

Foreword

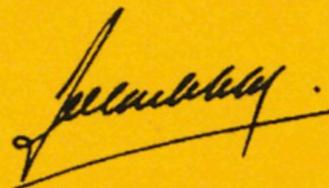
The word “Initiation” means beginning and I trust now that you have been initiated into your Lodge that this will prove the beginning of a long and enjoyable Masonic journey.

It is highly likely that much of what you have experienced seems slightly mystifying. However, let me reassure you that every other Freemason, even monarchs themselves, underwent an identical ceremony and most of them were probably just as puzzled at the time.

In the next few days your thoughts about the initiation ceremony will crystallise into specific questions, not just about the ceremony you experienced, but also perhaps relating to the structure and organisation of our Fraternity. It was with this in mind that this guide was first produced and distributed to every new Mason in London on his Initiation. Since then it has been warmly welcomed by those outside of London and is now made available to newly initiated Masons from many Provinces.

Masonry is not a secret society and I have little doubt that in the fullness of time, when you have experienced the enjoyment that membership brings, you will want to share this by considering introducing friends and colleagues to membership of your Lodge. I feel certain that the information contained within these pages will enable you to afford a more informed description of what Freemasonry is all about.

This Guide is intended to help you form the foundation of your Masonic knowledge. With it let me offer you my warmest congratulations and welcome you into Freemasonry in general and your own Lodge in particular. I wish you a long, happy and healthy Masonic career.



**RW Bro. John Lockley
Provincial Grand Master**



**RW Bro. John Lockley
Provincial Grand Master**

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Welcome

Welcome to Freemasonry.

The family

By being initiated into your masonic Lodge you have become a member of one of the world's oldest secular fraternal societies. Our membership includes:

- Around 300,000 Masons in England and Wales (all of whom experienced the same initiation ceremony).
- Around six million Masons worldwide.
- More than 7,000 Lodges in England and Wales.

The purpose of this Handbook

This booklet is intended to give you a very brief introduction to Freemasonry and to answer some of the questions you may have.

It is not meant to cover every aspect of Masonry with which you may need help during your early years of membership, even if that were possible! It is hoped, however, that you will have the support of your proposer and seconder. Your Lodge should also be appointing a knowledgeable brother as your mentor, who will be able to answer any questions you may have, or at least know where to go to find the answer for you.

You have become a member of one of the world's oldest secular fraternal societies.



A helpful reminder

Before you completed your application to join, you should have received leaflets to give you an insight into Freemasonry and what we practise and believe. To recap:

1. Masonry consists of a body of men banded together for the purpose of mutual intellectual, social and moral improvement and pledged to preserve our mysteries, privileges, customs and ceremonials. Its members endeavour to cultivate and exhibit brotherly love, relief and truth, to one another and the world at large.
2. The essential condition of membership is a belief in a Supreme Being.
3. Masonry recognises no distinction of religion and emphasises the duties of loyalty and citizenship. It does not permit any of its members to discuss religious or political questions in Lodge.
4. It offers no pecuniary advantages binding one Mason to deal with another, or to support him in any way in the ordinary business relations of life.
5. We support a wide variety of Masonic and non-Masonic charities but Masonry is not in any financial sense a mutual-benefit society. Masonic charities are solely for the less fortunate.
6. Masonry teaches that a man's first duty is to his family. People should not therefore join if the associated fees and charitable contributions will be to the detriment of their loved ones.
7. Therefore everyone should be sure:
 - a. he desires the intellectual and moral improvement of himself and others;
 - b. he is willing to devote time, means and efforts in the promotion of brotherly love, relief and truth;
 - c. he seeks no commercial, social or pecuniary advantages; and
 - d. he is able to afford the necessary expenditure without detriment to himself or his dependants.

What now?

You are now a member of 'The Craft' – a term used to describe the three degrees of freemasonry. As an Entered Apprentice your first step is to progress through your remaining two degrees, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason.

Your Lodge Committee will usually decide the workings for the year ahead, which includes when they think the time is right for your progression, although one meeting a year is reserved for the Installation of the Master.

Why become a Master Mason?

When you become a Master Mason, freemasonry really begins to open up and privileges include:

- Attending the whole workings of every ceremony (except a small section of the Worshipful Master's Installation meeting)
- Taking full part as an officer within your 'mother' Lodge or another Lodge you may join
- Joining other Lodges in the UK or abroad
- Joining other Orders beyond the Craft, such as the Holy Royal Arch (Chapter)
- Visiting other Lodges in the UK more easily. This is possible now but you may not see very much!
- Visiting Lodges abroad.

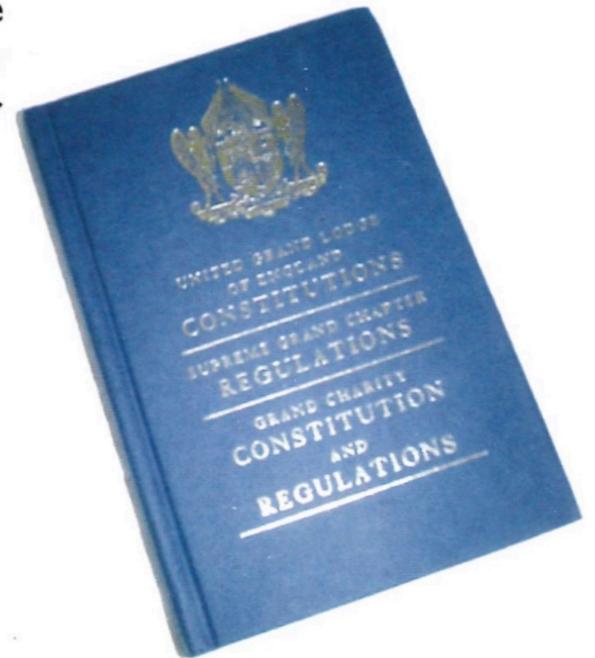
Progression

It is normal that once you have attained these three degrees you will start to move through the seven progressive offices, resulting in your becoming the Worshipful Master for the year. Each progressive officer has a role to play in each ceremony that is performed, although taking office is your choice. There is more about these offices later in the Guide.

If you decide to hold office, you will be expected to learn your part in the ritual and play a role in the team that carry out the various ceremonies. This is memorised from the Ritual Book you will be given when you become a Master Mason. The Ritual Book has missing or abbreviated words to keep the ceremony special, but you will be given these missing or abbreviated words verbally when required. Don't worry – your Lodge will help you with the learning, through a Lodge of Instruction, and there are some helpful tips about learning ritual later in this Guide.

The Book of Constitutions

At your Initiation you were presented with the Book of Constitutions. Don't try to learn it; you will find it useful reference for further information about our organisation. The part with a thick black line down the outside page is relevant only to the Holy Royal Arch (Chapter) – you will learn more about this later.



The Book of Constitutions

When you become a Master Mason, freemasonry really begins to open up.



Our meetings

Freemasonry is similar to many clubs, in that – the more you put in, the more you will get out.

The meetings are in two parts – the Lodge Meeting and the Festive Board. Most Lodges have a committee that agrees how many regular (usually four or five) and emergency meetings (if any) there are a year and start times. So put them in your diary a year in advance, or in your PC or organiser as permanent appointments; this makes it easier to plan personal activities around them. Before each meeting you will receive a **Summons**, which includes an agenda – bring this to each meeting.

The Lodge Meeting

As in any association there is a certain amount of administrative procedure: minutes of the last meeting, discussion and voting on financial matters, news and correspondence, proposing and balloting for new members. Part of the meeting will usually include collecting Alms, when you will be expected to donate a small sum to charity. Then there are the ceremonies, which form the core of the formal Lodge meeting.

The Festive Board

The Lodge meetings are followed by a dinner – the 'Festive Board' – which is the best opportunity to meet fellow and visiting members. The Festive Board will normally be followed by a standard format of toasts followed by the 'Masonic Fire' (see page 30).

After the Festive Board some members may choose to carry on the evening elsewhere, making the evening a very social affair.

Attendance

You should attend all meetings, but as an Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft or indeed Master Mason (for Worshipful Master's installation), you will have to retire from the Lodge for a short period, when workings above your degree are being performed. You should be accompanied by your mentor or another member when this happens, and you may like to ask beforehand who will do so. If you are unable to attend a meeting please notify the secretary at your earliest convenience.

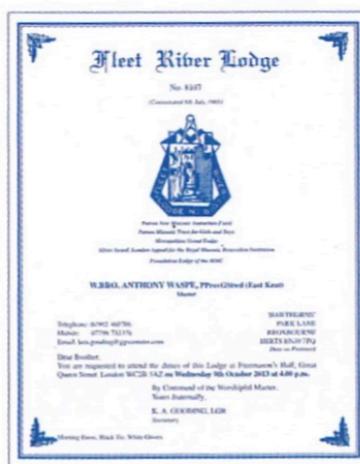
Ceremonies

There are four ceremonies:

- 1 First Degree or Ceremony of Initiation;
- 2 Second Degree or Ceremony of Passing;
- 3 Third Degree or Ceremony of Raising;
- 4 The Ceremony of Installation. This annual ceremony installs the Worshipful Master who then appoints his officers for the year ahead.

Where to sit

All Officers have a designated seat and there are often seating places for Grand Officers, Lodge members and guests. Please check with your Lodge where you should sit if you are unsure.



A typical Summons

Why become a freemason?

The reasons why people join and what they like about Freemasonry vary from person to person.

You will have your own reasons, but the following are taken from a sample of new members:

- **Quest for knowledge** – because they are intrigued about the history and mysteries held within Freemasonry
- **Charity** – because they feel it is a conduit to 'put back into society', through Masonic charity giving
- **Brotherhood** – because it is a leveller, meaning you meet (and indeed become friends with) a broad spectrum of people – from Chairmen of large PLCs to dustmen, people that live on your estate to foreign nationals, people from 21 to 90+yrs of age – essentially, a very extensive male demographic. Simply by mixing with people from different walks of life helps to broaden the mind
- **Self improvement** – to become a better person
- **Learning** – networking, learning from peers and mentors and learning from practising ritual (if you hold office) and after dinner speech-making (watching others and on occasion making a simple speech)
- **Unusual** – because there is nothing quite like it in life
- **Achievement** – progressing through office to Worshipful Master

...to become a better person.



Famous freemasons

Over three centuries freemasonry has attracted **Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers** and many key historic figures, including:

Kings

- George VI
- Edward VII
- Edward VIII

Presidents & Prime Ministers

- George Washington
- Sir Winston Churchill

Key historic figures

- Arthur Wellesley (1st Duke of Wellington)
- Henri Dunant (Red Cross Founder)
- Dr Barnardo

Writers

- Rudyard Kipling
- Robert Burns
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Musicians

- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- Gilbert & Sullivan
- Nat 'King' Cole
- Edward 'Duke' Ellington

Actors and entertainers

- Clark Gable
- John Wayne
- William Cody ("Buffalo Bill")
- Harry Houdini
- Peter Sellers

Sportsmen

- Clive Lloyd
- Arnold Palmer
- Jack Dempsey
- "Sugar Ray" Robinson

Scientists

- Sir Alexander Fleming
- Joseph Lister
- Edward Jenner (who developed the smallpox vaccination)

Explorers

- Sir Ernest Shackleton
- Captain Robert Scott (Scott of the Antarctic)
- Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin (Astronaut)

Businessmen

- Andre Citroen
- Henry Ford

The list could go on and on.

Brotherhood beginnings

The origins of Freemasonry are subject to scholarly debate. Organised Freemasonry as we know it today began with the founding of the first Grand Lodge on 24 June 1717 at the Goose and Gridiron Ale House in St Paul's Churchyard. It was formed by the agreement of four London Lodges, the oldest of which was thought to have existed in 1691. Evidence of the movement's existence prior to 1691 is sparse, so the true origins remain a mystery.

Freemasonry neither originated nor existed in King Solomon's time. Many historians have tried to prove freemasonry descended from the mysteries of classical Greece or Rome or was derived from the religion of the Egyptian pyramid builders. Other theories include: Freemasonry sprang from bands of travelling stonemasons acting by Papal authority; it evolved from a band of Knights Templar who escaped to Scotland after the order was persecuted in Europe; Freemasonry derived from the shadowy and mysterious Rosicrucian Brotherhood which may or may not have existed in Europe in the early 1600s. The honest answers to the questions when, where and why did freemasonry originate, are that we simply do not know.

The stonemason theory

That said, there is general agreement amongst historians and researchers that freemasonry developed, either directly or indirectly, from the medieval stonemasons (otherwise known as operative masons) who built the great cathedrals and castles. Those who favour the theory say there were three stages to the evolution of freemasonry. The stonemasons gathered in huts or Lodges to rest and eat. These huts or Lodges gradually became a grouping together of stonemasons to regulate their craft. Eventually, and in common with other trades, they developed primitive initiation ceremonies for new apprentices.

As stonemasons were accustomed to travelling all over the country and as there were no trade union cards or certificates of apprenticeship, they began to adopt a private word that they could use when arriving at a new site to prove they were properly skilled and had been a member of a hut or Lodge. It was, after all, easier to communicate a secret word to prove who you were and that you were entitled to your wages, than it was to spend hours carving a block of stone to demonstrate your skills.



We know that in the early 1600s these operative Lodges began to admit non-stonemasons. They were “accepted” or “gentlemen” masons. Why and what form the ceremony took is unknown. As the 1600s drew to a close more gentlemen joined the Lodges, gradually taking them over and turning them into Lodges of free and accepted or speculative masons, no longer having any connection with the stonemasons’ craft.

This theory is based on evidence from Scotland where there is ample evidence of Scottish operative Lodges, geographically defined units with the backing of statute law to control what was termed “the mason trade”. There is also plenty of evidence that these Lodges began to admit gentlemen as accepted masons, but no evidence so far that these accepted members were other than honorary masons, or that they in any way altered the nature of the operative Lodges. Furthermore no evidence has come to light, after a hundred years, for a similar development in England. Medieval building records have references to stonemason’s Lodges but after 1400, apart from masons’ guilds in some towns, there is no evidence for operative Lodges.

Building a better society theory

Yet it is in England that the first evidence of a Lodge completely made up of non-operative masons is found. Elias Ashmole, the Antiquary and Founder of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, records in his diary for 1646 that he was made a Free Mason in a Lodge held for that purpose at his father-in-law’s house in Warrington. He records who was present, all of whom have been researched and have been found to have no connection with operative masonry. English evidence through the 1600s points to freemasonry existing separately from any actual or supposed organisation of operative stonemasons.

This lack of evidence for the existence of operative Lodges but evidence for Lodges of “accepted” masons has led to the theory of an indirect link between operative stonemasonry and Freemasonry. Those who support the indirect link theorise that freemasonry was brought into existence by a group of men in the late 1500s or early 1600s. This was a period of great religious and political turmoil and intolerance. Men were unable to meet together without differences of political and religious opinion leading to arguments. Families were split by opposing

views and the English Civil War of 1642 to 1646 was the ultimate outcome. Those who support the indirect link believe the originators of Freemasonry were men who wished to promote tolerance and build a better world in which men of differing opinions could peacefully co-exist and work together for the betterment of mankind. In the custom of their times they used allegory and symbolism to pass on their ideas.

As their central idea was the building of a better society they borrowed their forms and symbols from the operative builders' craft and took their central allegory from the Bible, the common source book known to all, in which the only building described in any detail is King Solomon's Temple. Stonemasons' tools provided them with the multiplicity of emblems to illustrate the principles they were putting forward.



A charitable framework theory

A more recent theory about our origins places freemasonry within a charitable framework. In the 1600s there was no welfare state, so anyone falling ill or becoming disabled had to rely on friends and the Poor Law for support. In those days many trades had what have become known as “box clubs”. These grew out of the convivial gatherings of members of a particular trade during meetings of which all present would put money into a communal box, knowing that if they fell on hard times they could apply for relief from the box. From surviving evidence these box clubs are known to have begun to admit members not belonging to their trade and to have had many characteristics of early masonic Lodges. They met in taverns, had simple initiation ceremonies and passwords and practiced charity on a local scale. It is possible that freemasonry had its origins in just such a box club for operative masons.

Whatever our origins, after 1717 and the establishment of the Premier Grand Lodge, as it is known, Freemasonry grew in popularity, spreading across much of the world, attracting many famous and notable personalities.

Rules and regulations

When Grand Lodge was formed in 1717, Anthony Sayer was elected as the first Grand Master. Initially the Grand Lodge was simply an annual feast at which the Grand Master and Wardens were elected. But in 1721 other meetings began to be held and Grand Lodge began to be a regulatory body. In 1723, as the membership grew, Grand Lodge produced a 'Book of Constitutions' which outlined the rules and regulations governing freemasonry.

Expansion

By 1730 it had more than 100 Lodges under its jurisdiction, including one in Spain and another in India. It had begun to operate a central charity fund and had attracted a wide spectrum of society into its Lodges.

The Ancients and the Moderns

Some London Lodges disagreed with these Constitutions and in 1751, a rival Grand Lodge was formed by disaffected masons. Its founders claimed that the original Grand Lodge had departed from the established customs of the Craft and they intended practising freemasonry "according to the Old Institutions". Confusingly they called themselves the Grand Lodge of the Ancients

and dubbed their senior rival the "Moderns". It included many London Lodges and was known as the "Ancients" or "Atholl Grand Lodge", after the 3rd Duke of Atholl who became its first Grand Master.

United freemasonry

The two rivals existed side by side, neither regarding the other as regular or each other's members as regularly made freemasons. Attempts at a union of the two rivals began in the late 1790s but it was not until the Duke of Sussex became the Grand Master of the Moderns and his brother the Duke of Kent became Grand Master of the Ancients that real progress was made. Eventually the Union of the two rival Grand Lodges took place on 27 December 1813, under the Grand Mastership of HRH Prince Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, the sixth son of King George III.

The Book of Constitutions

The Book of Constitutions has been reprinted and gone through many editions since its initial publication, but the fundamental rules laid down in 1723 still apply today.

Our structure

The United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE)

UGLE is the ruling and governing body of freemasonry in this country. It is based at Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, London. For administrative purposes Lodges around the country are grouped under either the Metropolitan Grand Lodge or Provincial Grand Lodges, depending upon their geographical location.

UGLE is governed by The Grand Master, who is The Most Worshipful His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent. A number of senior executive officers and selected senior brethren assist him. Because the Grand Master is a member of the Royal Family, there is also a Pro Grand Master appointed to act on his behalf when the Grand Master needs to attend Royal duties. The current Pro Grand Master is Peter Geoffrey Lowndes. The Grand Master is also assisted by a Deputy Grand Master and an Assistant Grand Master. These people are often referred to as the Rulers and in turn are assisted by many other ranked officers.

Grand Lodge meets four times a year at what are known as "Quarterly Communications". Those eligible to attend include Grand Officers, and the Masters, Past Masters and Wardens of private Lodges, including your own.

Lodges Abroad

Many countries throughout the world have Freemasons' Lodges which are governed by a defined Grand Lodge (e.g. the Grand Lodge of Sweden, the Grand Lodge of Hungary, etc). Some of these foreign Grand Lodges have descended directly from UGLE. The Constitutions, Rules and Regulations of such Grand Lodges are recognised as 'regular' and English freemasons are permitted to join in the meetings, even though the signs may be slightly different to those used in your own Lodge. Some Grand Lodges, on the other hand, have Constitutions, Rules and Regulations that are not acceptable to the UGLE (i.e. they are 'irregular') and you are not permitted to participate in the affairs of their associated private Lodges. You should consult the secretary of your Lodge should you wish to visit a Lodge abroad.

Masonic Authority in London

The Grand Master
Head of UGLE



The Metropolitan
Grand Master
Head of MetGL



The Deputy Metropolitan
Grand Masters
Assistant Metropolitan
Grand Masters
Metropolitan Grand
Inspectors
Heads of London
Lodges in general



Worshipful Masters
Heads of individual
London Lodges

Masonic Authority in a Province

The Grand Master



The Provincial Grand Master



Deputy Provincial Grand Master



Assistant Provincial Grand Masters



Worshipful Masters

The Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London (MetGL)

The Metropolitan Grand Lodge is presided over by the Right Worshipful Metropolitan Grand Master. He is assisted by three Deputy Metropolitan Grand Masters, several Assistant Metropolitan Grand Masters, a number of Metropolitan Grand Inspectors and various executive officers.

Provincial Grand Lodges

There are 47 Provincial Grand Lodges, the geography of which is roughly based on the old county boundaries. Each Province is presided over by a Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master, assisted by various Provincial officers, the number of which is regulated by the size of the Province.

Administration

The Metropolitan and Provincial Grand Lodges administer the Lodges that fall within their jurisdiction. This is largely geographic but occasionally Lodges cross boundaries, especially in and around the Greater London area and other large metropolises.

These Grand Lodges meet at least once per year, sometimes more, at which time they will conduct the routine administration necessary, such as approving annual accounts, appointing auditors and also investing officers for the coming year. They will also use the opportunity to appoint and invest those particularly meritorious brethren who have received honours for their service to freemasonry.

Lodge officers

When you joined your Lodge you probably noticed there were lots of Masons with separate jobs to do, either guiding you, asking you questions, or teaching you about the Craft. You may have seen there were others who looked after the administration, ceremonial and finances of the Lodge.

In fact, to conduct a meeting and ceremony a Lodge ideally requires 11 non-progressive officers and 7 progressive officers. They are listed in the Summons that convenes the meeting.

Progressive officers

Usually each year a Brother would progress through these offices on a path from Steward to the highest honour within a Lodge – the Worshipful Master, although each office is subject to the choice of the Master for the year.

- 1 Stewards
- 2 Inner Guard
- 3 Junior Deacon
- 4 Senior Deacon
- 5 Junior Warden
- 6 Senior Warden
- 7 Worshipful Master (WM)

Non-progressive officers

The non-progressive officers are:

- Immediate Past Master (IPM)
- Chaplain
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Director of Ceremonies (DC)
- Almoner
- Charity Steward
- Mentor
- Assistant Secretary
- Assistant Director of Ceremonies (ADC)
- Organist
- Assistant Secretary
- Tyler

These offices are usually occupied by members who are past Masters of the Lodge and tend to be occupied by the same person for a number of years, to provide continuity and experience. They are also appointed by the Master annually, except the Treasurer and Tyler, who are elected. The IPM is the preceding year's WM.

Some Lodges formally appoint a Mentor to look after their newer members.

Lodge officers are recognisable by the jewels suspended from their Lodge collars. Where they sit in Lodge also helps indicate their role. There is a useful plan of a Lodge room later in this Guide.

Progressive officers

Stewards



This is likely to be the first office you will hold in the Lodge. The Stewards' main function is an integral part of a successful Festive Board, as in many Lodges the Stewards will be responsible for setting out the place-cards prior to the dinner, and serving the drinks during the Festive Board. It is a very good way to meet the members. They are also looked on as stand-ins for any absent Officer, to prepare for future office.

Inner Guard



The Inner Guard sits just inside the door of the Lodge. He admits accredited Brethren into the Lodge, advises when there is a Candidate wishing to enter the Lodge, and checks that everything is in order before entrance is allowed.

Junior and Senior Deacons



The Deacons look after and guide the Candidates during ceremonies. Their duties need to be carried out with care and dignity. The enjoyment and understanding of a candidate can be greatly enhanced by the sympathetic attitude of the Deacons, and by the efficiency of their working. They have one of the most interesting and delightful roles, which involves both learning ritual and floor-work. They also carry a wand as a badge of office.



Junior and Senior Wardens



The Wardens have different but complementary roles in the Lodge and assist the Master to open and close the Lodge, and conduct the rituals. In the normal course of events this year's Junior Warden will be next year's Senior Warden, and the Senior Warden will be next year's Worshipful Master. The Senior Warden sits opposite the Master in the West of the Lodge. The Junior Warden is entrusted with ensuring that no unqualified person enters the Lodge, which is why you will see the Inner Guard address the Junior Warden when a Brother wishes to enter the Lodge after it is opened. The Junior Warden sits in the South.

Worshipful Master



The Worshipful Master is elected each year by the Brethren of the Lodge, and is then "installed" into the Chair by his predecessor. He usually occupies the office for one year, although in an emergency this can be extended to two. He is in charge of the Lodge for his year, acts as its Chairman and normally conducts most of the ceremonies. The Master sits in the East of the Lodge, and must have served as either Senior or Junior Warden for a year, before he can be appointed. On becoming Master for the first time a Mason is then referred to as a Worshipful Brother.



Non-progressive officers

Immediate Past Master (IPM)



After his year as Master of the Lodge a Mason becomes the Immediate Past Master (IPM). Strictly the IPM is not an Officer of the Lodge, but his position is an important one, as it is his responsibility to sit beside the Master, both in the Temple and the Festive Board, and give him support and guidance when needed.

Chaplain



Whilst the discussion of religion (and politics) is not permitted within our meetings, each one opens and closes with prayer. Many Lodges that have no members of the clergy amongst their number, appoint one of their senior Masons to the office.

Treasurer



As you would imagine the Treasurer is responsible for the finances of the Lodge. Annually he produces a financial summary report, which is submitted to the auditors, who are elected from within the Lodge membership. It is the responsibility of each member to pay his subscriptions, together

with any dining charges to the Treasurer promptly. The Treasurer settles any debts incurred by the Lodge, such as the Lodge rent for the building where meetings are held, the various levies imposed by Grand Lodge and Metropolitan Grand Lodge, and dining expenditure. A Treasurer requires sound judgment, for ultimately, it is on his recommendation that the level of subscriptions for members is set.

Secretary



The Secretary has hands-on daily administration of all matters connected with the smooth running of the Lodge. He is effectively the conduit between Grand Lodge, Metropolitan Grand Lodge and your Lodge. He receives the mail addressed to the Lodge, and submits the returns detailing the membership, ceremonies conducted, and matters associated with the day-to-day affairs of the Lodge. Normally a Secretary holds the post for a number of years, providing continuity and experience for successive Masters. It is the Secretary's duty to organise the summons, and distribute them. Should you have any problems or queries with regard to Freemasonry an experienced Secretary

should be able to advise. Annually the Secretary receives a copy of the Masonic Year Book from UGLE, and the Year Book of MetGL. He holds these publications on behalf of the Lodge.

Director of Ceremonies (DC)



The DC should have a love of ritual; as his title implies, his function is to direct the ceremonial aspects of our meetings. As in public life when ceremonial is required, such as a State Funeral or Royal Wedding, the important events call for meticulous planning, rehearsal and organising for the requirements of the occasion. The DC's role is to make certain that ceremonies are efficiently conducted with dignity and decorum and that all concerned are aware in advance of what they have to do.

Almoner



The Almoner is effectively the Lodge Welfare Officer, as it is he who should maintain contact with the Brethren who, through age or infirmity, are unable to attend meetings; with Lodge widows; and with members suffering from illness. He should have knowledge of the variety of resources

that exist in time of need. The Almoner would organise petitions for assistance in cases of extreme need, and generally be on the lookout for signs of distress or loneliness among the members of the Lodge or their dependants.

Charity Steward



The Charity Steward is responsible for coordinating the Lodge's charitable affairs in the most efficient way. He should have knowledge of the various methods of making donations and will be happy to give help and advice to the members on these matters. A part of the Charity Steward's role is to encourage members to donate charitably, obviously within their means.

Mentor



The Lodge Mentor is a coordinating role. He nominates an experienced member of the Lodge to look after each new initiate and be available to answer any questions that he may have. He will ensure he fully understands all that is happening and guide him through the process of progression through the various offices.



Assistant Director of Ceremonies



The Assistant Director of Ceremonies' role is to help the Director of Ceremonies and to act as his understudy.

Organist



Many Lodges are not fortunate enough to have within their membership a Brother who is adequately skilled to play the

Organ at meetings, and so rely on professional organists. Some Lodges have no musical accompaniment. Generally, having an Organist can add to the overall decorum of the meeting.

Assistant Secretary



The Assistant Secretary's role is to help the Secretary. The duties vary from Lodge to Lodge.

Occasionally the Office is given to a Past Master who has been identified as a possible future replacement as Secretary. In some Lodges the Assistant Secretary deals with the Festive Board, booking dinners and generally supervising and supporting the Stewards in their role.

Tyler



The Tyler guards the outside of the door to the Lodge. This is an elected office. It is often carried out by a senior and experienced member of the fraternity, as he is the officer who prepares the candidate for the ceremonies, and should make sure that he can correctly give the specific salutes in which he has been instructed. The Tyler is not necessarily a member of the Lodge.

Visiting Officer ('VO' or 'VGO')

Once a year your Lodge has an official visit from a Visiting Grand Officer ('VO'), although it is likely he will attend unofficially at other times as well. He is the official representative of the Metropolitan or Provincial Grand Master. The role of the VO is to provide advice and assistance to all members of the Lodge. He reports on the wellbeing of your Lodge and also has a responsibility for helping with recommendations about the suitability for masonic honours of members of the Lodge.

Normally a VO will be assigned to your Lodge for a period of years in order to maintain continuity and to enhance the service provided to the Lodge.

Lodge items

You will notice that your Lodge room contained particular items, or furniture. They have a variety of uses – some are symbolic, and some practical. You will see these in virtually every Lodge you attend.

Carpet or Masonic Pavement

In most Lodge Rooms you will find a black and white squared carpet or chequered floor. This denotes our chequered existence, darkness and light, joy and sorrow.

Chairs and Pedestals

There are chairs or benches for all those attending our meetings around the squared carpet but three of these chairs will be behind pedestals or small tables. In many cases the chair and the pedestal will be marked with the jewel of the occupant. The chair and pedestal in the East is for the Worshipful Master. Opposite him in the West is the Senior Warden and in the South the Junior Warden. On the Master's pedestal will be placed the Bible, and any other relevant Holy Book, denoted as the 'Volume of the Sacred Law'.

The Warrant

The Warrant of the Lodge is granted to the Lodge by the Most Worshipful Grand Master at its Consecration. This Warrant must be in the Lodge Room when a Lodge is opened. It will always be displayed at the initiation of a

new member and when a new Master is installed. In some Lodges, it may be on display throughout the ceremony.

Volume of the Sacred Law (VSL)

In the English Constitution, the VSL is the Holy Bible. The VSL is always open when a Lodge is conducting business or one of its ceremonies. The Square and Compasses will be placed upon the VSL. If a Sacred Volume is required for Brethren of a faith other than Christian, then the Volume will be placed in front of or beside the Bible, but never on top.

The 'Moveable Jewels'

These are the Square, the Level and the Plumb-Rule, which are the Jewels of the Master, Senior Warden and Junior Warden respectively. The 'Jewels' and the other 'tools' used in Masonic ceremonies are referred to in documents from the early 1700s.

Rough and Smooth Ashlars

The Senior Warden's pedestal will have a smooth ashlar, or block of stone, resting on it and the Junior Warden's a rough ashlar. These are the 'Immovable Jewels'. They represent two different stages in Freemasonry and understanding. The rough ashlar is thought of as the stone on which an apprentice can learn the art of stonemasonry. The smooth ashlar is used by the more experienced stonemason to hone and perfect his skills.



Rough Ashlar



The Gavel



Smooth Ashlar

The Columns of the JW and SW

Each Warden has a column on his pedestal. These will usually show the designs of the Doric order for the Senior Warden, denoting strength, and the Corinthian order for the Junior Warden, denoting beauty. Usually the Columns are surmounted by a celestial or terrestrial globe which point out Masonry universal. The Wardens will also position their Columns to show if the Lodge is 'opened' or 'closed'.

The Working Tools

The Working Tools of each degree are fully explained in the ritual. The appropriate set of tools are displayed in the Lodge for each degree.

Tracing Boards

The Tracing Boards have always been a feature of Freemasonry. These three boards illustrate the story of each degree, the details being explained during the ceremony.

Tracing Board –
the First Degree

Lodge Banners

Many Lodges have a Banner, though it is not a requirement. Some Banners date back to the consecration of the Lodge, some are more recent. They often depict the origin, or some particular characteristics of the Lodge.

The Ballot Box

The Ballot Box is used for voting for new members, and can be of a variety of designs. Some have a 'yes' and 'no' drawer; (members place a ballot ball in the relevant drawer) and others one drawer. The correct procedure for balloting in your Lodge will be explained to you. A certain number of black balls or balls in the 'no' drawer, as per Lodge By-Laws, will exclude a potential member, hence the term 'black-balled'. Deacons hand out the appropriate number of balls needed.

Wands of Office

The Director of Ceremonies and his Assistant, and the Senior and Junior Deacons each have a Wand of Office. The DC and his Assistant will always carry their wands when moving about the Lodge. The Deacons, depending on the ritual, may carry theirs.

The Gavels

The Worshipful Master, and the Senior and Junior Wardens each have a Gavel. A Gavel is used by the Master to gain the members' attention when he is about to speak. The Master will sound his Gavel, followed by the Senior Warden and the Junior Warden. The same procedure is followed at the Festive Board when the Master is about to propose a toast or take wine.

The Lodge room

The Lodge room (or temple) plan shows a typical layout. This is where a Lodge holds its regular meetings. If you start visiting other Lodges you will find they vary as some premises are purpose-built, whilst others are converted or even shared with other functions.

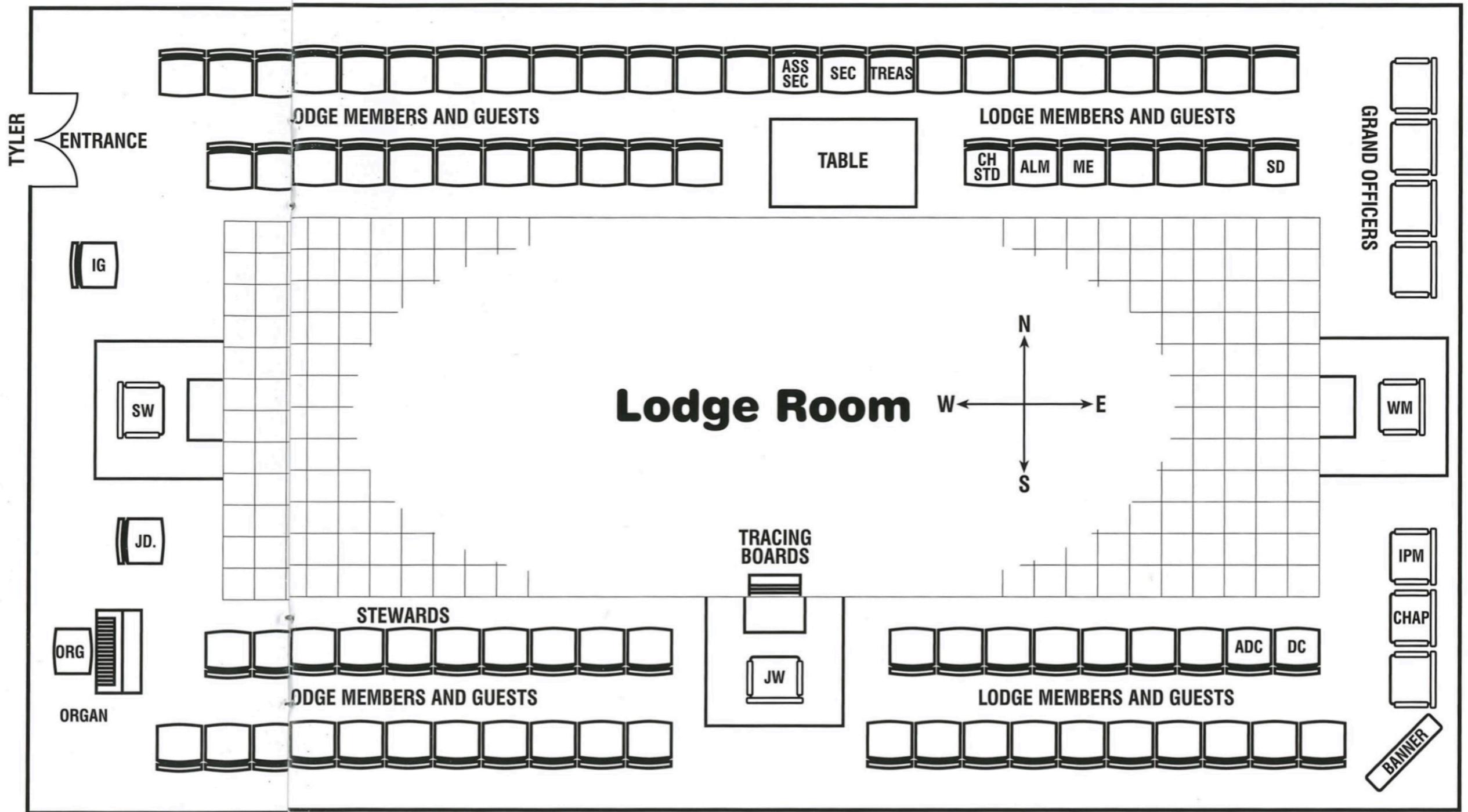
- The point of entry is in the West and facing East
- The WM sits in the East, the SW in the West and the JW in the South
- The Secretary and Treasurer are normally located on the North side
- The other junior officers vary somewhat in location from Lodge to Lodge, but generally are in the positions shown
- The Lodge Banner and Warrant are displayed in the room

Designated positions in the Lodge

KEY

WM	Worshipful Master
IPM	Immediate Past Master
	Grand Officers
	Provincial Grand Officers
SW	Senior Warden
JW	Junior Warden
CHAP	Chaplain
TREAS	Treasurer
SEC	Secretary
DC	Director of Ceremonies
ALM	Almoner
CStwd	Charity Steward
ME	Mentor
ASS SEC	Assistant Secretary
SD	Senior Deacon
JD	Junior Deacon
ADC	Assistant Director of Ceremonies
IG	Inner Guard
ORG	Organist
	Stewards
	Tyler





Our regalia

Dress Code

The dress code in most Lodges is similar: a dark lounge suit or Morning Dress (a black jacket and waistcoat with striped trousers), appropriate tie, white shirt, white gloves, black shoes and socks. An appropriate tie is either plain black, the Grand Lodge Craft tie or a Metropolitan/Provincial Grand Lodge tie.

Wearing your apron

The apron should be worn with the top above the midriff.

Your apron is full of symbolism. It is possible that the string that tied your apron when you were initiated was allowed to hang down at the front. These ends of string are the ancestors of the ornamental fringe seen on 18th Century Masons' aprons, and of the "tassels" on the aprons worn by all brethren once they have become Master Masons. On the two tassels (representing the two pillars) are seven individual strands that hang at the bottom, these too have a significance. There are a number of Masonic papers on the symbolism of regalia should you be interested in finding out more.

Initially aprons will be provided by the Tyler. However when you become a Master Mason you are expected to purchase your own. They are available from a variety of Masonic regalia suppliers. In some Lodges a dinner suit with black bow tie is worn at the Installation Meeting. If you have any queries regarding the dress code, including ties and aprons, please speak to your proposer, Lodge secretary or mentor.

Aprons and Collars

You will see some of the Brethren wearing dark blue aprons and collars and occasionally someone wearing a red one. They will be happy to explain the significance to you so please do not be afraid to ask. The only regalia, badges and other ornaments permitted in the Lodge are those attributable to the Craft itself and when you become a member of a Chapter, your appropriate Royal Arch jewel.

A little earlier, in the section on Masonic Structure, the various ranks were briefly outlined. Members of the Craft who have been honoured by The Grand Master with Grand Rank, or honoured by the Metropolitan/Provincial Grand Master with



Metropolitan tie, Craft tie and Provincial tie



honours are entitled to wear two types of apron dependent on the occasion or personal choice, that of Dress or Undress Regalia.

Those honoured by the Metropolitan Grand Master will be accorded Senior London Grand Rank (SLGR), London Grand Rank (LGR) or London Rank (LR). Those honoured by the Provincial Grand Master will be awarded rank in accordance with those laid down in the Book of Constitutions, as reflected in the collar and apron badges they wear. Rather than explain each one here, if you are interested then speak to one of the “dark blues” in the Lodge who will be happy to show you the differences, or look at the plates in the Book of Constitutions.

Occasionally you will see brethren wearing red aprons. These are either Grand Stewards, Metropolitan Grand Stewards or Provincial Grand Stewards. Again anyone who is wearing such an apron will be used to explaining its significance, so don't hesitate to ask.

Jewels

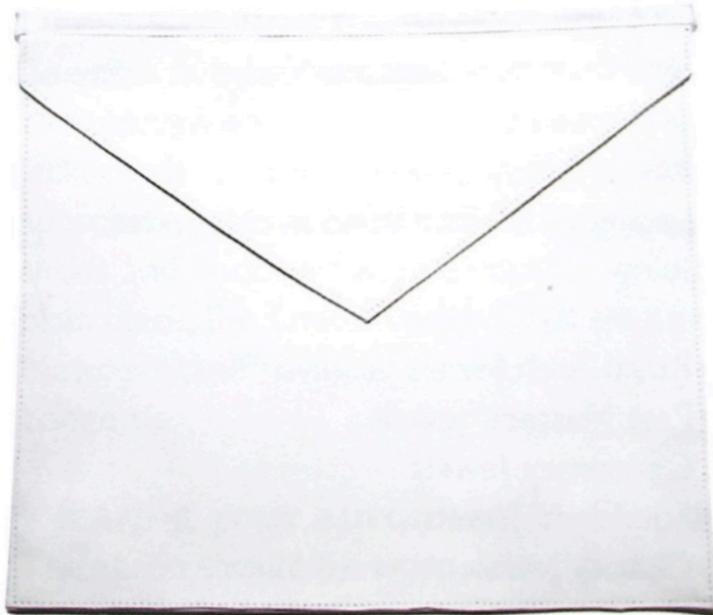
You will doubtless have noticed that many of the brethren in the Temple were wearing medals, or breast jewels as we call them. These jewels fall into various categories, including

- Royal Arch Jewels
- Past Masters' jewels
- Centenary Jewels
- Founders' Jewels
- Charity Jewels

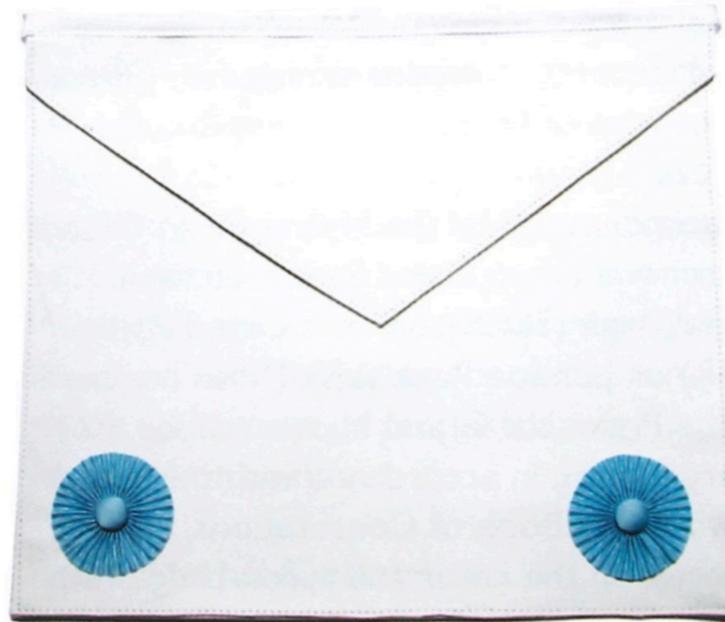
There are a number of designs, but The Grand Master must approve all jewels before they can be worn. The Book of Constitutions outlines the various rules regarding jewels and contains some illustrations.

Jewels are also discussed on pages 25-26 in the “Information for the Guidance of Members of the Craft” booklet you have received.

Jewels also refer to the pendants on the collars which the Lodge Officers and others wear, and these can be called collar jewels to avoid confusion.



Entered Apprentice (EA) – first degree apron



Fellow Craft (FC) – second degree apron



Master Mason (MM) – third degree apron



Worshipful Master (WM) apron





London Grand Rank Apron (Undress)



Provincial Grand Rank Apron (Undress)



Grand Rank Apron (Undress)



London Grand Rank Apron (Dress)



Provincial Grand Rank Apron (Dress)



Grand Rank Apron (Dress)



Metropolitan / Provincial
Dress / Undress Collar



Grand Officer's Dress / Undress Collar



LGR

PPSGW

Active
Metropolitan
/ Provincial
Office

Collar Jewels

Customs and protocol

Customs vary enormously from ritual to ritual and Lodge to Lodge, but these are in general use throughout Craft Masonry.

Salutes and signs

Salutes and signs are used throughout Lodge meetings and change depending on what degree is being worked. Each degree has a different sign or signs. You have already seen and given the First Degree Sign. You will be taught the others when you go through the subsequent degrees.

You will have seen that whenever a Brother speaks to the Worshipful Master or to the Wardens in the Lodge Room (nowhere else), a salute is given. The salute is the sign of the degree in which the Lodge is working at the time.

“So mote it be”

This phrase is used now in Masonry instead of the Hebrew word “Amen”. If an organist is present the words are sung at the end of hymns and prayers. Sometimes, for example, after a spoken Grace at the Festive Board, it is simpler just to say “Amen”. The literal meaning of the phrase is “May it be so!”, or “So be it!”

The Court Bow

Brethren do not salute one another, but by way of acknowledgement, perhaps as thanks for a courtesy, the Court Bow is given. This consists of standing upright, and simply bowing the head slightly – no more.

Squaring the Lodge

The custom in a Lodge for moving about the Lodge Room in “open” Lodge depends entirely on which ritual the Lodge uses. Some rituals demand punctilious clockwise “squaring” at all times; others allow more freedom of movement. “Stepping-off with the left foot” is standard practice.

‘Worshipful Brethren’

At a Lodge meeting, when addressing or referring to a Brother by name, the format is “Brother (name)” or “Worshipful Brother...”. Whether first names or surnames are used will depend on how formal the proceedings are at the time.

If you are making a speech, you may have to include an individual in the initial acknowledgments, perhaps even ‘Right Worshipful Provincial Grand Master’ or ‘Very Worshipful Assistant Metropolitan Grand

...details vary enormously from ritual to ritual and Lodge to Lodge.



Master'. In such a case, of course, you will check with your elders as to the correct protocol.

When addressing or referring to Brethren by their Office, the correct form is "Worshipful Master", "Brother Secretary", "Brother Treasurer", "Brother Immediate Past Master", etc., even if the Officer happens to be a Worshipful Brother by rank.

As in any formal meeting, all remarks are addressed to the Chairman who in our case is the Worshipful Master.

Incidentally, if you write a letter to a Mason, never include a Masonic rank or other Masonic references such as Lodge details etc., in the address on the envelope. Inside, it may be appropriate and polite to include the full Masonic rank and title.

Standing for the National Anthem

The correct posture when singing the National Anthem is to be standing upright, feet together with a straight back and hands at the sides.

Apologies

If you have to miss a Lodge meeting, do send apologies to the Secretary in advance. He will need to have accurate numbers of those attending, particularly for the dining arrangements. He will record apologies in the Minutes.

If you happen to be in Office, then the DC and the Preceptor will need to know well in advance to organise a replacement.

About Family Participation

At your interview it is likely that you were asked if your wife or partner supported your application. That is an important question, as it is hoped that your wife or partner will support, approve and encourage your participation and the time and costs involved in belonging to our fraternity. Many Lodges hold a number of social functions at which your wife, partner and family are encouraged to attend. Examples are Ladies evenings, Festival weekends and even garden parties.

The Festive Board

One of the delights of Masonry is the Festive Board and the camaraderie and relaxed atmosphere in which it is conducted. You have already been asked to respond to the toast made to you at your Initiation so you will know that a little preparation and advice will make things more comfortable for you.

During dinner it is customary in many Lodges for the Master to take wine with specific brethren. Wine taking is of a personal and mutual nature, all concerned stand and drink. There is a difference between the wine taking during the dinner and the formal toasting after dinner.

Toasts

Generally experienced members of the Lodge propose most toasts but occasionally you will be called upon for a Toast to give you some experience. You will normally have good notice of any such occasion with time to prepare. As a guideline Toasts can be introduced as follows:- “Worshipful Master, Brother Wardens, Distinguished Brethren, Brethren All.” The precise format will depend on the occasion and if in any doubt please consult the DC, your mentor or any other senior member of your Lodge.

No-one expects a Candidate or even a more experienced Mason to be the best after-dinner speaker – simply do your best. Never say anything that is likely to cause offence and short speeches are often appreciated.

When the Master sounds his gavel during the Festive Board it is expected that the Brethren should be immediately silent, out of respect to the Master.

Masonic Fire

After the toasts there is, in normal circumstances, what is known as “Fire”, a custom peculiar to Masonic dinners. No doubt you will have found it intriguing and probably a little confusing at your first Festive Board. However it is usually quickly and easily learned. There are a number of theories about the origins of Masonic fire. One of the more experienced members of your Lodge should be able to explain these to you. Some Lodges still employ the use of firing glasses, which are a shaped glass with a heavy base suitable for knocking on the table.

No-one expects a Candidate or even a more experienced Mason to be the best after-dinner speaker – simply do your best.



About our ritual

Ritual is important. It is something that has been passed down through the centuries from Mason to Mason, and makes our fraternity unique.

What's the purpose of ritual?

The purpose of ritual is to remind the candidate of certain ethical and moral precepts, awakening in him respect and tolerance for another's ideas and beliefs. It is for this reason that Brethren are required to avoid discussion of religious and political issues when inside the Lodge, as these are topics which easily divide men.

Ritual has been employed by nearly all cultures known to mankind as a process to assist in self-realisation and as such is a rite of passage, which if fully understood and experienced will lead to an improved state. The ritual of Freemasonry promotes self-knowledge, tolerance and philanthropy, as echoed in its three great principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

It also extols the cardinal virtues as defined by Cicero, namely: Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice and interestingly Cicero classed the art of memory as one of the virtues that made up Prudence.

Self discovery

It is suggested that you should regard your initiation not only as the beginning of your Masonic journey or way of life, but also as a porchway to discovering about yourself and your relationship with your fellow man. When you start to learn the ritual it is equally as important to focus upon the meaning of the words as it is to commit them to memory.

Learning ritual

Towards the end of this pack you will find more comment on ritual including a variety of methods to help you to learn the ritual in preparation for office.

Masonic symbolism

You will soon learn the phrase that *Masonry is a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, and indeed Freemasonry does rely heavily on symbolism.*

A universal language

Symbols are sometimes described as a universal language because they present the message in a way that is understood by all and does not depend on words that are different in various languages. The word “symbol” is defined as a thing that represents something else by association. In Freemasonry it might be defined as a material object that represents a basic moral truth or lesson.

Symbolism is part of everyday life. The printed word is basically a symbol: road signs; mathematical symbols; the striped barber’s shop pole etc.

Learn through symbolism

The ritualistic ceremonies of the three Degrees are the foundation our fraternity. In the ceremonies are contained all the philosophy and lessons of Freemasonry. Many of the symbols are called to your attention as you progress through the ceremonies, but there is so much more to the ceremony that

does not meet the eye at the time, and one of the many interests to Freemasonry is the discovery of different meanings and a greater understanding of the symbolism contained within the ceremony. Hence there will be many members of your Lodge who have seen the same ceremony literally hundreds of times (although of course the officers each time will probably be different, and certainly the candidate will be different) but the fact that you may have seen the same thing many times doesn’t detract from the enjoyment as there is so much to Freemasonry, and one can still be learning new aspects of it having been a member for many years.

Symbolism in to words

To spell out each of the symbols would be impossible, as different meanings can be considered by different people. However, please read the short passage on the opposite page, which illustrates some symbolism. You may hear this delivered in a Lodge one day, immediately before the Charge to the Initiate, which gives one explanation of the preparation of the Candidate:



A typical Ritual book

The ritualistic ceremonies of the three Degrees are the foundation our fraternity.



"Your preparation for Initiation must have seemed strange to you, and I am now permitted to explain it. You were hoodwinked for three reasons; to permit your mind to conceive, before your eyes were enabled to discover, the beauties of Freemasonry; to remind you that as you were received in a state of darkness so you must keep the outside world with respect to our Masonic secrets; and so that had you refused to go through with the usual ceremony you could have been led from the Lodge without observing its form. The reason a cable tow with a r.n. being put about your neck has already been explained to you. In ancient times the Entered Apprentice wore the cable tow about his neck to impress on his mind his duty to remain within hail so as to come on in due time whenever summonsed to his Lodge, unless prevented by illness. Your l.b. was made bare to discover your sex, since none but freeborn men of mature age can be made Freemasons. Your right arm was made bare that the Brethren might see that you had no weapon about you and also that you were willing to labour. Your l.k. was made bare because it was on that that you took your great and solemn obligation. (And also to show that you were a Freeman, as in earlier times any shackle marks

would have been visible.) The left side of man has always been considered the weaker, although the obligation you took was sacred and binding, it is deemed imperfect without others which are to follow. You therefore took it on your left knee though your inherent weakness was supported by you placing your r.h. on the Volume of the Sacred Law. You were slipshod because that was the custom observed by our ancient brethren in the E., where the slipping off of a shoe was considered a pledge of fidelity. Also you were slipshod because the ground on which our Lodges stand is considered holy. You were divested of m. for the reasons already explained to you, and to ensure that you should not bring anything offensive or defensive into the Lodge to disturb its harmony. The three distinct ks by which you were admitted alludes to an ancient and venerable exhortation "seek and ye shall find, ask and you will receive, knock and it shall be opened to you". You my Brother have sought in your mind and asked of a friend. He knocked and the doors of Freemasonry have been opened to admit you. That my Brother, is the best explanation I can give of the mode of your preparation."

Visiting other Lodges

One of the joys of Freemasonry is visiting other Lodges. Ordinarily you will be invited by a Brother who knows you are a Member of the Craft. If you anticipate visiting a Lodge where you are not known, please take your Grand Lodge Certificate with you. You will receive your Certificate, in due time.

Make sure of UGLE recognition

If you intend to visit a Lodge when you are abroad, it is essential that the Lodge is recognised by our governing body. Your Lodge secretary will help you find out. There are organised bodies who style themselves Freemasons but do not follow the Book of Constitutions and are therefore not recognised by the UGLE.

Visiting is encouraged

You are advised to visit a Lodge and see someone else being Initiated as soon as possible; so you may gain a greater understanding of what happened to you and why.

Much of the enjoyment that freemasonry offers comes from visiting. It is by getting out and about, that you will appreciate the true fraternity of our Craft.

Differing ritual or 'workings'

As a visitor it is usual that you sit and watch. You should use the signs you have been taught, and not those of other Lodges. There are a number of forms of ritual or 'workings' as it is called, such as Emulation, Universal, Bristol, West End, Taylors and so on, with slight differences to each. Find out which working your Lodge uses.

The visitors' speech

There is a possibility, that as a Visitor, you may be called upon to respond to the toast to the visitors. As in the differences in ritual so there are differences at the Festive Board. It is not appropriate to criticise another Lodge's working or the manner in which they conduct the Festive Board but rather enjoy the differences as part of your Masonic learning.

The introductions can be found on Page 34 and it is often sufficient to thank your hosts for their kind and gracious hospitality and express a wish that you might be invited again. Avoid smutty jokes and indeed do not regale your audience with lengthy humorous anecdotes unless you are especially adept and confident that they will go down well with the audience.

Finally, please remember to sign the signature book.

**One of the joys
of Freemasonry
is visiting other
Lodges.**

Lodge of Instruction (LoI)

At LoI, brethren meet to practice and perfect the various ceremonies in an informal atmosphere. This is where the ritual becomes familiar, the meaning of obscure passages explained, and where questions can be answered. Most Lodges operate a LoI or share LoI with other Lodges. Above all, LoI provides an opportunity to meet fellow Brethren in a relaxed environment becoming more acquainted with each other, developing teamwork and camaraderie. Many Masonic friendships develop through the LoI.

LoI makes all the difference

Whilst the words of the ritual should be learned at home, regular attendance at LoI with the opportunity to practice and rehearse builds knowledge, confidence and skill and enables us to give candidates the most meaningful experience during the ceremonies.

Join in with LoI now

We are all continually learning within our masonic lives, and although you may not need to practice for an office at the moment, it is recommended that you attend LoI as soon as possible. You will have to leave the room during rehearsal of Degrees you have yet to experience, nevertheless you will find regular

attendance at LoI very worthwhile and fulfilling and they will enable you to better become a valuable member of your Lodge.

Who will be there?

At the LoI there will be a mix of officers of the Lodge, Past Masters, and other brethren. The person in charge of the LoI is known as The Preceptor.

Apologies

There may well be a time when you are unable to attend LoI due to personal and work commitments. But, if you have agreed to take a role at a forthcoming LoI and then find that you are unable to attend please advise the Preceptor in advance so that alternative arrangements can be made.

There is no dress code and you do not need your regalia for LoI.



Tips for learning ritual

For some new Masons learning the ritual may be the first memorising they have done since leaving school. We all find different ways that work for us, but these are some ideas which can help.

- Understand what you have to say. Have a dictionary to hand whilst learning.
- Put the book away as soon as you can. The trick is to practise remembering the words not reading them. Also when attending Lol try not to refer to your book, there should be only one prompt.
- Transcribe the first letter of each word onto a sheet of paper and use that as an aide-memoire, rather than the ritual book, or questions card.
- Practise whilst washing up, or performing some other household chore. Remember that in the Lodge you will not be sitting comfortably in a chair, there are things to do and plenty of distractions; get used to that. In fact practise wherever possible, walking to work, taking the dog for a walk, even in the bathroom – after all it's the best tiled room in the house!
- Recite out loud and use different voices (even funny ones): this will help put expression and meaning into your delivery.
- Remember that if the delivery is right, and it is said with meaning, others will be far more likely to listen to what you are saying rather than listening for the odd wrong word, or missed line.
- Attend the Lol whenever you can. There is no substitute. Apart from benefiting from the guidance of the Preceptors, Lol is essential for practising floor work, timing, and saying the ritual out loud in front of your peers in a relaxed forum.
- Speak up clearly when saying the ritual; not only does it keep the Brethrens' attention, but also prevents you speaking too quickly.
- Where dialogue is involved have a working knowledge of that entire section of ritual, not just your part. When you know how the ritual goes, it's much easier to understand where your part fits in, and remember when it's your turn to speak.

- In your oral practise it helps to include words or sound effects as appropriate prompts/cues for the actions that are performed as part of the ritual, e.g. “bang-bang-bang” or “cut-turn-go-to-door”.
- When learning a Degree, learn the Obligation first. It’s too confusing to try to learn the whole ceremony straight through. Once you know the Obligation you have broken the back of the task, and the rest should come relatively easily.
- When learning an Obligation, speak each phrase out loud, and then repeat it. That way you’ll know how it sounds, and you’ll be far less likely to stumble when giving the Obligation.
- When learning a paragraph add to it the first two or three words of the next paragraph so you’ll always know the link to the next bit.

Above all, take pride in your work. It is well worth the effort.

Even before you accept office, it is good practice to learn ritual, you will get much more out of watching it and it will put you in good stead for when you do take office.

You will no doubt develop your own methods.



Our charities

As you learned at your Initiation, charity has been a significant part of Freemasonry since its earliest days, although unlike other fundraising organisations such as Round Table and Lions, most of the money we raise comes out of our own pockets. So whilst every brother is expected to contribute, it's important that no one should over-commit himself to charitable giving.

You are now part of a much larger National and International family. As with all good families, welfare is important, and we should strive to help our Brethren and their families who are ill, or in distressed circumstances. When Freemasons or their dependants fall upon hard times, financial assistance may be available from their Lodge, Metropolitan / Provincial Grand Lodge or one of the four main national Masonic Charities.

Collecting of Alms

The Deacons usually circulate a broken column, or alms bag at each meeting. Put an amount of your choosing in the bag. You may also be asked to put it in an envelope so that tax can be reclaimed, which can add a significant amount to the Lodge's giving. How the proceeds of the Alms collection are applied is a matter for individual Lodges.

You may also be asked by your Lodge's Charity Steward to complete a standing order to pay a regular small amount for charity on a monthly or other basis. This can be an effective and painless way to support charity and it allows the Lodge to claim back the tax too.

Lodge commitments

Annually your Lodge has to pay an amount of money to our governing body, The United Grand Lodge of England, in respect of each of its members. Additionally a payment is made on behalf of each member to The Grand Charity. The Lodge collects this money by way of your annual subscription, in addition to the amount collected through the alms bag, and other charity giving methods.

Making a difference

Together we can make a difference – a big difference: Freemasonry is the largest contributor to charitable causes after the National Lottery. In the past five years it is estimated the Freemasons under UGLE have donated approximately £75m to charity.

London Lodges give around £3.5m to charity each year. The focus of Masonic charitable giving is to the main Masonic charities (see overleaf), however, a sizeable amount also



The Masonic Charitable Foundation is one of the largest grant-making charities in the country.

goes to non-Masonic charities across the length and breadth of the nation, often for whom our donations can make a real difference.

Masonic Charitable Foundation

For Freemasons, for families, for everyone.

Freemasons are taught to practice charity and to care, not only for their own, but also for the community as a whole - both by charitable giving, and by voluntary efforts and works as individuals. Masonic charity is exercised at every level: individual Lodges make gifts and give aid to their own communities and every Province also gives large sums of money to regional causes. From its earliest days, Freemasonry has been concerned with the care of orphans, the sick and the aged; this work continues today. In addition, large sums are given to national and local charities.

Funded entirely through the generosity of Freemasons and their families, the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) is one of the largest grant-making charities in the country. Most of the support provided takes the form of financial grants to individuals and

families to assist with daily living costs. A range of health and care needs, including medical and dental treatments, counselling and mobility aids or home adaptations are supported, with funding also available for respite, residential, nursing and dementia care.

In addition, MCF awards millions of pounds each year to local and national charities that help vulnerable people, advance medical research and provide opportunities for young people. We also help to fund vital services such as hospices and air ambulances and regularly contribute to worldwide appeals for disaster relief. In total, our support helps to improve the lives of thousands of people every year in England, Wales and internationally.

MCF brings together the work of four national charities that had been operating separately under various names since the early 18th century. These are The Freemasons' Grand Charity, the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys and the Masonic Samaritan Fund; the fourth charity, the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution also exists as a leading care home provider.

Further reading

Freemasonry Today

'FT' is a quarterly magazine published on behalf of UGLE. The magazine is posted direct to all Freemasons, free of charge. The content of the magazine is intended to cascade information from the Quarterly Communications of Grand Lodge and the Masonic Charities. It also includes a number of articles of a general nature which are not necessarily Masonic. 'FT' is also available on audio tape for visually impaired masons – your Lodge secretary can apply on your behalf.

The Square

Is a commercial magazine about Freemasonry available on subscription, available quarterly and publish in March, June, September and December. Subscription costs around £12 per year with discount for multiple years. The magazine spans a wide array of main as well as side orders and contains stimulating articles, items of interest, adverts and points of view. Subscriptions for The Square can be obtained at www.thesquaremagazine.com or by phone at 0844 245 6935.

Year Books

Metropolitan Grand Lodge and all 47 Provincial Grand Lodges publish a Year Book annually, a respective copy of which should be held by your Lodge Secretary. The Year Book lists details of Metropolitan/Provincial Grand Lodge hierarchy, officers and relevant details together with a listing of Lodges under their authority.

Magazine/Web Sites

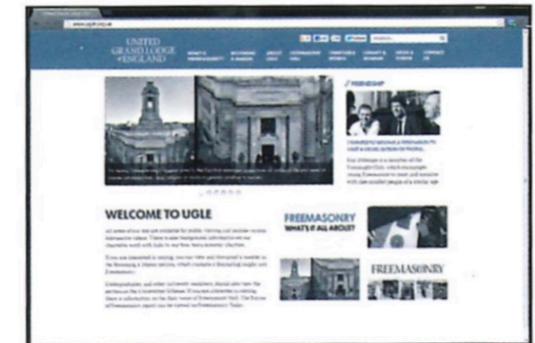
Most Metropolitan/Provincial Grand Lodges produce a magazine (usually quarterly) to reflect items of interest and activity in your area. They will also operate their own independent web site as well as Facebook and Twitter accounts to help assist in keeping you informed of what is going on. Ask your Lodge Secretary for details if they are not included with this booklet.

Other useful websites

www.pglstaffordshire.co.uk



Website for PGL Warwickshire



www.ugle.org.uk

Library and Museum of Freemasonry

There is a fantastic and highly recommended library and museum available to visit at Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street.

General reading

Even for non-Masons and especially for a Candidate before Initiation, it is reasonable and proper to want to know more about Freemasonry. Much has been written and is available through public libraries and Masonic retailers.

Several videos are also available, including:-

- The Freemasons
- Freemasonry, Today, Tomorrow

Ritual books

The books of the many rituals – dozens of them are readily available at Masonic retailers. Such study will obviously be of more relevance to a Master Mason after his raising and perhaps after having done some visiting.

Examples are:

- A Freemason's Guide and Compendium, by B.E. Jones
- Masonic Ritual, by Dr. E.H. Cartwright
- Freemason at Work, by Harry Carr
- World of Freemasonry, by Harry Carr
- The Craft, by John Hamill

The rule book

The ultimate rule book is The Book of Constitutions, which will be your constant companion. It is available on the UGLE website.

Masonic research

The foremost Masonic research body is the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, No. 2076, whose proceedings are published in 'Ars Quatuor Coronatorum'. Membership of their Correspondence Circle is available to Masons by telephoning 020 7831 4355.

Relevant at this stage, are the books by J.S.M. Ward:

- The EA's Handbook
- The FC's Handbook
- The MM's Handbook

Freemasons' Hall tour

The Library and Museum organises free tours of the Grand Temple and ceremonial areas. For further details, please visit the Library and Museum's website at www.freemasonry.london.museum/tours.php



Within Your Province magazine

Hymns

Opening Ode or Hymn

Hail, eternal! By whose aid
All created things were made;
Heav'n and earth, Thy vast design;
Hear us, architect divine

May our work, begun in thee,
Ever blest with order be:
And may we, when labours cease,
Part in harmony and peace

By Thy glorious Majesty
By the trust we place in Thee-
By the badge and mystic sign-
Hear us, Architect Divine

So mote it be.

National Anthem

God save our gracious Queen.
Long live our noble Queen.
God save the Queen.
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us.
God save the Queen

Sung at the end of a Lodge meeting or later
at the Festive Board

Closing Ode or Hymn

Now the evening shadows closing,
Warn from toil to peaceful rest,
Mystic arts and rites reposing,
Sacred in each faithful breast.

God of light! Whose love unceasing
Doth to all thy works extend,
Crown our order with thy blessing,
Build; sustain us to the end.

Humbly now we bow before thee,
Grateful for Thy aid divine;
Everlasting power and glory,
Mighty Architect! be Thine.

So mote it be.

Hymn sung at Grace

For these and all thy mercies given,
We bless and praise Thy Name, O Lord

May we receive them with thanksgiving
Ever trusting in Thy Word

To Thee alone be honour, glory
Now and henceforth for evermore.

Amen.



On page 30 we looked at some of the traditions of the Festive Board. Overleaf you will find the outline of the Toast List used in all Craft Lodges.

The Toast to “Absent Brethren”

Traditionally, this is regarded as the “Nine O’clock Toast”, when “The hands are on the square.” It is good to feel that at a particular moment, Brethren pause to think of one another, especially those who cannot be present for one reason or another. In practice, it is not always possible to arrange for the toast to be taken precisely at 9.00 p.m. It must not, for example, precede the toasts to the Queen and to the Grand Master.

In many Lodges, this toast can be a moving and memorable moment, particularly for example, when well loved Brethren may be absent through serious illness.

The Tyler’s Toast

Traditionally, this is the last toast of the evening and is announced by a customary double tap of the gavel by the Master alone. It can be given by any Brother but is usually given by the Tyler.

“To all poor and distressed masons where ’ere dispersed over the face of earth and water (and in the air), wishing them a speedy relief from their suffering and safe return to their native land should they so desire it. To all poor and distressed masons.”

The toast list

The Queen and the Craft

**The Most Worshipful The Grand Master
HRH The Duke of Kent**

**The Most Worshipful Pro Grand Master
The Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master
The Right Worshipful Assistant Grand Master
And the rest of the Grand Officers Present and Past**

The Right Worshipful Metropolitan/Provincial Grand Master

A toast to Metropolitan/Provincial Grand Officers

The Worshipful Master

The Immediate Past Master/Installing Master*

The Initiate**

The Visitors

Past Masters and Officers of the Lodge***

Absent Brethren

The Tyler's Toast

* only at Installation
** only when there is an Initiate
*** optional

Beyond the craft

The Holy Royal Arch

You will hear the term “Chapter” used. This refers to the Holy Royal Arch. Although there are numerous other Masonic Orders which you will get to hear about in time, none of them form part of Pure Ancient Masonry. The Craft teaches you about man’s relationship with man, whereas the Holy Royal Arch teaches about man’s relationship with his God. It is only by combining the two that you can ever become a complete mason. For this reason it is likely to be more beneficial to join the Holy Royal Arch before considering other Masonic Orders. You are eligible to join (called exaltation) a Royal Arch Chapter four weeks after the date of becoming a Master Mason.

The Metropolitan Grand Master and most provincial Grand Masters are also the head of the Holy Royal Arch in their respective jurisdictions. As such they are known as the Most Excellent Metropolitan/Provincial Grand Superintendent. Most Chapters are linked to one or more Lodges and meet less frequently than Craft Lodges, while the admission fees and the annual subscriptions are also lower.

To find out more please ask your proposer, Lodge secretary, mentor or any brother you see wearing a Royal Arch jewel, which is a jewel suspended from a tri-colour, red, or white ribbon.

Other Masonic Orders

You will learn about other Masonic Orders in due time and be able to join them when you have progressed to a Master Mason. That said, it is common practice to join The Holy Royal Arch as your first priority. Many Masons prefer to understand the Craft further before committing themselves to other memberships. Ultimately the choice is yours and feel free to discuss other Masonic Orders with your fellow Brethren.

Further reading on Masonic Orders

Title: Beyond The Craft
 Author: Keith B Jackson
 Publisher: Lewis Masonic Books



Conclusion

We hope you have found this Guide useful. As stated at the outset, it is not intended to provide answers to every question you may have. One of the interests of freemasonry is that we are learning new aspects regarding the Craft throughout our Masonic careers.

Please feel free to provide any feedback, or comments with regards to this Guide. Perhaps there may be subjects you feel would be appropriate to be included or some that may not have been sufficiently covered. Your comments really would be appreciated. To give feedback, please drop a line to:

The Metropolitan Grand Secretary
(Initiates' Handbook)
Metropolitan Grand Lodge
PO Box 29055
London
WC2B 5UN

Useful addresses

United Grand Lodge of England
Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street
London WC2B 5AZ

Provincial Grand Lodge of Staffordshire
211, Tettenhall Road
Wolverhampton
West Midlands WV6 0DD

Staffs Edition November 2018

