

WHITE RIVER LODGE No. 153



Brotherhood & Friendship

The Charge

Let me now beg you to observe that the Light of a Master Mason is darkness visible, serving only to express that gloom which rests on the prospect of futurity. It is that mysterious veil which the eye of human reason cannot penetrate, unless assisted by that Light which is from above. Yet, even by this glimmering ray, you may perceive that you stand on the very brink of the grave into which you have just figuratively descended, and which, when this transitory life shall have passed away, will again receive you into its cold bosom. Let the emblems of mortality which lie before you lead you to contemplate, on your inevitable destiny, and guide your reflections to that most interesting of all human studies, the knowledge of yourself. Be careful to perform your allotted task while it is yet day. Continue to listen to the voice of Nature, which bears witness that even in this perishable frame resides a vital and immortal principle, which inspires a holy confidence that the Lord of Life will enable us to trample the King of Terrors beneath our feet, and lift our eyes to that bright Morning Star, whose rising brings peace and salvation to the faithful and obedient of the human race.

WM steps forward, takes both hands of Candidate, and gently moves round anti-clockwise until they have exchanged places. Candidate is now in the South, facing North, about three short paces from centre line of Lodge.

I cannot better reward the attention you have paid to this exhortation and charge than by entrusting you with the secrets of the Degree. You will therefore advance to me as a Fellow Craft, first

as an Entered Apprentice. You will now take another short pace towards me with your left foot, bringing the right heel into its hollow as before. That is the third regular step in Freemasonry, and it is in this position that the secrets of the Degree are communicated.

They consist of Signs, a Token and Word.

Of the Signs, the first and second are casual, the third penal. The first casual Sign is called the Sign of Horror, and is given from the Fellow Crafts. Stand to order as a Fellow Craft by dropping the left hand into this position *Down, palm outwards as if shielding eyes from something on the ground* elevating the right *back of hand to face, shielding eyes* with the head turned over the right shoulder, as if struck with horror at some dreadful and afflicting sight.

The second casual Sign is called the Sign of Sympathy, and is given by bending the head forward, and smiting the forehead gently with the right hand.

Place your hand in this position with the thumb extended in the form of a square. The Penal Sign is given by drawing the hand smartly across the body, dropping it to the side, and recovering with the thumb to the navel. This is in allusion to the symbolic penalty at one time included in the Obligation of this degree, which implied that as a man of honour, a Master Mason would rather have been severed in two than improperly disclose the secrets entrusted to him. The full penalty was that of being severed in two, the bowels burned to ashes, and those ashes scattered over the face of the earth and wafted by the four cardinal winds of heaven, that no trace or remembrance of so vile a wretch might longer be found among men, particularly Master Masons.

The Grip or Token is the first of the Five Points of Fellowship. They are hand to hand, foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast and hand over back and may be thus briefly explained.

WM illustrates during explanation again with Candidate as words require and ensures Candidate's correct co-operation: Hand to hand, I greet you as a Brother; foot to foot, I will support you in all your laudable undertakings; knee to knee the posture of my daily supplications shall remind me of your wants; breast to breast, your lawful secrets when entrusted to me as such I will keep as my own; and hand over back, I will support your character in your absence as in your presence. It is in this position, and this only, and then only in a whisper, except in open Lodge, that the word is given: it is Machabén or Machbinna.

You are now at liberty to retire in order to restore yourself to your personal comforts, and on your return to the Lodge the Signs, Token and Word, will be further explained.