



# Royal Arch in Camera



## Your Chapter in Focus



West Lancashire Freemasons

PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF WEST LANCASHIRE

“Furthering your Masonic education through mentoring”

# 1.Introduction

This guide outlines a demonstration called “The Royal Arch In Camera”.

We all think of the word ‘camera’ as describing an apparatus for taking pictures. However, its other meaning is ‘a vaulted room’, and the expression ‘in camera’ is used to describe a meeting ‘in private’.

So it is a really appropriate title as the demonstration explains something of the history and symbolism of the Royal Arch at any regular Convocation.

It is intended to give guidance about the protocols and procedures in a Chapter, explain the characters portrayed in the various offices, and point out some important aspects of symbolism in the allegory of the Royal Arch story.

The work must acknowledge that the idea for this presentation came from E. Comp. Ian Crawford; also, that much of our background information has come from the works of Bernard Jones and the late Reverend Neville Barker Cryer.

## 2. Preparation Suggestions

### Chapter Ritual

Ahead of the visit, the presenting team should check which ritual the Chapter uses, which is especially important so that any variations can be noted and adjustment made to the text if necessary.

### Chapter Room

Well before the opening, the presenters should check lines of sight in the chapter room so that the banners on the staves are not obstructing the respective views of the Companions and the speakers. They can be removed temporarily to behind the Sojourner's and replaced after the presentation has finished.

### Late Arrival / 2nd Assistant Narrator

If possible, this Narrator should avoid mingling with the Companions ahead of the meeting, and remain outside when the Chapter is opened, in order to preserve the element of surprise at the opening of the presentation.

### Placing of Speakers

The best positioning of the speakers is Principal Narrator near the Three Principals; 1st Assistant Narrator in the South near the Sojourner's (so he can spring to correcting the Late Arrival and later demonstrate the steps); and the Late

Arrival/ 2nd Assistant Narrator sitting in the North near the door and the Sojourner's. This arrangement gives a very effective (and appropriate) triangle, so that the whole Chapter room is covered efficiently.

## Narrators

These should all be well grounded in the RA and aspects of its history and ritual as there are likely to be many questions after the presentation and at the bar & festive board. We can suggest background reading, such as Bernard Jones' 'Book of the Royal Arch', and other books, like those written by Yasha Beresiner and the Rev. Neville Barker Cryer.

The 1st and 2nd Assistant Narrators must be well briefed in the signs and the steps.

It is also important that the three Narrators confirm with each other that they are in the Chapter area prior to the meeting (bearing in mind that the element of surprise should be preserved for the 2nd Assistant Narrator's entry), so that if one is not available the 'Representative Chain' can take the Principal Narrator position.

# 3. The Script

## Principal Narrator

Most Excellent, your Excellencies and Companions, May I thank you for welcoming the In Camera demonstration to your Chapter today.

At this point there should be a knock on the door. The “Representative Chain” suggests that the ME receives the late arrival. (The Principal Narrator may also wish to put a hand gently on the shoulder of the DC and ask him to remain in his seat, if he has not been briefed beforehand)

The Companion appears, wearing his sash over the wrong shoulder, with his jewel misplaced in his breast pocket. He stands in a Lodge POA, and gives the sign to the MEZ, not to the name on the pedestal, displays his thumbs and reverses his hand movements. Before he takes his seat, the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Presenter speaks.

1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator: (leaping to his feet from the left side where he has been discreetly sitting)

Ideally the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator should learn what he has to say, to ensure that he covers all the points needed.

Most Excellent, please excuse me for a moment. Dear Companion, I must stop you before you sit down. You are not wearing your regalia properly and you're giving the Reverential or Hailing Sign from the wrong place and in an incorrect manner. To parody Morecambe & Wise, you are doing some of the right things, but not necessarily in the right order! Let me take you through the correct procedure and the Companions here will all be reminded how it should be done.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator then explains to the Companion, with a demonstration the whole Chapter can see, how the sash & jewel should be worn, where the POA is, and the proper method of giving the Hailing Sign. This is best done by the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Presenter going through the process at the Chapter POA, while the Late Arrival stands back at a Lodge POA, from where he will have given his signs anyway. Then the Late Arrival can be brought forward to the Chapter POA and talked through the sign as he is shown how it should be given. This should all be done slowly and methodically as it is also a demonstration to all the Companions present.

Your ribbon or sash should be worn over your left shoulder so that it hangs down on the right hand side of your body – the opposite side to where you would normally wear your sword. This is in allusion to those Companions who assisted at the building of the Second Temple, who, “each with the trowel in his hand and sword by his side were ever ready to



defend the City and Holy Sanctuary”. In this instance the right hand held the trowel, while the sword was in the left, and there is a further allusion to this in the toast to the pious memory of the Grand Originals at the Festive Board, where the glass is always held in the left hand. And, of course, you shouldn't forget that the penal sign in the RA is the only perfect sign in Freemasonry given with the left hand.

Also, your jewel is misplaced, the clue is in the name, as this is a breast jewel and takes priority over any other jewel that you may wear, it should be placed on your left breast nearest your heart. You must always wear your RA jewel at all craft meetings.

When entering the Chapter, a companion should go to the POA, in the West, midway between the PS and the KS, to give the R or H Sign. In all cases the sign is directed to the pedestal, and not to the Principals. No steps are taken before the signs are given and the thumb is kept concealed within the hand. The left hand with the thumb concealed is raised to the forehead with the thumb-side of the hand against the forehead as if shading the eyes. After a distinct pause, the right hand, also with the thumb concealed, is raised to the left breast as in the Sign of Reverence.

After a slight pause, the sign is dropped, not cut, by dropping both hands to the sides. The sign should be given reverentially, without haste, and without flourishes.

**Principal Narrator:** Well, this might be a good moment to introduce my two fellow Narrators for this evening. The brash companion who interrupted, is in fact E. Comp....., and our hapless late arriving companion is E. Comp..... They will both be assisting in the presentation this evening.

This may need to be finessed, depending on the moment of arrival by the latecomer.

If there is a delay in the late arrival's entrance, then the Principal Narrator should continue with his historical introduction, which can be restarted after the dress code & signs have been explained.

**Principal Narrator:** Let's start/restart (depending on the situation) by giving you a little background. Let's go back to the Third Degree in our Craft Lodges. The story described in the Third Degree takes place around 950 BCE (which stands for 'Before Common era'). Solomon is King of the Kingdom of Israel and head of the 12 Tribes.

The Temple at Jerusalem has been completed and the Ark of the Covenant deposited in the Holy of Holies. However, the principal architect of the Temple, Hiram Abif, has been murdered and thus the secrets of a Master Mason lost.

Solomon continued his reign for another 20 years, dying around 931 BCE. Although we masons regard Solomon as a



great king, he was not universally popular throughout the Kingdom, as taxation was always high. The ten northern tribes refused to accept his son, Rehoboam (**Re-ha-bo-am**), as his successor and broke away, continuing to be called the Kingdom of Israel, or the Northern Kingdom. The tribes of Judah (Solomon's tribe) and Benjamin remained loyal to Rehoboam and became the Kingdom of Judah, or the Southern Kingdom, with Jerusalem as its capital.

The Northern Kingdom of Israel existed as an independent state until around 720 BCE, when it was conquered by the Assyrian Empire and most of its population was either killed, or exiled throughout Asia and Africa. This led to the legend of the Ten Lost Tribes, which is why today some people from Ethiopia, for example, still claim to be of Jewish descent.

The southern Kingdom of Judah remained intact until about 598 BCE, when Jerusalem was attacked by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar (**Neb-bu-kad-nezzar**). The Temple (that is Solomon's Temple) was plundered and razed to the ground and the King Jehoiachin (**Je-ho-a-kin**), with the Royal Family and others, was carried away into exile in Babylon.

**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator:** And this is where the familiar Royal Arch story begins.

The Israelitish Nation remained in exile in Babylon for 70 years until the Babylonians were themselves conquered by the Persians under their king, Cyrus.

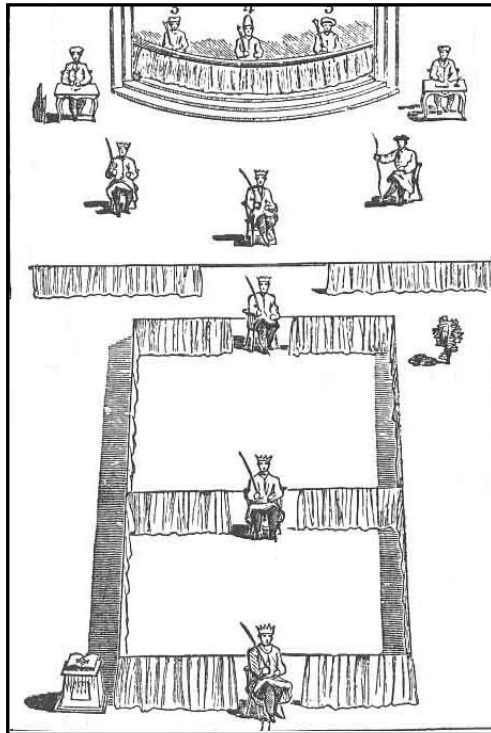
The Persians, mainly for political reasons, were much more friendly to the Hebrew Nation (and, indeed, to many other minorities within their empire) and allowed them to return to Jerusalem and build the second Temple on the site of the first.

The Royal Arch story describes the return of the Children of Israel to Jerusalem, the commencement of excavations for this second Temple, and the momentous discovery that they made during their work.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Narrator:** We would now like to explain about the various offices in the Chapter, in particular those of the Sojourner's who conduct the Candidate through his Exaltation, rather like the Junior Deacon who looks after an Initiate in a Craft Lodge.

Before we tell you about the Sojourner's, there is some interesting background about them, and their roles, which I am sure will interest you. In the early 1800s, particularly in Lodges under the Antients' Grand Lodge, a Master Mason progressed from the Craft to the Holy Royal Arch through a ceremony known as The Passing of the Veils.

This ceremony traced his progress along a path to spiritual enlightenment. There were four Veils, representing the four elements: Blue representing air and symbolising friendship; Purple representing water and symbolising union; Crimson or Scarlet representing fire and symbolising fervency & zeal; and White representing earth and symbolising purity.



**Principal Narrator:** The Ceremony of the Veils is still practised in Scotland, Ireland, and in Bristol. Supreme Grand Chapter has also authorised a version which can be demonstrated just once a year in London and on special occasions, within a Province.

So let us start our journey through the Royal Arch offices by considering these important characters, first the three Sojourners. **All three Sojourner's stand.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator:** As their names suggest, these men arrived in Jerusalem as strangers and claimed the opportunity to 'sojourn', or to spend time in the company of the Companions, and assist them in the rebuilding of the Second Temple, on the site where the first formerly stood.

At one stage in the 18th Century, all candidates for Exaltation were called 'sojourners' and three candidates were required for the ceremony, as happens now in some parts of the United States of America. At that time, the obligated candidates simply listened to a lecture, but, as the ceremony and Royal Arch allegory developed, the need for Sojourner's to be active officers became evident.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Narrator:** The Second Assistant Sojourner (**speaker waves him to step forward**) is the most junior of the three and indeed in some places is called the Junior Assistant Sojourner. You may be interested to learn that, in West Yorkshire today, there is a Chapter that uses an older and much longer opening ritual, which involves the questioning by the MEZ of each officer on what his duties are.

In the Second Assistant Sojourner's case, the answer is the 'Captain of the First Veil'. The duty of that office is 'to guard that blue veil and allow none to pass without giving the word and grip of that veil and to report the same to the Principal Sojourner who is 'Captain of the Third Veil'.

Thus is retained the memory of the older form of a part of Royal Arch Masonry, even though there is not the least semblance of a Veil in a Chapter today. Such practices remind us of the antiquity of our ceremonies and the fact that this office, like others, is not here just by chance. (2nd Assist Sojourner is waved back)

**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator:** The traditional task of a First Assistant Sojourner (presenter waves him to step forward) was to offer his services as one of the Israelites returning from Babylon, to help reconstruct the Temple in Jerusalem that was destroyed by the Babylonians. In the Ceremony of the Veils the First Assistant was placed in charge of the second or purple Veil and was known as the 'Captain of the Second Veil'.

Within the area behind that veil, candidates were reminded of the encounter between Moses and the Pharaoh who ruled Egypt before the release of the Hebrews from that land. It may be noted that, with this Veil, the ceremony emphasises the concept, or idea, of release from exile. It may also be of interest to learn that in Scotland it is the custom for this officer to be the one who is lowered into the vault, rather than the Principal Sojourner. (1st Assist Sojourner is waved back)

**Principal Narrator:** As his name suggests, the Principal Sojourner (presenter waves him to step forward) is the

senior of the three Sojourner's. In the Ceremony of the Veils, the Principal Sojourner was known as the 'Captain of the Third Veil'. Notably, as the candidate passed through that crimson Veil, the first mention of God's true name was given. It is also of interest that the password for the Crimson Veil is "Holiness to the Lord" and these words are, or should be, engraved on the Sceptre of every Third Principal.

In addition, they appear in Hebrew form ("Kodesh lo Adonai") on the coat of arms of the United Grand Lodge of England, and they were the motto of the Antients' Grand Lodge.

The fourth Veil, of white, representing purity, was a later introduction into the Veils ceremony and brings the candidate to the point where he is received by the Principals. After 1834 the Veils ceremony was discontinued in England and Wales and the form of ritual that is presently practised in the Royal Arch was established.

The Principal Sojourner's role now is that of the discoverer of the true secrets in the vault, but it has always to be remembered that this is done on behalf of the candidate.

Note that, while the Senior Warden in the West closes the lodge, so it is the Principal Sojourner's privilege to close the Chapter in the West. Another ancient link with Craft working is thus retained.



The role of the Sojourner's in our ceremonies has been further enhanced recently by recommendations that the "Sojourner's Readings", sometimes called the "Janitor's Readings", are used at each point that a candidate for exaltation is outside the Chapter. These enhance the experience for the Exalte and for all the Companions attending the Exaltation Ceremony.

### The Sojourners now all sit

**2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Narrator:** Now we turn to the two Scribes: First to Scribe Nehemiah (**Nay-hem-eye-yah**) (**who now stands**).

The name Nehemiah means 'God's consolation'. He was the leader of the third group of the Children of Israel returning to Jerusalem.

In exile, he had held the privileged position of being the King's cup-bearer, but on learning that the walls of Jerusalem had been broken down, he asked the king for permission to return and rebuild them. This request was granted and he was sent to Judah as governor of the province, with a mission to rebuild the walls and defend the city.

Once there, he defied the opposition of Judah's enemies on all sides – Samaritans, Ammonites, and Philistines – and rebuilt the wall and gates within 52 days. He then took

measures to repopulate the city and to purify the returning Nation.

The distinction of his office is marked by his wearing a white surplice which is also the garb of a teacher. By comparison, the white surplices worn by the Sojourner's represent 'robes of innocence, reflecting purity of heart and rectitude of conduct'.



Scribe Nehemiah's duty in the Chapter is to assist Scribe Ezra and to act as the gatekeeper to the Chapter. In some Chapters his high rank is further highlighted by giving him, rather than the Principals, the privilege of carrying out the veiling and unveiling of the pedestal. In any case, it is the two Scribes' privilege to equip the men who are engaged for the work of clearing the ground for the new Temple, and then further preparing them for their investiture.

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It is not a menial task, but a respected office, and Scribe Nehemiah is the first officer of the Chapter to receive a candidate when he is admitted into the Chapter room. Also, in some versions of the ritual, for example, it is his role to instruct the candidate how to advance to the pedestal.

**Nehemiah sits and Scribe Ezra now stands at the indication of the speaker.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator:** Scribe Ezra was born in Babylon, like many of the other great leaders, patriots and sages that the Hebrew Nation had produced in exile. In the Scriptural account, he was the leader of the second group of Israelites who returned to Jerusalem. Much of the building of the second Temple had been completed by the time he arrived, so his task was to ensure the restoration of the Law of Moses.



His duty was to ensure that this Law was taught and followed by those attached to the Temple, whether as its servants or

as worshipers. That is why in our Chapter lectures he is described as an 'expounder of the Sacred Law'.

The name, Ezra, means 'help'. Although he was a Scribe, he was also a priest and a member of the priestly family of Aaron.

His work was especially necessary because the returned exiles had become used to speaking and writing in the Chaldean (Cal-dee-an) tongue and they now had to become familiar again with the original Hebrew text of the Scriptures. Because he was a learned person who sought to instruct the people in the Holy Scriptures, it is not surprising that in English Chapters he too wears a surplice, the dress of a speaker or teacher in the established church of this land.

The white of his clothing also relates to the white Veil that was reached after a candidate had passed the three other Veils in the Veils Ceremony.

As explained earlier, that white and final Veil separated the candidate from the Holy of Holies where the three Principals were meant to be seated. Many Chapters required the

Scribes to stand by the eastern-most staves (points to them) when the candidate was being obligated. (Ezra sits)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Narrator:** We now come to the three Principals in the Chapter, starting with Joshua, the Third Principal.  
**(Joshua stands)**

Joshua is the third Principal who assists in the ruling of the Chapter. His name means 'the God who saves' and his role is not only that of a priest, but that of a High Priest.

It is he and not his father Josedech (**Jo-ze-deck**) who has that high honour. He was the first High Priest to be appointed to the Second Temple. That is why his sceptre is capped by a 'mitre'.

His Sceptre also has, or should have, the words "Holiness to the Lord" engraved on it, the password of the Crimson veil. Some of you may have misunderstood the words in the ritual "Joshua, son of Josedech, the High Priest", which you can see actually means the High Priest called Joshua who was the son of Josedech.

I hope that this clears up any confusion. One of Joshua's duties was to identify the religious artefacts that were brought back from Babylon with the returning Israelites. Significantly, it was Joshua who went into the Sanctum Sanctorum once a year, to offer up incense to God in seeking atonement for the sins of the people.

In earlier days, and still in a few English Chapters, the person in Joshua's chair wore a breastplate showing twelve jewels, as did the High Priest on the Day of Atonement when he entered the Holy of Holies.

These jewels represent the twelve tribes of Israel, the same as those represented on the ensigns on the floor.

It is worth noting that the three Principals also used to wear headgear, the emblems of which are now represented on their sceptres. In a very few Chapters, head-dresses, generally in the form of crowns, are still worn to this day.

The mitre and breastplate of the third Principal represent the **omnipotence of God (in plain English, being all powerful)**. It is the Almighty who has entrusted to his people, and to the priests in particular, the sacred knowledge of the Scriptures, prayers and ceremonies that were revealed to Israel.

That is why it is usually Joshua's responsibility to pray and read passages from the Volume of the Sacred Law at our convocations. **(Joshua sits)**

**Haggai stands**

**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator:** Haggai (**Hag-eye**) the Prophet travelled with Zerubbabel back to Jerusalem and was the one who



urged the people to proceed with the rebuilding of the second temple.

He is the second Principal appointed to rule in the Chapter. He possesses a part of the ancient Knowledge that is peculiar to a Chapter. It may interest you to know that, in some old Chapters, it is still customary for all present to form threes when opening and closing the Chapter, just as the Principals do. This is to prove that all those present are fully qualified members.

It is also to remind the Companions of the princely, prophetic, and priestly aspects of our Order by so taking part.

The name, Haggai, means 'festive' and Haggai is one of the twelve prophets with an Old Testament Book. His role as a prophet is marked by the rod or sceptre he bears which carries an 'All Seeing Eye', symbolically representing the omniscience of the Almighty (or, in plain English, that the Almighty is all knowing).

Haggai's role after the return of the Children of Israel from exile in Babylon was that of a Scribe and he acted in that capacity in the first Sanhedrin that was set up after the Israelitish Nation had settled again in Jerusalem.

The Sanhedrin was the council set up to govern the People, and was composed of 70 of the Elders. In addition, there was a President, usually the High Priest, who had a casting vote, and Masonic legend suggests that King Solomon was also a member, making 72 in all. (Haggai sits)

## Zerubbabel stands

**Principal Narrator:** Zerubbabel is a descendant of King David and a grandson of Jehoiachin, who was King of Judah when the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, took the Israelites into captivity. His name means 'God the Father in the East', and he was a prince and leader of the Children of Israel in exile in Babylon.

His sceptre bears a crown which reminds us of God's omnipresence. (or, in plain English, existing everywhere). He was the one given authority by Cyrus, the Persian ruler, to lead the first group back to Canaan and Jerusalem, where the city and temple were to be rebuilt. His task and responsibility, together with the two other Principals, is to appoint suitable people to the work, and to reveal to them the full knowledge that we share in a Chapter.

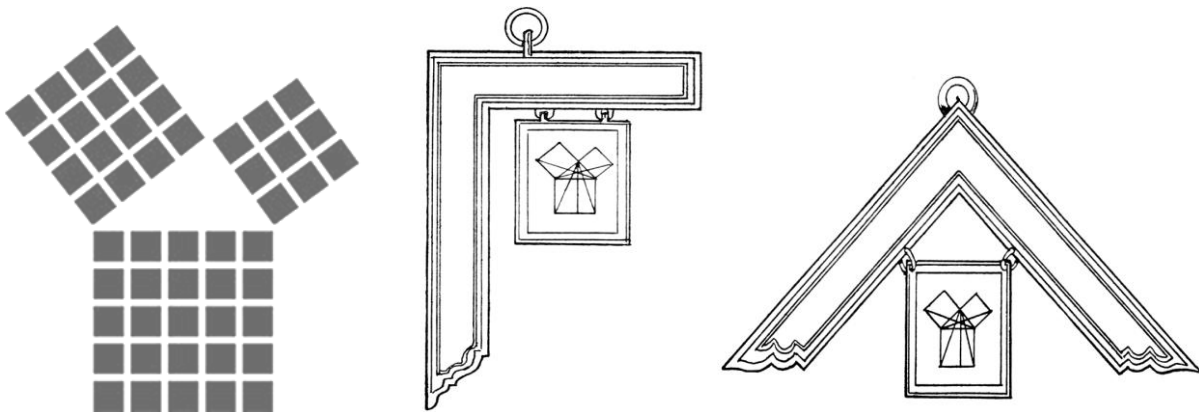
He is the first Principal of the Chapter and in charge of the convocation.

The Chapter is the place where those who are fully qualified Master Masons reach the climax and completion of the journey through pure, Antient Freemasonry.

Three Principals are needed to rule a Chapter, as originally the great secret of construction was to know how to form a right-angled triangle which could then be used as the basis for the design and erection of a building.

This needed three participants, each with a rod or sceptre of specific dimensions, which, when joined, created the required triangular figure.

This process is illustrated by the 47th Proposition of Euclid, also known as The Pythagoras Theorem, or 3: 4: 5 rule, which is depicted in the 3-box symbol on, for example, a Past Master's Collar Jewel.



That is why the absence or loss of one ruler, meant that temporarily, the 'secret was lost'. It is also why the three Principals each still hold a rod or sceptre.

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At this point, I would like to mention that, like the Craft, the Holy Royal Arch ceremonies are put together from a series of different legends. Joshua, according to the Bible, did not arrive at Jerusalem until some 70 years later, so he may not have sat with both Zerubbabel and Haggai in the Grand Sanhedrin. **(Zerubbabel sits)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Narrator:** Let's now consider the significance of the Banners and Ensigns and their arrangement in the Chapter.

It is important to remember that the tribes of Israel were quite a formidable army. When on the march they would form themselves into a column, but when they camped in the evening, they would arrange themselves into a defensive formation with three tribes at each of the four principal compass points i.e., North, South, East and West. The purpose of this was to protect their most prized possession – 'The Sacred Tabernacle', which they placed in the centre of the camp. Each small ensign in the Chapter represents a tribe, but we arrange them only along the North and South so that the Principals have a clear view of the Sojourners.

**Principal Narrator:** The four principal banners are usually placed behind the Principals' chairs. **(Indicate each as they are mentioned)**

They show:

1. a man, to personify intelligence and understanding;
2. a lion to represent strength and power.
3. an ox, to denote the ministration of patience and industry.
4. an eagle, to display the promptness and speed with which the will and pleasure of the Great I Am are executed.



These were the leading standards of the four Divisions of the army of Israel as well as an assembly point for each group of three tribes.

The order in which the principal banners are displayed, which includes the triple tau banner in the centre, is, of course, the same arrangement as used by Supreme Grand Chapter. (sits)



**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator:** In the Craft, we give many different types of salute, but we give only one in the RA, as explained earlier. When addressing the Principals, a court bow is all that is needed. (**demonstrates**) It is given by a brisk lowering of the head for a brief period. No other part of the body forms any part of the movement.

At the closing of a Chapter, when uniting in the act, F. F. F. F., the thumbs remain concealed when giving the Sign of R. in Aldersgate Ritual, while in Domatic the thumbs are shown as in the Craft Sign of Fidelity.

**Principal Narrator:** A question often asked is why the Principals' words are different in the opening ceremony from those in the closing.

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The Principals, when arranged in their triangles at the opening, all say in turn:

“We three, do meet and agree.....etc.” whilst in the closing, again in triangles, they say in turn: “We all do meet and agree.... etc.”

Originally only Past Principals were allowed to be present in the opening, but when the rules were changed, the words at the closing were altered to reflect the fact that ALL Companions were present.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Narrator:** The close affinity of the Craft and the Royal Arch is further emphasised by the fact that the Grand Master is automatically the First Grand Principal of Supreme Grand Chapter. Likewise, the Pro Grand Master is the Pro First Grand Principal and the Grand Secretary is also the Grand Scribe Ezra.

Another factor which entwines both the Craft and the Royal Arch is that you will find the Royal Arch Regulations in black edged pages of the Book of Constitutions which you should all have received at your initiations.

However, there are minor, but interesting, differences which not every Companion notices. For example, in Craft we often

refer to “In the Name of The Great Architect of the Universe”, but in the Royal Arch there is a small variation.

Most Excellent, would you kindly open the Charter of the Chapter and read the Title banner which appears on it. Notice Companions, in Craft it is “Great” Architect of the Universe, and in the Royal Arch, it is “Grand” Architect of the Universe.

**Principal Narrator:** There are at least 12 different rituals in use in Chapters. However, both the main ritual books, Aldersgate and Domatic, are now available in new editions, incorporating the mandatory changes imposed by Supreme Grand Chapter in 2004 and showing the ‘permitted alternative’ versions of the Symbolical and Mystical Lectures.

The Traditional and the Permitted Alternative Versions are now shown completely separately.

This is a feature which is less confusing than previous editions which interwove the alternatives within the texts.

Significantly, the Permitted Alternative Version is becoming more widely used nowadays and, very importantly, the suggested divisions within this version facilitate sharing the burden of learning.

This enables more companions to take part in a ceremony and helps inspire a much improved ambiance at Convocations.

**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Narrator:** We will now explain the sequence of seven steps that are made during the Opening of the Convocation by the Principals and by the Candidate at his Exaltation, first when blindfolded, and then when he approaches the Principals to receive his regalia.

We may all recall that there are 3, 5, and 7 steps in the three degrees of Craft Masonry, which are also the steps of the winding staircase which led to the middle chamber of the Temple.

The Master and his Wardens, three in number, rule a Lodge. With the addition of two Fellowcrafts, making five, they hold a Lodge. Two Entered Apprentices added to the former five make seven, and seven or more make a Lodge perfect.

The Royal Arch steps follow this pattern - that is 3, plus 2, plus another 2, making seven steps in all. Also 5 Companions can hold a meeting, but 7 companions must be present to undertake an exaltation, as laid down in the "Information and Guidance for members of the Craft" Excellent Companion (**insert name of 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Narrator**) will you please explain and demonstrate further.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Narrator then demonstrates proceeding to the East by 7 steps, halting and bowing at the 3rd, 5th, and 7th steps, and explaining the differences in Aldersgate and Domastic approaches as he does so.

In Aldersgate, the steps are incomplete at each bow, while in Domastic the step is completed so that the feet are together at each bow. Note that this is a proper bow NOT a court bow.

This is also the reverse of the steps taken by the Principals when opening the Chapter, as in Domastic they leave their steps incomplete for each word, and in Aldersgate they close the feet together before each word.

Do not go past the pedestal for the third bow.



## 4. CONCLUSION

**Principal Narrator:** ME and Companions, Thank you for your kind attention. We should like to end our presentation today with a call to action in this, your Chapter (*name & number given here*), on two particular counts, some of which you may already be implementing.

First, please try to involve as many Companions as possible in your ceremonies by taking advantage of the suggested divisions in the ritual now laid out in the latest Ritual Books. This will improve everyone's knowledge of this beautiful Order, help you all work together, and greatly add to the general enjoyment of the meeting.

Secondly, if you are all working together to produce a well-executed ceremony, then this will give your candidates an Exaltation to remember.

The presenting team is now happy to take questions.

# Royal Arch in Camera



Enquiries to: [mentor@provinceofwestlancs.org](mailto:mentor@provinceofwestlancs.org)



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