



The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

In this Issue	
The Masonic Apron	2
On The Square	6
Old Tiler Talk	7
Vision Statement	9
Emblems of the first Degree	10
Humour	11

Greetings Brethren,

The lead article this month is a good explanation of the Masonic apron and its symbolic status.

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The Masonic Apron and its Symbolic Status

At the outset it is emphasised that the object is to direct attention and thought to the inner meaning of the words of our Ritual in general, and to those referring to the Apron in particular.

When worthily worn, whether it be by the Sovereign or commoner, it is a badge of supreme honour. Further it must be understood that it has no actual status in public assemblies, though the lives and actions of its wearers can by implication cause the community to look upon Free Masons as men of highest honour.

All Free Masons in Lodge assembled wear an Apron, and no Mason is properly clothed without it. This universality alone should impress the brethren with its importance. The status of the Apron, however, does not depend merely on this fact, as it is specially emphasised in the address given to the Initiate when he is invested. Not only is its significance emphasised, but its status is actually indicated in the address in the First Degree.

Many Masons do not have seemed to have grasped the implications of the address referred to. This is undoubtedly due to lack of knowledge with regard to the full significance of the comparison made in the Ritual. At my own initiation I was deeply impressed with the following striking words:-

"It is more honourable than 'The Garter' or any other Order in existence."

In a general way I knew that the Order of the Garter had an exceptionally high status, and subsequently felt impelled to search for additional information. Some of the particulars obtained will, I hope, interest the brethren and at the same time throw light on the comparison made at the investiture.

Many men in civil life give service to the community or to the State. Such services are often given from the highest motives, and without hope of reward.

Outstanding services, however, are frequently recognised on behalf of the Nation by Her Majesty the Queen, who, as a mark of appreciation, confers upon the individual concerned some Honour or Decoration.

There is a number of such Honours and Decorations which are awarded for meritorious services, the granting of which is in the hands of the reigning monarch. In this address it is only possible to refer to a few, and in most cases with the utmost brevity.

The brethren here assembled all realise the importance of a proper appreciation of precedence according to rank. At Royal and important functions **precedence** according to the Status of the Order or Decoration worn, is of the greatest importance. Much could be said in this connection, especially from the historic point of view, but it would lead too far into the fields of Heraldry.

In connection with the British Empire, there are three national orders which are also the three premier orders of the Empire. They are:-

- The Most Noble Order of the Garter;
- The Most Noble and Most Ancient Order of The Thistle; and
- The Most Illustrious Order of St. Patrick.

The order of precedence of these is as said. Since "The Garter" is specifically mentioned in our Ritual in connection with the Masonic Apron, it will be dealt with more fully than the others.

THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER

This is the premier order of Great Britain, and the one most highly valued. It is rarely conferred on anyone below the rank of an Earl. Many historians rate it as the highest honour in the world. The Order was instituted in 1348 by King Edward III. The regalia or insignia is most impressive and magnificent.

Origin - This "Most Noble Order" is said to have originated from an incident at a dance at which King Edward III and many of his nobles were present, though some state the incident occurred at one of Edward's magnificent tournaments.

Whichever statement is correct, it is asserted that a garter of one of the ladies of the Court became unfastened and fell to the floor. The King calmly picked it up, at which some of the Lords present smiled, noting which, Edward, feeling annoyed, remarked that before long the Garter should become a symbol of great honour, adding the phrase, "Honi soit qui mal y pense." (Evil be to him who evil thinks).

Whether the story set out here is historically correct or not, it is generally conceded that the Order was founded by Edward III in 1348. His prophesy quickly became a reality, and today, nearly 600 years after its institution, the Order of The Garter still holds pride of place as the World's most coveted distinction in civil life, as distinct from Orders or Decorations which may be conferred for services in the Armed Forces.

Constitution - The membership is strictly limited, and consists of The Queen, and 26 Knights. Her Majesty the Queen is the hereditary Chief of the Order, and usually one or more Princes of the Royal Family have this great honour conferred upon them, when, as is the case with all the Knights, a binding and most sacred oath or

obligation is taken. The ceremony of admission is said to be very elaborate. Each member is given a stall on one side or the other of the Chancel in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

The Insignia of the Order consists of:

1. The Garter which bears the motto, "Honi soit qui mal y pense."
2. A Mantle of blue velvet.
3. A Hood and Surcoat of crimson velvet.
4. A Hat of black velvet ornamented with diamonds, and an ostrich feather.
5. A Collar of gold.
6. A Badge and Star.

Associated with the preceding, is each Knights banner, sword and helmet which are usually hung in the chancel of the Royal Chapel in Windsor Castle. The effect of the regalia as a whole is said to be gorgeous in the extreme, but somewhat sombre.

At the death of a Knight the Insignia is returned to the Queen, thus causing a blank space in the Chancel. A blank space may also occur if a Knight is considered to have violated his oath, or otherwise disgraced the principles of the Order.

In 1918 there were two such blank spaces. In one, the banner of Lord Kitchener had hung, but was removed after his death. In the other space, the banner of Kaiser Wilhelm, ex-Emperor of Germany, had hung. This was the first occasion during the existence of the Order, that a banner of a Knight of the Garter had been removed whilst he was still alive.

Under such circumstances, I understand that the banner, mantle, hood and certain other parts of the regalia are rolled together, and placed in the basement of the Royal Chapel, and there left to rot and decay. History has repeated itself in the present war.

According to press reports the regalia of the King of Belgium has been similarly treated. Just as initials are placed after a Mason's name to indicate his rank, so are initials used to indicate the order which has been conferred by the Sovereign as a mark of honour on certain of his subjects. In the case of the Garter the initials "K.G.," as for instance, H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, K.G.

How the Garter is Worn - The Knights wear the famous Garter exposed below the left knee, whereas the Queen wears it above the left elbow.

Only very brief reference will be made to one or two other Orders, of which there are about 14 of outstanding importance.

THE MOST NOBLE AND MOST ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF THE THISTLE (K.T.)

This is the second in order of precedence, and is supposed to have originated in 787 AD. It fell in abeyance for a time, but after various vicissitudes was revived by James II in 1687.

Constitution - This is limited to members of the Royal Family and 16 Scottish Noblemen.

Insignia of a Knight of the Thistle (K.T.)

This consists of a Mantle, Collar, Badge and Star.

Motto - "Nemo me impune lacessit" (No one provokes me with impunity).

THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF ST. PATRICK (K.P.)

This is the third of the National Orders and was instituted by King George III in 1783.

Constitution - This, as with the two preceding orders has a very limited membership, and consists of: The Sovereign, The Grand Master, The Governor-General and 22 Knights, making 25 in all.

The Insignia of a Knight of St. Patrick (K.P.).

This consists of a Mantle, Collar and Star.

The three National orders are conferred upon noblemen by Her Majesty as a special reward for conspicuous service.

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF ST. MICHAEL and ST. GEORGE

This is awarded for Colonial and Foreign service in, or to, the Dominions, or other overseas parts of the Empire, and may be awarded for civil or military services. This Order ranks seventh in order of precedence.

Like several other Orders which have not been mentioned it is divided into three classes, of which the initials and meaning are:-

- G.C.M.G** - Knight Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George.
K.C.M.G - Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George.
C.M.G - Companion of St. Michael and St. George.

The Insignia is impressive and varies with the class. Suffice it has now been said to indicate the significance of the statement that the Masonic Apron **"is more honourable than the Garter or any other order in existence."**

What a wonderful conception the original compilers of our Ritual had, to incorporate such a phrase as that just quoted. Members of the British Royal Family belonging to the Order of the Garter; members of that Order, as well as members of other famous orders have had these words addressed to them.

Further support of this is forthcoming from the Ritual of the First Degree where we are told:-

"Monarchs themselves have been promoters of the art, and have not thought it derogatory to their dignity to exchange the Sceptre for the Trowel, have patronised our mysteries, and joined in our assemblies."

Some brethren may well ask, what is it that gives the Mason's Apron such an extraordinary status as has now been indicated. If we continue the quotation a stage further, we find the reason given, namely, **"being the badge of innocence and the bond of friendship."**

The word 'Innocence' in this context is used to indicate "absence of, wrongdoing." This interpretation is supported by the fact that the "Tongue of Good Report" must have spoken in favour of the Candidate for initiation, before he is even admitted into the Lodge room, let alone invested with an Apron.

Still further support is given by the symbolism of the material from which the apron is made, namely, the skin of a lamb, by which the Initiate is reminded "of that purity of life and action which should at all time distinguish a F.M."

No greater claim to honour exists than "purity of life and action" of which the Masonic Apron is the badge, hence its pre-eminent status. Further it is stated that it indicates a "bond of friendship" between members of the fraternity in every nation, and in every country where true masonry exists. It should be remembered that true friendship between men is one of the greatest blessings, and one of the most far reaching in effect amongst members of the Craft.

Let us now pass to the Second Degree where the Candidate is told:-

"As a Craftsman you are expected to make the liberal arts and sciences your future study."

This urging to further study is intended to impress on the Candidate the importance of thought and investigation, so that he can discharge his duties fully and worthily, and at the same time appreciate the wonderful world in which we live, and the great blessings we enjoy.

Finally the Candidate becomes a M.M., and on being invested with his Apron in its final form, it is impressed upon him that it indicates three things:

- His rank;
- Reminds him of his duties; and
- Calls upon him for assistance and instructions to others.

In other words it is now a F.M. as indicated by his Apron, and all it implies.

He must be just and upright in all his actions, must exercise sound judgment, and be of strict morals. If the Masonic Apron is worn only by men possessed of the character and qualifications symbolised by it, and such men exert their proper influence on the community, we shall steadily progress to the Golden Age, when there will be peace on earth and goodwill towards men.

In this way members of The Craft in all nations can spread the cement of Goodwill, not only between themselves but between nations, and thus demonstrate that they are worthy of being invested with that Apron which is:- "more honourable than the Garter or any other order in existence."



ON THE SQUARE

My Brother, in the Courtyard
Each one of us have stood
Outside the tyled Temple door
Awaiting as we should.

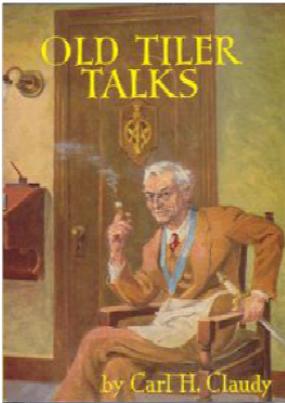
Take heed, thou young Apprentices
The Word emblazoned there:
To meet upon the level
And part upon the square.

My Brother, at the Altar
Each one of us has knelt
With solemn Oath and Brotherhood
The Mystic Tie we've felt.

Take heed, my Brother Fellowcraft
The Word emblazoned there:
To act upon the plumb
And part upon the Square.

My Brother, in the Temple
Each one of us were Raised
And on receiving further light
Into the Light we gazed.

Take heed, my Brothers, Masters all
The Word emblazoned there:
To Live within the compass
And part upon the Square.



Old Tiler Talks— EYES LIFTED HIGH

"I'm so tired of hearing about brotherhood!" complained the New Brother. "I'm sold on it, but I am weary of hearing it preached!"

"I make my bow to you!" answered the Old Tiler. "All my life I have wanted to meet the perfect brother!"

"Why, Old Tiler!" cried the New Brother joyfully, "I never expected to hear that from you! Are you, too, tired of the preaching of brotherhood?"

"Oh, no!" responded the Old Tiler. "I meant that if you are if you are weary of hearing of brotherhood, you know all about it. The human mind tires of what it has already beheld. We long to hear the new and the unknown, to see the strange and the unusual. We tire of that which is well known. You weary of brotherhood, because you know all about it. The man who knows all about brotherhood is, obviously, the perfect brother. So I make my bow!"

"I thought there was a trick in it somewhere!" grinned the New Brother, somewhat shamefacedly. "Of course I don't know all about it. What I am trying to say is that I weary of being preached at, rather than weary of the preaching."

"That is something else!" smiled the Old Tiler. "We all resent being preached at. And I know what ails you – that good brother from the far jurisdiction who spent half an hour talking platitudes. But you should look behind what he says to the motive before you let him weary you. A little boy I know sat down beside me recently and read me a chapter out of his school history. I knew the history and I knew the boy. I wasn't especially interested in either. But the boy was grateful for some small favor I had done him and because his history was a new story to him, he thought it would please me. I was bored by the history, but pleased with the child's effort to entertain me. "Brother Small Talk in his dry and uninteresting remarks means to do right. He is an honest and earnest Mason. He is following Oxenham's lovely lines as well as he can, and . . . "

"Who is Oxenham?" interrupted the New Brother.

"Oh, don't you know? A poet. Listen . . ." the Old Tiler stopped for a moment, and then, very softly, quoted:

"But once I pass this way. And then . . . and then . . . the Silent Door swings on its hinges; opens . . . closes . . . and no more I pass this way. So, while I may, with all my might I will essay sweet comfort and delight to all I meet upon the pilgrim way. For no man travels twice the Great Highway, that winds through darkness up to light, through night, to day."

"That's beautiful!" cried the New Brother.

"Indeed it is!" agreed the Old Tiler. "It is the very Skekinah of brotherhood; the glow of beauty which surrounds that which is holy. Brother Small Talk knows he will pass this way but once, and so, while he may, he essays sweet comfort and delight to all the brethren he meets upon the pilgrim way of Masonry. His idea of 'sweet comfort and delight' is to spread the doctrine of the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God."

"But," objected the New Brother. "It doesn't spread it to bore people with platitudes. I've heard what he said a thousand times."

"Ah, but now you are criticizing God!" answered the Old Tiler. "Look for the motive. God didn't give him much of a mind or provide him with many ideas. But Brother Small Talk does the best he can. His heart is right and his Masonry is good, and he tries to spread his 'sweet comfort and delight' as he goes along. To him his thoughts are beautiful. They touch his heart. And so, with a pleasant voice and a smooth flow of words, he gives them to his brethren, not knowing that they hear nothing that isn't better said in the ritual. Do you know Abou Ben Adhem?"

"No," answered the New Brother. "Member of this lodge?"

The Old Tiler smiled. "Not exactly," he answered. "He never lived; and yet he will live forever." The Old Tiler quoted softly; "Abou Ben Adhem, may his tribe increase, awoke one night from a deep dream of peace, and saw, within the moonlight in his room, making it rich and like a lily in bloom, an Angel, writing in a book of gold. Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold, so to the Presence in the room he said 'What writest thou?' The Vision raised its head and with a look made of all sweet accord, answered. 'The names of those who love the Lord.' 'And is mine one?' asked Abou. 'Nay, not so,' replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low, but cheerily still, and said. 'I pray thee, then, write me as one who loves his fellowmen.' The Angel wrote and vanished. The next night it came again with a great wakening light and showed the names whom love of God had blessed; and lo, Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

"That is very beautiful, too," said the New Brother, softly.

"Aye, that is beautiful," answered the Old Tiler. "Brother Small Talk, with his platitudes and his love of his fellowmen is beautiful, too. Look within, my boy, to the Motive. Do not 'Judge men by what they do, but by what they try. We all fail; if the Great Architect judged by accomplishment, what a pitiful state would we be in! But if He judges us by what we try, if He regards not our stumbling feet, but our eyes fixed on the star, then will Brother Small Talk meet kindly friends and a great welcome when he approaches the Tiler's door of the Grand Lodge above, for his eyes are lifted high!"

"I will never be tired of any man's sincere talk again!" assured the New Brother. "And, Old Tiler, write me that about the pilgrim way, and Abou, too, will you, please?"

The Old Tiler grunted as he reached for his pencil.



BEST EXAMPLE FOR VISION - MISSION- VALUES STATEMENT

VISION

(How we see ourselves- future state)

Freemasonry will be the pre-eminent fraternal organization committed to the improvement of good men through education, leadership, and fellowship.

MISSION

(How will we achieve our vision)

We will teach and perpetuate a fraternal way of life of high moral standards, through self-improvement, brotherhood, charity, community involvement and benevolence.

VALUES

(What Masons value as behaviours)

We value truth, tolerance, brotherly-love, morality, leadership, virtue, commitment, and making a difference in the community.

With acknowledgement to the Wandering Mason

News from the South

The death of W. Bro. Edward Fillingham has been announced in the UK. Edward joined the LOD as a PM Scottish Rite in March 1986. He was the first manager/ advisor of the Vanuatu Development Bank and a representative of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund.– a thorough gentleman, and a good but quiet lodge member—a good friend of Jock Hannaford and the late Gordon Haines.

Lodge Birthdays

Geoff Clelland	17
Bernie Cain	14
Bob Jackson	11
Shaun Gilchrist	7
Owen Drew	3
Russell Chilton	3 (J)

The Lodge is holding a gala dinner to mark 300 years of UGLE and 40 years of our Lodge. The event will be celebrated at the Holiday Inn, Tassiriki. More on this function next month.



THE EMBLEMS OF FREEMASONRY

The First Degree

Line.

The Line teaches the criterion of moral rectitude, to avoid dissimulation in action and conversation, and to direct our steps in the paths which lead to immortality.

The Pedestal.

The Pedestal is the base of a column on which the shaft is placed. Every Lodge is understood to have three—that of Wisdom in the E., Strength in the S., and Beauty in the S.. It is from this that we have the expression “to advance to the Pedestal” in allusion to the call of the R.W.M., which brings a member up to that part of the Lodge when so desired by the presiding officer.

The Three Grand Principles.

The Three Grand Principles on which Freemasonry is founded are Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. They are the Symbolic Jewels of a Master Mason and are treasured very highly by him.

Brotherly Love.

Brotherly Love has been described as the purest emanation of earthly friendship, and to extend and inspire it throughout the Universe is one of the grand purposes of Freemasonry. It is the strongest cement of the Order and without it the Fraternity would cease to exist. By it the Freemason is taught to believe that God made of one blood all nations of men, and to regard the whole human species as one family whose aim should be to aid, support and protect each other.

Relief.

Relief is a duty which every man owes to his fellows in consideration of the common infirmities of human nature, but especially is it a duty imposed upon a Freemason towards his brethren who are in need of sympathy and succour. It should be his aim ever to be ready to soothe the unhappy, relieve the distressed, and restore peace to minds that are troubled.

Truth.

Truth is a divine principle derived from the Great Father of Light. It is the duty of every brother to make truth the object of his search and to be fervent and zealous in its pursuit. It is the foundation of every Masonic virtue, and the subject of one of the earliest lessons which the Freemason receives.

This monthly feature is taken from William Harvey's book, "The Emblems of Freemasonry" 1918.

Humour

A rabbi was walking down the street when, suddenly, a strong gust of wind blew his streimel (fur hat) off his head. The rabbi ran after his hat but the wind was so strong it kept blowing his hat farther and farther away. He just couldn't catch up with it.

A young gentile man, witnessing this event and being fitter than the rabbi, ran after the hat and caught it. The young gentile man handed the hat over to the rabbi. The rabbi was so pleased and grateful that he gave the man twenty dollars, put his hand on the man's head and blessed him. The young man was very excited about both the tip and the blessing.

The young gentile decided to take his new found wealth to the racetrack. He bet the entire \$20 on the first race that he could. After the races the young man returned home and recounted his very exciting day at the races to his father.

"I arrived at the fifth race," said the young man. "I looked at the racing program and saw a horse by the name of Top Hat was running. The odds on this horse were 100-to-1. It was the longest shot in the field."

After saving the rabbi's hat, having received the rabbi's blessing, gotten the \$20, and seeing Top Hat in the fifth race, I thought this was a message from God. So, I bet the entire 20 dollars on Top Hat.

An amazing thing happened. The horse that was the longest shot and who did not have the slightest chance to even show came in first by 5 lengths.

"You must have made a fortune," said the father.

"Well yes, \$2000. But wait, it gets better," replied the son.

"In the following race, a horse by the name of Stetson was running. The odds on the horse were 30 to 1" Stetson being some kind of hat and again thinking of the rabbi's blessing and his hat, I decided to bet all my winnings on this horse."

"What happened?" asked the excited father.

"Stetson came in like a rocket. Now I had \$60,000!"

"Are you telling me you brought home all this money?" asked his excited father.

"No," said the son.

"I lost it all on the next race. There was a horse in this race named Chateau, which is French for hat. So I decided to bet all the money on Chateau. But the horse broke down and came in last."

"Hat in French is "Chapeau" not "Chateau" you moron," said the father.

"You lost all of the money because of your ignorance. Tell me, what horse won the race?"

The son answered, "A long shot from Japan named Yamaka."