



# Grand Lodge Bulletin

Vol. 65, No. 4

Editor: MWBro Robert E. Juthner

April 2000

## From the Grand Chaplain

A majestic cathedral in Northern Europe was widely renowned for its magnificent organ. Unlike the instruments of today, those organs depended on the labours of a man who would pump, by hand, the great bellows which supplied the air needed for the organ to produce its sound.

A guest organist was scheduled to play for an afternoon recital featuring the works of Mozart and Mendelssohn. This brilliant guest organist bowed to the audience and announced, "For my first selection, I will play a piece by Mozart." He then sat at the organ and began to press the keys, but absolutely no sound came out. He attempted a second time, but again to no avail. The third time, rather aggravated, he said loudly, "For my first selection I will play a piece by Mozart!" He returned to the keyboard, but still there was no sound. Suddenly, he heard a voice from behind the organ, "If you don't say 'we', I ain't gonna pump." The organist smiled and announced, "For OUR first selection, WE will perform a piece by Mozart." Then beautiful music was heard by all.

The communities in which we live, and the groups of which we are a part, always play their best music when we realize that it is "we" and not just "I." One of the greatest threats facing us as we begin our journey through the 2000s is a fierce individualism that prevents unity of purpose. We are so busy with our own agendas, so preoccupied with our own needs, so anxious about our own future, that we can all too easily become isolated from one another. Our ancestors in the faith — and our ancestors here in this place — knew better. For them, life was difficult and so they seized every opportunity to be together: to work together, to tell stories together, to celebrate the turning of the seasons together, and perhaps most important of all, to eat together. Perhaps this is one reason the communal table lies close to the heart of our respective faith traditions — the Passover Seder of our Jewish Brethren; the

Lord's Table at the centre of Christian life. The Great Architect of our lives knew that gathering at table teaches us that we are a community, that we have a common hunger for each other. He knew also that the greatest human hunger, beyond all

other hungers and desires, is the hunger for God: there is a hunger in our soul that only relationship with God can satisfy.

As you read these words, spring will be fast approaching and with it the Jewish Passover and Christian Easter. When our Jewish friends gather to share the Passover meal, they are celebrating deliverance from oppression and the new opportunities for life that have been given them. When Christians meet on Easter morning, it is to celebrate the victory of light and life over darkness and despair. And so all of us are reminded of the freedom and new life God gives us. We are reminded that we belong to one another, and that we belong to God. We are reminded that despite the fact that we come as different people from very different backgrounds, young and old, rich and poor, we are a community. This may well be one of the most significant and lasting contributions Freemasonry can make to the fractured and fragmented world in which we live: demonstrating that it is possible

for brothers — and sisters — to dwell together in unity of heart and mind.

Some of you will have had the opportunity to visit Sequoia National Park in northern California. From those magnificent trees, we derive a valuable insight: you will never find a sequoia in isolation. Why? Because they only survive by remaining close to each other. Despite the immense size to which they grow, sequoias have very shallow roots. They survive because the root system of each tree is interwoven with those of its neighbours. This is where their strength derives. When the fierce winds come, the trees literally depend on one another to stand. There is no room for rugged



## Grand Lodge Bulletin

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## Editorial

### In Which All Men Agree

This is about Freemasons who, in all respects, are "on the same wavelength," who find that they can wholeheartedly be in agreement with each other, and who thereby lend strength to the Fraternity. This does not mean a curtailment of individualism and such personal preferences as the support of a chosen political direction — after all, we do not get involved in partisan politics in Lodge. Another field that is taboo to us is that of which religious affiliation one may call his own, but this is different from the discussion of politics, because the "Charges of a Freemason" are quite explicit.

The reader is urged to turn to pages C43-44 in the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Alberta, and then compare the (altered) wording of "Concerning God and Religion" to that of the original text in Anderson's *Constitutions* of 1723 (based on much earlier manuscripts):

"A Mason is oblig'd by his Tenure to obey the moral Law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient Times Masons were charg'd in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to *that Religion in which all Men agree*, leaving their particular opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish'd; whereby Masonry becomes the Centre of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance." (*Emphasis is this writer's*)

This principle of universal religious toleration is well known among the Masons of our jurisdiction, and undoubtedly practiced by them, but the implied ability to agree with one another need not be limited to Religion. We can strive to reach agreement among Masons in all other areas of human endeavour. In our *Grand Lodge Bulletin* of May 1973 (Vol. 38, No. 9, p. 35) the Governor of Delhi, India, a non-Mason addressing a Masonic assembly, was quoted as saying: "Freemasonry lays stress only on those things on which all men are agreed, instead of stressing things on which men have ever been divided."

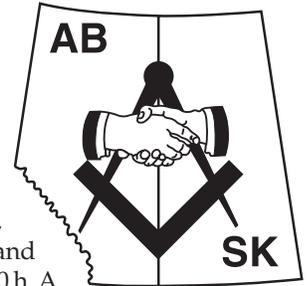
individualism here. Community is the answer.

And so, with thankfulness and joy for the unity we share and the unity to which we aspire, may our hearts go out in love to meet the love of God. Wishing each of you — and all of us together — every joy and blessing!

Bro. Earle Sharam, VWGrand Chaplain

## Hands Across the Border

The 11th annual "Hands Across the Border" Masonic Speaking Competition will be held on April 8 & 9, 2000 at the Western Development Museum, North Battleford, SK, commencing with Registration at 1130 h, followed by Luncheon at 1200 h, the Official Opening at 1345 h, and the "Speak-offs" from 1400 to 1600 h. A social period will begin at 1630 h, with the Banquet at 1800 h.



On Sunday, April 9th, 0900 h. a Church Parade and Church Service will be conducted (please wear regalia) followed by Farewell Brunch. The Grand Masters of Alberta and Saskatchewan will be in attendance. Speaker at the Banquet will be WBro Ron Williams of Norwood Lodge No. 90, GRA. The meeting will be chaired by WBro Bob Davidson, with Bro Norm Roach as Master of Ceremonies.

All events, including speak-offs, are open to Masons, ladies and guests. Cost per person: Luncheon, speak-off and brunch — \$15.00; Banquet — \$15.00.

Mail cheque to:

Hands Across the Border

1714 Gregory Drive

North Battleford, SK S9A 3E2

For accommodation information phone or fax Bro Norm Roach at 1-306-445-8861.

## Grand Master's Itinerary

### April

- 6 Ivanhoe Lodge, Freemasons' Hall Edmonton
- 16 Masonic Spring Workshop, Kananaskis
- 20 Britannia Lodge, Masonic Hall, Lloydminster, Grand Lodge of Saskatchewan
- 27 Bursary Committee, Freemasons' Hall, Red Deer
- 29 Kitchener Lodge, Rimbey
- 30 Northern Lights District Meeting, Edmonton

There is a message in that statement, a lesson to be heeded by otherwise well-meaning Brethren about to address Masonic audiences in Lodges, in conferences, in workshops; whether they be called guest speakers, theme speakers or keynote speakers — the importance of not dividing the Craft! It is only natural that some in those positions may feel enthusiastic about their particular themes (or hobby-horses), and without doubt they will receive applause. But they should always respect their audiences' right to "select or reject" what they offer.

It is of paramount importance that we, the Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Alberta, remain to be supporters of those values only IN WHICH ALL MEN AGREE.

## Reliving History



“It was a crisp November night in colonial Canada. The year was 1765, and all the footsteps in the freshly fallen snow trod a path to the Union Hotel in Royal Square, St. Helier. — On this night Union Lodge No. 349, Grand Lodge of England, was holding its regular communication, a meeting at which the Lodge’s newest candidate would be initiated. — George III is England’s king. General James Murray is civil governor of Canada. The Battle of the Plains of Abraham took place just six years ago and the American colonies’ war of independence will not begin until eleven years after this meeting of Union Lodge.”

More than one hundred Masons from southern Alberta, as well as Grand Lodge officers, travelled to High River on November 18, 1999, to witness the demonstration of a historic Masonic meeting by the “Cornerstone Players” of Cornerstone Lodge No. 19. Following a banquet and the regular meeting of the Lodge, after a brief recess the Brethren returned to the Lodge room to be transported back in time to the year 1765. In curious silence the Brethren watched the Tyler entering the dimly lit room and lighting the candles at the meeting table, for in those times meetings were conducted with the officers seated around a table.

Moments later the Right Worshipful Master and the officers of “Union Lodge” entered, dressed in period fashion, from tricorne hats and wigs to silver-buckled shoes. Their aprons and jewels were in the style of two centuries ago — hand painted and embellished as each Brother then chose to do.



Lodge was opened in the Fellowcraft degree, as in those days only Brethren who had served as Lodge Masters could call themselves Master Masons. The reading of the minutes proved interesting, as there was reference to slave trading and Brethren being in debtors’ prison.

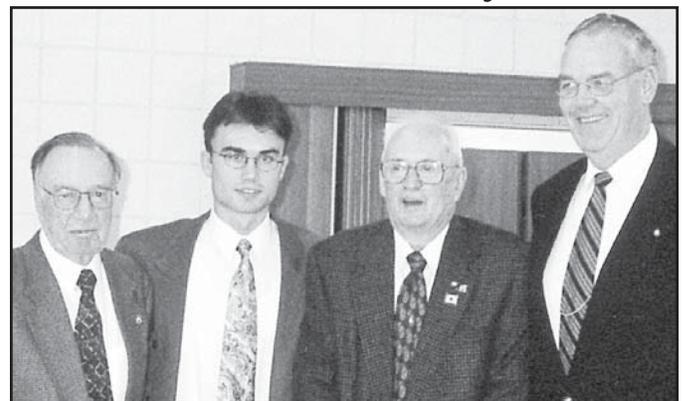
Next on the agenda was the EA degree which saw the new floor cloth used for the first time, to appease the innkeeper who had complained about the chalk and charcoal marks on the floor after each degree meeting. Frequently, throughout the meeting, the Right Worshipful called his men to refreshment — and refresh themselves they did, with ale and wine supplied by the tireless and conscientious Tyler. Finally, with their labours completed, “Union Lodge” closed “very much” in harmony... and the cast members took their bows.

This 1765 demonstration was the brainchild of Bro Mark Toon who got the idea from the Masonic internet. He contacted the Lodge in England which had researched the script and previously performed the demonstration. Bro Toon’s wife, Sharon, sewed all the costumes and his fifteen year old daughter Rebecca drew and painted the floor cloth. The cast members, shown in the pictures, include WBros Bill Holmes, Jack Williams, Bob Bayes and Glen Springsteel, and Bros Paul Fraser, Mark Toon, Steven Hargrove, Cyril Abbott, Bob Kilgour and Allan Jones.

Proceeds from the event were earmarked for the Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund, the Masonic Foundation of Alberta and Cornerstone Lodge’s community charities. The “Cornerstone Players” will gladly perform this 1765 Lodge meeting demonstration for any other Lodge. All proceeds will then again go to the charities mentioned.

WBro Bill Holmes  
IPM, Cornerstone Lodge No. 19

## An Additional Bursary



The Brethren of Centennial Lodge No. 194, of Edmonton, who have long supported the Grand Lodge Masonic Higher Education Bursary Fund, and plan to continue to do so in the future, in order to show the local community the benevolent activities of the Fraternity, have for the third consecutive year provided their own additional Masonic higher education bursary award to a deserving student.

This year a cheque of one thousand dollars was presented to a young man, Catalin Vlad, a second year student at the University of Alberta. Their decision to support one other than a first year student, merits applause. This is certainly something to be emulated throughout the jurisdiction.

The picture shows, left to right: WBro Donald E. Keen, Mr. Catalin Vlad, RWBro Gordon Renton and WBro Bob Garnett.

## Honour Roll

All Brother Freemasons of Alberta salute the Brethren listed who, during the year 1999, have been awarded long service jewels or bars. Their loyalty to the Craft sets an outstanding example to be emulated. Sincere congratulations!

### 50 Year Past Master Jewels — 1999

Morrison, G.K. Cairo Lodge No 32

### 70 Year Bars

Erickson, A.A. Lethbridge Lodge No 39

### 60 Year Bars

Campbell, D.J. Cornerstone Lodge No 19

Christensen, N.E. Lethbridge Lodge  
No 39

Glover, W.J.B. Strathcona Lodge No 77

Jackson, W. Eureka Lodge No 10

Kendal, P.J. St. John's Lodge No 25

Lukey, J.A. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No 82

Martins, R.T. West Edmonton Lodge  
No 101

Roelofs, K.C. Diamond City Lodge No 65

Spurr, J.V. Calgary Lodge No 23

Stong, C.C. Highlands-Unity Lodge No  
168

Van Dusen, W. Highlands-Unity Lodge  
No 168

### 50 Year Jewels

Aitken, A.S. Calgary Lodge No. 23

Allan, G.S. Kitscoty Lodge No 131

Armstrong, G.J. Strathcona Lodge No 77

Atkinson, J.A. Cairo Lodge No 32

Barker, N.W. Concord Lodge No 124

Bice, P.R. Cornerstone Lodge No 19

Boyd, J.R. Northland Lodge No 147

Bradley, J.E. Buffalo Park Lodge No 44

Browne, D.V. Balmoral Lodge No 185

Clegg, D.W. Northland Lodge No 147

Code, J.F. Acme Lodge No 60

Crerar, D.C. Brooks Lodge No 73

Crockett, K.L. Avon Glen Lodge No 170

Cutting, J.W. Concord Lodge No 124

Davis, V.J. Empire Lodge No 63

Donaghey, S. Evergreen Lodge No 166

Donhou, W.C. Griesbach Lodge No 191

Dyson, C.H. Ashlar Lodge No 28

Fairhurst, W.J. Calgary Lodge No 23

Foster, J.P. York Lodge No 119

Francis, R.C. Highlands-Unity Lodge  
No 168

Frew, J.M. Highlands-Unity Lodge  
No 168

Friesz, C.S. Strathmore Lodge No 53

Fry, J.C. Mystic Tie Lodge No 188

Gibson, R.C. Drumheller Lodge No 146

Gimbel, G.G. Beacon Lodge No 190

Gray, E.L. Strathmore Lodge No 53

Gregorash, E.O. Charity Lodge No 67

Grosland, L.A. Dynamic Lodge No 96

Hanse, H.P. Vulcan Lodge No 74

Hansen, H.E. Vulcan Lodge No 74

Hitchner, D.K. Cornerstone Lodge No 19

Holm, T.B. Vulcan Lodge No 74

Howe, L.G. Acme Lodge No 60

Jones, A. Rocky Summit Lodge No 30

Jones, W.S. Acacia Lodge No 11

Knowles, E.D. Cascade Lodge No 5

Knudtson, M.G. Perfection Lodge No 9

Kraft, E.C. King George Lodge No 59

Kulak, J.H. Meridian Lodge No 129

Little, R.A. Northland Lodge No 147

MacFarquhar, D.A. Carstairs Lodge  
No 20

MacLean, W.R.D. Temple Lodge No 167

Manery, R.G. North Star Lodge No 4

Mansell, A.H. Crossfield Lodge No 48

Matheson, D. Kenilworth Lodge No 29

McBain, G.D. Carstairs Lodge No 20

McCollum, W.J. Commercial Lodge  
No 81

McDowell, K.G. Cairo Lodge No 32

McIlveen, H. Balmoral Lodge No 185

McInnis, Harry Camrose Lodge No 37

McKinney, R.H. Apollo Lodge No 27

McLean, J.E. Strathcona Lodge No 77

McNiven, D. Granite Lodge No 127

Miller, W.F. Mountain View Lodge  
No 16

Miller, H. Concord Lodge No 124

Milne, W.S. Hanna Lodge No. 178

Mitchell, D.B. Ivanhoe Lodge No 142

Moisey, N.A. Redwood Lodge No 193

Moses, A.R. Foothills Lodge No 174

Murry, J.H. Vermilion Lodge No 24

Neill, D. Highlands-Unity Lodge  
No 168

Nelson, L.J. Strathmore Lodge No 53

Nesbit, J.L. Brooks Lodge No 73

Niddrie, R.F. Acacia Lodge No 11

Orr, J. Charity Lodge No 67

Paylor Walter Perfection Lodge No 9

Penfold, E.J. Dominion Lodge No 117

Poeter, V. Mayerthorpe Lodge No 148

Robinson, W.G. Cascade Lodge No 5

Rooke, W.E. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No 82

Sadd, V.A. Highlands-Unity Lodge  
No 168

Sammons, F.F. Gleichen Lodge No 36

Scott, J.R. Empire Lodge No 63

Simonson, S.D. Vermilion Lodge No 24

Skedanuk, C.P. West Edmonton Lodge  
No 101

Skjenna, O. Oyen-Crocus Lodge No 82

Springer, B. Granite Lodge No 127

Stark, W.G. Harmony Lodge No 75

Stewart, H.N. Acacia Lodge No 11

Thirsk, R.D. Camrose Lodge No 37

Treacy, Linton E. Hussar Lodge No 130

Truman, K.A. Mizpah Lodge No 35

Walter, W.F. Avon Glen Lodge No 170

Walter, J.R. Avon Glen Lodge No 170

Waterhouse, J.H. York Lodge No 119

Watson, A.D. Acacia Lodge No 11

White, S.E. Innisfail Lodge No 8

White, R.S. Jordan Lodge No 177

Young, G.D. Beacon Lodge No 190

## Knowing the Mind of God

"Einstein once asked the question: 'How much choice did God have in constructing the universe?' ...He would, of course, still have had the freedom to choose the laws that the universe obeyed. ...[T]here may well be only one, or a small number, of complete unified theories... that are self consistent and allow the existence of structures as complicated as human beings who can investigate the laws of the universe and ask about the nature of God.

"Even if there is only one possible unified theory, it is just a set of rules and equations. What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe?...

"Up to now, most scientists have been too occupied with the development of new theories that describe *what* the universe is to ask the question *why*. On the other hand, the people whose business is to ask *why*, the philosophers, have not been able to keep up with the advance of scientific theories. In the

eighteenth century, philosophers considered the whole of human knowledge, including science, to be their field and discussed questions as: Did the universe have a beginning? However, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, science became too technical and mathematical... Philosophers reduced the scope of their inquiries so much that Wittgenstein... said, 'The sole remaining task for philosophy is the analysis of language.' What a comedown from the great tradition of philosophy from Aristotle to Kant!

"However, if we should discover a complete theory, it should in time be understandable in broad principle by everyone, not just a few scientists. Then we shall all, philosophers, scientists, and just ordinary people, be able to take part in the discussion of why it is that we and the universe exist. If we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason — for then we would know the mind of God."

Stephen Hawking, Physicist  
*A Brief History of Time*, Bantam Books, 1988

## Table Lodge

*Seventh in a series of articles on Masonic Protocol and Etiquette*

Holding "Table Lodge," at least in Alberta, is a relatively recent addition to Lodge or After-Lodge programming, and may have so far made its appearance in only few Lodges in this jurisdiction. To many of our readers this may even be "news." Our rituals as well as our rules and regulations are silent on this subject, wherefore some might say that "what is not forbidden is allowed."

It is not the object of this article to render a step-by-step account of the proceedings at Table Lodge, but only to mention a few organizational facts and to concentrate on matters of etiquette pertaining to it. First, however, some historical notes:

Table Lodges had been common in the early 18th century, and it is assumed that most Lodge meetings, including the conferring of the degree, together with eating and drinking, were held in this manner. Later, when Table Lodge became a type of hour of refreshment, or Festive Board, the seating arrangement was maintained, that is, with the WM in the centre at the east end of a horseshoe-shaped table, and the SW at the north and the JW at the south extremities of the table. The other Brethren were seated along the exterior sides, facing each other across the central void, which was used by the Serving Brethren waiting on the table. (This is still so today.) Table Lodges were tyled Lodges, and none but Masons were admitted. They were always conducted in the Entered Apprentice degree, claims one source, although this would not have been logical in case of degree work above the first. During the 1970s, MWBro Myron Lusk was instrumental in introducing the Table Lodge in our jurisdiction, and most of the original methods were preserved. However, the Tyled Lodge aspect seems to have been discontinued.

What has been preserved from early times includes the table layout, the fact that the WM presides, his and the Wardens' stations, the table settings, the serving of wine for the series of toasts and the wording of those toasts or "healths," as well as the curious vocabulary used for items of food, drink, dishes, cutlery, glasses as well as verbs like "to drink," "to eat," "to carve" — which become "to fire," "to masticate," "to hew." "Firing" is of particular importance and frequency in proposing the obligatory toasts: "The health of the Sovereign or Chief Magistrate of the State"; "That of the Grand Master and the supreme power of the Order"; "That of the Master of the Lodge" (offered by the SW); "That of the two Wardens"; "That

of the Visiting Brethren"; "That of the other Officers of the Lodge, the Initiates and Affiliates — if any"; and "That of all Masons wheresoever spread over the face of the globe." Non-obligatory toasts or challenges may be added.

A particular ritual is observed when making those toasts, using heavy-bottomed crystal glasses (which, when set down hard on the table, will not shatter) such as shown in the illustration. Here, one word on etiquette is in order: the actions following the commands and accompanying words "Point — Left — Right (x3) — clap hands (x3) — Vivat" must not be rushed but should follow in deliberate, not too fast order. Some Brethren misunderstand the purpose of the exercise! It was also as to good manners when George Oliver (*Masonic Jurisprudence*) stated: "All excess was avoided and the convivialities of Masonry were regulated by the Old Charges, which directed the Brethren to enjoy themselves with decent mirth, not forcing any Brother to eat or drink beyond his inclination, nor hindering him from going home when he pleased."

When this writer travelled in Europe (in 1987) with a group of twenty Brethren and sixteen ladies from Western Canada, visiting Alt Heidelberg Lodge No. 821 UGLLG, which is composed of US Armed Forces personnel, they were treated to a "Mixed Table Lodge" — not a tyled Lodge — where Masons and their ladies took full part in the proceedings. This concept then also gained popularity in Alberta. It is obvious that when hosting ladies and possibly other non-Masonic guests, proper observation of etiquette becomes very important.

That's what your friend Masproquette can think of at the moment. So long!

REJ

## Pike on the Pedestal

In the Sunday 12/12/99 comics section of the *Washington Post*, Albert Pike was featured in a series called *Flashbacks*, written and drawn by Patrick M. Reynolds. The series is based on the book *A Cartoon History of DC*.

Several historically accurate panels on Pike's life were shown and his involvement with Freemasonry was strongly emphasized.

Anyone reading *Flashbacks* would have a good impression of Albert Pike and of Freemasonry.

*Focus*, Vol. 6, issue 4, December 1999

## Not a Religion

Following an inaccurate statement about Freemasonry, which has been made in the July-August issue of *Presbyterians Today*, which read: "Mother and Father were members of the Eastern Star, and Masons, and that was their faith," the editors agreed to publish a correction received from the MIC (Masonic Information Center) in their November 1999 issue.

"NOTARELIGION — Marjorie Tyler's statement ("Touched by Another") that her parents 'were members of the Eastern Star, and the Masons, and that was their faith' gives the impression that Freemasonry considers itself a religion. Nothing could be farther from the truth... Freemasonry is not a religion. It requires of its members belief in God as part of the obligation of every responsible adult, but advocates no sectarian faith or practice. Masons believe that there is one God and that people employ many different ways to seek, and to express what they know of God.



Some typical, modern day "Cannons" or firing glasses.

“Freemasonry lacks the basic elements of religion. It has no dogma or theology, no wish or means to enforce religious orthodoxy. It does not claim to lead to salvation by works, by secret knowledge, or by any other means... Without interfering in religious practice [Freemasonry] expects each member to follow his own faith and to place his Duty to God above all other duties.”

*Focus*, Vol. 6, issue 4, December 1999

## The Freemason’s Square

by MWBro A.O. Aspeslet, PGM  
 From the Pages of *Fiat Lux Lodge of Research* No. 1980.

Albert G. Mackey in his Encyclopedia of Freemasonry writes, “The square and compasses have been so long and universally combined to teach us, as says an early ritual, ‘to square our actions and to keep them in due bounds.’ They are seldom seen apart but are so kept together as two great lights that they have come at last to be recognized as the proper badge of a Master Mason.



The square is the second mentioned of the three great lights of Masonry. It is the jewel of the WM, the highest office in the Lodge. The square has a special significance in the FC degree. The FC Lodge is opened on it, the candidate is received on it and he is obligated within it. It should also be noted that the square is one of the working tools in the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree, which degree symbolizes manhood. The square is properly applied to building as without it there would be very little rhyme or reason to the building.

What then is a square? Simply put a square consists of two lines which when joined form a perfect 90 degrees. When we look around us Masonically, the square is usually plain and the two arms are of equal length. However, at times we will see a square with one arm longer than the other. Then, too, we sometimes see squares that are marked off in inches, thus making it a measuring tool. The question then arises: What is the correct form of the Mason’s square?

While it is true that most squares seen today in Freemasonry have arms of equal length, it appears that this was not always so. Bro. Sydney D. Klein FLS, FRAS in his paper to AQC writes: “We have seen that 2300 years ago the highest thinkers of the Greek age or reason considered geometry as the foundation of all knowledge, even including the knowledge of the GAOTU.” In this same paper he points out that the Greek word for the square was ‘Gnomon’ from which he says the word for knowledge was derived. He suggests also that the Greek letter gamma “Γ” was the primitive form designating the square in ancient times. The Greek letter Gamma has one side longer than the other.

Much is made of the 47th problem of Euclid in our rituals. It is from this problem that we find that if you have a triangle in which the sides are in the ratio 3:4:5, then the angle contained by the sides 3:4 equals 90 degrees. By using this problem as a bench mark then, the square would be one in which the two arms would be in the ratio 3:4 meaning that one arm would be longer than the other, most nearly approximating that of the Greek letter Gamma.

AQC Vol. VI shows a picture of old chairs of a lodge in Coventry, England with squares on them with one arm longer than the other. Further, in AQC Vol. XIV one may observe an Old English and Modern English PM’s jewels. The former has one arm longer than the other and it is suspended in the form of a hangman’s gibbet. From the short arm is suspended the 47th problem of Euclid. The modern English PM’s jewel is very much similar to that used in this Jurisdiction. Colin Dyer says that the hangman’s gibbet type of square with the 47th problem of Euclid came into use about 1820 and continued into the 1830s.

Colin Dyer, in *Symbolism in Craft Freemasonry*, tells us that: “Bro. J.P. Bellat, one time Deputy Provincial G.M. of North and East Yorkshire, recovered a very curious relic in the form of an old brass square containing the inscription [u being read as v]:

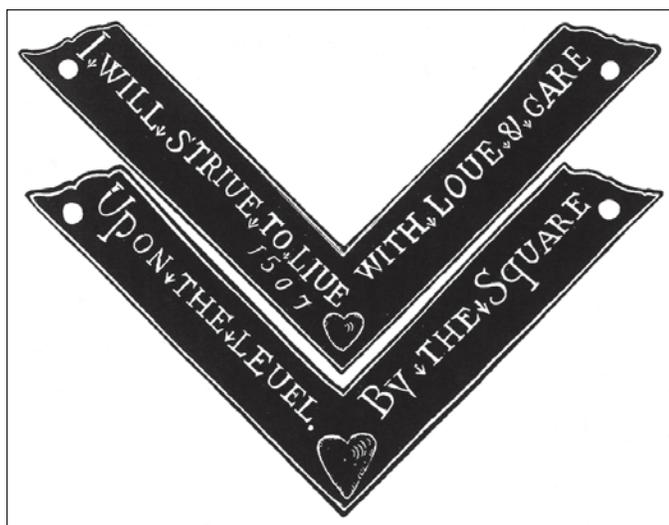
I will striue to hiue  
 with loue and care  
 upon the leuel  
 by the square.

This square was found under the foundation of an ancient bridge near Limerick, in 1830, and the date on the square is 1517. Unfortunately he makes no comment as to the length of the arms. It is mentioned here only because it shows that the teaching of our old operative brethren was identical to our speculative application of the working tools.

In modern Freemasonry, as we know it, the square remains a symbol of morality, truthfulness and of honesty. Nowhere in the Craft degrees is it recognized as a measuring tool. As the 2nd degree lecture describes it, the square teaches us to regulate our lives and actions by the Masonic rule and line and to correct and harmonize our conduct by the principles of morality and virtue.

The square was used by our ancient operative brethren to adjust their work, (i.e., to ascertain where and how to apply the mallet and the chisel); the rule is for measurement. Thus the trying square of the stonemason need only have two arms at an angle of 90 degrees, intended only to test the accuracy of the sides of the stone, to assure that they were all at the proper angle fit for the builder.

In view of the above, it would appear that whether the square we use has one arm longer than the other, or the arms are of equal length matters little. But as it was not intended to be a measuring tool, it would be wrong to mark it off in inches.



Drawing of the “Baal’s Bridge Square” discovered in Limerick, Ireland. It carries a four-line “limerick,” no pun intended. (From Sources of Masonic Symbolism by Alec Horne.)