

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

PROLOGUE	1
APRONS, DRESS AND PARAPHERNALIA	2
APRONS.....	2
DRESS.....	2
PARAPHERNALIA.....	2
OFFICERS	3
SELECT MASTER DEGREE	5
AHISHAR'S SOLILOQUY (Optional).....	8
WORK.....	8
OBLIGATION.....	10
HISTORICAL LECTURE.....	15
APRON LECTURE.....	16
CHARGE TO THE CANDIDATE.....	17

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 24th 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.

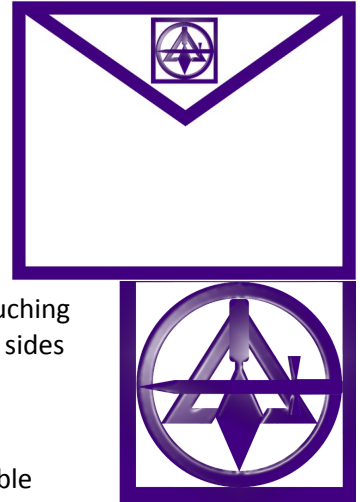
APRONS, DRESS AND PARAPHERNALIA

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

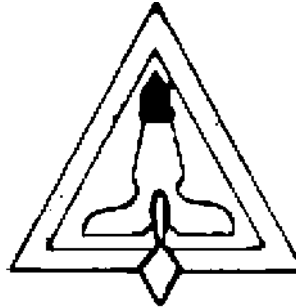
- A representation of the nine arches.
- Three small tables for stations in the East.
- One seven branched candelabra. One Royal Arch Ark, with Triangular bronze plate containing the Royal Arch cryptogram, Aaron's Rod, Pot of Manna, Book of the Law and three ancient squares.
- Trowels, swords, and shackles.

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

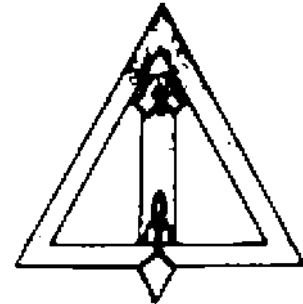
OFFICERS



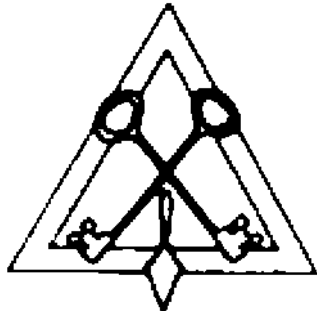
Illustrious Master



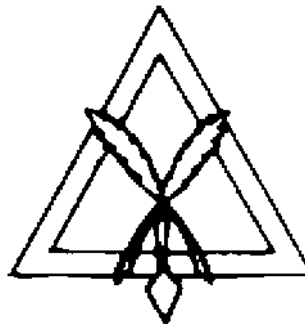
Deputy Master



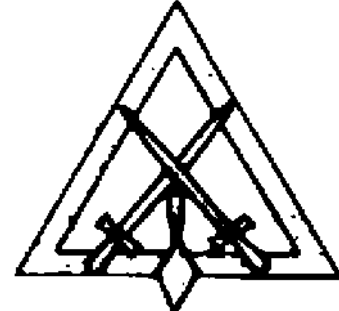
Principal Conductor
of the Work



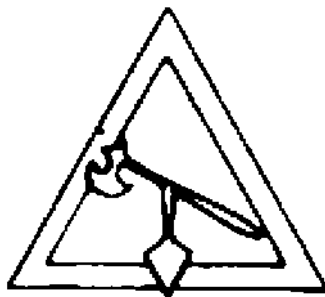
Treasurer



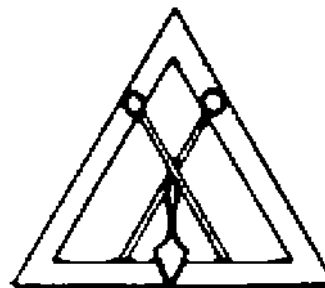
Recorder



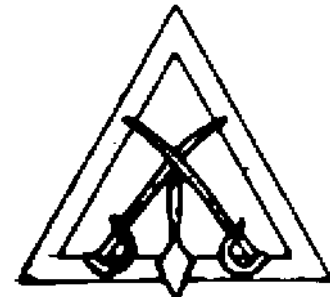
Captain of the
Guard



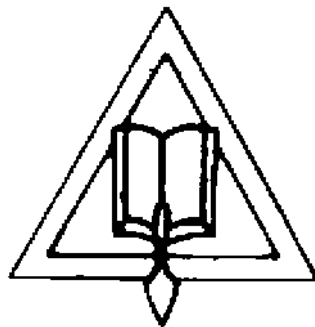
Conductor of the
Council



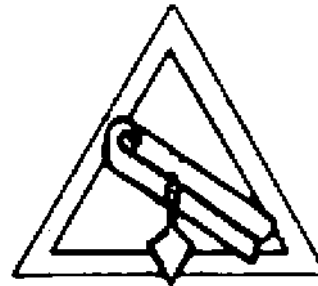
Steward



Sentinel



Chaplain



Marshal



Illustrious Master



Deputy Master



Principal Conductor of the Work



Treasurer



Recorder



Captain of the Guard



Conductor of the Council



Steward



Sentinel

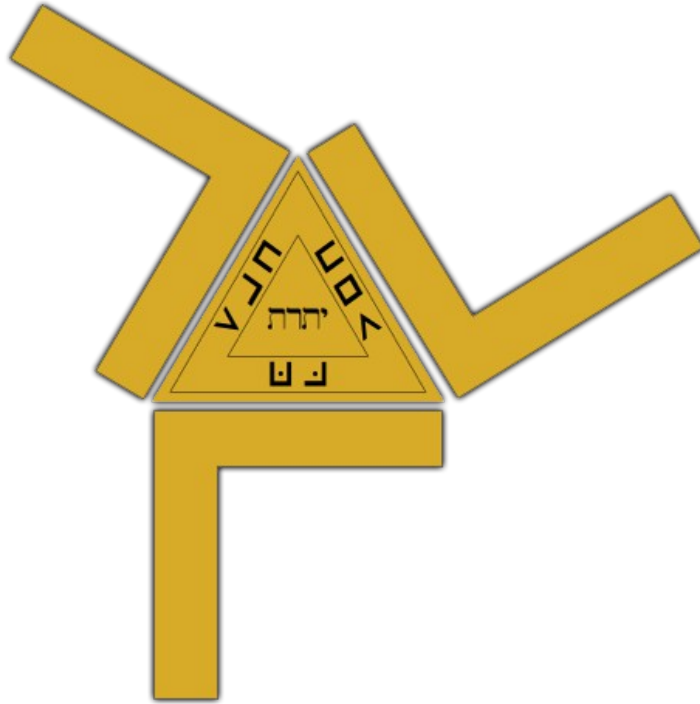


Chaplain



Marshal

SELECT MASTER DEGREE



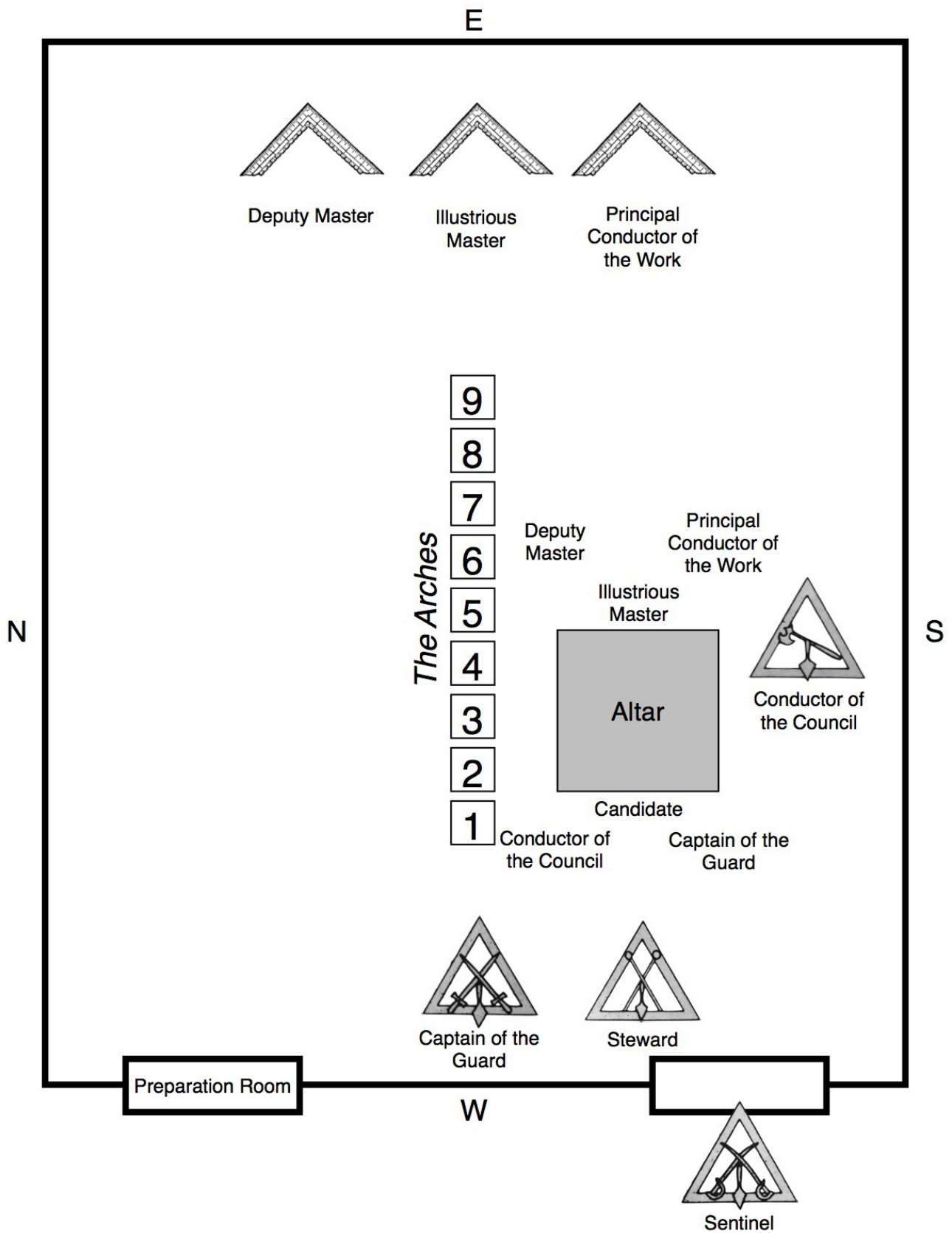


Diagram 1

In this degree the Illustrious Master, Deputy Master and Principal Conductor of the Work represent Solomon, King of Israel (KS), Hiram, King of Tyre (HKT) and Hiram Abiff (HA), respectively.

The preparation room represents King Solomon's most retired room, and the Council chamber, the Secret Vault with its nine Arches, eight of which are in process of construction, and the ninth completed. The west part of the room represents the first Arch, and the east part the ninth Arch.

Arches are placed directly in front of east leaving the ninth Arch as large as room permits. Diagram 5.

Altar is in the southwest.

Dim lights as candidate enters. Bright lights after the obligation.

The Conductor of the Council takes Candidate into the preparation room and instructs him that in this degree he represents Zabud, a particular friend of Solomon, King of Israel, and that he is to enter and proceed toward the East; if asked. "Who comes here?" to answer, "A zealous brother, desirous of participating in your labors."

Craftsmen with trowels are working on the first eight Arches. Each has a sword within reach.

The Captain of the Guard is guarding the first Arch with sword at carry.

AHISHAR'S SOLILOQUY (Optional)

Ahishar: *(as he falls asleep across inner door opening)* In truth this is the life of a mongrel dog. Evening after evening I walk here; up and down, back and forth, until my feet are weary and my legs scarce hold me to my path. Nine to twelve, night after night, "When prying eyes sleep," they say.

(Yawns and stretches)

I could do with a little sleep myself. Would I were with my friends at the inn by the City Gate. They know how to treat a man. But no, here I must stand guard where never a soul comes to share a word with me. Full three months since anyone approached this arch save those who work behind there.

(Walks a few steps in silence.)

I wonder what they work at? A precious secret it must be within those arches, to make a man suffer so. And - if I ask, wherefore I stand guard, what answer is given? Solomon says, "Be content good Ahishar, in due time you will receive your reward."

(Begins to lean back on one elbow)

"Guard well your post," they say to me. A foolish task for a man to guard against no one.

(Yawns and settles farther back)

Two long hours to pass before low twelve. My eyes will scarce open now.

(Falls back on floor asleep and snores)

(Only one active candidate should be challenged; however, all candidates should be brought in from preparation room and caused to step over Ahishar. Having given his instruction in the prep room, the Conductor of the Council, on the left, will conduct the class, single file, into the Council chamber and direct them to be seated on the northwest side of room. He will then take his position on the left of the last candidate as he is challenged by the Captain of the Guard)

WORK

CG: Who comes here?

Zabud: A zealous brother, desirous of participating in your labors.

CG: Advance and give the Sign and Token of your entrance.

Zabud: I cannot.

CG: An intruder! An intruder!

(The workmen quickly drop their working tools, seize swords and rush to the spot. Only two workmen should actually go to the assistance of the Captain of the Guard so as not to obstruct the view of the class.)

(At the same time the three Grand Masters enter hurriedly from the ninth Arch. They pass through the Arches with Solomon, King of Israel in the lead.)

KS: What is the cause of this alarm?

CG: An intruder has entered our Secret Vault.

KS: Put him to instant death.

(One of the guards (workmen) raises his sword as if to carry out the order on the spot. The Captain of the Guard suddenly recognizing the prisoner, steps forward, parries the blow with upraised sword and exclaims:)

CG: Hold! *(Turns to Solomon, King of Israel)* Illustrious King Solomon, are you aware upon whom you are about to execute this sentence? This is none other than your particular friend Zabud.

KS: *(Surprised)* Zabud! *(Approaches for a closer look at the prisoner, pauses a moment in thought, then says:)* Companion Captain of the Guard, *(Captain of the Guard salutes with sword; Solomon, King of Israel responds)* bind him fast and have him forthcoming when called for, or your life shall answer for his escape.

KS: *(To Hiram, King of Tyre and Hiram Abiff)* Illustrious Companions, Let us retire to the ninth Arch for consultation.

(Guards bind the Candidate under direction of the Captain of the Guard. They step back to northwest corner of the room. Candidate should not be taken out of the room. Captain of the Guard guards prisoner. As the three Grand Masters retire to the ninth Arch for consultation, the workmen return to their labors. On arrival in the East, the three Grand Masters do not assume their stations but hold their consultation standing in front of the dais. Curtains at ninth Arch remain open.)

KS: Companions, you are aware that Zabud has long been my particular friend and favorite. If it were possible, I should be glad to pardon him. My worthy Companion of Tyre, what is your opinion?

HKT: Illustrious King Solomon, our Obligations are such that but twenty-seven can be admitted. Our number is full. How then can he be pardoned?

KS: My worthy Companion Hiram Abiff, what do you say?

HA: Illustrious King Solomon, it would seem that curiosity and disobedience prompted him to enter. He should therefore suffer the penalty.

KS: *(Meditates a moment)* It seems indeed impossible to save him. Let us return to the first Arch and announce our decision.

(They return to the first Arch; Solomon, King of Israel in the lead. At the return of the three Grand Masters, the workmen cease their labors and stand silently by, watching and listening to the proceedings.)

KS: Bring forth the prisoner.

(On the order of Solomon, King of Israel, the Candidate is brought forth, Conductor of the Council on the left and Captain of the Guard on the right.)

KS: My unfortunate friend Zabud, your curiosity and disobedience have cost you your life. I have consulted with my colleagues and found them inexorable. The nature of our obligations is such that I cannot pardon you. You must therefore prepare for death.

(Conductor of the Council and the Candidate fall on their knees and remain in this position until ordered to rise.)

CC: *(Speaking for Candidate)* Illustrious King Solomon, I pray your Majesty to remember my great and sincere attachment to your sacred person, your service and your secrets; of late, finding a secret work going on with which I was not made acquainted, I feared I had lost your Majesty's favor and grieved in silence until unable to bear it longer; I humbly made known my fears to your Majesty, when you directed me to remain content, for a door would soon be opened for my reception. This assurance satisfied me. This evening having important business to communicate to your Majesty, I sought you as usual at your private apartment.

On finding the door open, I took it for granted that it had been left open for my reception, and entered. But I beg your Majesty to believe that it was not curiosity or disobedience that led me hither, but fervency and zeal in your Majesty's service.

(Toward the end of the above plea, Hiram Abiff proceeds to the west where Ahishar is sleeping, looks down at him for a moment and then returns to the first Arch.)

HKT: Illustrious King Solomon, if this be true, Zabud is not guilty of the charge alleged against him. His offence was owing to an unguarded explanation of your own. He ought to be pardoned and admitted one of our Select Masters.

KS: My worthy Companion of Tyre, how can that be? Is not our number already full?

HA: 'Tis true, Illustrious King Solomon, our number is already full, but Ahishar, the guard, (*points to him*) is no longer worthy of our confidence. He is sleeping at his post. Let him be dismissed and executed, and Zabud appointed to the work.

KS: My worthy Companion, I thank you for this advice. It shall be done. Companion Captain of the Guard, (*CG salutes with sword; KS responds*) let Ahishar be put to death instead.

CG: (*Goes to Ahishar and shakes him*) Ahishar, Ahishar! Awake! Arouse! Thou art condemned to die.

Ahishar: (*As he rises*) Mercy! Mercy! Is there no mercy?

CG: (*As they go out through preparation room door*) None for you. It has been extended to another.

(*After a few moments, Captain of the Guard returns and reports.*)

CG: Illustrious King Solomon, (*Salutes with sword; Solomon, King of Israel responds*) your order has been duly executed.

KS: Zabud, are you willing to take upon yourself a solemn obligation to keep the secrets of the Secret Vault?

Z.: I am.

KS: Then arise. (*Conductor of the Council and the Candidate rise*) Free him from his shackles, and conduct him to the Altar.

OBLIGATION

(*Captain of the Guard returns sword. Captain of the Guard and Conductor of the Council remove shackles. Captain of the Guard conducts the Candidate to Altar. If there is a class, Conductor of the Council directs them to follow the active Candidate to the Altar. Conductor of the Council follows behind and assists Captain of the Guard in placing them. The candidates should be arranged in a triangular position. One at the Altar and those behind each placing his hand upon the shoulder of the man in front of him. Candidates kneel.*)

Captain of the Guard active Candidate, and Conductor of the Council form a triangle back of Altar; Captain of the Guard on the right and Conductor of the Council on the left.

The three Grand Masters form a triangle in front of Altar, HKT on the right and two paces back of Solomon, King of Israel. Hiram Abiff on the left and two paces back of Solomon, King of Israel

As the Candidate is conducted to the Altar, the workmen retire to the sidelines and are seated.

Steward remains at his station.

Candidate is placed at the Altar, kneeling on both knees, both hands resting on the Holy Bible, square, and compass.)

CG: Illustrious King Solomon, the Candidate is in due form.

KS: Say I, pronounce your name in full, and repeat after me.

I, _____, of my own fr wl and ac, in th pr of the Su Ar of th Un and ths Ill. Cou. of S.M., do hby and he mst sol and sinc pr and sw tht I wi frvr kp and con the sec of ths deg, and wl nt reveal thm ex to hm or thm to whm thy of rt belong.

I furthermore promt tht I wi st to and ab by the B.L., Ru and Reg of any Cou. of S. M. of wh I ma bec a mem; also the Con., La and Edicts of the Gr. Cou. un wh the sa is holden, so far as thy may co to my kn.

I fu pr tht I wl ans nd ob all du si and su, given or coming to me in a constitutional manner, fm a Cou. of S.M. or fm a wor Comp. of ths deg, if in my pwr so to do.

I fu pr tht I wi he, ai and as all po and dis wor Comp. S.M., thr wid and orps, ac to thr necsts and my ability.

I fu pr tht I wl nt be pres or as at the con of ths deg upn any per unless he shl ha regly recd al th precdg degs frm E.A. to R.M. inclusive, and thn only, in a legly con Cou. of S.M.

I fu pr tht I wi nt ch, wr or def a Cou. of S.M., or a Comp. of ths deg.

I fu pr tht I wl nt penetrate th nth A. wtht per of th IM

All this I mst sol nd sin pr nd sw, wtht eq, men res or sec ev in me whtvr, bi mysf und no le pen thn tht of hvng my eys pl ou, my ha ch of, my bo qu and th am th rub, sh I ev kn or wfly vio ths my sol ob of a S.M., so he me God and kp me st in the du per of th sa. *(Bright lights)*

(Solomon, King of Israel removes candidate's hands from Bible.)

In token of your sincerity of purpose in these solemn engagements, you will kiss the Holy Bible now open before you. *(Done)* (In so doing you are acting on behalf of your fellow candidates).

This is the First Sign of a Select Master. *(Gives it)*

(The ends of the thmb nd fst two fin of ea ha placed at th eys; thrust th hands forward as tho ping ou eys.)

and this is the Second Sign. *(Gives it)*

(Strike the lft wri wth th edge of th ri ha and th ri wri wth th edge of th lft ha, as tho chpng of hnds.)

They allude to a portion of the penalty of the Obligation, that of having your ey-- pl----- out and your ha--- ch----- of-. With these signs you are to salute the Illustrious Master, on entering or retiring from a Council of Select Masters.

This is the Grand Hailing Sign, or sign of distress. *(Gives it)*

(Draw the edge of the ri ha fr th lft shldr to th ri hip, and th lft ha fm th ri shldr to th lft hip; then throw the hands to th lft as if to throw it amg th rub.)

It alludes to the additional portion of the penalty, that of having your bo-- qu----- and th---- among the ru-----.

The signs by which you will be enabled to pass the first eight Arches, and in which you were deficient when challenged by the Captain of the Guard, are as follows:

On being asked, "Who comes here?" you reply, "G-----." The Guard then says, "Advance and give the Sign and Token of your entrance." You answer with the Sign of Silence, thus: *(Gives it)* He responds with the Sign of Secrecy, thus: *(Gives it)* Then both give the signs of Silence and Darkness, thus: *(Gives them)*

(S of Sil: Wth th thu nd last two fin of th ri ha closed in th palm thereof, place th fir two fin diagonally across the mo.

S of Sec: Ri ha on the lft br.

Signs of Sil and Dar: S of Sil as above; lft ha ov th ey.)

With these signs you will be enabled to pass the first eight Arches.

(Solomon, King of Israel goes around south of Altar, with left hand grasps active candidate's left coat lapel inserting his first two fingers under coat lapel thumb on top palm out, with slight pressure, and says: "Arise" He retains grip until explanation is completed. All candidates will rise at the same time.)

KS: Arise, Zabud, henceforth be dumb and blind to all you have seen and heard. This is the grip of a Select Master. Its name is "Ish Sodi," which signifies, "Man of my choice," or "Select Man."

Zabud, being obligated and instructed, you are qualified to advance to the ninth Arch.

(The three Grand Masters return to the East through the Arches, close the curtains, assume their stations and are seated.)

Captain of the Guard follows the Grand Master and takes position guarding the first arch, draws sword and stands at carry, facing west.

Conductor of the Council and the Candidate will stand fast west of Altar until the above movements are completed, then approach the first arch)

CG: Who comes here?

Cand: Gi----.

CG: Advance and give the Signs and Tokens of your entrance.

(Conductor of the Council and Candidate: Give Sign of Silence)

(If there is a class, all candidates will give signs.)

CG: *(Returns sword and gives Sign of Secrecy)*

(Captain of the Guard, Conductor of the Council and candidate(s) all give signs of Silence and Darkness)

CG: You have my permission to pass the eight arches.

(As Conductor of the Council and candidate(s) pass to the ninth arch, Captain of the Guard will assume his station and be seated.)

CC: *(At ninth Arch) (***) (***) (***)*

HA: *(Rises and steps down to entrance)* Who comes here?

CC: Zabud, the King's friend, who has King Solomon's permission to advance to the ninth Arch, desires to be admitted.

HA: Illustrious King Solomon, your friend Zabud desires to be admitted.

KS: Admit him.

HA: Enter.

(Hiram Abiff resumes his station and is seated. Conductor of the Council conducts class into the ninth arch. The Ark should be so placed that the class will have a good view as the deposits are made.)

KS: *(From his seat)* Zabud, my Illustrious Companions, being deeply impressed with the zeal you have displayed in our service, have, in unison with myself, determined to reward your devotion by admitting you to the secrets of the ninth Arch.

God has revealed to us in His Word, that this city and Temple which we are now erecting, will, at some future period, be destroyed, the nation carried away into captivity, where the worship of the true God will cease for a time among them, and the forms and ceremonies which He has enjoined upon us to pursue, will

also be forgotten. To avert so dire a calamity from the Craft and Jewish people, He has enjoined upon us in His Word to deposit those sacred treasures, which the people most revere, in a secret and secure place, for He has promised us that in three score and ten years, He will restore this people to the land which they now inhabit, and He will put it into the heart of a Prince of the House of Judah to rebuild the Temple to His Holy Name, and He will give him a sign as a reward and encouragement for his zeal and fidelity, and the sign shall be the recovery of the Word.

You are fortunate in having come forth at this time, as we are about to make that deposit, and which you will now have the privilege of witnessing.

We will now make the deposit.

(The three Grand Masters rise, step down from the dais and form a triangle at the Ark, facing the class.)

KS takes up Scroll or Book of the Law and says:)

KS: The record of the Book of our Fathers says: *(Reads Exodus 16:32-34)* "And Moses said, this is the thing which the Lord commandeth: fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt. And Moses said unto Aaron, take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations. As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the testimony, to be kept."

(Solomon, King of Israel hands pot of manna to Hiram, King of Tyre, and he to Hiram Abiff, who deposits it in the Ark, after Hiram, King of Tyre has lifted the lid.)

KS: *(Reads Numbers 17:10)* "And the Lord said unto Moses, bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token."

(Deposit made as before.)

KS: *(Reads Deuteronomy 31:24-26)* "And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this Book of the Law, and put it in the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee."

(Solomon, King of Israel takes key and places it inside of Book as he says:)

KS: Within the Book of the Law we will place a key to the characters upon the Ark.

(Deposit made as before.)

KS: We will now deposit on the top of the Ark, this triangle containing the Master's Word or Great and Sacred Name *(Done)* And that it may be known that this Ark contains treasures belonging to the craft, we will place our three squares on the sides of the triangle.

(After the squares are placed, Solomon, King of Israel raises his hands and prays - extemporaneously or as follows:)

O Lord God of Israel, we ask that Thou protect and preserve these Sacred Treasures until it pleases Thee to reveal them to future generations. Amen.

All is finished.

(Hiram, King of Tyre and Hiram Abiff do not raise hands. The three Grand Masters resume stations and are seated.)

KS: Companion Conductor of the Council, you will seat the Candidate.

(Conductor of the Council seats the Candidate, goes to his station and is seated. Solomon, King of Israel or an appointed Companion will take position in front center of the class and give the Historical Lecture.)

HISTORICAL LECTURE

In giving the history of this degree, we revert to the building of the Temple.

Our three Grand Master's, Solomon King of Israel, Hiram King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff, being in possession of the writings of Moses and the Prophets, well knew that if the Children of Israel deviated from the laws therein contained, their enemies would be let loose upon them, their cities and Temple sacked and destroyed, and all the Sacred Treasures in the Sanctum Sanctorum would be forever lost. In order to prevent this evil, they agreed to erect a secret vault under ground leading from King Solomon's most retired apartment and ending under the Sanctum Sanctorum or Holy of Holies.

This secret vault was divided into nine arches or apartments. The ninth Arch was erected by our three Grand Masters as a place wherein to deposit a true copy of all the Holy Vessels and Sacred Treasures contained in the Sanctum Sanctorum above; also to meet in Grand Council to confer the Master Mason degree when the Temple should be completed. There were employed on the other eight Arches, twenty two men from Gebal, a city of Phoenicia, together with Ahishar and Adoniram, all of whom were well skilled in the arts and sciences generally, but particularly in sculpture. Their hours of labor were from nine at night 'till twelve, the time when prying eyes are closed in sleep.

During the erection of this Vault, a circumstance occurred which characterized this degree, and upon which the ceremony of initiation is founded.

One of King Solomon's particular friends, whose name was Zabud, discovered that there was a secret work going on with which he had not been made acquainted, and for a long time he grieved in silence. At length he complained to King Solomon, and received for an answer, "Be content, friend Zabud, the time will come when a door shall be open for your reception," meaning that when the Temple should be completed he should receive the Master Mason degree. This satisfied him.

One evening, having some particular business with King Solomon, he went to his most retired room in search of him, and finding the door of the Secret Vault open, and not guarded, as usual, by the Grand Steward, Ahishar, who was sleeping at his post, he took it for granted that it had been left open for his reception, whereupon he entered and was dealt with as you have already learned.

When the ninth Arch was completed, our three Grand Master's deposited therein an exact imitation of the Ark of the Covenant, and placed within it an imitation of the Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod, and also a true copy of the Book of the Law, or all the writings of the Bible up to that period, and that it might be known by whom and for what purpose it was deposited, they placed on three sides of the Ark the initials of their names, and on the fourth, the time when, meaning, "Deposited in the year of light 3000, by Solomon King of Israel, Hiram King of Tyre and Hiram Abiff, for the benefit of the Craft in general, but the Jewish nation in particular."

The Master's Word was then placed on the top of the Ark, engraved on a triangular plate of gold, on the sides of which, in certain mysterious characters were engraved the Key, or cover words by which the Master's Word may be revealed. A key to these characters was placed inside the Ark in the Book of the Law, so that if the Children of Israel should ever be carried into captivity, and remain so long as to forget their mother tongue, yet on their return, if found, by means of this key, the Word might be restored; and that it might be known and distinguished as the Master's Word when found, they placed on the top of the Ark their three Jewels, one on each side of the triangle, knowing that a description thereof would be handed down to the latest posterity. Thus was preserved the long lost Master's Word, now the Grand Omnificent Word or Great and Sacred Name, which Royal Arch tradition informs us was first communicated by God to Moses at the Burning Bush, and remained in use until near the completion of King Solomon's Temple.

It was then lost at the death of our Grand Master Hiram Abiff, and lay buried in darkness 470 years, when, as you are aware, at the building of the Second Temple after the Babylonian captivity, through the merits of Jeshua, Zerubbabel and Haggai, it was again restored to the Craft, in whose possession we trust it may forever remain.

APRON LECTURE

I now present you with the apron of a Select Master. Its color is white bordered with purple. The white is Ancient Masonry's final reminder of that purity of life symbolized in the first Apron you received as an Entered Apprentice; while the purple, the color of kings, exhorts us to rule well our own lives that we may be numbered with that select nobility who truly practice our Royal Art.

The sword designates us as guardians, whose peculiar duty is the preservation of those sacred treasures, which are ours through Masonic heritage.

The trowel reminds us that we are builders, and that our lives should be constructive in their influence upon the Brotherhood and upon the world.

The broken triangle speaks to us of mortality - of the uncertainty of our tenure of life, of the importance of an industrious use of our time and our faculties, and of the place of wages, refreshment and rest, which awaits our entrance through the gate of death.

Enclosing this emblem of our mortal life is the unbroken triangle, emblematic of Deity, whose love enfolds us all, whose justice and mercy are alike infinite and alike perfect, and whose Word points the way of life immortal.

May you wear this Apron with such honor that it may ever distinguish you as a Mason who is truly a Select Master.

CHARGE TO THE CANDIDATE

Companion(s), having attained to this degree, you have passed the circle of perfection in Ancient Craft Masonry. In the capacity of Select Master you must be sensible that your obligations are increased in proportion to your privileges. Let it be your constant care to prove yourself worthy of the confidence reposed in you, and of the high honor conferred, in admitting you to this select degree.

Let uprightness and integrity attend your steps; let justice and mercy mark your conduct; let fervency and zeal stimulate you in the discharge of the various duties incumbent upon you; but suffer not an idle or impertinent curiosity to lead you astray, or betray you into danger.

Be deaf to every insinuation, which would have a tendency to weaken your resolution, or tempt you to an act of disobedience.

Be voluntarily dumb and blind, when the exercise of those faculties would endanger the peace of your mind, or the probity of your conduct; and let silence and secrecy, those cardinal virtues of a Select Master, on all necessary occasions, be scrupulously observed.

By a steady adherence to the important instructions contained in this degree, you will merit the approbation of the select number with whom you are associated, and will enjoy the high satisfaction of having acted well your part in the important enterprise in which you are engaged, and after having wrought your regular hours, may be admitted to participate in all the privileges of a Select Master.