accusation. In any case, if he was formerly involved with masonry, it did not play any role in the late spiritual raising of this man of God as a reformer, except maybe for his better knowledge of one of the worst evils to avoid. He certainly did not resort to such powers or societies as the freemasonry for his work as God’s messenger. The Holy Spirit was his Guide, and it was all through the Bible.

- Note 1: Out of the three sources, two are from same author.
- Note 2: See the title of the paper presenting the main accusation against Miller: ‘God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World’ (Eerdmans: 2008).