

Grand Council of  
Royal and Select Masters  
Of Iowa



Fourth Edition

GRAND COUNCIL RITUAL

FOURTH EDITION  
February 2015

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON RITUAL (2015)**

Norman D. Rank, P.G.M., Chairman, Board of Custodians

Donald E. Mosier, P.G.M.

W. Charles Smithson, P.I.M.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>PROLOGUE</b> .....                        | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>APRONS, DRESS AND PARAPHERNALIA</b> ..... | <b>2</b>  |
| APRONS.....                                  | 2         |
| DRESS.....                                   | 2         |
| PARAPHERNALIA.....                           | 2         |
| <b>OFFICERS</b> .....                        | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>OPENING (SELECT MASTER DEGREE)</b> .....  | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>OPENING</b> .....                         | <b>7</b>  |
| PURGING.....                                 | 9         |
| WORK.....                                    | 10        |
| PRAYER.....                                  | 12        |
| <b>CLOSING (SELECT MASTER DEGREE)</b> .....  | <b>14</b> |
| CHARGE AT CLOSING.....                       | 15        |

## PROLOGUE

After several years of Councils and Companions lacking a written version of the rituals of Cryptic Masonry in Iowa (the third edition was released in 1985, and supplies had been exhausted about 2011), it was determined that a closer look at the Cryptic work in Iowa needed to be done prior to again releasing the work for printing.

With changes to the manner in which the work was communicated, the number of Companions proficient in the work, and technology, much work needed to be done to keep Cryptic Masonry relevant.

On December 9, 2014, Most Illustrious Companion Kurt Hoffmann, Grand Master released a poll to the membership to gain further opinion on the subject of moving the ritual toward plain-English. The results of this survey indicated that 60% of the membership favored plain-English, rather than encoding. However, the obligation, and any 'secret work' should remain encoded.

On December 20, 2014 M.I.Comp. Hoffmann formed a Special Committee on the Ritual. This committee consisted of: M.I.Comp. Norman Rank, Chairman of the Board of Custodians, M.I.Comp. Don Mosier, and I.Comp. W. Charles Smithson. They were charged to review the work, see that it was properly converted to plain-English, and that digital versions of the work would be made available. This committee had a deadline of January 15, 2015 in which to complete these tasks.

The committee consulted with several sources to ensure accuracy in the ritual, including the first three editions of the Iowa ritual, the 24<sup>th</sup> edition of the rituals of the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International, and rituals from other Cryptic jurisdictions.

Then on January 10, 2015, the Committee announced to M.I.Comp. Hoffmann that they had completed their work. However, the Committee asked that their draft be pre-released to the membership for their review and comment. Thus, the work was distributed electronically for 30 days for the membership to review. After considering numerous comments and suggestions from the membership, the committee made changes as they saw necessary. Finally, on February 15, 2015, the Special Committee on the Ritual released their final work, which you now hold in your hands.

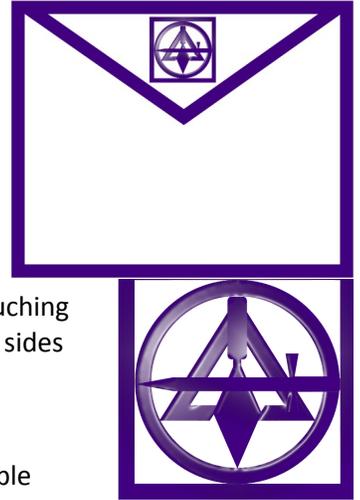
## APRONS, DRESS AND PARAPHERNALIA

Councils must be equipped with the following aprons, robes and paraphernalia:

### APRONS

The aprons are white bordered on the sides and bottom and on the flap with a band of purple, and are provided with purple strings. The emblem of the Council is to be on the flap.

The emblem of the Council shall be as follows: In the center is a trowel in an erect position with the handle up and the blade or bowl down; outside of the trowel is a broken equilateral triangle with the missing or broken side on the lower or horizontal side; across and on top of the trowel and broken triangle in a horizontal position with hilt at right is laid a sword; around all of the above and touching the outer points is a circle; and outside of the whole touching the top, bottom and sides of the circle, is a square.



### DRESS

Robes, if used, should be in good condition, with appropriate footwear and no visible jewelry. The dress of the first three officers of subordinate Councils should be as follows:

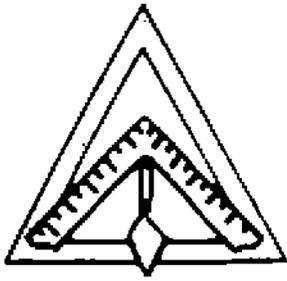
- The Illustrious Master is dressed in a royal robe of purple.
- The Deputy Master is dressed in a royal robe of red or scarlet.
- The Principal Conductor of the work is dressed in a royal robe of blue.
- The Captain of the Guard, the Steward and the Sentinel may be clothed in ancient military costume with a helmet on the head and a sword in the hand.
- The Conductor of the Council is dressed in a robe of scarlet.
- Use robes or dusters for craftsmen in the Select Master degree.

### PARAPHERNALIA

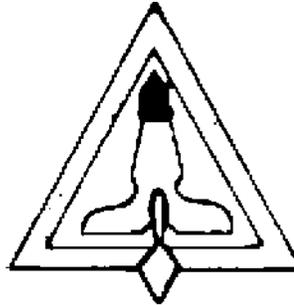
- A representation of the nine arches.
- Three small tables for stations in the East.
- One seven branched candelabra. One Royal Arch Ark, with Triangular bronze plate containing the Royal Arch cryptogram, Aaron's Rod, Pot of Manna, Book of the Law and three ancient squares.
- Trowels, swords, and shackles.

The above-mentioned equipment, with, possibly, the exception of the furnishings of the Sanctum Sanctorum, is essential for the proper presentation of the degrees.

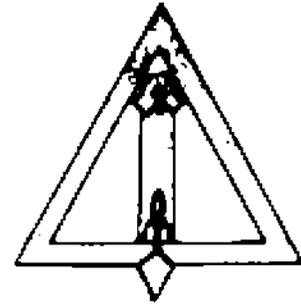
## OFFICERS



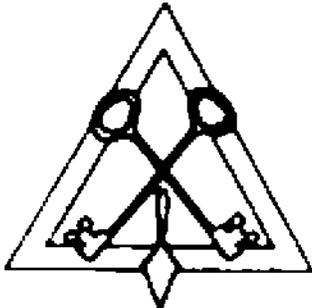
Illustrious Master



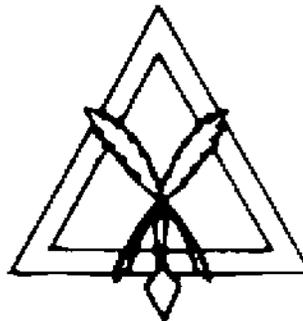
Deputy Master



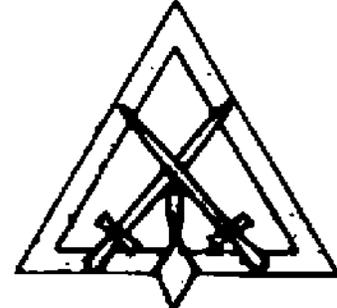
Principal Conductor  
of the Work



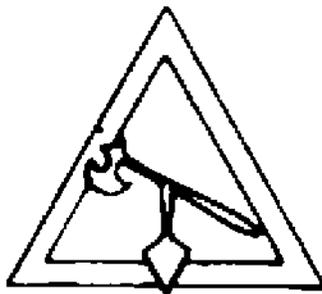
Treasurer



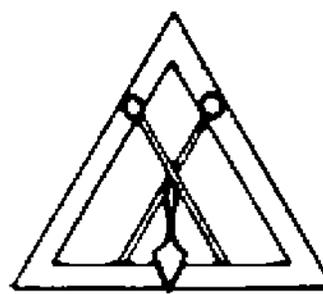
Recorder



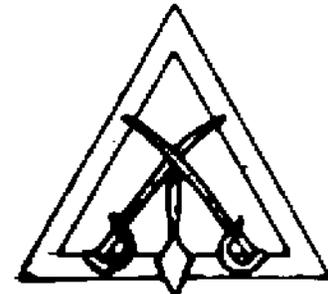
Captain of the  
Guard



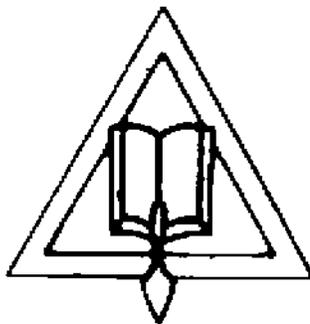
Conductor of the  
Council



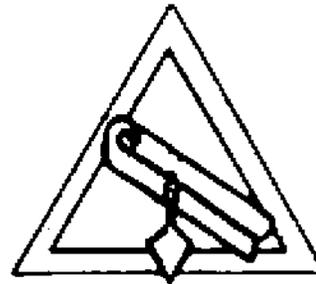
Steward



Sentinel



Chaplain



Marshal



Illustrious Master



Deputy Master



Principal Conductor of the Work



Treasurer



Recorder



Captain of the Guard



Conductor of the Council



Steward



Sentinel



Chaplain



Marshal

## **OPENING (SELECT MASTER DEGREE)**

### **Officers and Stations**

1. Illustrious Master (IM)
2. Deputy Master (DM)
3. Principal Conductor of The Work (PCW)
4. Treasurer (Tr)
5. Recorder (Rec)
6. Captain of The Guard (CG)
7. Conductor of The Council (CC)
8. Chaplain
9. Steward (St)
10. Sentinel (Sent)

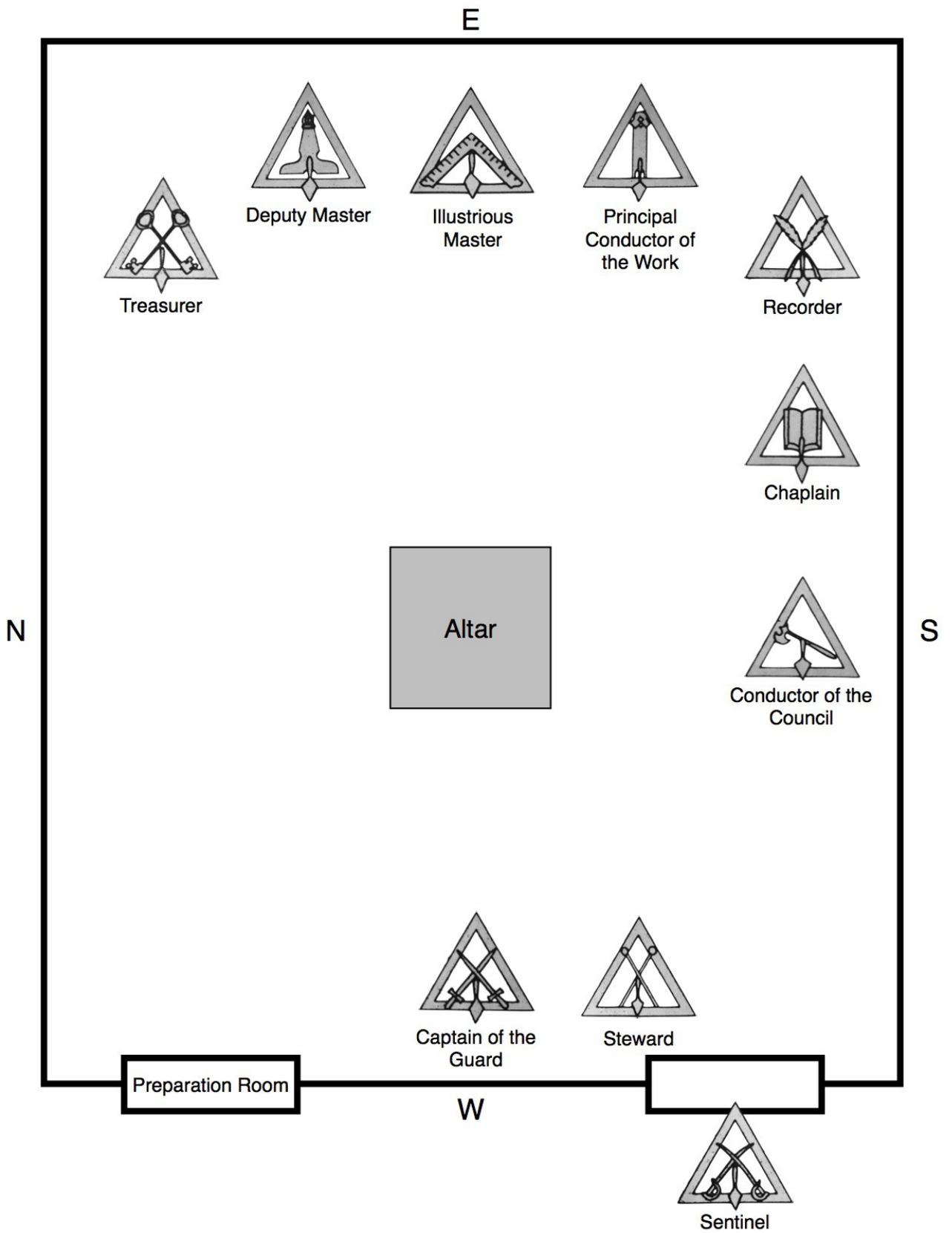


Diagram 1

## OPENING

*At the appointed time the Illustrious Master will assume his station and give one knock (\*) to call the assembly to order. All officers will take their respective stations and all will be seated. Steward will see that the doors are closed (Diagram 1).*

**IM:** Illustrious Companion of Tyre, (*Deputy Master rises*) shall we resume our labors in the Secret Vault?

**DM:** Illustrious King Solomon, it is my ardent desire to see the Secret Vault completed, and the Sacred Treasures safely deposited therein, that I may return to my own country with the satisfaction of having faithfully discharged my duty to the Craft. (*DM is seated.*)

**IM:** (\*) Companion Captain of the Guard, (*Captain of the Guard rises*) are all present Select Masters?

**CG:** (*Being satisfied*) Illustrious Master, all present are Select Masters.

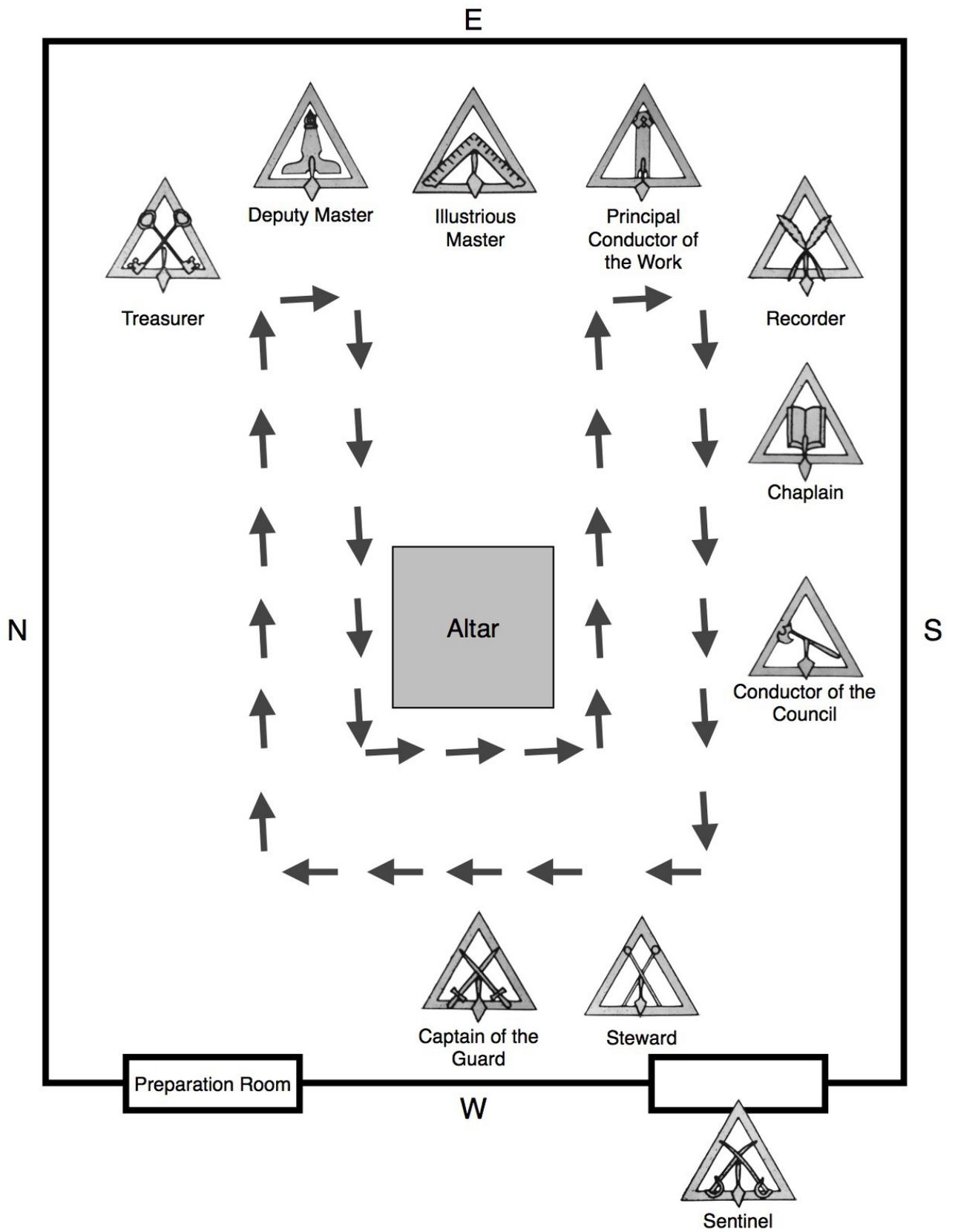


Diagram 2

## **PURGING**

*If Captain of the Guard is not satisfied, he will call on the Steward.*

**CG:** Companion Steward, (*Steward rises*) are all present Select Masters?

**St:** I will ascertain and report.

*Steward goes north to just in front of sidelines, then east to end of sidelines, about faces and returns to a line just west of Altar, turns left and goes south to just in front of sidelines, then east to end of sidelines, about faces and returns along south side of room to his station, purging north sidelines as he goes east and south sidelines as he goes west, making square corners. (Diagram 2).*

*When challenging a Companion, Steward will halt, face the Companion, cause him to rise, right or left face - he should never turn his back to the Companion challenged - and say:*

**St:** Companion Captain of the Guard, a visitor for whom I cannot vouch.

**CG:** (*If he cannot vouch for the visitor*) will any Companion vouch for the visitor? (*The visitor being vouched for, the Captain of the Guard will say*) Companion Steward, the visitor is properly vouched for.

*Steward will again face the Companion, direct him to be seated, and proceed with his duties.*

*If the visitor is not vouched for, the Illustrious Master will appoint a committee of three who will retire with the visitor and examine him.*

*An examined visitor, having the proper credentials, and there being no objection, may be introduced at any convenient time after the Council has been duly opened.*

*Having completed his duty of purging, the Steward returns to his station, faces the Captain of the Guard and, reports:*

## WORK

**St:** Companion Captain of the Guard, all present are Select Masters. (*Steward is seated*)

**CG:** Illustrious Master, all present are Select Masters.

**IM:** Is our number complete?

**CG:** I find the number three times nine.

**IM:** See that the Companions are in order as Select Masters.

**CG:** (\*\*\*) (*All rise*) Companions, be in order as Select Masters.

*All give first sign (pl--- ou- ey--) and hold it until released by the knock (\*) in the East. The Illustrious Master does not rise or give sign.*

**CG:** Illustrious Master, the Companions are in order.

**IM:** (\*) (*All drop hands to side. All are seated except Captain of the Guard*) Companion Captain of the Guard, you will see that the Secret Vault is securely guarded.

**CG:** Companion Steward, (*Steward rises*) see that the Secret Vault is securely guarded, and inform the Sentinel that the Illustrious Master is about to open \_\_\_\_\_ Council Number \_\_\_\_\_ of Select Masters. Direct him to take due notice thereof and guard accordingly.

**St:** (*Opens door*) Companion Sentinel, the Illustrious Master is about to open \_\_\_\_\_ Council Number \_\_\_\_\_ of Select Masters. Take due notice thereof and guard accordingly.

*Closes door, gives (\*) answered by the Sentinel (\*). Returns to his station and reports:*

**St:** Companion Captain of the Guard, the Sentinel is at his post and the Secret Vault is securely guarded. (*Steward is seated*)

**CG:** Illustrious Master, the Secret Vault is secure.

**IM:** Companion Captain of the Guard, are you a Select Master?

**CG:** I am acknowledged as such, and have wrought my regular hours.

**IM:** What are the regular hours?

**CG:** From nine at night 'till twelve, the time when prying eyes are closed in sleep.

**IM:** Where were you greeted as a Select Master?

**CG:** In a legally constituted Council of Select Masters assembled in a place representing the Secret Vault erected by King Solomon under the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Temple.

**IM:** How many compose a Council of Select Masters?

**CG:** Nine or more.

**IM:** When composed of only nine, who are they?

**CG:** The Illustrious Master, Deputy Master, Principal Conductor of the Work, Treasurer, Recorder, Captain of the Guard, Conductor of the Council, Steward, and Sentinel.

**IM:** The Steward's station?

**CG:** At the entrance to the Secret Vault.

**IM:** (\*\*) (All officers rise except the Illustrious Master) Companion Steward, your duty?

**St:** To guard the entrance to the Secret Vault with sleepless vigilance.

**IM:** The Conductor of the Council's station?

**St:** In the South.

**IM:** Companion Conductor of the Council, your duty?

**CC:** To prepare, introduce and conduct all candidates for reception and greeting; examine visitors and see that they are properly accommodated.

**IM:** The Captain of the Guard's station?

**CC:** In the West.

**IM:** Companion Captain of the Guard, whom do you represent?

**CG:** Adoniram.

**IM:** Your duty?

**CG:** To guard well my post, and suffer none to pass it but the select, the faithful, and the worthy; to aid in organizing and preserving order and decorum in the Council; to obey the commands of my chief and be near at hand to see them duly executed.

**IM:** The Recorder's station?

**CG:** On the left of the Illustrious Council.

**IM:** Companion Recorder, your duty?

**Rec:** To observe the will and pleasure of the Illustrious Master, and record the proceedings of the Council so far as the same are proper to be written.

**IM:** The Treasurer's station?

**Rec:** On the right of the Illustrious Council.

**IM:** Companion Treasurer, your duty?

**Tr:** To number and weigh out the shekels of the Sanctuary, and provide for the helpless orphans.

**IM:** The Principal Conductor of the Work's station?

**Tr:** On the left of the Illustrious Master.

**IM:** Companion Principal Conductor of the Work, whom do you represent?

**PCW:** Hiram Abiff

**IM:** Your duty?

**PCW:** To sound the silver trumpet at early dawn and eve of day, when the Sun's first and last rays guild the mountain tops, announce high twelve, and proclaim the time for refreshment and labor.

**IM:** The Deputy Master's station?

**PCW:** On the right of the Illustrious Master.

**IM:** Companion Deputy Master, your duty?

**DM:** As the representative of Hiram King of Tyre with the Illustrious Master in Council, to exhibit the fellowship of Kings; to brighten the chain of friendship; to furnish memorials of the ancient craft, and to aid and support my chief in all the requirements of his office.

**IM:** The Illustrious Master's station?

**DM:** In the East of the Ninth Arch.

**IM:** His duty?

**DM:** As the representative of Solomon King of Israel in Council, to recite the secret traditions; to illustrate the moral principles of our order; to cherish the worthy, and hold in due veneration the ancient landmarks.

**IM:** Companion Captain of the Guard, what is the hour?

**CG:** Nine at night.

**IM:** *(Rises) (\*\*\*) (All rise)* Since it is nine at night, it is the time to resume our labors. The Companions will repair to their several stations, and, after the regular alarm of the mysterious nine, each will resume his labors as he may be directed. Give your orders accordingly.

**CG:** Companions, it is the order of the Illustrious Master that you repair to your several stations and, after the regular alarm of the mysterious nine, each will resume his labors as he may be directed.

**IM:** Companions, attend to giving the Signs.

*(All present will give the signs in unison with the Illustrious Master as follows: 1: ha--- to he--; 2: pl--- ou- ey--; 3: ch-- of- ha--- (le-- ha-- fi--); 4: bo-- qu----- an-- th---- am----- th- ru-----. After each sign, drop hands to side before giving the next sign.)*

**IM:** *(\*\*\* \*\*\*)*.

**DM:** *(\*\*\* \*\*\*)*.

**PCW:** *(\*\*\* \*\*\*)*.

**IM:** Companions, let us pray. *(Illustrious Master may give the prayer or call on the Chaplain thus:)* Companion Chaplain, you will lead us in our devotions.

#### **PRAYER**

May the Supreme Grand Master graciously preside over all our Councils, and direct us in all such things as He will be pleased to approve and bless. May our profession as Masons be the rule of our conduct as men. May our secret retreat ever continue to be the resort of the just and merciful; the seat of the moral virtues, and the home of the select. Amen.

**Response:** So mote it be.

**IM:** I now declare \_\_\_\_\_ Council Number \_\_\_\_\_ of Select Masters duly opened. Companion Captain of the Guard, you will inform the Sentinel; Companion Conductor of the Council, attend at the Altar.

**CG:** Companion Steward, inform the Sentinel.

*(Conductor of the Council and Steward leave their stations simultaneously to perform their respective duties.*

*Conductor of the Council goes to Altar, opens Bible at Exodus 16:32-35, places Square and Compass on left hand page, gives first two signs, (pl--- ou- ey--and ch-- of-ha---) which are acknowledged by Illustrious Master, and returns to his station.)*

**St:** *(At the door) (\*\*\*)*

**Sen:** *(Outside) (\*\*\*) (\*\*\*) (\*\*\*)*.

**St:** *(Opens door)* Companion Sentinel, the Council is duly opened.

*(Steward closes door, gives (\*) answered by Sentinel (\*) and returns to his station.)*

**Stew:** *(At his station)* Companion Captain of the Guard, the Sentinel is informed.

**CG:** Illustrious Master, your order has been obeyed.

**IM:** *(\*) (All are seated.)*

*-End of opening-*

## CLOSING (SELECT MASTER DEGREE)

**IM:** (\*) Companion Captain of the Guard, (*Captain of the Guard rises*) I am about to close this Council. You will see that the Secret Vault is securely guarded.

**CG:** Companion Steward, (*Steward rises*) see that the Secret Vault is securely guarded, and inform the Sentinel that the Illustrious Master is about to close \_\_\_\_\_ Council Number \_\_\_\_\_ of Select Masters. Direct him to take due notice thereof and guard accordingly.

**St:** (*At the door*) (\*\*\*) (\*\*\*) answered by Sentinel (\*\*\*) (\*\*\*) (*Stew opens door*) Companion Sentinel, the Illustrious Master is about to close \_\_\_\_\_ Council Number \_\_\_\_\_ of Select Masters. Take due notice thereof and guard accordingly.

(*Steward closes door, gives one knock (\*) answered by Sentinel (\*) and returns to his station.*)

**St:** Companion Captain of the Guard, the Sentinel is informed. (*Steward is seated*)

**CG:** Illustrious Master, the Secret Vault is secure.

**IM:** Companion Captain of the Guard, are you a Select Master?

**CG:** I am acknowledged as such and have wrought my regular hours.

**IM:** What are the regular hours?

**CG:** From nine at night 'till twelve, the time when prying eyes are closed in sleep.

**IM:** Where were you greeted as a Select Master?

**CG:** In a legally constituted Council of Select Masters assembled in a place representing the Secret Vault erected by King Solomon under the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Temple.

**IM:** Whom did you represent?

**CG:** One of those who for their fidelity and skill were selected to assist in building the Secret Vault.

**IM:** How many were employed in the erection of the Secret Vault?

**CG:** Twenty-two from Gebal, Ahishar, Adoniram, and our three Grand Masters, twenty-seven in all, and no more.

**IM:** Why but twenty-seven?

**CG:** Because there were but nine Arches, and three only could be employed on each Arch.

**IM:** Where did the Secret Vault begin?

**CG:** In King Solomon's most retired apartment.

**IM:** Where did it end?

**CG:** Under the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Temple.

**IM:** For what purpose was it erected?

**CG:** As a place wherein to deposit a true copy of the Ark of the Covenant, containing imitations of the Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod, also the Book of the Law.

**IM:** Where was the deposit made?

**CG:** In the ninth arch of the Secret Vault.

**IM:** What countryman are you?

**CG:** A Phoenician.

**IM:** Of what city?

**CG:** Gebal.

**IM:** What is your name?

**CG:** Gi----

**IM:** What is your age?

**CG:** Three times nine, or twenty-seven.

**IM:** What are your implements?

**CG:** The Sword and Trowel.

**IM:** How explained?

**CG:** As the Sword and Trowel were used by our ancient brethren for defense and protection, and to cement and complete the Secret Vault, so should we as Select Masters devoutly guard the inestimable secrets of our venerable fraternity, and unite and cement the brotherhood.

**IM:** What is the hour?

**CG:** Low twelve.

**IM:** What remains to be done?

**CG:** To retire in peace, practice virtue, and maintain silence.

**IM:** *(Rise) (\*\*\*) (All rise)* Companion Captain of the Guard, it is my order that \_\_\_\_\_ Council Number \_\_\_\_\_ of Select Masters be now closed and stand closed until its next stated assembly, unless especially convened by order, of which due and timely notice will be given. Proclaim this to the Companions present, that having due notice thereof, they will govern themselves accordingly.

**CG:** Companions, it is the order of the Illustrious Master that \_\_\_\_\_ Council Number \_\_\_\_\_ of Select Masters be now closed and stand closed until its next stated assembly, unless especially convened by order, of which due and timely notice will be given. Take due notice thereof and govern yourselves accordingly.

**IM:** Companions, attend to giving the Signs.

*(IM will lead in giving all signs from the R.M. through the S.M. degrees.)*

**PCW:** *(\*\*\* \*\*\*)*

**DM:** *(\*\*\* \*\*\*)*

**IM:** *(\*\*\* \*\*\*)*

#### **CHARGE AT CLOSING**

Companions, being about to quit this sacred retreat, to mix again with the world, let us not forget, amid the cares and vicissitudes of active life, the bright example of sincere friendship, so beautifully illustrated in the lives of the founders of this degree. Let us take the lesson home with us; and may it strengthen the bonds of fraternal love between us; incite our hearts to duty, and our desires to wisdom. Let us exercise Charity, cherish Hope,

walk in Faith. And may that moral principle, which is the mystic cement of our fellowship, remain with us and bless us. Amen.

**Response:** So mote it be.

**IM:** I now declare this Council duly closed. Companion Captain of the Guard, inform the Sentinel. Companion Conductor of the Council, attend at the Altar.

**CG:** Companion Steward, inform the Sentinel.

*(Conductor of the Council and the Steward leave their stations simultaneously to perform their respective duties.)*

**CC:** *(goes to Altar, closes Bible and returns to his station.)*

**Stew:** *(At the door) (\*\*\*) answered by Sentinel (\*\*\*) (Steward opens door) Companion Sentinel, this Council is closed. (Door is left open; the Steward returns to his station.)*

**Stew:** Companion Captain of the Guard, the Sentinel is informed.

**CG:** Illustrious Master, your order has been obeyed.

**IM:** (\*)

*-End of closing-*