

Grand Lodge of Nebraska, A.F. & A.M.
Masonic Continuing Education Course

Entered Apprentice

This manual does not disclose any of the esoteric portions of the ritual. The contents of this manual therefore may be discussed with, and read by, any person interested in acquiring knowledge about Freemasonry. This manual has been produced for the use in this "Online Masonic Education Course"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Course
Freemasonry Defined
The Purpose of Freemasonry
Origin of Freemasonry
Short History of Freemasonry
Short History of Masonry in Nebraska
Transition from Operative to Speculative
Transition from Speculative to Applied
King Solomon's Temple
Is Freemasonry a Secret Society?
Is Freemasonry a Religion?
Freemasonry Attitude to Politics and Religion
The "Tenets"
Symbols of the First Degree
Working Tools of an Entered Apprentice
Interpretation of the Ritual of the First Degree

THE ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE

Qualifications of a Petitioner
The Secret Ballot
Preparation for Initiation
Duly and Truly Prepared
Entering the Lodge
The Method of Reception
The Holy Saints John
Prayer in Lodge
The Practice of Circumambulation
Kneeling at the Altar
The Obligation
The Rite of Destitution
The Northeast Corner
The Lecture of this Degree
The Charge

MASONIC DECORUM AND ADVANCEMENT

The Proficiency
The Language of Freemasonry
When to Rise and When to be Seated
Subjects Not Proper for Discussion in Lodge
The Worshipful Master
The Tiler
No Horseplay or Hazing
The Heart of the Masonic Family
The Rights of an Entered Apprentice Mason
The Responsibilities of an Entered Apprentice Mason
Famous Freemasons
Masonic Glossary: Entered Apprentice
Questions For The Entered Apprentice

PURPOSE OF THIS COURSE

The intent of this course is basically twofold: first, to provide the new and old members of Masonry with more information about the Fraternity, its structure, practices and symbolism; and secondly, to offer suggestive approaches for further research if one is so inclined. We feel that there is not only a great need for this type of information but also a great desire for it as well. Masonic education begins with the study of the rituals themselves. For some this is enough, but for others it is not. This course provides the next logical step for the student of the mysteries of Masonry.

FREEMASONRY DEFINED

Freemasonry cannot be defined in a few sentences or pat answers. One of the most common definitions is that it is a system of morality, veiled in allegory (or a story) and illustrated by symbols. This is true, but Freemasonry is more than that. While it is certainly a course of moral instruction that uses both allegories and symbols to teach its lessons, Freemasonry is also an organized society of men, a fraternity. It uses symbols derived from operative stonemasonry and architecture but not exclusively. Much of its symbolism is also taken from Biblical sources, especially the stories surrounding the building of King Solomon's Temple. Great stress is placed upon the development of moral and ethical virtues and the building of character, with Truth being the guiding principle of our lives. Thus, development of the inner man and charity are natural outcomes which further defines what we are. In other words, we are using proven methods to enhance the lives and spirits of our members in a tangible way.

There are also aspects of Freemasonry that enrich our lives and spirits in an intangible way. This part of Masonry is harder to define but is just as real. There is something very profound about Freemasonry. It seems to speak to a hidden part of oneself that responds with a deep reverence and respect. The deeper one takes his studies of the rites and symbols of Freemasonry, the richer his Masonic life becomes.

In his poem, "**When is a Man a Mason?**" the Rev. Joseph Fort Newton captured the essence of what it means to be a Freemason:

"When he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope, and courage-which is the root of every virtue. When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, as vile, as divine, as diabolic, and as lonely as himself, and seeks to know, to forgive, and to love his fellowman. When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yea, even in their sins-knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them, and above all how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt birds without a gun, and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child. When he can be happy and high-

mindful amid the meaner drudgeries of life. When star-crowned trees and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead. When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response. When he finds good in every faith that helps any man to lay hold of divine things and sees majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be. When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something beyond mud, and into the face of the most forlorn fellow mortal and see something beyond sin. When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellowman, and with his God; in his hands a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of a song-glad to live, but not afraid to die! Such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to all the world."

THE PURPOSE OF FREEMASONRY

What is the purpose of Masonry? One of its most basic purposes is to make good men even better. We try to place emphasis on the individual man by strengthening his character, improving his moral and spiritual outlook, and broadening his mental horizons. We try to impress upon the minds of our members the principles of personal responsibility and morality, encouraging each member to practice in his daily life the lessons taught through symbolic ceremonies in the lodge. One of the universal doctrines of Freemasonry is the belief in the "Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God (also often referred to within Masonry (in the fraternity's unique way of stating concepts in building- or architecturally-related metaphors) as the Great Architect of the Universe – GAOTU)". The importance of this belief is established by each Mason as he practices the three principle tenets of Masonry: **Brotherly Love, Relief** and **Truth**.

Masonry is also the custodian of a tradition of initiation. It is the duty of every Freemason to preserve and perpetuate this tradition for future ages. This is a heavy responsibility and should give pause to any who would seek to make changes in the body of the Craft, except those with the highest motives and deepest understanding of the principles involved.

ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY

How did Freemasonry originate? We are not sure when our craft was born. We do know it goes far beyond written record and we believe it was not always called Freemasonry. It is obvious that some of the ancient Mystery Schools of Egypt, Greece and the Near East influenced the ceremonies that are used today. These ceremonies were designed as tests, and admission was granted only to those who passed and were worthy of further instruction. Our ceremonies have some of the same elements, though probably of a less physical nature, while still maintaining its spiritual form. Specifically, there are points of similarity between our Fraternity and the society founded by Pythagoras and the Fraternity of Hermes at Hermopolis in Egypt. We can also find affinities in the great Mystery Schools of Isis and Osiris of

Egypt, the Dionysiac/Orphic and Eleusinian Mysteries of Greece, and the Mithraic Mysteries of ancient Rome.

Other groups that carried on like traditions include: the Jewish eschatological sect of the Essenes - from whom some believe John the Baptist came; the Roman Collegia of Artificers - an organization of builders - that Marcus Vitruvius Pollio (under the Emperor Augustus) led in the first century; and, the Comacine masters who flourished at the fall of the Roman Empire. The last group provides some link with the cathedral building projects of the medieval ages that were virtual bibles in stone. Our connection with these great schools of the past and other organizations is tenuous at best, but nevertheless, a study of them yields deep insight into our own Fraternity. We will refer again to these august institutions within this Masonic Continuing Education Course at appropriate places. It is generally thought that the medieval craft guilds gave rise to the operative lodges that in turn became the birthplace of Freemasonry as we know it today.

HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY

In the book of human history Freemasonry has a chapter of its own. When you have become the member of a Lodge it is a chapter you will wish to read, as much for its own fascination as for the light it will throw upon your path as a Mason. Here we shall tell you a very little bit about that story; not for the sake of history as such, but to enable you to understand better the three steps of initiation which lie before you.

Men in all ages and in all lands have had secret societies; have made use of ceremonies of initiation, employed symbols, emblems and means of recognition. When Freemasonry came into existence—nobody knows how many centuries ago—it inherited much from such societies, certain of its rites and a number of its symbols. Along your path of initiation you will encounter them; their unspeakable antiquity makes them more holy in our eyes.

The oldest of all existing written records of our Craft is a manuscript written by some unknown Brother in England, about 1390. That was nearly six centuries ago! But the document itself shows that even then Freemasonry was already very old.

At the time this document was written all Freemasons were Operatives; that is, they were workers engaged on buildings. Such a builder was then called a "Mason." There were many kinds of Masons, but the evidence indicates that those who were called "Freemasons" were those builders of a superior type who designed, supervised and erected the great cathedrals and other marvelous structures in the Gothic style of architecture.

Those Operative Freemasons, as I have just said, designed such buildings as a whole and in each detail; dressed the stone from the quarries; laid it in the walls; set up arches, pillars, columns and buttresses; laid the floor and built the roof; carved out the decorations, made and fitted the stained-glass windows into place and produced the sculptures. Their work was difficult to execute; called for a high degree of skill and genius; and required of them a great deal of knowledge of mechanics and geometry as well as of Stone-Masonry. They were the great artists of the Middle Ages.

Training men for such work called for a long period of severe discipline. Boys sound in body, keen in mind, and of good reputation were taken at the age of ten or twelve and apprenticed to some Master Mason for a number of years, usually seven; this Master Mason was such a boy's father in Freemasonry, his tutor, his mentor, his guide, who taught him both the theories and the practices of the Craft. At the end of his apprenticeship the youth was required to submit to exacting tests of his proficiency before being accepted into full membership in the Craft.

Where a number of Freemasons worked together on a building over a period of years they organized a Lodge, which might meet in a temporary building or in one of the rooms of the uncompleted structure. Such a Lodge was governed by a Worshipful Master assisted by Wardens; it had a Secretary to keep its books, a Treasurer to keep and to disburse its funds, a charity chest from which to dispense relief to the members in accident, sickness or distress and to widows and orphans of Master Masons; it met in regular communication, divided its membership into grades, admitted members by initiation—in short, it was in all essentials what a Masonic Lodge is today.

The young beginner in learning the builders' art was called an Apprentice; after he had served as such a sufficient time to give evidence of his fitness his name was entered in the Lodge's books, after which he was called an Entered Apprentice. At the end of his seven or so years of apprenticeship he was called into open Lodge, his conduct was reported, and he was then set to prove his skill by producing what was called a "Master's piece." Hitherto he had been on probation; if now he passed his test satisfactorily he was made a full member of the Craft. In the sense that he now stood on an equality of duty, rights, and privileges with all others he was called Fellow of the Craft—the word "Fellow" meaning full membership; in the sense that he had now mastered the theories, practices, rules, secrets, and tools of his trade he was called a Master Mason.

Completing their work in one community these Freemasons would move to another, setting up their Lodges wherever they met. Other types of Masons were compelled by law to live and work in the same community year in and year out, and under local restrictions. A number of our historians believe it may have been because they were free of such restrictions that the Gothic builders were called "Freemasons."

Such was the Fraternity in its Operative period; and as such it flourished for generations. Then came a great change in its fortunes. Euclid's geometry was rediscovered and published, thereby giving to the public many of the Masons' old trade secrets. The Reformation came and with it the Gothic style of architecture began to die out. Social conditions underwent a revolution, laws were changed; all these, and other factors, brought about a decline in the Craft. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Freemasons became so few in number that only a small Lodge here and there clung to a precarious existence.

Owing to these conditions the Freemasons adopted a new practice; they began to accept non-Operative members. In the old days only an Operative Mason in the literal sense could become a member; but during the two centuries I have just mentioned—our historians call them the "Transition Period"—gentlemen with no intention to become builders, and out of curiosity, for social reasons, or from interest in the Craft's ancient customs, were received. And because they were thus accepted they were called "Accepted Masons." At first there were few of these, but as time

passed their number increased, until by the early part of the eighteenth century they out-topped the Operatives in both number and influence.

As a result of this the Craft took a step that was destined to revolutionize it and to set it on a new path of power and magnitude. On St. John the Baptist's Day, June 24, 1717, four or more old Lodges of London and Westminster met in London and organized a Grand Lodge, and on the same day selected their first Grand Master, M. -W. -Anthony Sayer.

Within a few years of that date the Craft had transformed itself from an Operative Body into a Speculative Fraternity (by "Speculative" is meant Masonry in a moral, or symbolical, sense), reorganized the old two Degrees into the three Degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason; collected and collated the old Masonic manuscripts, produced the first Book of Constitutions, and was chartering Lodges in many countries, including our own, to take care of the Fraternity's membership, which began rapidly to increase shortly after the organization of the Grand Lodge. All this was the beginning of organized Speculative Freemasonry as we now know it.

In 1751 a second Grand Lodge was organized in England; prior to that Grand Lodges had been set up in Scotland, Ireland, and on the Continent. Early American Lodges, of which the earliest known was organized at Philadelphia in 1730, were placed under the charge of Provincial Grand Lodges, which were ruled by Provincial Grand Masters appointed by Grand Lodges in England or in Scotland and Ireland.

As one of the results of the successful termination of the War of the Revolution, American Grand Lodges became sovereign and independent. It was a question at the time of that happening whether there should not be one Grand Lodge for the whole of the United States, but the wisdom of the Craft prevailed and any such scheme was abandoned.

As the years passed one Grand Lodge was organized in each State, being sovereign within its own limits, no other Grand Lodge having any right whatever to control Masonic affairs under its Jurisdiction. Today we have in the United States fifty-one Grand Lodges, one for each State and one for the District of Columbia; on their rolls are more than one and one-half million members.

Speculative Freemasonry did not spring full-formed out of nothing in 1717, but came as a gradual development out of Operative Masonry. Through an unbroken line we can trace our lineage back to those builders of the early Middle Ages; we are Masons too, except that where they erected buildings we try to build manhood; their tools we have transformed into emblems of moral and spiritual laws and forces; their practices and secrets we have embodied in the Royal Art of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth; their rituals, mellowed, enriched, and made more beautiful with the passing of time, we employ in the entering, passing and raising of our candidates; all that was living and permanent in their Craft we have preserved and we use it in behalf of goodwill, kindness, charity and brotherhood among men. Such is our heritage, my friend, and as you enter into it you will discover it inexhaustible in interest, life-long in its appeal, a power in your life to enrich, to ennoble and to inspire.

HISTORY OF MASONRY IN NEBRASKA

The history of Masonry in Nebraska extends back prior to Nebraska's entry into the Union in 1867. The area that now comprises Nebraska became a part of United States territory in 1803 as a result of the Louisiana Purchase. The Lewis and Clark expedition passed through Nebraska both enroute to, and returning from, the West Coast. While both William Clark and Merewether Lewis were Masons, there were no recorded Masonic activities held during their sojourn through this portion of the country. During the early portion of the 19th Century, fur traders traversed the Platte and Missouri River Valleys, setting up posts for trade with the local Indian tribes. In 1820, the first United States military post west of the Missouri was established at Fort Atkinson, now Fort Calhoun, Nebraska. This post was constructed to protect those individuals involved in the fur trade, and was also intended to prevent incursions into that lucrative business by British fur trading companies extending their reach south from Canada. The post was garrisoned by troops of the 6th Infantry, and was in existence until 1827, when the fur trade began to wane, and the troops assigned to the fort needed elsewhere. While there is no evidence of Masonic meetings being conducted at the post during its short existence, it is possible that a military lodge may have existed in the 6th Infantry Regiment, or that there may have been informal meetings of brethren assigned to the unit.

John C. Fremont explored a large portion of Nebraska in the early 1850s, and his reports were instrumental in providing Congress with sufficient information to warrant the formation of a territory, a preliminary step on the road to statehood. In 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska Territory was officially formed, and it was shortly after thereafter that we have documentation of Masonic meetings within the territory that now comprises Nebraska.

On October 3, 1855, the Grand Lodge of Illinois chartered Nebraska Lodge # 184. The first meeting was held in April 1855 in the second story of a trading post owned by Peter Sarpy, one of the pioneer fur traders in the region. The altar was ostensibly composed of a bale of Indian blankets. On May 28, 1856, the Grand Lodge of Missouri issued a charter to Giddings Lodge # 156 at Nebraska City, and on June 3, 1857, the Grand Lodge of Iowa chartered Capitol Lodge # 101, meeting in Omaha. These three lodges would be the start of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska.

In September 1857, Masters and Wardens from those three lodges assembled and organized the Grand Lodge of Nebraska. Nebraska Lodge # 184 became Nebraska Lodge # 1; Giddings Lodge was renamed Western Star Lodge # 2, and Capitol Lodge # 101 was transformed into Capitol Lodge # 3. (Interestingly, if one wishes to trace the roots of the Grand Lodge back a bit further, the Grand Lodges of Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa trace their lineage through lodges in Kentucky and Tennessee and ultimately to colonial-era Grand Lodges in Virginia and North Carolina.)

The first lodge created by the new Grand Lodge of Nebraska was Nemaha Valley Lodge # 4 in Brownville. The lodge was created in December of 1857, and it, along with Omadi Lodge # 5 (South Sioux City) and Plattsmouth Lodge # 6, both of which were created a month later, were chartered at the Grand Lodge Annual

Communication in June 1858. The lodges followed the path of settlement, which, at that time, was along the Missouri River.

The first Nebraska lodges chartered away from the Missouri River area were far to the west, in Colorado Territory. Nebraska's Platte River Valley served as a corridor for thousands of individuals who traversed the area on their way to the newly discovered silver and gold mines in Colorado. Among those thousands of migrants, there were obviously numerous Masons, as the Grand Lodge of Nebraska issued charters to two lodges, Summit # 7 in Parkville, Colorado, and Rocky Mountain # 8 in Gold Hill, Colorado. These two lodges were chartered in June of 1861 and they, along with a third lodge in Central City, Colorado that had been issued a dispensation by Nebraska, formed the Grand Lodge of Colorado in August 1861. The Grand Lodge of Nebraska issued an additional two dispensations in 1863 to lodges in Idaho Territory. Those lodges had ceased to function by 1867.

While Nebraska and other portions of the West were still in the process of being settled, the country came near to being ripped asunder, as the Civil War erupted in April 1861. Nebraska remained loyal to the Union and raised a regiment of infantry (the 1st Nebraska) which was dispatched to join Federal forces campaigning east of the Mississippi. Not only did Nebraska supply troops, the Grand Lodge of Nebraska also issued a dispensation for a military lodge, named Monitor Lodge.

The establishment of military lodges had been a fairly common occurrence during the 18th Century, particularly in the British Army. Lodges were chartered by the Grand Lodges of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and assigned to a particular regiment. Consequently, the individual Masons in any particular regiment could hold Masonic meetings and initiate, pass, and raise candidates from that regiment. Moreover, they could meet wherever that regiment happened to be stationed, whether it be in North America, India, or in Europe. During the American Revolution several colonial Grand Lodges chartered military lodges that accompanied units of the Continental Army on their campaigns. After the Revolution, however, these military lodges surrendered their charters to the Grand Lodges that had issued them.

From the beginning of the 19th Century American Grand Lodges did not generally approve of issuing charters or dispensations to military units. Since nearly every unit was stationed in a place where a state Grand Lodge was already in existence, the thought was that it would be improper for a lodge, say chartered by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, to meet at a military post in Texas, where another Grand Lodge was sovereign. Given the fact that blue-uniformed Masons from Nebraska would probably not be welcome at a lodge meeting in Mississippi, the Grand Lodge of Nebraska decided to buck the tradition and issue a dispensation. Monitor Lodge was issued a dispensation in July 1863 and met until the cessation of hostilities in 1865. It had a highly successful, if brief, existence, initiating, passing, and raising brethren assigned to Union Army.

At the conclusion of the Civil War, settlement in Nebraska resumed anew, aided and encouraged in part by the Homestead Act of 1863 which encouraged settlers to settle and farm land. This population boom resulted in Nebraska becoming a state in 1867. More lodges were established in Nebraska, many of them still in communities along the Missouri River, such as Falls City, Omaha, Fort Calhoun, and Peru. However, as settlements spread west across Nebraska, so did

lodges. By 1871, lodges had been established in Fremont, Lincoln, Beatrice, Seward, Grand Island, and North Platte. A lodge was also chartered in Wyoming Territory in 1870 (Wyoming Lodge # 28). This lodge transferred to the newly formed Grand Lodge of Wyoming in 1874, becoming Wyoming Lodge # 2. By the end of the 19th Century, lodges had been established throughout the state of Nebraska, and two other Grand Lodges, Colorado and Wyoming, could trace their roots to the Grand Lodge of Nebraska.

Membership in the fraternity continued to increase through the first half of the 20th Century. Growth in membership occurred in the years immediately after World War I, but the Depression of the 1930s caused a contraction in the membership rolls, as some members found themselves unable to keep up their membership. Several thousand members were lost for several years in a row during the 1930s, even as lodges cut their dues. The economic turnabout that coincided with the onset of World War II stopped the loss of membership. Moreover, there was a tremendous influx of new members during the war years, and membership continued to grow until the late 1950s. In 1957, a century after the beginning of the Grand Lodge, Masonic membership in Nebraska peaked at 46,213.

Changing population demographics, the emergence of a new generation of "non-joiners" (the "Baby Boomers"), and societal and cultural changes led to an ever-diminishing number of new Masons in Nebraska. These changes were certainly not limited to Nebraska, but were widespread throughout the country. The membership problem was exacerbated in some of the more rural parts of the state, as large elements of the population moved from the villages and small towns to larger communities. Many small town lodges were forced to close or consolidate with other nearby lodges.

By the late 1990s, the leaders of Nebraska Masonry had recognized these problems, and set about to solve them. In 1986, direct solicitation of potential members was permitted, and the ritual sections that needed to be memorized by candidates were reduced in scale. One day classes were initiated in 1996 in order to accommodate the busy schedules of younger adult males, who were now more deeply involved with home, school, and civic activities than members of preceding generations had been. Over the past decade, these efforts have borne some fruit. More new members are created each year than are lost to death: however, suspensions, generally for non-payment of dues, still result in a net membership loss, although the percentage of the net loss has greatly declined. Nebraska Masonic leaders are now focusing on retaining membership, and have embarked upon several programs to accomplish that goal.

Interestingly enough, the one-day degrees and shortening of the required memorization has not had a negative effect on either the quality or quantity of the candidates. Many of the men who became Masons in one-day degrees recruit their friends to go through in the traditional manner, believing that the lessons they learned are better taught in slower, shorter segments. Additionally, many of the candidates who had only to learn the shorter form of the ritual, have since become fascinated with ritual work, and have taken efforts to become proficient in the ritual of all the degrees. Finally, there has been no statistical difference in the suspension rate for Masons who entered the fraternity during one-day degrees, or by the more traditional method.

The Nebraska Grand Lodge also displayed great foresight by being the second Grand Lodge in the country (immediately after Connecticut), to recognize Prince Hall Masonry. This was done in 1990. Moreover, this was full recognition, with no limits imposed on lodge visits or interaction between members of the two grand lodges. Nebraska's bold step has paved the way for other grand lodges to follow suit. Indeed, most jurisdictions in the United States have recognized their Prince Hall counterparts.

As previously noted, efforts must be made to retain members, as well as to attract them. Lodges must become relevant in the communities in which they are located, and social activities developed to go hand-in-hand with the ritual activities of the lodge. Friendship dinners, involving all the appendant bodies, have proven to be a great way to recruit new members. Lodge sponsorship of activities, such as the Children's Identification Program (CHIP); have focused community attention on the lodges, thereby providing much positive reaction and an increase in membership. Masonic education forums have filled gaps in the knowledge of many Masons, not just the new members, and have become extremely popular.

In 2001 the United States again found itself in an unwanted war as terrorists attacked New York City and Washington, D. C. As in years past, many of those men serving in our armed forces were also Masons. As they deployed overseas to fight the nation's enemies they, like their forbears in other conflicts, desired to be able to meet with their brethren in Masonic communication. The Grand Lodge of Nebraska, using the example of the Civil War era Monitor Lodge, in 2005 granted a dispensation to Nebraska Masons to meet overseas. Swisher Lodge (named after a Nebraska Mason who was killed in Iraq) was formed and has held meetings in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Many of these outreach activities and efforts to bring Masonry into the spotlight culminated in 2007 during the 150th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of the Grand Lodge. Numerous activities were held in all portions of the state during the year, but the highlight was undoubtedly a ceremony conducted at the state Capitol in Lincoln. The rotunda of the capitol contains busts of individual who, because of outstanding service to the state or nation, have been elected to membership in the Nebraska Hall of Fame. There are currently 23 individuals who have been so honored: eight of them, more than a third, are Masons.

Nearly 400 Masons, wearing aprons and jewels, marched in procession from a Masonic building in downtown Lincoln to the state capitol. Once inside the capitol, a memorial service was held honoring those eight Masons. Among the eight were: William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, famed scout, hunter, showman, Medal of Honor recipient and member of Platte Valley Lodge # 32, North Platte; William Jennings Bryan, Congressman, three time candidate for President of the United States, Secretary of State in Woodrow Wilson's cabinet, and a member of Lincoln Lodge # 19; and John J. Pershing, Commander in Chief of the American Expeditionary Force in Europe during World War I and also a member of Lincoln Lodge # 19.

While Nebraska Masonry honors its past, we look forward to the future with unabated enthusiasm. We believe the best years of Masonry are yet to come.

TRANSITION FROM OPERATIVE TO SPECULATIVE

What is the difference between "Operative" and "Speculative" Masonry? Operative refers to the time in our history when Masons actually performed the physical labor of building. They were the best at their craft, and they kept secret their methods of building. Speculative refers to the period of time when men were accepted into the Craft as "non-operative" members. They were not "physical builders", but "builders of character" instead.

We are unable to accurately pinpoint the time when we transitioned from operative to speculative masonry. The change was gradual and probably, stretched over a period of more than 50 years. It began early in the 1600's and may have begun with the acceptance of patrons into the operative lodges, as was mentioned in the Entered Apprentice Degree instruction. Other members who were not interested in becoming stonemasons, followed the patrons. Those who were admitted by consent of the operative masons became "Accepted Masons". Membership was desired because of the spiritual, social and cultural advantages. During this time, our Craft grew rapidly in numbers.

The decline of Gothic architecture and the reduced demands for great building projects greatly lowered the number of skilled operative craftsmen needed to carry on construction during this period. If we had not become Speculative Masons, our Craft would have been faced with extinction. Many of the institutions of that day did pass into oblivion; but by becoming Speculative, the Craft has grown to a point never envisioned by its founders. Much of this growth can be attributed to the formation of the premier Grand Lodge of England, when four old Lodges in London held a meeting at the Goose and Gridiron Tavern in June of 1717. At this meeting, a brother by the name of Anthony Sayer was elected Grand Master. From there, Masonry quickly spread over much of the world, and other grand lodges were established.

KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

The frequent references to King Solomon's Temple in this and other Degrees, has led to the false conclusion that the Fraternity was founded by him. Freemasonry became an organized craft many years after the reign of Solomon. However, our ritual is based upon Masonic legends connected with both Solomon and the Temple at Jerusalem, which has helped enrich the symbolism. The Biblical passages regarding the Temple can be found in the First Book of Kings, Chapters 5 to 8, and the First Book of Chronicles, beginning in the second chapter.

IS FREEMASONRY A SECRET SOCIETY?

The answer is no. A secret society is one in which the membership is concealed, the meeting places are kept secret, and knowledge of its organization and principles is unknown to the public. True, we have a few private practices in Freemasonry: a part of our ritual, our modes of recognition and the business of the

Lodge. Portions of our ritual have been handed down within Freemasonry for centuries and form a part of our tradition. However, our purposes, ideals and principles may be learned by anyone who inquires. There are numerous books on these subjects available to the public. All printed Masonic information, with the exception of our esoteric work, may be freely discussed in public. As Masons, we wear lapel pins and other Masonic jewelry, march in parades with our distinctive aprons, advertise the time and place of our meetings and openly sponsor charities. We can hardly be called a secret society. We do prefer to keep our rites private, because keeping them sacred and solemn enhances their initiatory value.

IS FREEMASONRY A RELIGION?

Again, the answer is no. Because of the nature of the teachings of Freemasonry, we require our candidates to acknowledge a belief in a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. Otherwise, the ceremonies would be meaningless. But there is no requirement that one belong to a particular religion or a particular church. That choice is a personal decision. It is the opinion of our Order that membership in our Fraternity will only enhance a man's experience in whatever religious community he chooses to belong. An atheist cannot become a Mason, because Masonry is built on the foundation of trust and reliance in a Supreme Being; belief in such is an essential prerequisite of membership.

Masonic ideals are not set forth in written creeds. For the most part, the individual Mason must interpret the rituals for himself and come to whatever understanding will satisfy his own mind and conscience, allowing others to do likewise. This is an example of Masonic tolerance, one of the primary principles of the Craft. Our Order seeks only to unite good men for the purpose of brotherhood - not to promote any specific religion.

Can a Catholic become a Mason? There is nothing within Masonry that prohibits a Catholic, or indeed, any member of any faith that acknowledges a Supreme Being from becoming a member. There are many misunderstandings by the public, and sometimes even our own members, concerning this issue. These misunderstandings have led to many false conclusions and created barriers where none exist, so far as Freemasonry is concerned. Some Catholic Popes regarded Masonry with disfavor and have issued edicts that condemned Freemasonry and prohibited membership to all Catholics. In spite of this, many prominent Catholics have become Masons. Our organization generally has given no official recognition to these edicts. We have chosen to follow a course of "silence and circumspection" since the first edict was issued in 1738 by Pope Clement XII.

FREEMASONRY'S ATTITUDE TO POLITICS AND RELIGION

In Masonry are certain basic rules and principles called **Landmarks**, which cannot be changed or repealed by any Mason, Lodge or Grand Lodge. These Landmarks are an expression of that which belongs to Masonry's identity; if they were cancelled out Masonry would cease to be Masonry.

One of the most important of all these Landmarks is that which forbids us to participate, as Masons, in any form of religious or political sectarianism. We cannot

question a candidate as to his peculiar beliefs in religion or politics; we cannot discuss such matters in any of our assemblies; and we cannot take any kind of public action with regard to them in the name of the Craft. A candidate must pledge himself to a belief in God and to a belief in immortality, and he must reverence the Holy Bible as a rule and guide for his life. The doctrinal interpretation he may place on these beliefs must, however, be left entirely to him. So also he must pledge himself to good citizenship, but his choice of a political party through which he works for the realization of his ideal of citizenship must be left entirely to him.

The Fraternity's attitude toward all such sectarianism is more than a negative one. It goes farther than merely to say "Hands off." It is rather a positive one, for it definitely prohibits all Masons from sectarian controversies in all forms. Such controversies are unmasonic that is, they are an outright violation of written Masonic law, and subject a member to severe discipline.

It is not difficult to understand the reason for this Landmark. Freemasonry exists for the sake of, is dedicated and devoted to, the life of Brotherhood. Brotherhood means that many of us, men drawn from all walks of life, with a great variety of racial characteristics and religions and political opinions, are brought together, and kept together, in a relationship of friendship, harmony, and goodwill. To maintain that harmony it is necessary that whatever passions and prejudices might divide us into opposing groups, feuds, schisms or conflicting cliques, must be kept out. It is notorious that nothing is more likely to divide and alienate men than religious and political sectarianism. For this reason sectarianism is prohibited because the needs and the welfare of Brotherhood demand it.

Freemasonry thus prohibits sectarianism within its own membership. But what, you may now wish to ask, is its attitude toward that sectarianism in the outside world which leads men to make war on Freemasonry itself? What is a Mason to do in response to attacks from the outside? This question is a pertinent one. During its whole history the Fraternity has been subject to attacks from without. In our own country a hundred years ago a coalition of certain churches with a national political party undertook to stamp Masonry out of existence. Two or three of the great churches of the world still maintain that same attitude toward it. At the present moment it has been dissolved by force by several of the powerful governments of the world. In all probability our Craft will always have such enmities to deal with, as does every other organization.

Our attitude toward such attacks is to ignore them. We do not fight back. We take the position that if some man (or group of men) disagrees with the teachings of Freemasonry that is his own private affair and does not concern us. We do nothing to invite, or to warrant such attacks, therefore they are no affairs of ours. Our faith in the truth and right of Freemasonry is so well-founded that we are certain it needs to do nothing except go on being itself in order to silence sooner or later any charges that may be made against it by any kind of enemies.

This sums up what we may describe as Freemasonry's negative attitude toward religious and political sectarianism. But it also has a positive attitude toward religion and politics, and it is to this that we next turn your attention.

That positive attitude in its most general sense takes the form of the great Masonic ideal of toleration. Tolerance has always been one of the Principal Tenets of our Order. What do we mean by tolerance? We do not mean that one belief is as true

as another, or as valuable as another; we do not advocate a general indifference to all beliefs; nor do we hold that all differences of opinion should be melted down into a drab gray of compromise. As believers in toleration we take the opposite position; we believe that one belief is truer than another, that one opinion is better grounded than another: and we want the truth to prevail. But we know that the truth can never emerge unless each man is left free to see the facts for himself, to think for himself, to speak for himself, to confront life's realities for himself. Let each human mind have a fair deal; let it be left free to observe the world for itself. This, we believe, is the one way in which the truth about any of the great subjects of human life will ever be found. Tolerance, therefore, is a positive and constructive thing; it encourages each man to think for himself, because how otherwise shall men learn in the long run to think the " same things. In all our assemblies we try to deal with one another, in so far as religions and political opinions may be concerned, in this spirit of fair play; we may disagree, but we try not to be disagreeable.

But Freemasonry's attitude is even more definite than this.

First, as regards to religion, as said above that Freemasonry is dedicated to, and devoted to, Brotherhood. But this Brotherhood rests on a basis of religion. Every Mason must believe in God and in the immortality of the soul. The Bible must be open on every Lodge Altar. A candidate takes his obligations upon his knees. Before engaging in any important undertaking a Mason seeks aid and guidance through prayer from the Sovereign Grand Architect of the Universe. This is religious, but it is not a religion. It is faith—but it is not a faith confined to any one creed. It is worship—but it is not a worship chained to any one altar. In the great words of the First Book of Constitutions it is the religion "in which all good men agree." It is the ground, which underlies all religions, all churches, all creeds, all sects. Once Masons stand together on that ground they may afterwards proceed to build for themselves this church or that, may incline to one doctrinal interpretation or another: the Fraternity does not interfere with them in so doing, but it insists that whatever be their private opinions they shall stand on that ground.

Second, as regards politics. Politics means the discussion and determination of matters of public policy. Shall a government maintain a large army and navy or a small one? Shall it charge a tariff on goods shipped into it from abroad? Shall it have a strong central government, or a weak one? Shall it allow freedom of thought and speech, or not? Shall it grant religious freedom, or shall it set up a state church and compel all citizens to belong to it? How shall it impose and collect its taxes?

Each question of this kind is a question of national policy, and therefore of politics, consequently matters of politics are of the utmost importance and concern to any nation. Every citizen, if he is a good citizen, will bring to bear on such questions his best judgment and will do whatever his duty demands toward putting into effect such policies as are determined on.

This is good citizenship and Masonry demands of every member that he be a good citizen. Just as we saw that the religion of Masonry is that common ground which underlies all religious parties, so is this good citizenship the common ground under all political parties. A Mason may adhere to this political party or to that, may hold one opinion about the tariff or another, may believe in a large navy or in a small one; nobody can interfere with him in so doing; but what-ever be his party or his

opinion, he must be a good citizen— law-abiding, faithful to the nation, loyal to the civil powers, as quick to do his public duties as to do his private duties.

To sum up: As a Mason you will never introduce into the Craft any controversial sectarian question; you will pay no heed to those from without who may attack the Fraternity; you will adhere to that religion in which all good men agree, and in your life as a member of the Commonwealth you will be loyal to the demands of good citizenship.

THE TENETS

(Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth)

The principal, or chief, tenets of Freemasonry are, Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. It is necessary not to overlook the word "principal," for it signifies that, while it is on these three teachings that our Fraternity lays the greatest emphasis, yet there are other teachings of almost equal importance, and in any discussion of our subject those others must not be lost sight of.

By a "tenet" is meant some teaching so obviously true, so universally accepted, that we believe it without question and always take it for granted. Examples of such teachings lie everywhere about us. Good health is better than illness; a truthful man is more dependable than a liar; it is better to save money than to waste it; an industrious man is more useful than an idle one; a wise man is a more able counselor than a foolish one; education is to be preferred to ignorance - these are but a few of the countless examples of teachings that no intelligent man can possibly call into question. Everybody takes them for granted. They are tenets.

When we turn to the Principal Tenets of our own Fraternity we are immediately struck by an interesting fact: Freemasonry considers Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth to be teachings of this kind! It holds them to be true in a sense that no man can question them: they are obvious, self-proving, axiomatic. I wonder if you have always considered them to be so? Is it not a common thing for men to consider Brotherly Love, for example, to be such a thing that, while it might be highly desirable, it is not practicable, and is therefore nothing but a floating vision, to be dreamed of but never possessed? It is challenging for Freemasonry to call such things "tenets," for it means that they are not only true, but plainly and obviously and necessarily true. Unless you can grasp this fact, unless you can see for yourself that the teachings of Freemasonry are realities, self-evident realities, and not visionary ideals, you will never be able to understand Masonic teachings. For Freemasonry does not tell us that Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth ought to be true, that it would be better for us all if they were true—it tells us that they are true. They are tremendous realities in human life, and it is as impossible to question their existence, as it is to question the existence of the ground under our feet, or the sun over our heads. The question is not whether we shall believe in them or not, for we cannot help but believe in them; the question is, what we are going to do about them?

Let us now reflect a moment upon the Principal Tenets, beginning with **Brotherly Love**. By love is meant the placing of the highest possible valuation on another person. A man's mother or father, his wife or sweetheart, his children, his intimate friends, he values for himself—not for advantages he may gain from them,

not for their usefulness to him, but solely each one in his own person and for his own sake. We work for such persons, we make sacrifices for them, we delight to be with them; that, in detail and practice, is what is meant by love.

What then is Brotherly Love? Manifestly, it means that we place on another man the highest possible valuation as a friend, a companion, an associate, a neighbor, a fellow. Merely to be with him, merely to spend hours in his company, to have the privilege of working at his side, is all we ask. We do not ask that from our relationship we shall make money, or further our business interests, or achieve some other form of selfish gain. Our relationship with such a one is its own excuse for being, its own justification, its own reward. All of us know that this Brotherly Love is one of the supreme goods without which life is a lonely, unhappy, ugly kind of thing. This is not a hope or a dream, but a fact—as real as day and night, or as the law of gravity. Freemasonry builds on that fact, takes it for granted, provides opportunities for us to have such fellowship, encourages us to understand and to practice it, and to make it one of the laws of our existence; it is, in short, and in literal truth, one of its Principal Tenets.

Relief, which stands next in order, is one of the forms taken by the general principle of Charity. One must be distinguished from the other, however, especially as Charity is most often interpreted. When we think of Charity we think of pauperism, or of chance poverty; we think of it as being a condition it is necessary for the community or the state to care for. A man is crippled or chronically ill, or he is the victim of a wave of unemployment, or he is addicted to some vice, such as drink or gambling, with the result that his dependents are left in want; to care for such a man is deemed usually to be a responsibility resting on the public, and as a rule the public discharges that responsibility through some form of organized effort financed by general subscriptions or out of public funds.

The Masonic conception of Relief is somewhat different from this. While it happens that now and then some Brother, through misfortune and no fault of his own, becomes more or less permanently incapacitated to support himself and family, and under such circumstances is cared for by Outside Relief, at the Masonic Home, or by his Lodge, such cases are the exception rather than the rule, and are not what is meant by Masonic Relief. The qualifications demanded of a petitioner are such as to exclude the type of men who, through indolence or vice, may be expected to lapse into pauperism or into chronic poverty.

Masonic Relief takes it for granted, instead, that any man, no matter how industrious and frugal he may be, may through sudden misfortune, or other conditions over which he has no control, find himself in temporary need of a helping hand. To extend to him a helping hand under such circumstances is not what is generally described as charity, but is one of the natural and inevitable acts of Brotherhood. Any possible conception of Brotherhood must, in the very nature of the case, include as a part of itself this willingness to give help, aid and assistance. Therefore Relief, as thus Masonically understood, is in strict truth a Tenet. If we are going to have Brotherhood at all, we shall expect this free and cordial spirit of helpfulness to be a part of it.

By **Truth**, the last of the Principal Tenets, is meant something more than the search for truths in the intellectual sense, though that is included necessarily, and is one of the things meant by Freemasonry's motto, "Let there be light." By Truth is

meant that if we are to have a permanent Brotherhood its members must be truthful in character and habit, dependable, men of honor as well as of honesty, men on whom we can rely to be faithful fellows and loyal friends. Surely no argument is needed to prove that Truth, as thus understood, is a necessity, that it is required in the nature of things if a Brotherhood is to exist, and therefore something we should all take for granted as being beyond question.

As said in the beginning, Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth are the Principal Tenets of Masonry. There are other Tenets, also, teachings of a truth and necessity so obvious that argument is never necessary to sustain them. You are urged to ponder the teachings of the Craft as you progress from Degree to Degree with this in mind. You may not find that any of them are novel, or exciting. Novelty, however, while it may at times have its own interest, is not to be compared in value with the knowledge that the truths on which Freemasonry is founded are eternal: they are never new, neither are they ever old; time cannot wither nor custom stale their infinite variety, the freshness of immortality is on them because they never die, in them is a ceaseless inspiration and an inexhaustible appeal. They are tenets of Freemasonry because always and everywhere they have been tenets of human life.

SYMBOLS OF THE FIRST DEGREE

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

The symbolism of the **hoodwink** is twofold: first, it emphasizes the veil of secrecy and silence surrounding the mysteries of Freemasonry; secondly, it represents the mystical darkness, or ignorance, of the uninitiated. It is removed at the appropriate time; that is, when the candidate is in the proper attitude to receive Light and suggests that we do not make the great things of existence, such as goodness, truth and beauty, but find them; they are always there; it is our blindness that conceals them from us.

The **Cable Tow** is a symbol of all those external restraints by which a man is controlled by others, or by forces outside himself. If a man does not keep the law of his own free will he must be compelled to keep it by compulsion. The removal of the Cable Tow means that when a man becomes the master of himself he will keep the law instinctively, out of his own character, and not under compulsion. The length of the Cable-Tow is frequently referred to in the language of Freemasonry, but many of the new Brethren do not understand its meaning. Formerly, a Cable-Tow was deemed to be the distance one could travel in an hour, which was assumed to be about three miles. In Nebraska this is any reasonable distance from which a summons may be answered, health and business permitting. Each Mason is bound to all other Masons by a tie as long and as strong as he himself determines his ability will permit. One may also consider the idea of the silver cord (Ecclesiastes 12:6) and the Cable-Tow.

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

The **Ceremony of Entrance**, by which is meant all that happens at the Inner Door and the passing between the Great Pillars, signifies birth or initiation and symbolizes the fact that a candidate is entering the world of Masonry. He leaves the darkness, destitution and helplessness of the world for the light and warmth of this new existence. It is not an idle formality, but a genuine experience, the beginning of a new career in which duties, rights and privileges are real. If a candidate is not to be an Apprentice in name only, he must stand ready to do the work upon his own nature that will make him a different man. Members are called craftsmen because they are workmen. Lodges are quarries because they are scenes of toil. Freemasonry offers no privileges or rewards except to those who earn them; it places working tools, not playthings, in the hands of its members. To become a Mason is a solemn and serious undertaking. Once the step is taken, it may well change the course of a man's life.

The **Method of Reception** of the candidate into the Lodge room is intended to symbolize the fact that our rituals are serious and confidential and that there are consequences for violating this confidence. It also reminds a man that his every act has a consequence, either in the form of a reward or a penalty. The method of reception also points out the value of a certain virtue needed to gain admission into the mysteries of Masonry.

The **Rite of Circumambulation**. Circumambulation means to walk around some central point or object. It is Masonry's name for the ceremony of walking around the Lodge-room, an allegorical act rich with many meanings. One of the principal of these is that the Masonic life is a progressive journey, from station to station of attainment, and that a Mason will always be in search of more light. The act is performed in a clockwise manner, patterned after the movement of the sun as it is seen from the earth, moving from East to West, by way of the South. The candidate's journey around the Altar also enables the brethren to observe that he is properly prepared. Circumambulation is an ancient practice found all over the world. Much the same idea as the labyrinth, it portrays the path of initiation as that of a journey. In another sense, it symbolically aligns one to a proper relationship with the order of the universe. There are references to circuitous routes in Psalms 26:6 and Job 22:14. And one may remember the action at Jericho. An equally significant ceremony is that of approaching the East. The East is the source of light that station in the heavens in which the sun appears when about to chase the darkness away. Masons are sons of light, therefore face the East.

The **Altar** is "the most important article of furniture in a Lodge-room". The Altar is symbolic of many things. As a temple symbolizes the presence of Deity, the altar symbolizes the point of contact. Its location in the center of the Lodge also symbolizes the place which God has in Masonry, and which he should have in every Mason's life. It is also a symbol of worship and faith. The candidate approaches the Altar in search of light and assumes his obligations there. In the presence of God and his Brethren, he offers himself to the service of the Supreme Architect of the

Universe and to mankind in general. The Altar is the point on which life in our Masonic Lodges is focused and it should be accorded the highest respect. The wisdom of the Master is said to flow from his station in the East to the Altar. Thus, one should never cross between the Master's Station and the Altar when a Lodge is in session.

The **Obligation** is the heart of the Degree; for when it is assumed by the candidate, he has solemnly bound himself to Freemasonry and assumed certain duties, which are his for the rest of his life. The taking of the Obligation is visible and audible evidence of the candidate's sincerity of purpose. The Obligation has a two-fold purpose. In addition to binding the candidate to Freemasonry and its duties, it also protects the Fraternity against someone revealing the modes of recognition and symbolic instruction. The candidate should understand that the great truths, which Masonry teaches are not secret, but the manner in which Freemasonry teaches these truths is considered secret.

Like much in the Fraternity, the roots of this practice are ancient. Making vows was a common practice in the Mysteries and was even a form of personal religion to the general populace. In many ways the vow defined their relationship with the deities of their homeland. Many vows were expressed in terms such as promises to a Deity in return for safe voyages, successful crops, healing, and so on. Although the nature of making vows and obligations has changed in modern times, it remains a very powerful method for setting direction in one's life and the building of character. The Latin *obligato* literally signifies a tying or binding. The relationship between the Cable Tow and the Obligation, along with the changing nature of this relationship as the candidate progresses, should not go unnoticed.

The ancient oral penalties are retained in our ritual to impress upon the mind of each Brother how serious a violation will be regarded by the members of the Fraternity. The Obligations were voluntarily assumed, and every means possible is used to impress the new Mason with the solemnity and the necessity for faithful performance of them.

The Three Great Lights of Masonry are the Holy Bible, Square and Compass. The Volume of the Sacred Law (no matter what religion) is an indispensable part of a Lodge. The Grand Lodges of the United States use the Holy Bible as the V.S.L. (Volume of Sacred Law) on their Altars. In our jurisdiction, a candidate may request to have his own sacred book present on the Altar with the Bible during his degree ceremonies. The open Bible signifies that we should regulate our conduct according to its teachings because it is the rule and guide of our faith and is a symbol of man's acknowledgment of his relation to Deity. The Square is a symbol of morality, truthfulness and honesty. To "act on the square" is to act honestly. The Compass signifies the propitious use of action and is a symbol of restraint, skill and knowledge. We might also properly regard the Compass as excluding beyond its circle that which is harmful or unworthy. The general public as the symbol of Freemasonry recognizes the Square and Compass.

The symbolism of the square and compass is seen in many ancient carvings and artwork. A stonemason's square has been seen to represent the earth, while the compass has related to the arc of heaven. Thus their union has represented the union of heaven and earth. The Volume of Sacred Law can also represent God's communication to man through scripture and inspired writings. The triple symbol can

also be seen as representing God's expression through the creation of heaven and earth.

The Three Great Lights are also consistent with the three-tier system of Blue Lodge Masonry. One way of interpreting the triple symbolism is seeing human nature as divided into three parts – body, mind, and soul with a Degree for each part. In the same way, the Three Great Lights are the guiding principles of the three natures: the Square to the body, the Compass to the mind, and the Volume of Sacred Law for the soul.

The Lesser Lights are the Sun, the Moon and the Master of the Lodge. The Sun is a symbol of that which is masculine, active, and aggressive; the Moon, of that which is feminine, receptive, gentle, nonresistant; when these two types of human action are maintained in balance, mastership is the result.

The **Lambskin Apron**. The Apron is at once an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason. By innocence is meant clean thinking and clean living, a loyal obedience to the laws of the Craft and sincere good will toward one's Brethren. The Badge of a Mason signifies, among other things, that Masons are workers and builders.

Other aspects of this most visible vesture of our Fraternity should be mentioned. The apron, as a mark of distinction, has been found in many similar organizations of initiatory nature including the Essenes, and the Mythraic Mysteries, and has been conspicuous on statues of some Egyptian and Greek deities. The lamb has always been a symbol of innocence and sacrifice. There are two senses in which innocence is being used here. Innocence in one sense is free from moral defect. The other sense used is that of being new born.

Another consideration of the white lambskin apron is that the Sign of the Ram begins at the Spring Equinox – the time of year that life is renewed.

The Masonic Apron is made up of two parts: a square and a triangle, representing four and three respectively. The symbolism of these numbers, as well as their sum, should be studied in connection with the form of the apron in the different degrees. Finally, it should be mentioned that the word candidate comes from the Latin *candidatus* which means, "clothed in white." The Apron is at once the emblem of purity and the badge of a Mason. By purity is meant blamelessness, a loyal obedience to the laws of the Craft and sincere goodwill to the Brethren; the badge of a Mason signifies that Masons are workers and builders, not drones and destructionists.

The **Words, Grips and Tokens** are our means of recognition by which among strangers we are able to prove others or ourselves regular Master Masons in order to enter into fraternal intercourse.

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

The same significance is had by the office of **Worshipful Master**, who is a symbol as well as the executive officer of the Lodge. As the sun rules the day, he rules and governs his Lodge; his title, "Worshipful," means that as the governor he

is worthy of reverence, respect and obedience; and he stands for just and duly constituted officers everywhere, especially the heads of the State.

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

The **Northeast Corner** is traditionally the place where the cornerstone of a building is laid; when the Apprentice is made to stand there it is because he is the cornerstone of the Craft's future. What the Apprentices are today Masonry will become in the future. Other considerations on the northeast corner are the following. The north in Masonry is attributed to darkness and the east to light. Therefore, the northeast is a place midway between darkness and light. Being midway, it is also symbolic of equilibrium. Furthermore, this spot representing equal light and darkness corresponds with the point of the Spring Equinox when the nighttime is equal to the daytime. There is some evidence that the lambskin apron was presented to the candidate at one time in the northeast corner of the lodge.

It needs to be mentioned that there is a seeming contradiction of this symbolism with physical reality. If we imagine the lodge's boundaries to be the eastern and western horizons, with the north and south walls being the Tropic of Cancer and Capricorn (where the sun reaches its northern and southern limits), then the day that the sun rises in the northeast corner of the "lodge" is the Summer Solstice near St. John the Baptist's Day. Sometimes symbolism overlaps, but in many cases it is a hint at a deeper meaning.

The **Entered Apprentice is himself a symbol**, one of the noblest in the whole emblematic system of the Craft. He represents youth, typified by the rising sun; but beyond that he represents trained youth, youth willing to submit itself to discipline and to seek knowledge in order to learn the great Art of Life, which is the real Royal Art, and which itself is represented and bodied forth and interpreted by all the Mysteries of Masonry.

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

Freemasonry makes extensive use of symbolism and allegory. A general study of symbolism is recommended to every Mason. Research into the historical uses and meanings of symbols utilized in the rituals, as well as a comparative study of mythology, provides a sure foundation for Masonic education. Especially recommended to Masonic researchers is a working knowledge of the stories from the

Bible. Whenever a person or story is explicitly mentioned or alluded to in the rituals of our Fraternity, it is our task to find out why.

In Masonry, the Lodge is the center of activity. It is symbolically the Temple of Solomon. All degree work (ritual) and advancement is done within the Temple. The Temple is considered to be an exact replica of the divine world. It is sacred; it is the center of the universe. Its structure, furnishings, dimensions, and proportions – its architecture - are a mirror image of the Divine. Usually a temple is high upon the mountain (to be closest to God) and is considered the center of the cosmos. It is a sacred space, a place out of the ordinary. The Temple is the place where the human is most likely to encounter the Divine.

Being Masons, we might expect that the symbolism of stones would be important. The importance of stone symbolism is pervasive in religious thought. We can find references connecting stones with the gods back to the remotest times. It has been considered by some religious historians as being an archetypal image representing absolute reality. Many of the old gods (i.e. Mithras) were thought to be born from stones (*petra genitrix*). Stones possess the qualities of stability, solidity, and everlastingness which are also qualities attributed to the gods. There are numerous references to stones throughout the Bible which allude to a link between the stone, the sacred, and spirituality. In Isaiah 28:16 we read: *“Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: ...”* In Psalm 118: 22 we find: *“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”* Also, in Revelation 2:17 we read: *“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”* We also read (Genesis 28:11) that when Jacob had his vision of the angels and the ladder reaching to heaven, he used a stone as a pillow. After he awoke: *“Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-El (God’s House).”*

WORKING TOOLS OF AN ENTERED APPRENTICE

The Working Tools presented to the candidate were those used by the ancient operative craftsman in the erection of the building on which he was working. To the Speculative Mason, these represent those moral and spiritual virtues, habits and forces by means of which a man is enabled to reshape the crude and often stubborn materials of his nature in order to adjust himself to the needs and requirements of human society. If a man has lived planlessly, carelessly, without aim or ideal, he must, if he is to become a Mason, learn to systematize his life, must adopt a trestle board, as signified by the **Twenty-four Inch Gauge**. If he has traits of temper, habits of speech, or defects of character that disturb or injure others, and interfere with his taking his proper place in the Brotherhood, as "knots and excrescences" on a stone interfere with putting it into its allotted place in the building, he must rid himself of them. This is represented by the **Common Gavel**. It is interesting that one tool (gauge) is used passively and the other (gavel) is used actively. One is a tool of measurement and calculation, while the other is one of force. One tool decides what to keep, while the other gets rid of the rest. While they do not contain the whole philosophy of Masonry, the various Working Tools allocated to the three

degrees, by their very presence, declare that there is constructive work to be done; and by their nature, indicate the direction this work is to take.

AN INTERPRETATION OF THE RITUAL OF THE FIRST DEGREE

The word "Apprentice" means a beginner, a learner. In what is the Entered Apprentice Mason a beginner? Of what is he a learner? It is a privilege to give you some suggestions that will help you to answer these questions for yourself in order that you may better appreciate and understand the First Degree which recently was conferred upon you.

The Masonic Lodge room as represented in the Ritual is a symbol of the world. The particular form in which this symbol was cast harks back to early times when man believed the earth to be square and the sky a solid dome; but while this form no longer represents our own knowledge of the physical shape of the world the significance remains the same; the First Degree is not intended to be a treatise in geography or astronomy.

"What is this world which is thus represented? It is the world of Masonry it is the Masonic career from its beginning to its end, including all that lies between. The Great Pillars through which the candidate enters it represent birth and signify that in taking the First Degree he is being born into the Masonic life. Already he has been born into other worlds, physical and social, but now he is being born into Masonry; therefore he is poor, blind, and helpless, like a babe in its mother's womb. As one of our scholars has said of the candidate, " The old life with all its accessories has dropped from him as completely as though he were dead. He is to enter on a new life in a new world."

That new world is an organized world. Masonry is systematic, proportionate, balanced, and exists in the form of duties, laws and definite work, supervised and regulated, controlled through laws written and unwritten, expressed through Landmarks, traditions, usages, Constitutions, and By-laws, guided and directed through officers vested with power and authority. When the candidate takes his obligation it is to pledge himself to uphold that lawful system; when he salutes the Master and Wardens it is to signify his obedience to the legally constituted officers; when he is willing to follow his guide and fear no danger he expresses his trust in, and loyalty to, the Fraternity, as should a child which as yet is unable to trust himself.

The new world is a lawful world in which caprice and arbitrariness have no part. It has a definite nature of its own, it is devoted to specified purposes, it is committed to well-defined aims and ideals. Its members cannot make it over to suit their own whims or to conform to their own purposes; they must make themselves over to it, must conform themselves to its requirements. One does not become a Mason first in order to become a member; he becomes a member in order to become a Mason, and if there be in his nature anything that obstructs him, he must make use of his Working Tools to remove it. Among the first requirements demanded of the Apprentice is that he shall offer himself as a rough stone, to be shaped under Masonic laws and influences for a place in the Temple of Masonry.

The world of Masonry is a complete world. Existence in it is fully rounded, and it satisfies the needs of the whole man— physical, moral, intellectual, social and spiritual. It establishes its own physical conditions suitably to its needs. It requires of

its citizens that they be good and true men, able to meet the test of the Square, the Plumb, the Level and the Compasses. It offers abundant opportunities for good fellowship and social contacts. It satisfies the mind with the great teachings of a profound philosophy. It worships God, prepares its altars, opens the Sacred Books and leads the life of prayer according to the needs of the soul. It is to learn such a life as this that an Apprentice must study to improve himself in Masonry; it is not permitted him to come merely for the loaves and fishes, or only to be entertained, or to seek for himself some personal advantage, but it is required of him that he shall build his life according to this trestle board of a well-rounded existence, assisted by guides and teachers, encouraged and inspired by experienced Brethren, and using the Working Tools and all other means provided.

This world of Masonry is dedicated to Brotherhood. Unless the Apprentice is willing and qualified to lead the brotherly life he will never be able to master the Royal Art. Unless in his obligations he pledges himself to live the brotherly life with genuine sincerity, the Mystic Tie can never take lasting hold of his nature. Unless he is willing to abide by the laws, everyone of which at bottom exists to define, regulate, or control the brotherly life, he will find himself out of joint with the Fraternity and unable to find foothold in the world he seeks to enter, All our ritual, symbols, emblems, allegories and ceremonies, in all the richness and variety of their meaning, point in the same direction; and except an Apprentice shall thus accept and understand them, he will fail to understand the Masonic teaching.

In taking his First Degree an Apprentice takes his first step into such a life as this; passes through the portals of birth into such a world as this; passes from the darkness, destitution and helplessness of the unenlightened world into the light and warmth of such an existence as this. This is the great meaning of the Degree; and the Degree therefore is not an idle formality, but a genuine experience, the beginning of a new career in which duties, rights and privileges are as actual as anything can be, so that if a candidate is to be more than an Apprentice in name only he must stand ready to do a work upon his own nature which may leave him a different kind of man.

As an Entered Apprentice he must therefore possess certain qualities. One of these is obedience. Except a learner is willing to obey his guides and teachers, there is no way for him to learn. Such obedience is not intended to be blind or servile, nor rest on fanaticism; it is only what is required of any man, young or old, who undertakes the mastery of a new art.

Another qualification is humility. An Apprentice will never be subjected to humiliation, but it is demanded of him that he have humility, a willingness to be led and directed, a freedom from egotism or conceit, a complete absence of any presumptuous belief that he knows already what he has only begun to learn.

With these he needs also industriousness. Freemasonry maintains a high threshold. It holds out no deceptive promise of an easy victory, but makes it plain that many obstacles and hazards will be encountered in the journey. Its members are called Craftsmen because they are workmen; its Lodges are called quarries because they are scenes of toil; it offers no wages or rewards except to those who earn them; it places Working Tools in the hands of its members, and not playthings.

Also it would be wise for any Entered Apprentice Mason to study a little in Masonic literature, not laboriously or necessarily at great length, but enough to familiarize himself with the Landmarks of our history, with our Ritual, philosophy, and jurisprudence. There is no need for you to buy such books; you may borrow them without charge from the Grand Lodge Library. Time invested in them will bring you a rich return in the future. These books may be obtained from Lodge libraries, from Masonic libraries located in our large cities and in some cases from public libraries. After completing the Degrees you will be in a better position to judge what writings will better serve your needs and it is suggested that before purchasing you give the matter the same serious thought and consideration you would give to any other financial transaction. Time, however, invested in Masonic study will bring you rich returns.

In conclusion you are urged to receive what has been said as to the nature of Apprenticeship, not as a series of pious moralizing or as a counsel of perfection. It is a solemn and serious thing to become a Mason. Once the step is taken, it may well change the course of a man's life, and frequently does. What has been said about the First Degree describes actualities and realities. Let that be all the more stimulus to you to do thoroughly the work of learning; if failure brings painful consequences success will bring a life-long reward. And our wish for you is abundant success.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A PETITIONER

The qualifications to be a Mason are clear and distinct. There are physical, moral and spiritual qualifications. In Nebraska, the petitioner must be a man of at least 18 years of age. He must be free of any previous felonious criminal convictions and be of good moral character. He must also believe in a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul.

The physical qualifications are necessary because the person must be free to make his own life decisions and be responsible for himself. The moral qualifications are self-evident for the viability of any brotherhood and the lofty ideals of our society. The two spiritual qualifications not only inform the entire structure of Freemasonry but also align the Fraternity with the great Mystery Schools and religions of the world. It is the transition from belief to knowledge that seals the mark of true spiritual initiation.

THE SECRET BALLOT

After a man has applied for Masonic membership, and his background has been thoroughly investigated, the lodge members vote by secret ballot to accept or to reject him for membership.

Masonry's secret ballot is another of its ancient customs. It has been rather aptly said that when a petitioner is voted upon for Masonic membership he undergoes the "Ordeal of the Secret Ballot". To be elected, he must receive an affirmative vote from each and every member present at that meeting. Just one member out of all present - there could be twenty, or fifty, or a hundred members in attendance - can drop the black cube and deny him membership. When you consider the moral yardstick by which Masons measure membership applicants and that only one negative vote can reject a petitioner, it would seem reasonable to assume that a large proportion of petitioners would be rejected for membership. But that is not the case. Many, many more are elected than are rejected. That fact is testimony to the

generally good judgment of those who recommend applicants, and it also indicates that the fraternity, by and large, attracts good men.

Much has been said and written, pro and con, about the secret ballot. Some argue, not without logic, that it is not fair for just one member out of all those who may be present at a meeting to be able to deny a petitioner membership. Others argue, also logically, that if even one member knows something negative about a petitioner, then that one member should have the right and the opportunity to prevent the entrance into Freemasonry of one he feels would bring discredit to it.

It goes without saying that a member who rejects a petitioner for mere petty reasons having nothing to do with moral fitness occasionally abuses the secret ballot, but such instances are rare and in almost every election the good man is elected to membership.

It is also undeniable that despite the requirements as to recommendation, as to background investigation, and as to unanimous secret ballot, an occasional undesirable person attains Masonic membership. Again, though, these instances are relatively rare. It should be remembered that if a member ever acts contrary to the rules and regulations of Freemasonry, he can be suspended or expelled from membership.

PREPARATION FOR INITIATION

Ideally, the candidate should find his way to the door of Freemasonry on his own. If a man senses the stirrings in his heart for a deeper understanding of life than that he has heretofore found, he will seek until he finds the Fraternity. This turning of the heart is really the beginning of his initiation. Therefore, each candidate who comes seeking light is said to be first prepared in his heart.

While Freemasonry is not a religion, its ceremonies are of a serious nature, dignified in their presentation and impart teachings that, if properly understood, obligate a man to lead a better life. To get the greatest good from the ceremonies, a candidate should first prepare his mind to understand and absorb these teachings. The candidate should pay strict attention to every part of the ceremony, in order that he may gain some understanding of the teachings of Freemasonry. The methods we use in teaching may be new and unusual to the candidate, but these methods have been used for many centuries and have not changed significantly since they originated. Finally, he should remember that every Mason in the Lodge room is his friend and brother.

DULY AND TRULY PREPARED

Being duly and truly prepared refers to the wearing of special garments furnished by the Lodge to emphasize our concern with man's internal qualifications, rather than his worldly wealth and honors. By wearing these garments, the candidate signifies the sincerity of his intentions. The symbolism of the Rite of Destitution reverts to those ancient times when men believed that the planets determined human fate and controlled human passions, and that there were metals by which each planet was itself controlled. In ancient initiations, candidates were compelled to leave all metals behind, lest they bring into the assembly disturbing planetary influences. While with us, this symbolism no longer has an astrological character. However, the old point about excluding disturbing influences remains. The candidate

is not to bring into the Lodge room his passions or prejudices, lest that harmony, which is one of the chief concerns of Masonry, be destroyed.

Being duly and truly prepared also refers to the state of a man's heart and soul as he seeks admission into our Order. "Seek and ye shall find. Ask and it shall be given unto you. Knock and it shall be opened unto you."

There are other factors involved in the preparation of the candidate that will be addressed in the next degree.

THE HOLY SAINTS JOHN

Freemasonry, long ago, chose as its patron saints, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. By doing this, the Brethren arrived at the conclusion that their patron saints belonged to a Lodge and that it must have been in the city in which they lived - Jerusalem. By this tradition, all Lodges symbolically come from one at Jerusalem. By tradition, also, every Mason hails from such a Lodge. By coming from this mythical Lodge, he proves that he hails from a "just and legally constituted Lodge."

PRAYER IN LODGE

No Lodge can be opened or be closed without prayer, which is offered by the Master or Chaplain. The prayer is universal in nature, and not peculiar to any one religion or faith. But the act of invoking the blessings of Deity is a central Masonic practice. At the end of prayer, each member responds with the words "So Mote it Be", which means in Modern English, "So may it ever be".

THE LECTURE OF THIS DEGREE

The Lectures given to the candidate by the Worshipful Master are intended to elaborate certain phases of the ritual, giving a broader explanation of the ceremonies in order for the candidate to understand the lessons of Freemasonry. The four cardinal virtues of **Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence** and **Justice** are explained here as well as the three tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

The form of a Lodge is an oblong square, or a rectangle. It extends from East to West (horizon to horizon) and between North and South. The covering of the Lodge is the canopy of heaven. It is not a coincidence that the two major patrons of the Masonic Lodge have their birthdays near the Summer and Winter Solstices where the sun reaches its most northern and southern limits. The East in a Masonic Lodge does not necessarily mean the actual point of the compass. The East in the Lodge is the station of the Worshipful Master whence he dispenses light and instruction to all his brethren. Some Lodges may actually have the Master sitting in another compass location, but the important point is that the Master is always symbolically located in the East and the other symbolic points of the West, South and North are located in proper relation to the station of the Master. Further instruction is given in the lecture regarding the Supports of the Lodge: the three pillars of Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, which also relate to the three immovable Jewels of the Lodge: the Square, Plumb and Level, which still further relate to the three principal Officers; The Master, Senior Warden and Junior Warden and the three Lesser Lights of the Lodge.

The three movable Jewels of the Lodge consist of the Rough and Perfect Ashlar and the Trestleboard. The Rough and Perfect Ashlars are precise symbols of the process of initiation. In a Hermetic sense, the Rough Ashlar is the prima material, while the Perfect Ashlar is the Philosopher's Stone. In Masonry the Rough Ashlar is a stone as cut in the quarry, a Perfect Ashlar is a stone madeready for the builders use. The Rough Ashler reminds us of our imperfections. The Perfect Ashlar reminds us of our hopeful attainment of perfection. The Ornaments of the Lodge consist of the Mosaic Pavement, the Indented Tessel, and the Blazing Star. We walk in a world of opposites: good and evil, night and day, hot and cold, love and hate. The Mosaic Pavement symbolizes this fact. Again, all of these symbols should be studied further to find out what they conceal and what they reveal.

THE CHARGE

At the end of the ceremony and instruction in each degree, the candidate is charged to perform his Masonic duties. The Charge given him explains these duties especially in their relation to the particular Degree. These Charges should not be ignored as mere conventionalities.

If you never remember anything else to explain to someone "What is Freemasonry" the charge in the first degree is quite complete.

"My Brother; as you are now introduced into the first principles of Masonry, I congratulate you on being accepted into this ancient and honorable order; ancient, as having existed from time immemorial; and honorable, as tending, in every particular, so to render all men who will be conformable to its precepts. No institution was ever raised on a better principle or more solid foundation; nor were ever more excellent rules and useful maxims laid down than are inculcated in the several Masonic lectures. The greatest and best of men, in all ages, have been encouragers and promoters of the art, and have never deemed it derogatory to their dignity to level themselves with the Fraternity, extend their privileges, and patronize their assemblies. There are three great duties which, as a Mason, you are charged to inculcate: to God, your neighbor, and yourself. To God, in never mentioning His name but with that reverential awe which is due from a creature to his Creator; to implore His aid in all your laudable undertakings; and to esteem Him as the chief good. To your neighbor, in acting upon the square, and doing unto him as you wish he would do unto you. And to yourself, in avoiding all irregularity and intemperance, which may impair your faculties or debase the dignity of your profession. A zealous attachment to these duties will insure public and private esteem.

In the state, your are to be a quiet and peaceful subject, true to your government, and just to your country; you are not to countenance disloyalty or rebellion, but patiently submit to legal authority and conform with cheerfulness to the government of the country in which you live. My brother, I would that you could fully realize what it is to be without a family, without a home, and without a country. And if you ever are tempted to say a word, or do a thing that should put a bar between you and your family, your home, and your country, pray God in His mercy to take you, that instant, home to His own heaven. Stick by your family, my brother, forget you have a self, while you do everything for them. Think of your home, my brother; write and send and talk about it. Let it be nearer and nearer to

your thought the farther you have to travel from it; and rush back to it when you are free. And for your country, my brother, and for that flag, never dream a dream but of serving her as she bids you, though the service carry you through a thousand hells. No matter what happens to you, no matter who flatters you or abuses you, never look at another flag. Never let a night pass but you pray to God to bless that flag. Remember, my brother, that behind all these men you have to do with, behind officers and government, and people, even, there is the Country Herself, your Country; and that you belong to Her as you belong to your own mother. Stand by her, my brother, as you would stand by your mother. In your outward demeanor, be particularly careful to avoid censure or reproach. Let not interest, favor, or prejudice, bias your integrity, or influence you to be guilty of a dishonorable action.

Although your frequent appearance at our regular meetings is earnestly solicited, yet it is not meant that Masonry should interfere with your necessary vocations; for these are, on no account, to be neglected. Neither, are you to suffer your zeal for the institution to lead you into argument with those who, through ignorance, may ridicule it.

At your leisure hours, that you may improve in Masonic knowledge, you are to converse with well informed brethren, who will be always as ready to give, as you will be ready to receive, instruction.

Finally, keep sacred and inviolable the mysteries of the order, as these are to distinguish you from the rest of the community and mark your consequence among Masons. If, in the circle of your acquaintance, you find a person desirous of being initiated into Masonry, be particularly careful not to recommend him unless you are convinced he will conform to our rules; that the honor, glory, and reputation of the institution may be firmly established, and the world at large convinced of its good effects."

MASONIC DECORUM AND ADVANCEMENT

THE PROFICIENCY

The Proficiency is a series of questions and answers which the candidate is required to commit to memory prior to being advanced to the next degree. Among other things, it is intended to:

- (1) Teach each candidate the language of Freemasonry.
- (2) Fix in his memory the teachings and structure of the Degree.
- (3) Impress upon his consciousness the different points of the Obligation.
- (4) Give each candidate an ancient method to contemplate the meanings behind the degree.
- (5) Give the new candidate a point of contact with an established member.

The long form Proficiency is no longer mandatory. Currently, a candidate must only demonstrate proficiency in the Obligation and Modes of Recognition of each degree. However, each candidate can still choose to complete his Proficiency in the long form.

THE LANGUAGE OF FREEMASONRY

Why is the language of Freemasonry so different from that which we normally use? This question is often asked by new members of our Fraternity. The Ritual of Freemasonry is a product of the early decades of the 18th century. It contains much of the language of that time period and other words and phrases from the very old work have been incorporated. This is why the language is written and spoken as it is. If the time and effort is spent to study the words of our Ritual, one will discover that the thoughts and teachings imparted cannot be put in fewer words and still retain their meaning.

WHEN TO RISE AND WHEN TO BE SEATED

The gavel in the hands of the Master of a Lodge is one of the symbols of authority by which he governs. When the gavel is sounded once in the East at the beginning of Lodge, the Brethren must come to order. Two raps call the principle Officers to their feet, and three raps mean that all Brethren must stand. If everyone is standing, one rap seats everyone in the Lodge. If the Worshipful Master addresses you by name, arise, face the East, give the due guard and sign of the degree and listen to his instructions. If you wish to speak, arise and wait until the Master recognizes you. Give the due guard and sign of the degree, and then address your remarks to him.

SUBJECTS NOT PROPER FOR DISCUSSION IN LODGE

Sectarian religion and politics should not be addressed in Lodge, and there are good reasons for this. When we meet in a Lodge, we are all on a common level, and are not subject to the classes and distinctions of the outside world. Each Brother is entitled to his own beliefs and convictions. Our objective is to unite men, not to divide them. These subjects create honest differences of opinion that might well cause friction between brethren.

There will also be subjects concerning the Lodge's business that should not be discussed. All deliberations should be kept within the bounds of propriety and

everyone should show tolerance for the opinion of others. Every Master wants harmony in his Lodge. Once a matter has been put to vote in the Lodge and a decision is made, all members, regardless of how they voted, should accept the decision. We try to teach every Mason to be a good citizen and to perform his civic duties. We do not try to keep anyone from expressing his opinion or from serving his city, county, state, or nation, in an honorable manner. Anyone who serves in political office should not act politically as a Freemason, nor use the name of Freemasonry in exercising his political rights, such as showing affiliation with any Lodge in his campaign advertising.

THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER

Why is the presiding officer of the Lodge called Worshipful? This is an Old English word meaning, "worthy of respect." Since he is chosen by the Brethren, they deem him to have sufficient wisdom, integrity and Masonic knowledge to govern the Lodge properly. Why is the Worshipful Master's station in the East? In the world of nature, the sun rises in the East to shed light and luster on earth. In a like manner, it is the province of the Master to be the source of Masonic knowledge for his Brethren as they "approach the East in search of light." Why does the Master wear a hat in the Lodge? He wears the hat, and the remainder of the Brethren remain uncovered, for several reasons. Keeping the head covered while others are uncovered has long been a symbol of superior rank. Men, as a mark of respect, usually uncover in the presence of those they deem to be of superior rank. Also, it is possible that the Worshipful Master wears a hat because King Solomon wore a crown as a mark of dignity. The title Master is not unlike the Master of a ship or one who has received a Masters Degree in his chosen discipline. He is capable of teaching his subject - thus imparting "light" or knowledge.

THE TILER

The Tiler guards the avenues approaching the Lodge. A Lodge is said to be "duly tiled" when the necessary precautions have been taken to guard against intrusion by cowans, eavesdroppers or other unauthorized persons. (A cowan is one who tries to masquerade as a Mason. He has not done the work but says he has in order to gain admittance. An eavesdropper is one who tries to steal the secrets of our Society. He would forge a dues card or may find one and try to masquerade as the owner.) If a Brother comes to Lodge late and wants to join the meeting, the Tiler sees that he is properly clothed and then vouches for him as qualified to enter. It is the duty of the Tyler to inform the Junior Deacon when a qualified Brother wishes to enter the Lodge and to let the Brethren know in which Degree the Lodge is working.

NO HORSEPLAY OR HAZING

There is no place for horseplay or hazing during our ceremonies, and the candidate can be assured that there will be none. The rituals are serious and solemn, and we try to teach moral lessons with great dignity. Anything which is told to the candidate in a joking manner, serves only to desecrate the honorable purposes of Freemasonry. The candidate should have no apprehension about entering a Lodge. He is always entering a society of friends and brothers where he will be treated with dignity and decorum at all times.

THE HEART OF THE MASONIC FAMILY

Freemasonry is not just another fraternity or association of men banded together for social, political or economic advantages. Our foundation is built on a philosophy of friendship and brotherly love. We also make many worthwhile contributions to our society and community. For example, the Grand Lodge of Nebraska supports the Nebraska Masonic Home in Plattsmouth for our Brethren and their female relatives. In addition, the Masonic-Eastern Star Home for Children in Fremont cares for disadvantaged children, both those who are related to a Mason and those who are not.

THE RIGHTS OF AN ENTERED APPRENTICE MASON

These are very limited, since he cannot vote or hold office. He is, however, entitled to a Masonic funeral. The Entered Apprentice is not entitled to organized Masonic Charity, but this does not bar him from receiving assistance from a Mason, as an individual. He can attend a Lodge while an Entered Apprentice Degree is being presented. He has a right to be instructed in his work and in matters pertaining to his degree. If charged with violating his obligation, he is entitled to a trial. He is entitled to apply for advancement to the Second Degree, when proficient in the Entered Apprentice Degree. He may not receive the degrees of Craft Masonry elsewhere without consent of the Lodge. Also, the Apprentice possesses modes of recognition by which he can make himself known to other Masons.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN ENTERED APPRENTICE

An Entered Apprentice Mason has very few actual Lodge responsibilities. He must keep private everything entrusted to him, conduct himself with proper decorum and diligently work to learn his proficiency and as much about the Craft as possible. He should not be content with learning the words letter-perfect, but should study the meanings also. If he cannot interpret these for himself, he should seek help from others. Complete faithfulness to his obligations and implicit obedience to the charge are among his important and lasting responsibilities.

FAMOUS FREEMASONS

Many men whose names have been instrumental to the history and development of our civilization have been Freemasons. The following are but a few of the many famous historical figures who have participated in our mysteries.

THE ARTS:

COMPOSERS: Irving Berlin, George M. Cohan, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, John Phillip Sousa, Richard Wagner, Franz Joseph Haydn, Franz Listz, and many others.

ENTERTAINERS: John Wayne, Gene Autry, Ernest Borgnine, Joe E. Brown, Bob Burns, Eddie Cantor, Charles D. Coburn, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Donald Crisp, Cecil B. DeMille, Richard Dix, Douglas Fairbanks Sr., W.C. Fields, Clark Gable, Arthur Godfrey, David W. Griffith, Oliver Hardy, Jean Hersholt, Harry Houdini, Al Jolson, Charles "Buck" Jones, Harry Kellar, Harold C. Lloyd, Tom Mix, Dick Powell, Will Rogers, Charles S. "Tom Thumb" Stratton, Richard B. "Red" Skelton, Paul Whiteman, Ed Wynn, Darryl Zanuck and many others.

SCULPTORS: Gutzon Borglum and his son, Lincoln Borglum (together carved Mt. Rushmore National Memorial), Johann G. Schadow (Prussian Court Sculptor) J. Otto Schweizer and many others.

WRITERS: Robert Burns, Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain), Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Sherlock Holmes), Edward Gibbon (Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire), Edgar A. Guest, Rudyard Kipling, Alexander Pope, Sir Walter Scott, Jonathan Swift, Lowell Thomas, Voltaire and many others.

BUSINESS:

BUSINESS LEADERS: John Jacob Astor (financier), Lloyd Balfour (Jewelry), Lawrence Bell (Bell Aircraft Corp.), William H. Dow (Dow Chemical Co.), Henry Ford, Alfred Fuller (Fuller Brush), King C. Gillett (Gillett Razor Co.), Sir Thomas Lipton (tea), Fredrick Maytag, Andrew W. Mellon (banker), James C. Penny, George Pullman, David Sarnoff (father of T.V.), Leland Stanford (railroads - Stanford Univ.) and many others.

MILITARY & POLITICS:

MILITARY LEADERS: Generals John J. Pershing, George Marshall, Douglas MacArthur, Joseph Stillwell, Jonathan Wainwright, Curtis E. LeMay, Omar N. Bradley, Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, Claire L. Chennault, Mark Clark, James Doolittle, Admirals David G. Farragut (First Admiral of the U.S. Navy), Ernest J. King, Richard E. Byrd and many others.

UNITED STATES PATRIOTS: George Washington, Francis Scott Key (wrote our national anthem), Ralph Bellamy (wrote our Pledge of Allegiance), Paul Revere, John Paul Jones, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, Patrick Henry and many others.

UNITED STATES POLITICIANS: Thomas Dewey, Everett Dirksen, Fiorello H. LaGuardia, John Marshall, Barry Goldwater, Hubert Humphrey, Robert Dole, Jack Kemp and others.

UNITED STATES PRESIDENTS: George Washington, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, James Polk, James Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, James Garfield, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, William H. Taft, Warren G. Harding, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman and Gerald Ford.

WORLD LEADERS: Emilio Aguinaldo (Phillippine Patriot and General), Miguel Aleman (Mexican President 1947-52), Eduard Benes (President of Czechoslovakia 1939-48), Sveinn Bjornsson (1st President of Iceland), Simon Bolivar ("George Washington of South America") Napoleon Bonaparte (and his four brothers), King Charles XIII (King of Sweden 1748-1818), Sir Winston Churchill, Randolph Churchill, King Edward VII and King Edward VIII (Kings of England, 1901-10 & 36, respectively), Francis II (Holy Roman Emperor, 1768-1806), Frederick the Great (King of Prussia 1740-86), George I & George II (Kings of Greece, 1845-1913 & 1922-47), George IV & George VI (Kings of England 1760-1820 & 1820-30), Gustavus VI Adolphus (King of Sweden 1792-1809), Kamehemeha IV and Kamehemeha V (Kings of Hawaii (1854-63 & 1863-72) Leopold I (King of Belgium (1831-65), Peter the Great (Emperor of Russia 1689-1725), William I (King of Prussia 1861-88), William II (King of the Netherlands (1792-1849), William IV (King of England (1830-37) and many others.

RELIGION:

RELIGIOUS LEADERS: James C. Baker (Bishop, Methodist Church, organized first Wesley Foundation in U.S.), Hosea Ballou (Founder, Universalist Church), Robert E. B. Baylor (Baptist clergyman, founder of Baylor University), Preston Bradley (founder of the Peoples Church), Father Francisco Calvo (Catholic Priest who started Freemasonry in Costa Rica in 1865), Hugh I. Evans (National head of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.), Most Reverend Geoffrey F. Fisher (former Archbishop of Canterbury), Eugene M. Frank (Methodist Bishop), Reverend Dr. Norman Vincent Peale (Methodist Episcopal minister and author) Titus Low (President of Methodist Council of Bishops), Thomas Starr King, Swami Vivekananda and many others.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY:

ASTRONAUTS: Ed Aldrin, Neil Armstrong, Gordon Cooper, Don Eisle, Virgil Grissom, Ed Mitchell, Tom Stafford, Fred Haise, and Wally Shirra.

EXPLORERS: Hiram Bingham (Discoverer of Machu Picchu), James Bruce (Discoverer of the source of the Blue Nile), Adm. Richard E. Byrd, Christopher "Kit" Carson, William Clark; Merriwether Lewis, and Robert E. Peary.

INVENTORS AND SCIENTISTS: Samuel Colt (firearms), Sir Alexander Fleming (penicillin), Edward Jenner (vaccination) Simon Lake (first practical submarine), John L. McAdam (Macadamized roads), Luther Burbank and many others.

OTHERS:

SPORTS: Grover C. Alexander, Cy Young, Jack Dempsey, Arnold Palmer, Tyrus R. "Ty" Cobb, Carl O. Hubbell, Christopher "Christy" Mathewson, Mordecai P.C. Brown, Gordon "Mickey" Corchran, Avery Brundage, Albert "Happy" Chandler, Branch Rickey, Knute Rockne and many others.

YOUTH ORGANIZATION FOUNDERS: Daniel Carter Beard (Boy Scouts), Frank S. Land (International Order of DeMolay), William Mark Sexson (International Order of Rainbow for Girls)

Further information concerning famous and historical Freemasons can be found in Brother W.R. Denslow's book **"Ten Thousand Famous Freemasons"**.

MASONIC GLOSSARY - ENTERED APPRENTICE

Appertaining	belonging to, or connected with, as a rightful part or attribute; relating to
Archives	a place in which records and historical documents and items are preserved
Bade	told; ordered; requested; directed
Cable's Length	a maritime unit of length; about 100 fathoms or 600 feet
Cable Tow	a twisted rope, usually of cotton or synthetic material, used symbolically to bind or make fast; originally a particularly strong rope
Cardinal	of basic importance; main; primary; essential; principal
Circumscribe	to draw a line around; to limit in range of activity definitely and clearly
Circumspection	carefulness in considering all circumstances and possible consequences
Clad	covered or clothed
Conduce	to lead or tend to a particular and desirable result
Corporeal	having, consisting or, or relating to, a physical material body; not intangible
Divested	to deprive or take away from; to undress or remove clothing, ornaments or equipment
Due	proper; according to accepted standards or procedures
Engrave	to cut figures or letters into wood or metal
Equivocation	to avoid committing oneself to what one says; uncertainty; uncertain or questioning disposition or mind
Etch	to produce as a pattern on a hard service by eating into the material's surface as with acid or a laser beam
Fellow	a member of a group having common characteristics; an associate; an equal in rank or power or character
Fortitude	strength of mind that enables a person to encounter danger, or bear pain or adversity, with courage
Guttural	of, or having to do with, or involving the throat
Hail, Hele, Hale	to hide or conceal; to cover; to keep out of view
Hoodwink	a blindfold
Hoodwinked	blindfolded

House Not Made With Hands, Eternal in the Heavens	that which lies beyond death; heaven (II Corinthians 5: 1)
Immemorial	extending or existing since beyond the reach of memory, record or tradition
Impart	to give; to communicate knowledge of something; to make known; tell; relate
Indite	to write down; to put down in writing
Intrinsic	belonging to a thing by its very nature; the essential nature or constitution of a thing; inherent; in and of itself
Invest	to give; to furnish; to clothe
Inviolate	not broken or disregarded; not told to others; respected
Light	knowledge or understanding
Manual	of, or having to do with, or involving the hands
Mystery	the secret or specialized practices or ritual peculiar to an occupation or a body of people; rites or secrets known only to those initiated
Passions	great emotion; the emotions as distinguished from reason; powerful or compelling feelings or desires
Pectoral	in, on, or of the chest
Pedal	of, or relating to, the foot or feet
Precepts	a principal or instruction intended especially as a general rule of action
Prudence	the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason; skill and good judgment in the management of affairs or the use of resources; caution or circumspection as to danger or risk
Saints John	Saint John the Baptist and Saint John the Evangelist, the two ancient patron saints of Freemasonry
Shod	wearing footgear, with shoes on
Steady	constant in feeling, principle, purpose or attachment; dependable; firm in intent showing little variation or fluctuation; unwavering; resolute
Subdue	to bring under control especially by an exertion of the will; to reduce the intensity or degree of; tone down
Superfluity	excess; unnecessary; immoderate, especially living habits or desires
Superfluous	exceeding what is needed; excess; extra; not needed; unnecessary
Temperance	moderation in action, thought or feeling; self-restraint; a habitual moderation in the indulgence of the appetites or passions; moderation in, or abstinence from, the use of intoxicating substances
Tongue of	having a good reputation; those who know

Good Report	you report that you are a good man; a credit to yourself and to society
Usual	your job; the manner in which you make Vocation your living
Vouch	assert; affirm; attest; to verify; to supply supporting testimony; to support as being true
Vouchsafe	to grant or furnish; to give by way of reply
Warden	an official having care or charge of some administrative aspect or an organization or some special supervisory duties; a British term used in the Episcopal Church and at various colleges and in government functions
Worshipful	notable; distinguished; worthy of respect; a British term used as a title for various persons or groups of rank or distinction

Questions for the Entered Apprentice Mason

1. What does Freemasonry mean to you? What are its purposes, aims and ideals?
2. What is the difference between OPERATIVE Masonry and SPECULATIVE Masonry? Are we today Operative, Speculative or both?
3. What is the difference between SPECULATIVE Masonry and APPLIED Masonry?
4. Where and when did Freemasonry originate? From what date do we trace our modern origins? What occurred on this date?
5. What is the meaning of the titles A.F. & A.M. and F. & A.M.? In Nebraska, which title do we use?
6. Is Freemasonry a religion? Why or why not?
7. Is Freemasonry considered a Secret Society? Why or why not?
8. Allegorically, in what historical location is the degree work of our Lodges meant to take place? Why is this place so important?
9. Giving your own opinion, why do you believe that only one who believes in a Supreme Being may become a Mason?
10. What are the qualifications to become a Mason under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska?
11. What percentage of a Lodge must vote favorably upon an application for it to be accepted?
12. What do we mean when we say that a candidate must be first prepared in his heart?
13. What is the meaning of "duly and truly prepared"?
14. What is the symbolism of the Hoodwink?
15. What is the symbolism of the Cable-Tow?
16. How is the candidate received upon first entering a Lodge and what is it meant to convey?
17. What is the purpose of circumambulating (walking in a circle around) the Lodge room during the ceremony of initiation?
18. Who are the Holy Saints John and what is their importance in Freemasonry?
19. What are the Three Great Lights of Masonry and why are they placed in the center of the Lodge?

20. What does the open Volume of the Sacred Law (VSL) upon the Altar signify, and which Holy Book(s) do we use in Nebraska?
21. Give the meaning of the Square.
22. Give the meaning of the Compass.
23. Of what significance is the Obligation?
24. Even though the physical penalties mentioned in the Obligation are symbolic, why are they retained in the ritual work?
25. Of what is the Lambskin Apron an emblem? What does it signify?
26. What are the Working Tools of an Entered Apprentice Mason? After reading what the ritual has to say about them, what, in your own words, do you think they mean for us? Consider the difference between Operative and Speculative Masonry
27. What is the Rite of Destitution meant to teach us?
28. The North is a place of darkness. The East symbolizes the rising Sun or the dawn of illumination. Why is the Entered Apprentice placed in the North-East corner of the Lodge?
29. Name the Four Cardinal Virtues
30. What are the Three Great Supports of Masonry? To which Officers are they attributed?
31. What is the difference between a Rough Ashlar and a Perfect Ashlar? Why is this symbol considered by some to be the most important symbol in all of Freemasonry?
32. Define the term Cowan.
33. Define the term Eavesdropper.
34. What is the meaning of the term "Worshipful," and how is it used in a Masonic Lodge?
35. Give an example of one symbol from the Entered Apprentice Degree and describe its meaning. Look below the surface and try to see what universal principles it is meant to communicate.
36. What has been your experience of Freemasonry thus far? Has it met your expectations? Why or why not?
37. Did reading this booklet add anything to your experience in taking the First Degree of Masonry?