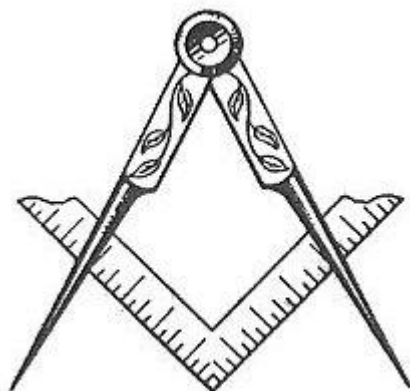


Raising

An overview of your Ceremony of Raising



West Lancashire Freemasons
PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF WEST LANCASHIRE

“Furthering your Masonic education through mentoring”

1.Symbolism of Your Raising

It was obvious from the outset that this Ceremony is the most dramatic of the three through which you have progressed. It is also the one that has the deepest meanings.

In the Exhortation you were encouraged to reflect on the previous degrees in order to prepare yourself for the teachings of this degree.



You are told that its peculiar objects of research are to reflect on death. This is so, and no doubt forms an appropriate conclusion to the study of yourself that is encouraged in the Charge.

The ceremony teaches us to die with honour and dignity and expresses our hope for life after death. Death is inevitable and we learn to meet it face on, with dignity. However, there is so much more to it and reflection over time will lead you to consider many points.

You are introduced to the legend of King Solomon, King Hiram and Hiram Abif. Clearly there is a genuine secret that they possess, but that is lost following the death of Hiram Abif. A highly dramatic and poignant moment occurs when you

represent him, following which you are Raised on the Five Points of Fellowship.

Through your preparation in the earlier two degrees you are now capable of being raised to a new sublime level of speculative thinking. This will lead you to consider why you need to improve yourself. The purpose of improvement lies in a personal need to search for that Supreme Being for whom you have been, and continue to, build the Temple. Through our work and especially through the Light received from the Volume of the Sacred Law, we are now able, on the centre, to contemplate this most important of matters.

The Third Degree Ceremony is the most dramatic of the three. The ceremony teaches us to die with honour and dignity and expresses our hope for life after death. Death is inevitable and we learn to meet it face on with dignity.

At the end of the ceremony you were told that the 'Secrets of a Master Mason' were lost. These secrets are not fully explained to you, therefore you must search further.

2. Your Third Degree Ceremony

The Lodge was opened in the First Degree; Minutes were read and the Lodge opened in the Second Degree. You were then taken to the East and answered the 'Questions'; you then

Provincial Grand Lodge of West Lancashire
Third Degree Ceremony

agreed, as before to conceal the Secrets of the Degree after which, the Worshipful Master entrusted you with the password leading from the Second to the Third Degree.

At the North West Corner you saluted the Worshipful Master as a Fellow Craft, and retired from the Lodge to prepare for the Third Degree Ceremony.

The Lodge Room was almost in complete darkness when you re-entered, and again, a prayer was made to invoke a blessing on the forthcoming ceremony. During the first perambulation you were examined as an Entered Apprentice at the Junior Warden's pedestal. In the second perambulation you were examined as a Fellow Craft Freemason at the Senior Warden's pedestal.

During the third perambulation you communicated the required information to the Senior Warden who then presented you to the Master as a Candidate prepared to be raised to the Third Degree. You were instructed to approach the pedestal in a particular way. At the pedestal you took the Obligation of a Master Mason and agreed forever, to conceal the Secrets of the Degree.

The Exhortation and Traditional History were then related to you, during which you played a part in a very dramatic presentation to the assembled Brethren and you were shown the five points of fellowship.

Shortly after this, the lighting of the Lodge Room was restored. Towards the end of this presentation the "Substituted Secrets of a Master Mason" were then partly explained, after which you retired from the Lodge Room.

Having restored yourself to your personal comfort, you returned to the Lodge Room, advanced and saluted the Worshipful Master in the Three degrees and you were then invested with your Master Mason's Apron. The Worshipful Master then addressed you about your duties as a Master Mason.

The second half of the Traditional History was then related to you, with some explanation of how certain Secrets came into being. Next the full five signs and secrets were demonstrated to you in great detail.

Finally the tools of a Master Mason were presented to you. You then were moved to the North West Corner, where you saluted the Worshipful Master as a Master Mason, and took your seat in the Lodge.

3. Beyond Your Third Degree

The Masonic story does not end with the Third Degree – an ending of sadness, tragedy and death as our Master, Hiram Abif, meets an untimely demise at the East gate at the hands of three unscrupulous characters. There has to be a happier ending.

In Craft Freemasonry, a Brother acknowledges a belief in a Supreme Being, yet in the Craft ceremonies, this relationship is not explored further. It is in the Royal Arch that a Mason continues and completes his education and knowledge of Craft masonry and is invited to reflect and contemplate upon his personal relationship and spiritual well-being with his God, in whatever form this Supreme Being presents itself to him.

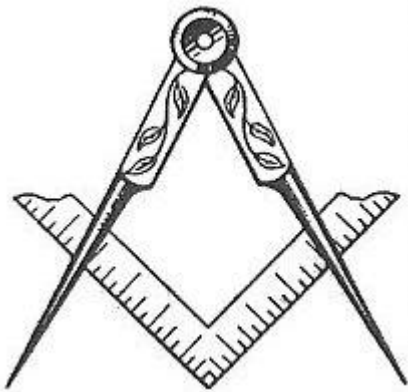
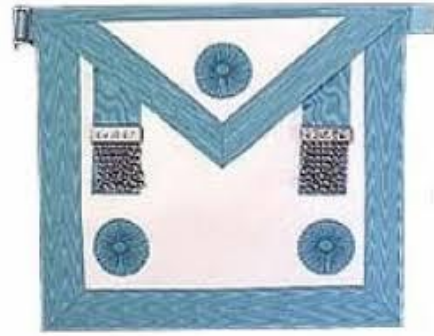
It is therefore justly claimed to be the fulfilment of “Pure Ancient Masonry” and no Brother can consider his Masonic knowledge complete until he has become a Companion of this Supreme Order.

Having been raised to the Degree of a Master Mason, you are now eligible to be exalted into the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch, and come to understand why the Royal Arch is considered the Supreme Degree and the very essence of Freemasonry.

A Royal Arch Chapter is a Masonic body which is attached to, but organised separately from, a Craft Lodge and is not in any way directly governed by it. Chapters usually meet three or four times during a Masonic season; meetings are called Convocations.

The joining and annual fees payable are generally proportionately less than those of a Lodge. Due to its close affinity with the Craft, the Royal Arch does not hold its own Charity Festivals but looks to support the Craft in its endeavours as best it can. Charity giving in the Royal Arch is therefore usually restricted to Alms Collections or very occasional special appeals.

Chapter is in many ways similar to a Lodge in that there is a progression of Officers towards the Chairs of the Three Principals who, between them, govern and rule the Chapter.



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