

The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

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Membership e-mail address list

A list of current members and their e-mail addresses is available on request.

Greetings Brethren,

There is a wide selection of articles for your consideration and enjoyment this month.

Planting a Masonic Garden

First, plant five rows of peas.....

Preparation, Purity, Presence, Promptness, Perseverance.

Then, plant four rows of squash....

**Squash gossip,
Squash interference,
Squash indifference,
Squash unjust criticism.**

Add five rows of lettuces.....

**Let us be faithful to duty,
Let us be unselfish and loyal,
Let us be true to our obligations,
Let us obey rules and regulations,
Let us love one another.**

And since no garden is complete without them, finally plant turnips..

Turn up for meetings,

**Turn up with a smile,
Turn up with new ideas,
Turn up with new members,
Turn up with determination to make everything count for something.**

If you plant all of the above, you will enjoy a perfect Masonic Garden, and reap lots of pleasure for your effort !!!

THE SYMBOLS OF THE FIRST DEGREE

The symbols, emblems and allegorical ceremonies of the First Degree have each a meaning. Taken together these meanings comprise the teaching of the degree. Time is too brief to give complete explanations or even to mention all of them, but we believe it will be profitable to you to have a few hints and suggestions, especially as they will show that every detail of the ritual is filled with a definite significance which each Mason can learn if he applies himself.

The hoodwink represents that darkness in which an uninitiated man stands as regards Masonic life. For this reason it is removed at the moment of enlightenment. Its removal suggests that we do not make the great things of existence, such as goodness, truth and beauty, but find them. They are always there. It is our blindness that conceals them from us.

The cabletow is a symbol of all those external restraints by which a man is controlled by others, or by forces outside himself. If a man does not keep the law of his own free will he must be forced to keep it by compulsion. The removal of the cabletow means that when a man becomes the master of himself he will keep the law instinctively out of his own character, and not under compulsion.

The Lodge is a symbol of the world, more properly of the world of Masonry. Initiation means birth, or a new birth, an entrance into that world. This symbol means that in its scope and extent Freemasonry is as wide as human nature and as broad as mankind, and that as a spirit and ideal it permeates the whole life of every true Mason, outside the Lodge as well as inside.

The ceremony of entrance, by which is meant all that happens at the inner door, signifies birth of initiation and symbolizes the fact that a candidate is entering the world of Masonry, there to live a new kind of life.

The sharp instrument means, among other things, that there is but one real penalty for violation of the obligations – the penalty, that is, of the destructive consequences to a man's character of being faithless to his vows, untrue to his word, disloyal to his obedience.

The ceremony of circumambulation is the name for the ceremony of walking around the Lodge room, an allegorical act rich with many meanings. One of the principal of these is that the Masonic life is a progressive journey, from station to station, to attainment, and that a Mason will always be in search of more light.

An equally significant ceremony is that of approaching the East. The East is the source of light that station in the heavens in which the sun appears when about to chase the darkness away. Masons are sons of light, and therefore face the East.

The Altar is the most important article of furniture in a Lodge room, and at the same time a symbol of that place which the worship of God holds in Masonry – a place at the centre, around which all else revolves.

The obligations have in them many literal meanings and as such are the foundations of our disciplinary law, but over and above this they signify the nature and place of obligation in human life. An obligation is a tie, a contract, a pledge, a promise, a vow, a duty that is owed. In addition to the obligations we voluntarily assume, there are many in which we stand naturally – obligations to God, to our families, to employers or employees, to friends and neighbours. A righteous man is one who can be depended upon to fulfil his obligations to the best of his ability.

The Great Lights are the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Square and the Compass. As a Great Light the Volume of the Sacred Law represents the will of God as man understands it. The Square is the physical life of man under its human conditions. The Compass signifies the moral and spiritual life. If a man acts in obedience to the will of God, according to the dictates of his conscience, he will be living in the illumination of the Great Lights and cannot go astray.

The Lesser Lights are the sun, the moon and the Master of the Lodge. The sun is the symbol of the masculine, the active, the aggressive, the moon, of the feminine, the receptive, the gentle, the non-resisting. When these two types of human action are maintained in balance, mastership is the result.

The words, grips and tokens are our means of recognition by which, among strangers, we are able to prove others or ourselves to be regular Master Masons in order to enter into fraternal fellowship.

The ceremony of salutation, in which the candidate salutes each station in turn, is, in addition to its function as a portion of the ceremonies, also a symbol of a Mason's respect for and obedience to all just and lawfully constituted authorities. The Old Charges state this in a single sentence: "A Mason is a peaceable subject to the Civil Powers, wherever he resides or works."

The same significance is found in the office of Worshipful Master, who is a symbol as well as the executive officer of the Lodge. As the sun rules the day, he rules and governs his Lodge; his title "Worshipful", means that as the Governor he is worthy of reverence, respect and obedience; and he stands for just and lawfully constituted authority everywhere.

The apron is at once the emblem of purity and the badge of a Mason. By purity is meant blamelessness, a loyal obedience to the laws of the Craft and sincere goodwill to the Brethren. The badge of a Mason signifies that Masons are workers and builders, not drones and idlers.

In the ceremony of destitution the candidate discovers that he has nothing of metallic character on his person. This symbolism reverts to ancient times when men believed that the planets determined human fate and controlled human passions. Men thought that there was a metal by which each planet was itself controlled. In ancient times candidates were compelled to leave all metals behind, lest they bring into the assembly disturbing planetary influences. While with us the symbolism no longer has its astrological character, the old point about keeping out disturbing influence remains. The candidate is not to bring into the Lodge his passions or prejudices lest that harmony which is one of the chief concerns of Masonry to sustain shall be destroyed.

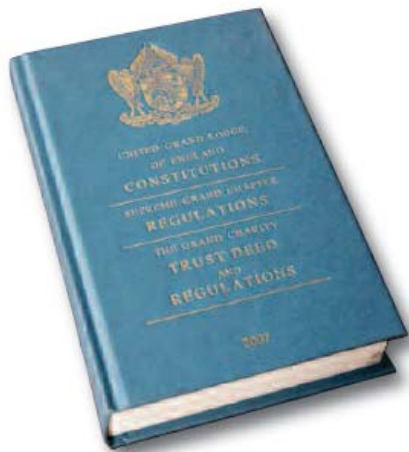
The northeast corner is traditionally the place where the cornerstone of a building is laid; when the Apprentice is made to stand there it is because he is the cornerstone of the future Craft. What the Apprentices are today Masonry will become in the future.

The working tools represent those moral and spiritual virtues, habits and forces by means of which a man is enabled to reshape the crude and often stubborn material of his own nature in order to adjust himself to the needs and requirements of human society. If a man has lived planlessly, carelessly, without aim or ideal, he must, if he is to become a Mason, learn to systematize his life, must adopt a rule of life as dignified by the twenty-four inch gauge. If he has traits of temper, habits of speech, or defects of character that disturb or injure others, and interfere with his taking his proper place in the Brotherhood, as "knobs and excrescences" on a stone interfere with putting it into its allotted place in the building, he must rid himself of them. This is represented by the mallet.

The Entered Apprentice is himself a symbol, one of the noblest in the whole emblematical system of the Craft. He represents youth, typified by the rising sun. But beyond that he represents trained youth, youth willing to submit itself to discipline and to seek knowledge in order to learn the great art of life, which is real royal art, and which itself is represented, embodied in, and interpreted by all the mysteries of Masonry.

It is by such voices and arts as these that the First Degree gave its teaching to you as a man and a beginning Mason. We sincerely hope that these hints, these suggestions as to the meaning of the symbols and emblems, will lead you to seek further for more light upon them, not alone in order that you may become a well-trained Mason, but also for their value to you, as you lead your life outside the Lodge room.

This article was first prepared by W. Bro. A. J. Beck, sitting Master of the Research Lodge of Wellington and reproduced in the February 1984 edition of The Discoverer.



ACHIEVEMENT

When do we become a Mason? After the First Degree? When we become a Fellowcraft? or not until we become a Master Mason? The answer is quite simple, it is the precise moment after you take your **FIRST** obligation.

It may be that we cannot fully enjoy visiting until we are duly qualified as a Master Mason, and even then, are we "*Practicing Masons*", or just members on the roll?.

It is easily understood that at any stage in our development, (as individual Masons), we can feel insignificant in such a great & huge fraternal organisation.

However, I ask you to examine Masonry, which began as a small idea and evolved into what it is today. We must do many little things to accomplish a big thing.

Think about it! Every tile in the mosaic pavement serves its purpose. The void which would be present if even one tile were missing makes each sector indispensable.

You've heard the saying, "*It's only a drop in the bucket*". A drop in the bucket may appear insignificant, but, you know, a drop of water placed in the ocean does raise its level, even though imperceptibly. Because a deed or event is small is no reason to ignore it!!!!

So it is with our Lodges. Be they small, appear insignificant, or be unimpressive; be they only a drop in the bucket, their contributions to Freemasonry can be measured.

Some ideas take a long time to prove and develop into something fruitful and so it is with Masonry.

Our Ancient Landmarks, the backbone of our fraternity, have survived the pressures of time.

A seed needs to be planted, cultivated and harvested. But, being a farmer, I am fully aware that the same planting does not always reap the same harvest.

We talk about our organisation needing modernisation. Much is said about keeping an open mind. This virtue is worthy of praise, but it should not stop there.

Our minds should be always enquiring, not simply accepting new ideas, but exploring them, establishing their credibility, helping the good ones to become implanted and nourishing them.

This is where research becomes so important. Research, in essence, is an organized way of discovering the truths and merits of an idea.

Nearly all of us, (I'm no exception) waste more valuable time excusing ourselves with "*not having the time*" than with any other excuse for our lack of achievement.

Small amounts soon build into large amounts. A few minutes a day soon add up to hours of wasted time and finally we realise that '*time*' has passed us by.

Each of us, in looking at life, seeks to make the best of our place in it. *Life is a succession of challenges and a realization of basic values.*

It is up to us as individuals, to pick and choose that which is important to us, and to mankind.

In short, to live, we must act. To act, we must make choices. To make choices, we must consider values and values are determined by little things.

In life, we have two paths to follow: to the one side – fear, hatred, envy; to the other side – confidence, love, sharing. Let us follow the Masonic path.

Adapted from a paper by: Orvil E. Mything, Grand Master; Published in The Tracing Board—March 1987

THE NEWLY-RAISED MASTER MASON

True Antient Freemasonry consists of three degrees and three degrees only. As all three degrees have been conferred upon you, thus making you a Master Mason, you are now entitled to an explanation concerning the peculiar nature of these ceremonies. Reference to the Ritual of the three degrees, plus the accumulation of educational material provided by Grand Lodge and your own Lodge will enable you to appreciate the connection of our whole system, and the interdependence of its several parts. But it must be remembered that the information which has been, and is now being given to you of necessity barely scratches the surface, and cannot constitute any more than a single stone in the foundation of your future Masonic knowledge.

In retrospect, you were admitted to Freemasonry in the Entered Apprentice Degree in a state of helpless indigence, to inculcate a useful lesson of natural equality and mutual dependence; then in the Fellowcraft Degree, you were urged to cultivate "with the most diligent care and attention" those wondrous faculties with which God has endowed the being created after His own image; finally, in this Degree, you symbolically passed through the valley of the shadow of death to a purified resurrection. Thus each degree, while supplementing and complementing the others, had its own general theme. These may be stated here respectively as Moral, Intellectual, and Spiritual.

From the beginning to the final act, the Temple of Solomon loomed large in the drama as you were conducted successively from your first entrance between the Two Great Pillars at the Porch or Entrance up the winding stairs to the Middle Chamber, and finally even into the Sanctum Sanctorum itself, in a state of darkness which served only to express that gloom which the eye of human reason cannot penetrate unless assisted by the Light which is from above. While in that cloud of darkness you were made to represent the central figure in a tragedy wherein certain mysterious secrets were said to be lost, and a noble individual died in order that Virtue might live.

That magnanimous being was Hiram Abif, "a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali". That tribe's territory bordered that of Tyre, and his father had been a man of that country. In the Second Book of Chronicles, Chapter 2, he is described thus ". . . skilful to work in gold and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out any device which is put to him . . ." In other words, a Prince of Builders, able to design and to draft, make or create, anything and everything which goes into or onto even the noblest of structures, whether for practical or ornamental purposes. By his description as recorded above he is eminently fitted to be the Operative ideal of all Speculative Master Masons.

Of course, the Hiram Legend as used by us is purely allegorical; we are not necessarily dealing either with a tangible building or with literal history. The Temple of Solomon symbolically represents your own character; the Three Great Pillars: Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, embody your personal ideal for a philosophy of life; Hiram Abif is not dead, but lives on as your immortal soul. The "genuine secrets" were lost to us through the inability of fallible human beings to resist temptation, as related in the Volume of the Sacred Law in the account of the Garden of Eden. For us, their substitutes are the Grand Principles upon which Freemasonry is founded, namely Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, principles which you are charged to inculcate, that they may be always maintained and ever renewed, to the glory of the Most High and the benefit of mankind.

To sum up, Freemasonry is a way of life, and to inculcate this has been the main purpose of your progress through the three degrees. If you and I are the better for our association with the Craft, then the ceremonies through which we have passed will not have been conducted in vain. If, through these trials, we have been inspired to renew our dedication to the lofty ideals represented by the Order, and to practice both in private and in public life the duties we have been taught in Freemasonry, then the

high purpose of the Institution will have been fulfilled, and as a result the World will to that extent have become a better habitation for mankind. To achieve these things is the fundamental aim of Freemasonry.

It is hoped that your recent experiences will have helped to kindle within you a curiosity concerning the Craft, together with the determination to discover even more about it, its' history, its' meaning and its' purpose, so that eventually you may become known and accepted, not only as a Master Mason, but as a Master among Masons.

The Worshipful Master, Officers and Members of your Lodge bid you welcome to full status in the Fraternity. May you find in Freemasonry that which you came to seek, and may the genuine tenets of the Craft ever prove to be a source of refreshment and inspiration to you.

*by R. W. Bro. A. Robertson Eddie
Published in MASONIC BULLETIN, BCR;
February 1975*

THE KNIFE & FORK DEGREE

I do not attend the meetings
I do not have the time to spare
But every time they have a feast
You will surely see me there.

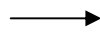
I cannot help with the degrees
For I do not know the work
But I can applaud the speakers
And handle a knife and fork

I am so rusty with the ritual
That it seems like Greek to me
But practice has made me perfect
In the Knife and Fork Degree....!

*Author unknown and
doesn't apply to us?*

By W. Bro. W.S. Shaw,

Toowoomba Lodge of Instruction, Nov 87



THE FOUNDATION STONE

The foundation stone is put down
Where the building is to start
It also is the corner stone
Of every Freemason's heart
There the builder builds a house
Whether it be large or small
And the mason builds a temple
With its two great pillars tall
It contains all the moral teachings
Known to the mason alone
And so to him his ritual
Is his foundation stone
From the stone up to the roof
Every building's made to rise
So the mason's character is built
Up to its greatest size
What would we be without a base
On which to build our temple grand
We would be nothing, even less
Than the smallest grain of sand
So, when we have squared our stone
And set it on a base, so fast
It becomes an immovable sign
Of the goal we've reached at last
When we've finally reached that goal
Never more will we be alone
For by then we've learnt that God
Is the true foundation stone.

DESIDERATA

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons.

Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant, they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let not this blind you to what virtue there is; Many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection.

Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.

But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.

And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be.

And whatever your labours and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams; it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

*Found in Old Saint Paul's Church, Baltimore, Dated 1692.
Presented to Aurora Lodge #165 A.F. & A.M. by Bro. M.J. Denton 1973.*

The Personification of a Mason

If you see a man who quietly and modestly moves in the sphere of his life; who, without blemish, fulfils his duty as a man, a subject, a husband and a father; who is pious without hypocrisy, benevolent without ostentation, and aids his fellowman without self-interest; whose heart beats warm for friendship, whose serene mind is open for licensed pleasures, who in vicissitudes does not despair, nor in fortune will be presumptuous, and who will be resolute in the hour of danger.

The man who is free from superstition and free from infidelity; who in nature sees the finger of the eternal master; who feels and adores the higher destination of man; to whom faith, hope and charity are not mere words without any meaning; to whom property, any, even life, is not too dear for the protection of the innocence and virtue, and for the defence of truth.

The man who towards himself is a severe judge, but who is tolerant with the debilities of his neighbour; who endeavours to oppose errors without arrogance, and to promote intelligence without impatience; who properly understands how to estimate and employ his means; who honours virtue, though it be in the most humble garment, and who does not favour vice though it be clad in purple; and who administers justice to merit whether dwelling in palaces or cottages.

The man who, without courting applause, is loved by all noble-minded men, respected by his superiors and revered by his subordinates; the man who never proclaims what he has done, can do, or will do, but where need is, will lay hold with dispassionate courage, circumspect resolution, indefatigable exertion and rare power of mind, and who will not cease until he has accomplished his work, and who then, without pretension, will retire into the multitude because he did the good act, not for himself, but for the cause of good.

If you, my friend, meet such a man, you will see the personification of brotherly love, relief and truth; and you will have found the ideal of a Freemason.

This excerpt is taken from the "address to the brethren" given very close to the end of the installation of the officers of a lodge according to the "English" or British Columbia "Canadian Work" (2000)

Reproduced from the Educator

Famous Freemasons – Part 11

Major-General Henry Knox - US Revolutionary War hero, he was the first Secretary of War under the U.S. Constitution. A Masonic lodge named in his honour was constituted on the gun deck of the USS Constitution ('Old Ironsides') in 1926. Knoxville, Tennessee and the famous "Fort Knox" were named in his honour.

Marquis de Lafayette - French soldier and politician, he took part in the American Revolution as a close supporter and friend of Brother George Washington. Already a Freemason in France, he was given honorary membership by many lodges and Grand Lodges across the USA.

Fiorello LaGuardia - American politician, the major airport in New York City is named in his honour. Three time Mayor of NY City and namesake of the International Airport. Garibaldi Lodge No. 542, New York City.

Simon Lake - Engineer who built the first submarine to operate successfully in open sea.

Frank S. Land - In 1919, founded the Order of DeMolay, a fraternal organisation for young men aged 12-21. Originally a group of fatherless boys, DeMolay quickly grew and was 'adopted' by Freemasonry in the United States. Today DeMolay is international in scope and millions of boys and men still refer to the founder of the Order as "Dad".

Charles Lindbergh - American aviator who made the first solo transatlantic flight. He made the first non-stop flight from America to Europe. His plane was the Spirit of St. Louis and bore the Masonic insignia. Keystone Lodge No. 243, St. Louis, Missouri.

Sir Thomas Lipton - Scottish merchant and yacht racer who opened a successful chain of grocery stores in Great Britain and established tea processing factories in England and the US. He was also famous for the tea he transported from Ceylon and his interest in association football. Scotia Lodge No. 178, Glasgow.

Franz Von Lizst. Hungarian composer. Lodge Zur Einigkeit, Frankfurt, Germany.

Harold C. Lloyd – Actor and entertainer and American silent film actor. Alexander Hamilton Lodge No. 535, Hollywood, California. A.A.O.N.M.S. Imperial Potentate.

Joe Loss - English bandleader and TV personality. Chelsea Lodge No.3098 UGLE

John Loudon Macadam. Scottish engineer. Developed the smooth waterproof road surface.

General Douglas MacArthur – A 5-star American General, served in both world wars and former US Chief of Staff, he commanded the Allied Forces in the South Pacific during World War II. He promised the Filipino people "I shall return" to save them from the occupying Japanese Forces. He was ultimately removed from military leadership by another Mason, President Harry S. Truman. Made a Mason "at sight" in the Philippines and became 32 deg in Manila and life member of the Nile Shrine Temple, Seattle, Washington.

Lauchlan Macquarie – Major-General and the first Governor-in-Chief of New South Wales. During his twelve years in office he raised NSW from a prison camp to a thriving colony.

Alexander Majors - One of the three founders of the short-lived but famed Pony Express in the United States; each rider was required to take an oath to clean living and honesty. Its inspiration is immediately familiar to Masons. "You will raise your arm to a level square and repeat after me:" Those participating in the annual re-enactment are required to take a nearly identical oath today.

Humour

What is it called if a Lodge ballot returns two black balls? Electile dysfunction

What kind of man was Boaz before he was married? Ruthless

What time was it when the Lodge visited the brewery? High time

Why did the crocodile refuse to eat Freemasons? Because they would lodge in his throat

Why did the Freemason cross the road? He was following the landmarks of the Order

What did the Freemason say when he tripped and fell off the drawbridge? So moat it be

What did the JW say when the Stewards was about to serve double helpings at the Festive Board? Halve it and begin.

When is a Freemason not a Freemason? When advancing to the East in the 2nd Degree, he turns into a winding staircase.

What do Hiram Abiff and Gary Cooper have in common? They both faced murderous ruffians at high noon.

Where was King Solomon's Temple located? On the side of his head

What's the first thing a colony of Masonic beavers would do? Build a grand lodge

What did the Freemason say when his kids covered him with sand at the beach? Don't put a sprig of acacia on top!

What do you get if you cross a Freemason with an elephant? An overweight Brother who never forgets his ritual charges.

Why is Freemasonry a suspected terrorist organisation? Because the Square and Compasses are weapons of math's instruction.

What's the difference between Past Masters and politicians? Politicians want to change things.

Who is the most enlightening person in the Lodge? The Director of Ceremonies, because DC power is electrifying.

What did the Israelites say when their first King (before David and Solomon) died? That's Saul folks.

What kind of car did King Solomon's father drive? According to Scripture, the roar of David's Triumph was heard throughout the land.

What's the worst thing about being a Fellowcraft? You're always one of the usual suspects.