

The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

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Greetings Brethren,

TEMPERANCE

The final charge in the Initiation Ceremony recommends every new Brother to allow Temperance to chasten him.

TEMPERANCE may be described thus -

That due restraint of the passions and affections which render the body tame and governable and relieves the mind from the allurements of vice.

This virtue ought to be the constant practice of every Mason as he is thereby taught to avoid excess or the contracting of any vicious or licentious habits whereby he might unwarily be led to betray his trust and subject himself to the penalty referred to in his Obligation.



Membership e-mail address list

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

THE LETTER "G"

One of the most prominent features in Lodge Temples is the letter "G", which is suspended from the ceiling in the centre of each room. It is also displayed on every Second Degree Tracing Board.

The ritual says that it is the Roman letter equivalent of certain Hebrew characters, representing God, the Grand Geometrician of the Universe. The Hebrew characters are the four corresponding to the Roman letter, J. H. V. H. which is the personal name of God, known as the Tetragrammaton. The Hebrews considered the personal name of God too sacred to be spoken, so the vowel sounds necessary for its pronunciation were inserted only in their thoughts. In some Lodges, this most sacred symbol is a triangle containing the Hebrew word.

A belief in a Supreme Being (a single God), is an essential landmark of Freemasonry, and so it is fitting that the sacred symbol representing His Being should be located over the centre of the Lodge room.

In the Craft, however, the letter "G" has not always been considered to stand for God and has not always been suspended over the centre of the Lodge. In the early 1700's, the "G" was usually placed on the floor in the middle of a Tracing Board, which was either drawn in chalk or laid out in templates.

In modern American Lodges, it is often placed in the East, while in some European Lodges it is to be found high on the West Wall. Many Masonic authorities believe that it should be one of the most prominent features to be seen when entering a Lodge, and it must therefore, be readily seen from the West. While it is almost a universal feature in the Craft, there are some foreign constitutions where the letter "G" is not one of the appointments of the Temple.

In very early times, the letter "G" stood for Geometry, the fifth science. Geometry was considered the essence of life—and also the essence of Freemasonry, in particular the Fellowcraft Degree.

In the words of one early Masonic authority and it was the science by which Masons it stands for the determination and wonderful wisdom of



authority, the letter "G" denotes Geometry, Artificers calculated all their neighbours. To nation, definition and proof of the order, the power of God in his Creation.

Plato said: "God is always geometrising."

A Fellowcraft was once quite commonly known as a "G" - man".

During the 18th century, the letter probably stood for both God and Geometry, depending upon the context in which it was used. In the 19th century there was a gradual conversion to its specific reference as the "sacred symbol" representing the "Grand Geometrician of the Universe".

Whatever its history, or location in the Lodge Room, there is no doubt the letter "G" is designed to impress upon everyone who enters that Deity is present everywhere, and that His all-seeing eye sees everything.

The operative Mason in his daily work was continually subject to the discipline of Geometry, which was regarded as an elegant expression of the law of the Great Architect of the Universe.

While the modern speculative Mason often has little interest in the laws of Geometry, no Freemason should ever lack an appreciation of the omnipotence of Almighty God, or the importance of Freemasonry.

THE DEACONS

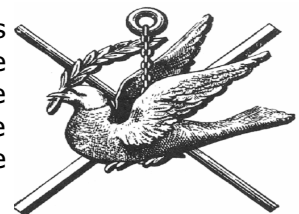
To serve as Deacon of a Lodge is a very rewarding experience, albeit most demanding in concentration, dignity and decorum. It is the Deacons, principally, who set the standard of most physical movement when the Lodge is at labour, and there can be little that is more satisfying than the knowledge of a task performed to the best of one's ability. This applies to the Deacons whether it be in their ceremonial work or in their official duties as servant or messenger. He serves his Master or Warden, as the case may be, particularly in preserving order and decorum, and he acts as their messenger when the occasion requires.

In Lodges working with at precision which characterizes our own jurisdiction in particular, it would be difficult to imagine a ceremony being enacted without Deacons, yet provision for such an office as a regular requirement is of comparatively recent origin. Indeed, it was not until the beginning of the 19th century that the need for such an officer was recognized by the Mother Grand Lodge. This is perhaps more easily understood when it is realized that, originally, ceremonies of initiation and passing were quite simple and brief in character. It was only as they became more complex that the necessity for such assistance for the Wardens became apparent.

Lodges operating under the Irish, Scottish and Antients, (and in some few isolated cases under the Moderns) were the first to take action by appointing Stewards (probably initially on an ad hoc basis) to assist the Wardens in conducting the candidate to wherever he ought to be for a particular task. It was not until 1809 that the Lodge of Promulgation, set up by the Mother Grand Lodge to consider and recommend ceremonies which could be acceptable to both English Grand Lodges, resolved that "deacons being proved on due investigation to be not only antient, but useful and necessary officers be recommended" as regular officers with specific and clearly defined tasks.

This comparatively late recognition does serve to highlight the fact that, as previously indicated, in the early days of speculative Masonry the actual ceremony of being made a Mason, or being promoted within the Craft, was rather brief, extending little beyond being obligated and receiving certain methods of recognition to allow the candidate to be re-admitted for further instruction. On his readmission, having proved that he was qualified, he was able to sit among his peers and elders to learn from them, and later, as he acquired further knowledge, to discuss various aspects of the philosophy of Freemasonry, its aims and objects, its moral teachings, its historical background and so on. This knowledge was originally conveyed by question and answer, in catechetical form, but gradually it became formalised and incorporated as integral parts of the various ceremonies.

Originally the Deacon's jewel was a replica of the Greek God Hermes, or his Roman counterpart Mercury, with winged head and feet, symbolical of the winged messenger. Later it was changed to what we have today, the dove bearing an olive branch. The dove, being the messenger sent out from the Ark by Noah to seek for land left high and dry by receding waters, and the olive branch a universal emblem of peace.



With regard to responsibility for good order in the Lodge, that finally rests with the Master and his Wardens, who have each been entrusted with a gavel as an emblem of authority. The Deacon's role in preserving peace, order and harmony is to anticipate possible areas of friction and to indicate the infinitely more desirable quality of peace and goodwill by holding out the symbolical olive branch. In other words, it is his task to be alert to possible areas of disaffection and by the nature of his own conduct symbolically portrayed by the olive branch, demonstrate the greater advantage to be derived from the harmony which should at all times characterise Freemasons.

THE MASONIC DECK OF CARDS

One evening at a meeting a Brother was seen with a pack of playing cards in the Lodge. When the matter was reported to the WM he summoned the brother concerned and demanded an explanation. The brother was taken aback and somewhat embarrassed but went on to explain thus:

"WM I was not using these playing cards in an un-Masonic manner, for I regard them as my ritual and almanac, you see when I look at:

- The **ACE** it reminds me of the Grand Architect of the Universe.
- The **TWO** reminds me of the two great pillars at the entrance of King Solomon's Temple.
- The **THREE** reminds me of the 3 who rule the Lodge, - the WM, the SW, and the JW.
- The **FOUR** reminds me of our 4 degrees
Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master Mason, and the Mark Ceremonial.
- The **FIVE** reminds me of the 5 noble orders of Architecture,
Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Composite.
- The **SIX** reminds me of the 6 principles of our order,
Brotherly Love, Relief, Truth, Faith, Hope, and Charity.
- The **SEVEN** reminds me of the 7 liberal arts and sciences,
Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy.
- The **EIGHT** reminds me of Ecclesiastes chapter 12 verse 8, vanity Oh vanity sayeth the preacher.
- The **NINE** reminds me of the working tools of the first 3 degrees.
24 inch gauge, Gavel, Chisel, Square, Level, Plumb Rule, Skirret, Pencil, Compasses.
- The **TEN** reminds me of the 10 Commandments on which our order is based.
- The **JACK** reminds me of the Grand word in the Fellow Craft Degree.
- The **QUEEN** reminds me of the widow who bore the famous son and also our Sovereign.
- The **KING** reminds me of King Solomon the principle figure of our order.
- There are **TWELVE** face cards which remind me of the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 signs of the Zodiac.
- There are **TWO COLOURS** which remind me of the pillars of Fire and Cloud.
Of Night and Day. Of Good and Evil.



- There are **FOUR** SUITS which remind me of
Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice.

There are (poetical licence here) **365** spots in the pack which serves to remind me of the number of days in the year, the time when all brothers should be Freemasons, not only on the nights we attend our lodges.

That WM is my explanation of my behaviour of playing with a deck of cards in open lodge".

The WM admonished the brother.

Masonic Quotes

FREEMASONRY IS A MORAL ORDER, INSTITUTED BY VIRTUOUS MEN, WITH THE PRAISEWORTHY DESIGN OF RECALLING TO OUR REMEMBRANCE THE MOST SUBLIME TRUTHS, IN THE MIDST OF THE MOST INNOCENT AND SOCIAL PLEASURES, FOUNDED ON LIBERALITY, BROTHERLY LOVE AND CHARITY. (BENEDICT ARNOLD)

Flattering as it may be to the human mind, and truly honourable as it is to receive from our fellow citizens testimonies of approbation for exertions to promote the public welfare, it is not less pleasing to know that the milder virtues of the heart are highly respected by a Society whose liberal principles must be founded in the immutable laws of truth and justice. To enlarge the sphere of social happiness is worthy of the benevolent design of a Masonic institution; and it is most fervently to be wished that the conduct of every member of the Fraternity, as well as those publications that discover the principles which actuate them, may tend to convince mankind that the great object of Masonry is to promote the happiness of the human race.
[GEORGE WASHINGTON]

THE WAGES OF THE CRAFT

There is a mine of wealth in the verbiage of Masonry. To ordinary observers the surface indications, may be slight, but to the thoughtful Mason every word contains a nugget of ore. Often the Senior Warden of a lodge is regarded as a greatly inferior officer, with little authority, and merely a sort of Deputy Master, a lay figure, unless the Master be absent. Not so; and he tells us so, and what he tells is true, and indicates a deeper truth than he tells. The Senior Warden is the paymaster of the craft, now nominally, once really. He is a sort of stranded Masonic official on the shores of time. His vocation is largely gone. But what he now asserts of himself gives as a hint of what he once really was. It proves that he is an historic character, that time, the great leveller, has lessened his authority; that his office was not created in the present or last century, but originated with Freemasonry itself, in the remote past.

The language used by the Senior Warden proves that he is a kind of fossil. When does he ever pay the craft wages now? But he did once—ay, and as long as three thousand years ago, if there is anything in Masonic tradition, or in Masonic philology. This carries us back to the building of King Solomon's Temple.

According to the traditions of the lodge, which are fortified in certain respects by the facts and traditions of Mark Masonry as well, there were two classes of stone hewers and squarers, or Fellowcrafts, at the building of Solomon's Temple—first, a superior class of skilled workmen, who were each in possession of an individual 'Mark,' and who always designated their work by this Mark; and, second an inferior class, of probably younger and less experienced workmen, who had no Mark, and probably performed only the rough work of the quarries. The former received their pay in silver; the latter in corn, wine and oil, It was the duty of the Senior Warden of the lodge to pay these wages, and he did it on the sixth day of the week (Friday), at the sixth hour (high twelve), when the craft was called off from labour to refreshment.

Now that the Mark Degree has been severed from the Fellow Craft Degree and made a special degree, the Senior Warden's vocation in the Fellow Craft or Master Mason's Lodge is gone. He has no wages to bestow and no craftsmen to pay. Nevertheless, he retains the old language, which indicates what his duty once was, and thereby testifies to the antiquity of his station and the dignity with which he was once clothed.

But let it not be inferred Freemasons no longer receive wages. Far from it. There is no man who receives better wages than a Freemason, he is a member of that ancient and honourable fraternity which has no rival, whose wealth.—intellectual, moral, social and material—is untold, and which dispenses its wealth with a liberal hand. Let us see what the wages of the craft now are, and to whom they are paid.

The non-affiliate gets nothing, and merits nothing. He is a backslider, out of all sympathy with his fellows. He comes not near the lodge, and of course can receive no wages. Neither does the habitual absentee from the lodge, who is in good standing, receive any wages. Seeing is receiving, and he never hears. Hearing is receiving, and he never hears. No one receives wages but the brother who is dutiful to his lodge. But what does he receive? Mostly liberal wages. He is enriched in mind, in body, and in spirit. The sublime truths taught in the craft, by sign and symbol by word and act, are impressed again and again on his memory, so that he cannot forget them.

Every devoted Freemason should be a noble man, He has no excuse for turpitude, He unfailingly knows what is right, and cannot err through ignorance. Beside this, he is enriched in spirit by communion and fellowship with his brethren. He has their sympathy; he sits with them, both at labour amid refreshment. The convivial joys of the banquet room are his. He is enriched also in body. Often the wages are material in form.

He partakes of the viands which up-build the body and rejoice the heart—the corn, the wine and the oil of the craft. His wages often include all of these payments. Can any brother under these circumstances go away dissatisfied? Can he be aught than happy, yea, delighted? Is the fraternity a useless one which can offer such rewards to its initiates—truth for the mind, nourishment for the body, encouragement and inspiration for the spirit, the emotional nature? Ay and its wages are larger still.

Does fortune fail, do friends fall away, does penury follow sharply on the heels of misfortune, and then heaven-born charity is dispensed by the craft. Then the wages are in shekels, as well as in the corn of nourishment, the wine of refreshment and the oil of joy. The unfortunate brother is paid the wages of both classes of Fellow Crafts, those with Marks and those without; he is paid in specie and he is paid in kind.

Were Freemasons ever better paid than now? Were their wages ever larger? We would rather be a Freemason to-day than to have been one in the days of King Solomon. We would rather enjoy the labour and refreshment of the lodge now than that which our primitive brethren enjoyed. The best times are these times, all that is said about the “good old times” to the contrary notwithstanding.

All Freemasons are entitled to receive their wages, and, if they do not, it is owing to the wilful neglect of their duties; it is their fault and not the fault of the craft.

Masonic Record of Western India 1888

A Mason's Wife

From active Masons, resolute,
Our wives and families we salute;
We surely know the price you pay,
Who sit alone while we're away.

No high degrees on you conferred,
In Lodge, your name is seldom heard;
You serve our cause though out of sight,
While sitting home alone tonight.

Masonic papers list our names,
Awards are given, fit to frame;
But yours is absent... you who strive,
To keep our fortitude alive.

You're part of every helpful deed,
On your encouragement we feed;
Without your blessings, how could we,
Continue acts of charity?

And so, this poem, we dedicate,
To every Master Mason's mate;
And offer our undying love,
Rewards await in Heaven above.

The Six Mistakes of Man

Cicero, the Roman statesman and philosopher, wrote the following some 2000 years ago:

1. The delusion that personal gain is made by crushing others.
2. The tendency to worry about things that cannot be changed or corrected.
3. Insisting that a thing is impossible because we cannot accomplish it.
4. Refusing to set aside trivial preferences.
5. Neglecting development and refinement of the mind and not acquiring the habit of reading and studying.
6. Attempting to compel others to believe and live as we do.

THE SKIRRET

You are unlikely to discover the word "skirret" in any modern dictionary or encyclopaedia – at least, not in the context with which we, as Freemasons, are familiar.

It seems to have disappeared from the language of the operative builder. But if the word has been forgotten, the instrument itself has not, and it is in as general use as ever.

It is better known as the "chalk line" – a length of cotton string impregnated with French chalk, and contained on a spindle similar to the "skirret" of our ritual.

The line is drawn out in exactly the manner described in our Master Mason Degree, and stretched between the previously determined points on the floor. It is then given a slight "flip", and as it strikes the ground along its length,

It leaves a line of chalk, which is subsequently rendered permanent with paint, or with a tightly stretched steel wire.

This line becomes the centre-line from which all principal dimensions are measured. Any serious inaccuracy in its position could lead to chaos at subsequent stages in the work, therefore the responsibility for determining, verifying and approving this line is that of the Chief Engineer, or Architect – "The Master Builder himself".

Our ritual leaves us in no doubt as to the symbolical significance of the skirret and its line, -

"a straight and undeviating line of conduct laid down for our guidance in the Volume of the Sacred Law."

How familiar to us are some of the points along this straight and undeviating line, -

- Thou shalt not steal.
- Thou shalt not bear false witness.
- Honour thy father and thy mother.
- Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength and thy neighbour as thyself.

We well know how any serious deviation from this line leads unfailingly to social chaos of one kind or another.

In a time of permissiveness and moral laxity, this "straight and undeviating line of conduct" is more than a guideline, it is a **life-line**.

*By Bro. Phil J. Croft, King David Lodge No. 93, BCR;
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Famous Freemasons – Part 14

Cecil Rhodes (1852 - 1903) was an English-born businessman, mining magnate, and politician in South Africa. He was the founder of the diamond company De Beers, which today markets 40% of the world's rough diamonds. He set up the provisions of the Rhodes scholarship, which is funded by his estate.

Michael Richards - The talented actor most popularly known as "Kramer" from the Seinfeld television series. In November, 2006, he exploded in a racist rant that has received unfavourable publicity around the world.

Eddie Rickenbacker - American Air Force pilot and war hero - he was the most decorated combat pilot of World War I having downed 21 enemy planes and 4 balloons. He later became president of Eastern Airlines. Kilwinning Lodge No. 297, MI.

Branch Rickey - US baseball executive most remembered as the General Manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, he created the 'farm system' for developing players and he hired Jackie Robinson to break the 'colour line' in baseball.

Ringling Brothers - American circus showmen - all seven brothers and their father August Ringling were members of Baraboo Lodge No. 34, Baraboo, Wisconsin.

"Sugar Ray" Robinson - American prize-fighter and six-time world champion (once as a welterweight and five times as a middleweight). Joppa Lodge No. 55 PHA, New York City.

Roy Rogers - "King of the Cowboys". American singer and actor who played a singing cowboy in motion picture Westerns. Always wearing the white hat, Rogers played the hero who never killed his opponent but rather would shoot him in the hand to wound him. On his grave is proudly displayed the Cross of his faith and his 33rd Degree Masonic emblem. 33rd Degree KCCH, Hollywood Lodge, No. 355, Hollywood, California.

Franklin D. Roosevelt - Governor of New York and 32nd President of the United States, he was the only US president to be re-elected four times. He brought his country out of the Great Depression, guided them through World War II and died in office. He was succeeded by another Mason, Harry S. Truman. Holland Lodge No. 8, NY City. Also Scottish Rite. He was present at the raising of his three sons, all of whom were raised in Architect Lodge No. 519, New York City. Honorary Grand Master of Demolays.

Theodore Roosevelt - Hero of the Spanish-American War, Governor of New York, Vice President and when President (and Mason) William McKinley was assassinated; he became the 26th President of the United States. Winner of the Nobel Peace prize. Matinecock Lodge No. 806, Oyster Bay, New York State.

William Edmundo Ros OBE. Latin music great. Chelsea Lodge No.3098 UGLE

Natan Meyer Rothschild, Anglo-German financier. Emulation Lodge No. 21.

